Author's response to reviews

Title: Use of alternative medicine for hypertension in Buikwe and Mukono districts of Uganda: A cross sectional study

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Author's response to reviews:

Use of alternative medicine for hypertension in Buikwe and Mukono districts of Uganda: A cross sectional study

Response to reviewers’ comments

Dear reviewers, we gratefully appreciate the time you have taken to review our manuscript in submission. Please find response to concerns raised in this manuscript

Reviewer: Dr. Osamor Pauline

Reviewer's report:

The use of alternative medicine for hypertension in Buikwe and Mukono districts of Uganda: A cross sectional is an interesting topic in the field of hypertension management. Although the manuscript is well written there are some aspects that will strengthen the quality of the manuscript.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The introduction is too brief and inadequate. It does not address hypertension as a disease which includes how hypertension treatment and control is realized in sub-Saharan Africa.

The literature review on the state of alternative medicine use is inadequate in the background. The concept of alternative and forms of alternative medicine use should be clearly stated in the background/introduction. Authors should cite previous studies from Africa that studies the prevalence of use of alternative medicine in hypertension. Only two of their citations are from Africa and one notable one on the authors missed which is very similar to their study that used a community based approach is the study by Osamor and Owumi (2010) on “complementary and alternative medicine in the management of hypertension in an urban Nigerian Community”. It will also be nice and interesting to compare and contrast the findings from this manuscript prevalence (as well as other findings) with these studies.

Response to comment:

We have addressed the comment in the background section. The introduction is expounded and hypertension prevalence, treatment and control are presented.
We have also captured the existing literature on state of alternative medicine use in the background section and cited previous studies from Africa that studies the prevalence of use of alternative medicine in hypertension. A discussion on comparison between our manuscript and the manuscript has been presented in the discussion section.

2. The author’s stated objective was to estimate “prevalence” but their sample size was based on a different outcome “determinants of alternative medicine use”. Authors should please clarify.

Response to comment

The sample size was estimated based on the outcome with low likelihood (determinants of use of alternative medicine). This outcome generated a bigger sample that was sufficient to measure both outcomes.

3. It seems that the authors just lifted what were stated in the questionnaire as headings for their tables. The table titles and categories of responses are poorly done. They should be interpreted to convey proper meaning to the reader.

Response to comment

We have revised the headings for the tables. Thank you for the comment.

Minor essential revisions

1. It seems ~92% of the sample use modern medicine and ~52% use alternative medicine, with only 4% using alternative medicine alone. It would be useful to comment on this pattern i.e. use of modern medicine was nearly universal and alternative medicine was not used alone but as an adjunct to modern medicine. The fact that so few use alternative medicine alone means that they do not believe alternative medicine “on its own” is able to control their hypertension.

Response to comment

We appreciate this comment. We have incorporated it in the discussion.

2. I am just curious as to why there is a high proportion of missing data. Also the authors should replace “no education” with “no formal education” and I also suggest that the proportion for primary education be stated clearly.

Response to comment

Responses with missing data were dropped. No education has been replaced no formal education.

3. It is my advice that after responding to the comments from the reviewers that the authors should endeavour to seek the services of an English editor before consideration for publication.

Response to comment

We have reviewed the paper for grammatical errors.

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.
Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests
Reviewer 2
Reviewer’s report
Title: Use of alternative medicine for hypertension in Buikwe and Mukono districts of Uganda: A cross sectional study

Minor Essential Revisions
a. Table headings or descriptions of how data in each table was derived would be helpful.

Response to comment
Dear Reviewer, we are grateful for the time you have spent to review this manuscript. The table descriptions are changed to create more clarity.

b. A Table 1 with descriptive data on the demographics of the population being studied is missing. It is unclear if Table 1 and Table 2 with the use of 95%CI are reporting results from a model or descriptive statistics.

Response to comment
Table 1 and table 2 are reporting results from descriptive statistics. We have clarified this the descriptions in the tables.

c. In Table 3 use the reference for gender and place of residence should be indicated with a 1 as with the other covariates in the table.

Response to comment
We included 1 for the reference variable.


Response to comment
We have removed the period in the statement.

e. It is not clear what the subject or researcher’s understanding of “self-treatment” is.

Response to comment
By self treatment we mean those on self medication or managing their own sickness.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests

Additional comments
Review of Use of alternative medicine for hypertension in Buikwe and Mukono districts of Uganda: A cross-sectional study
Fred Nuwaha and Geoffrey Musinguzi

Nuwaha and Musinguzi present results from a cross-sectional study on the use of alternative medicine in patients who have been diagnosed as hypertensive in Buikwe and Mukono districts of Uganda. The question posed by the author is an important one and one that has been addressed in several other regional studies. The survey and statistical analysis methods are appropriate and the data are sound. It would have been interesting to see a table listing the types of alternative medicines used in these communities and frequency with which they are used.

The authors acknowledge previous research on CAM use. Including more up to date references on how the medical community views alternative medicine would be helpful as several of the references are dated not necessarily consistent with current views on CAM. The title and abstract convey the information found and the writing is excellent.

Response to comment
The type of alternative medicine used was almost exclusively herbal remedies reported by 73/74 (99%) – we feel the table may not be necessary.