Author's response to reviews

Title: Hypertension and associated factors among college students in northwest Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study

Authors:

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Version: 2
Date: 26 March 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
To: Dr. Martin O'Flaherty

BMC Public Health

Ref: MS: 1866046869104824

Dear Dr. Martin,

Thank you very much for showing interest on our article entitled "Hypertension and associated factors among university students in Gondar, Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study."

We also appreciate the editor and reviewer for their critical evaluation of the article and invaluable comments. Accordingly, we have responded to those comments point-by-point. We did also extensive language editing and formatting in order to fulfill some of the questions raised by the editor and reviewer. Hope the response we have provided and the changes we have made would satisfy the editor and reviewer. Look forward to receive the final decision soon. Thank you so much for your attention.

Kind regards,

Takele Tadesse, Ph.D, Associate Professor

Corresponding author
**Editorial Comments and Authors’ response**

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<th>Reviewer’s comments</th>
<th>Authors’ response</th>
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<td>1) Please include the age of the participants in the first sentence of the 'Participants and Collection' section (This study included 610 randomly selected college students aged years).</td>
<td>We have made extensive edition and corrections on the revised manuscript. Point-by-point response to the editor’s and reviewer’s comments and the revised manuscript were attached for further action.</td>
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<td>2) We recommend that you copyedit the paper to improve the style of written English.</td>
<td>The editor’s concerns were true and well taken. We have made extensive language edition and formatting in accordance to the journal’s format</td>
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**Comments of Reviewer (Pietro Amedeo Modesti) and Authors’ response**

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<td>The study by Alemu and Tadesse was aimed at investigating the prevalence of hypertension in a selected population (University students) of Ethiopia. The study is of potential interest because hypertension is an important issue in Africa. However some crucial issues have to be reconsidered.</td>
<td>Thank you so much for showing interest in our article. We have made extensive edition and corrections on the revised manuscript. Point-by-point response to the reviewers’ comments and the revised manuscript were attached for further action. We also made extensive language edition and formatting in accordance to the journal’s format</td>
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<td>1. Operational definitions (categories) is not clear. This is crucial to explore factors associated with high blood pressure. As regard the main issue of the study, hypertension, is defined as 1) SBP #140 or DBP #90mmHg) or 2) reported regular use of anti-hypertensive medication; this definition is correct according to guidelines. Prehypertension, and normal BP (two categories reported in results) should also be defined in the Methods section. Alcohol drinking: which difference between “light” and “moderate”? Physical Activity should be reported as a single category with three levels.</td>
<td>This is an interesting observation thank you for these comments and we have made extensive edition and corrections on the revised manuscript. To substantiate the clarification of this concern please refer to the manuscript.</td>
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<td>2. Inclusion criteria is confounding. The definition of hypertension is clear. However, “Students who were taking anti-hypertension medication were excluded from the study” (page 4). Are you considering the prevalence of unaware hypertension only?</td>
<td>The reviewer’s concerns were true and well taken. The reason we didn’t include the subjects who are taking anti-hypertension medication is the medication may alter the blood pressure of the subjects at the moments of data collection so this affects the correlation of the high bp with the potential causes. To substantiate the clarification of this concern please refer to the manuscript.</td>
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3. A section “Statistical Methods” is lacking. How the Authors did study the association between risk factors and high blood pressure? A clear description of methods is essential, as well as of the model adopted in Table 3.

   This is an interesting observation thank you. we have used Forward stepwise binary logistic regression analysis using Stata version 11.0 (Stata, College Station, TX, USA) to assess the relative importance of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable. To avoid an excessive number of variables and unstable estimates in the subsequent model, only variables reached a p-value less than 0.3 were kept in the subsequent analyses.

4. Kidney damage was not assessed. However STEP questionnaire contains data regarding personal history of chronic disease. How many subjects had a personal history of kidney disease? The role of kidney damage might be important (J Hum Hypertens. 2013;27:572-9).

   The reviewer’s concerns were true and well taken. We did include the question whether they have kidney problem or not but we didn’t find any association between kidney disease and high blood pressure.

5. University students in Ethiopia cannot be considered as representative of young Ethiopians. How many subjects have the opportunity to go at University in Ethiopia? This point should be discussed.

   This is an interesting observation. Thank you for these comments and we have made revision in the conclusion section of the paper. To substantiate the clarification of this concern please refer to the manuscript.


   The editor’s concerns were true and well taken. We made necessary edition (reference # 16).

Reference list should be reviewed to follow the instruction to Authors.

   The editor’s concerns were true and well taken. We made necessary formatting in accordance to the journal’s format

Variance (SD) for age is lacking in Table 1

   The editor’s concerns were true and well taken. We included in Table 1.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

   Thank you so much for showing interest on our manuscript.

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

   Thank you so much. We made very critical language edition and corrections on the revised manuscript

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

   Thank you!