Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 6 February 2014

Reviewer: Pietro Amedeo Modesti

Reviewer's report:

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.

Major Compulsory Revisions

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.

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?

3. A section “Statistical Methods” is lacking. How did the Authors studied 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.

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).

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.

Minor Essential Revisions

Reference 11 is misquoted. The correct reference reporting a prevalence of 28.3 for hypertension in adult Ethiopians in Gondar is Awoke et al. (BMC Cardiovasc
Reference list should be reviewed to follow the instruction to Authors.

Variance (SD) for age is lacking in Table 1

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

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

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'