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Detection of *Hepatitis B* and *C Virus* infection among students of private tertiary institution in South-Western Nigeria

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Background: *Hepatitis B Virus* (HBV) and *Hepatitis C Virus* (HCV) infection is a major health problem and account for a substantial proportion of liver diseases worldwide.

Aim: The aim of this study was to determine the prevalence rate of *hepatitis B* and *C virus* infection among undergraduate students of Babcock University.

Methodology: The blood samples of 200 participants (96 males and 104 females) were randomly collected and screened using rapid serological methods. HBV markers were determined using a HBV 5 in 1 Panel cassette supplied by Innovita Biological Technology Co., Ltd., China; while antibody to HCV was detected using anti-HCV test strip supplied by Blue Cross Bio-Medical Co., Ltd., China. The demographic and clinical information of the participants were collected using structured questionnaires.

Results: Out of the 200 participants screened, 3 (1.5%) were positive for HBsAg, 10 (5.0%) were positive for Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAb), 3 (1.5%) were positive for HBcAb, 2 (1.0%) were positive for HBeAb and none (0%) was positive for Hepatitis B Virus Early Antigen (HBeAg). 2 (2.1%) of the 96 males screened were positive for HBsAg, while only one (1%) out of the 104 females screened was positive for HBsAg. There was no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between the number of male and female students positive for HBsAg. On the basis of age distribution, data show that 3 (2.7%) out of the 110 students that were 16-20 years old were positive for Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg), while students in the other age groups were negative for HBsAg. Risk factors associated with infection include: Tattooing, history of blood transfusion and shared sharp objects. Interestingly, zero prevalence rate (0%) of HCV infection was recorded in this current study. And consequent upon the above, co-infection of hepatitis B and C virus was absent in this present study.

Conclusion: The outcome of this study showed that a low prevalence rate of HBV mono-infection exists among undergraduate students of Babcock University, therefore the on-going public health campaign programmed against hepatitis B and C should be sustained.

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