Reviewer's report

Title: Perceptions on hypertension among migrants in Delhi, India: a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 13 November 2008

Reviewer: Deborah J Cohen

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BMC Review

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The question the authors address is well defined.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The methods are appropriate, but require further description. See comments below.

3. Are the data sound?
Yes. The data appear to be sound.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, but this manuscript needs to be tightened and the Discussion is overly repetitive.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
No. I didn’t see any discussion of the study’s limitations.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
I am not an expert in this topic and would defer on this assessment. That said the literature reviewed seems adequate.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes. However, the title could be shortened.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes, although I believe the paper needs to be condensed significantly and the
figure is so complicated as to not be particularly useful.

Discretionary Revisions

Minor Essential Revisions
Tighten up the language and make sure the manuscript is as concise as possible.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Overall Comments:
This is an interesting manuscript that is longer than it need be. There is a great deal of redundancy between the Results and Discussion. The Results can also be tightened up (see my comments below).

Introduction
This review seems adequate. I would tighten the language as much as possible.

Methods
More description is needed in this section.
1. Sample – Although this may have been a language barrier, it was not entirely clear what made people eligible for participating in this study. What does it mean to be good observers and willing to share information? In addition, more information about participants is needed. For example, educational background, profession, socioeconomic status) may be useful to report as this could influence perceptions, attitudes and beliefs regarding hypertension.

2. With regard to sampling – you have an N of 14 for interviews and an N of 3 for the focus groups. While this sample size may be sufficient, this is currently difficult to judge. In qualitative research, the focus is not on the size of the sample, but whether or not thematic saturation was reached; the point at which themes repeat and no new information is being ascertained about the research question. The authors do not discuss this in the manuscript. Further, it is unclear if the study was designed to assess saturation. To assess saturation, the research design needs to be iterative. That is, the research team moves between data collection, analysis and sample selection in order to allow early insights shape the interview guide and influence the selection of subsequent participants. The process of data collection, analysis and sample selection continues until there is repetition found in what people are saying. There is no evidence in the current manuscript that there was in iterative process or that saturation was reached.

3. The author should include a brief statement about preconceptions and how this may have influenced this study and its findings.

4. The author should include the interview guide in the manuscript or as a supplement to the manuscript.
5. The Methods section should also include a rationale for why both interview and focus group data collection methods were used.

6. Focus groups and interviews are different and require separate description in the Methods section. For example, with focus groups it is necessary to understand the rationale for selecting participants and organizing the groups. For example: were these heterogeneous or homogenous group, were they moderated, were they moderated by someone who is trained in conducting focus groups, were they audio-recorded, were notes taken to capture group dynamics, etc.

7. In addition, focus group and interview data cannot be analyzed in the same manner. In focus groups, one person’s answer may influence what others in the group say. This manuscript needs more description of the approach used for analyzing these data in general (including all the steps you followed and why), and would benefit from some citations to give the readers a sense of the works that inform the approach used. In addition, more information is needed about how the data were analyzed and what different steps were used to analyze interview and focus group data.

8. Results – I think this section would be greatly improved the findings were better synthesized around 1 to 3 important findings. In its current form, it appears that what informants said was organized topically and reported with little in depth analysis and interpretation. For example, one finding of this study may be that there are few differences between the two groups the researcher approached. This is an important finding. A second finding may be that there were a number of misconceptions about hypertension and its causes and cures among those studied. Within such a sub-heading (if this sub-heading is appropriate) one might report the patterns in misunderstanding, using 1 or maybe 2 quotes that support each claim.

9. Currently there are too many quotes in the text.

11. Group process often strengthens the data collection and analysis process, fostering reflection and different ways of seeing and understanding the data. Given this is a single author publication it would be useful to know if there was a group process (these people should be recognized) or how the author addressed this important limitation.

10. Currently, the Discussion repeats what has been reported in the Results. It is reasonable to offer a brief summary of results in the Discussion section. However, the primary focus should be on discussing the conclusion and implications of the work. Developing the Discussion section in this direction would strengthen the manuscript.

11. A discussion of the study’s limitations should be added to the Discussion section.
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.