Reviewer’s report

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

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 19 November 2008

**Reviewer:** Denise C Fyffe

**Reviewer’s report:**

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1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   a. The authors present an important topic that is very timely.
   b. Background: 2nd sentence is confusing – the direction of the social gradient is implied and should be stated clearly. The authors may want to include a sentence that compares the prevalence and risk factors of hypertension among low and high SES people living in India, if that information is available.
   c. Background: A brief description of the socio-economic (and maybe cultural characteristics) of the 2 migrant groups may be helpful to the reading audience. What is the prevalence of hypertension among migrants groups?
   d. Background: Although the authors mention the socioeconomic determinants of hypertension in India, the introduction seems to missing a sentence or two that highlight other important epidemiological findings about the prevalence and risk factors (e.g., genetic factors) associated with hypertension in India.
   e. Background: What is it about migrant groups that put them at a disadvantage and risk of hypertension – is it only lower SES?
   f. Background: Sentence 7 “Explanatory models...”: Need a reference for this sentence. It isn’t clear if the authors are proposing to use Kleinman’s explanatory models to describe/compare the perceptions of settled and neo-settled migrants about hypertension.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   a. The authors failed to mention whether the study was approved by the IRB.
   b. Was the topic guide developed based on: i) previous studies with other ethnic/racial groups; ii) theoretical model (e.g., health belief model); iii) previous pilot data?
   c. Pretesting the topic guide – please tell the reading audience more about that (e.g., who did the authors recruit to pre-pilot the material? what was the feedback from the pre-pilot testing?)
   d. Using key informants and focus groups was relevant to the topic area and research questions. However, the authors did not justify the use of key informants in conjunction with focus groups (e.g., was it to provide validation of the results – themes generated – from the focus groups?).
e. Key informant approach requires careful selection criteria of formal or informal leaders, influential leaders or experts. Table 1 indicates that the key informants were from both migrant groups – this also needs to be mentioned in the text.

f. Recruitment of focus group participants is not clearly outlined. Was it a purposive sample?

g. Were there any incentives provided for the study participants? If so, please mention these incentives.

3. Are the data sound?

a. Were the qualitative analyses based on a theory (e.g., grounded theory?)? If so, please describe.

b. The researchers did not discuss saturation of the data. Was saturation met during data collection?

c. The interviews and focus groups were transcribed into English – was the translation of the interviews and focus groups verified?

d. It is not clear if the interviews/focus groups were conducted in English or Hindi or both languages – translation (and back translation) are important aspects of qualitative methodology – What are some of the implications of using translation?

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

a. Table 1 is not described in the “Results” section. Table 1 includes too much information. Please report descriptive information about key informants and focus group participants in separate tables (include mean age and age range).

b. The presentation of the narrative data is a little confusing. The first sentence of this section should be used to let the readers know the structure of the presentation of these qualitative findings and illustrative quotes.

c. The first 2 sentences in the results section illustrate are confusing. Was the English phrase “blood pressure” used throughout all of the interviews and focus group discussions? Or only when participants used that term was it also used by interviewers or focus groups moderators?

d. The authors should not refer to the study participants as “people” (in the 3rd person) but use another term (e.g., participants, interviewees)

e. Pg 6: Need a heading to introduce “The present explanatory models of people…”

f. Participant identifiers with the quotes are helpful be sure to use a consistent format.

5. Are the discussion and conclusion well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

a. The discussion and conclusion are fairly well done.

b. Figure 1 needs to be explained.

6. Are the limitations of the work clearly stated?
a. Limitations were not mentioned (e.g., potential bias in recruitment, data collection, development of topic guide)

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   a. The authors acknowledge that there has been quite of literature about the prevalence and risk factors associated with hypertension among the people of India. What is important about this study is that it is one of the first studies to examine the perspectives of this high risk of group to help inform community interventions.

8. Does the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   Title is fine. The abstract should be strengthened based on the revisions outlined.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
   a. Needs to be reviewed for tense and wording (e.g., page 9: “cardiovascular” is 1 word; page 10 last paragraph “round” should be “around” and “peoples” should be ‘participants’);
   b. Lower case the term “in-depth”

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background
• Refer to comments in point 1 above
• The authors need to strengthen their line of argument for carrying out the study
• Improve the section that outlines the authors reasons for focusing on and/or comparing migrant groups in this section

Methods
• See comments above in point 2 & 3
• Provide more information about pre-testing methods (e.g., topic guide)
• Please be more specific about the way translation (and back translation) was conducted (i.e., the primary language used in the focus groups; interviews; transcripts)
• Provide more detail on recruitment

Results
• See revisions listed above in point 4
• Please clarify the speakers when presenting the results – the authors have lumped together responses from all participants (key informants; focus group participants; migrants; neo-migrants) – weren’t you planning to compare perspectives across groups? If so, this is not clearly articulated in the results section.
• The authors should reconsider their presentation of themes (e.g., headings need to be revised)
• The issue of language is referred to in the first paragraph of page 5. The authors did not clarify that the terms had the same meaning for the participants
• Remove the last quote on page 5 – it takes away from the message in this section
• Page 6: first paragraph – there seems to be some gender differences that need to be extrapolated from the data
• Page 6: City vs. hypertension – title is vague; what does “each of which has been linked further” mean?
• Page 6: Pollution and adulteration: maybe add “Adulteration of Food”; remove “…along with many other problems”.
• Page 8: Participants seem to demonstrate some confusion about the symptoms of hypertension; The section entitled “Awareness of own status of hypertension” needs to be clarified

Conclusion & Discussion
• Refer to points listed above #5

Other revisions
• See points listed above #6, 8, 9

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests