



### REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-50351

Date: 22-02-2025

**Title: Screening for occult hepatitis B infection among Chronic Liver Disease patients attending tertiary care hospital**

**Recommendation:**

- Accept as it is.....**YES**.....
- Accept after minor revision.....
- Accept after major revision .....
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	√			
Techn. Quality		√		
Clarity		√		
Significance			√	

**Reviewer's Name:** Dr Aamina

**Reviewer's Decision about Paper:**      **Recommended for Publication.**

**Comments** (*Use additional pages, if required*)

### **Reviewer's Comment / Report**

**Overall Assessment:** The manuscript presents a well-structured observational cross-sectional study aimed at screening for Occult Hepatitis B Infection (OBI) in Chronic Liver Disease (CLD) patients. The study is highly relevant given the clinical significance of OBI and its potential implications for disease management and transmission prevention.

**Strengths:**

- The study addresses an important gap in HBV detection among CLD patients.
- Use of both ELISA and real-time PCR provides a comprehensive diagnostic approach.
- Clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria enhance study validity.

**Abstract:**

- The abstract effectively summarizes the study's objective, methodology, results, and conclusion.
- The prevalence of OBI is clearly stated, with differentiation between probable and confirmed OBI cases.

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- The conclusion provides a concise recommendation regarding anti-HBc as a surrogate marker for OBI diagnosis.

### Introduction:

- The introduction provides a strong background on HBV and OBI, highlighting their clinical relevance.
- The epidemiological context is well-explained, along with key diagnostic challenges.
- The historical development of OBI research is outlined, emphasizing its clinical significance.

### Materials and Methods:

- The observational cross-sectional design is appropriate for the study objective.
- Inclusion and exclusion criteria are clearly defined, ensuring study relevance.
- Laboratory methodologies, including ELISA and real-time PCR, are well-documented.
- Ethical approval and informed consent are mentioned, ensuring compliance with research ethics.

### Results:

- The prevalence of OBI is reported with clear numerical values.
- The differentiation between probable and confirmed OBI cases is clearly explained.
- Statistical agreement analysis between ELISA and PCR results is provided.

### Discussion:

- The discussion effectively contextualizes findings within the existing literature.
- The significance of OBI detection in CLD patients is well-articulated.
- The role of anti-HBc as a surrogate marker is discussed in relation to PCR findings.

### Conclusion:

- The conclusion succinctly summarizes key findings and their implications for clinical practice.
- The recommendation for using anti-HBc as a preliminary screening marker is well-supported by study findings.