

ABSTRACT

Background

Sleep difficulties are highly prevalent among adolescents, and are associated with significant impairments. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) is effective for adolescents with disrupted sleep in High Income Countries, but it is known if it is acceptable and effective in African settings.

Objectives

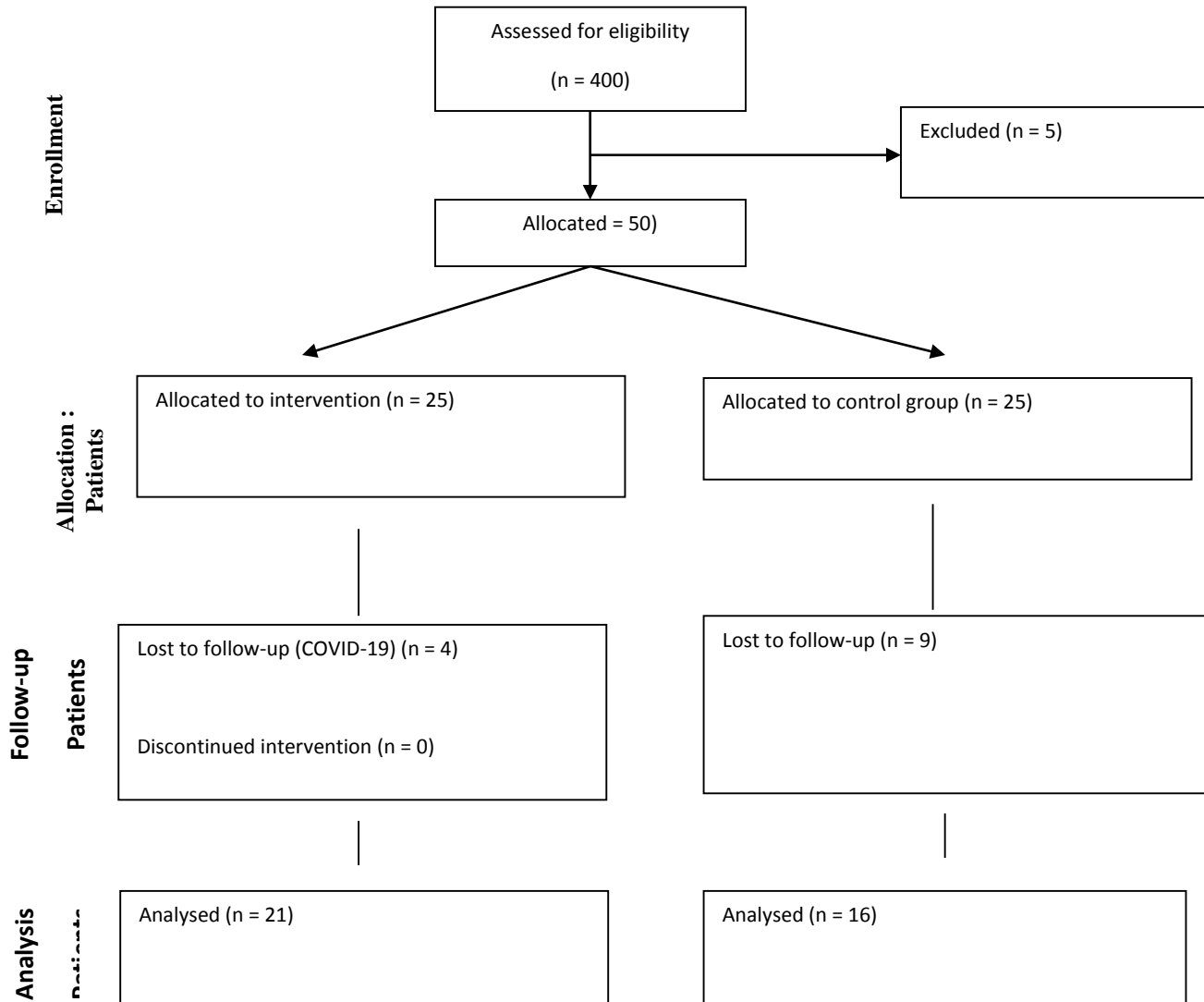
To assess the effect of CBT-I among adolescents with sleep difficulties in Nigeria.

Methods

This was a controlled trial involving 50 adolescents with highest ranked scores on the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) who were recruited from four schools (two public and two private). Balloting was used to assign 25 students in a pair of public and private schools to the intervention group, and the other 25 students in the second pair of public and private schools as waiting-list controls. The two groups were dyad-matched for baseline ISI scores, gender, and type of school to reduce baseline differences. The treatment group received weekly sessions of manualised group-based CBT-I intervention over five weeks. Primary outcome was ISI score on the 5th or 6th week. Secondary outcomes were depressive symptoms, sleep onset latency, total sleep duration, and knowledge about sleep.

Figure 1

CONSORT flow diagram of study participants



Results

Participants were aged 13-17 years ($M = 14.9$, $SD = 1.16$) and consisted of 18 males and 32 female pairs. Controlling for baseline scores, the CBT-I group showed significantly lower post-intervention insomnia scores compared with the control group [$F(1, 33) = 15.39$, $p = .0001$, ($\eta^2 = .60$)], lower depressive symptoms [$F(1, 33) = 20.50$, $p = 0.0001$ ($\eta^2 = .43$)], shorter sleep latency [$F(1, 32) = 230.51$, $p = 0.0001$, $\eta^2 = .55$], longer sleep duration [$F(1, 32) = 2.33$, $p = 0.0001$, $\eta^2 = .48$], and higher knowledge of sleep [$F(1, 33) = 7.44$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.37$]. All CBT-I participants rated the programme as excellent (85.7%) or good (14.3%).

Conclusion

CBT-I was feasible, well received and showed promising efficacy for adolescents with sleep difficulties in this setting. To our knowledge, this is the first study of CBT-I for adolescents in Africa. Larger controlled trials are recommended to establish the generalisability of these findings in this region.

Key Words: Insomnia, Adolescents, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, CBT-I, Nigeria