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Health Communication and Hepatitis Health Management: A Study on the Awareness and Behavioural Practices in Nigeria

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Abstract

Hepatitis has become a leading cause of death across the globe. Social lifestyle practices and behaviours that predispose individuals to contracting the disease have been identified as factors that constitute huge challenge towards the disease prevention. Against this backdrop, this study examined the residents' source of information on hepatitis disease, knowledge of the high-risk behaviours that could expose people to hepatitis infection and the effects of hepatitis awareness on current behavioural practices of the study population. The study adopted the survey design and multi-stage sampling procedure was employed. The findings revealed that the broadcast media was identified as the major source of information on hepatitis disease/prevention. Respondents' knowledge of high-risk behaviours that stimulate hepatitis infection was very low. Knowledge of hepatitis preventive measures was critically low. More so, awareness of hepatitis disease did not influence the majority of the residents to adopt preventive practices aimed at reducing the incidence of hepatitis infection. In view of these findings, the study recommends among others that information on hepatitis prevention should be more 'behaviour-centred' and interpersonal communication channels such as opinion leaders, religious leaders, community development officers and community-based health workers could be identified and recruited for hepatitis intervention.

Keywords [Hepatitis disease](#), [awareness](#), [risk factors](#), [prevention](#), [development communication](#), [behaviour change communication](#)

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