

Prevalence of Risk Factors for Hypertension Among Faculty at an Urban University in Uganda [Letter]

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Dear editor

We have read a research article entitled “Prevalence of Risk Factors for Hypertension Among Faculty at an Urban University in Uganda” by Alinaitwe et al,¹ recently published in Integrated Blood Pressure Control Journal. We congratulate the authors on this successful article and make some contributions. There are four strengths of this study: 1) This is the first study conducted at a university in Uganda to assess the risk profile of hypertension among teaching staff, thus making an important contribution to existing knowledge, 2) Involved 141 teaching staff from five of the ten faculties at Makerere University, thus covering a diverse range of academic positions, 3) Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire developed based on the STEP-wise approach to NCD surveys by WHO, indicating that the study used a standardized tool, 4) Provides implications for the development of hypertension risk screening tools in the formal sector of work, as well as emphasizing the importance of prevention and health promotion to reduce the risk burden of hypertension.

However, we have also discovered several limitations that need to be corrected in the future, namely: 1) Most of the data collected on participants’ behavior was based on self-reported assessments, which can be prone to response bias, 2) Some other indicators of increased risk factors for hypertension, such as diabetes and blood cholesterol levels, were not evaluated in this study, thus limiting the understanding of the total risk profile, 3). This study used blood pressure measurements taken on only one day, which may not be definitive enough to diagnose hypertension, 4) The specific study population, ie university teaching staff, may not be able to directly generalize these findings to the general population in Uganda.

To obtain better results, we recommend that further research be carried out by 1) There is a need to develop and test hypertension risk screening tools in the formal work sector to promote primary and secondary prevention of hypertension,² 2) Further studies could expand the scope of the study to include additional risk indicators such as diabetes³ and blood cholesterol levels, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the risk profile, 3) Further evaluation of factors inhibiting physical activity among teaching staff and design of targeted interventions to promote physical exercise as a preventive measure for hypertension,⁴ 4) Consider blood pressure measurements taken over a wider time span to gain a more comprehensive understanding of hypertension status.

In conclusion, this study is one of the first to demonstrate the prevalence of hypertension risk factors among university teaching staff in Uganda, as well as confirm the association between modifiable risk factors such as obesity, physical activity, and consumption of added salt with hypertension. The study also highlights the need for routine screening efforts and health promotion campaigns to reduce the risk burden of hypertension among this population.

Disclosure

There is no conflict of interest related to this communication.

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