

ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES (KAP) TOWARDS RABIES, AND IT'S CONTROL IN DHAKA DISTRICT OF BANGLADESH

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Executive Summary

Rabies is a tropical disease that has been significantly overlooked in many locations worldwide. Each year, there have been 60,000 documented fatalities, mostly in Asia and Africa. Dogs account for around 99% of human fatalities caused by rabies. As a result, there has been a rise in the occurrence of dog bites, yet rabies remains a neglected disease in Bangladesh. The aim of this study was to investigate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding rabies in the Dhaka district of Bangladesh. We conducted a cross-sectional survey using a structured questionnaire among randomly selected residents across Dhaka city. In total, 379 respondents took part in the survey. The majority (69%) of respondents were male. 54% (n=204) of respondents knew the causal agent of rabies and the majority of participants (320, 79%) were aware that vaccination could prevent rabies, nevertheless did not vaccinate their dogs (355, 94%) and allowed their dogs to roam freely in search of food. Half of the participants (50%) did not know what to do after exposure to a dog bite as a first aid. Educational level and the area where they live were found to be significantly associated with knowledge, attitudes, and practices ($p < 0.05$). Although respondents demonstrated some level of knowledge about rabies, overall this study reveals critical gaps in their attitudes and practices. These shortcomings may be associated with a low level of education and living area. Therefore, decision-makers need a new approach to control rabies, with a special focus on public awareness and health education, in order to sustain rabies control programs.

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