

Review of: "Auditing the Cost of Treating Hypertension in a Tertiary Health Facility in Yobe State, North-Eastern Nigeria"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Title: Auditing the Cost of Treating Hypertension in a Tertiary Health Facility in Yobe State, North-Eastern Nigeria

Abstract

- While the abstract is informative, it could benefit from being more concise. Some sentences could be streamlined without losing important information. For example, "The study utilised a cross-sectional study design, using interviewer-administered questionnaire to collect information from the respondents" could be simplified to "A cross-sectional study design was used to collect data via interviewer-administered questionnaires."
- The abstract includes key quantitative findings, such as the average cost of treating hypertension and the percentage of respondents with controlled blood pressure. Adding more specific numerical data, such as confidence intervals or ranges for these values, would enhance the clarity and precision of the results presented.

Introduction

- The introduction effectively outlines the prevalence of hypertension in Nigeria, its associated complications, and the range of costs reported by patients for hypertension treatment. However, the information could be presented in a more structured manner to enhance readability. Consider breaking down the introduction into distinct paragraphs or sections to clearly delineate different aspects of the background information.
- Ensure consistent formatting of citations throughout the introduction. For example, some citations are placed within brackets immediately after statements, while others are placed at the end of sentences. Consistency in citation placement and formatting improves the overall professionalism and readability of the text.
- While the introduction references previous studies on hypertension prevalence and treatment costs in Nigeria, it could benefit from a more integrated literature review. Instead of listing multiple studies sequentially, consider synthesizing key findings and trends from the literature to provide a more cohesive narrative and highlight gaps in knowledge that the current study aims to address.
- Provide more specific details about the study context and setting to help readers better understand the relevance and significance of the research. For example, briefly describe the healthcare system in Yobe state and any unique socio-economic factors that may influence hypertension treatment costs in this region.

Method

- This section should be reorganized with subheadings. The following suggested subheadings can be used: Study site and design, Sample and sampling, Development and validation of questionnaire, Data collection, Data analysis, ethical considerations.
- The study employed IBM SPSS for data analysis, which is a widely used statistical software. However, the analysis appears to be descriptive, focusing on frequencies, percentages, and means. Including inferential statistics, such as regression analysis or hypothesis testing, could provide deeper insights into the relationships between variables and strengthen the study's conclusions.
- The study calculated the average cost of hypertension treatment per patient and the cost-effectiveness of different drug combinations. While these calculations are informative, they may oversimplify the complexities of healthcare costs. Incorporating sensitivity analysis or considering indirect costs, such as lost productivity or caregiver burden, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the economic impact of hypertension.

Results

- Provide appropriate subheadings for this section, and it should be in line with the objectives of the study.
- For table 2, provide results only on the yes responses.
- Figures and tables should be referenced in the text.
- For table 3, the first variable is "folder," and this is out of place. This appears in almost all the tables. If this refers to the number of respondents, kindly indicate this in the
- For the number of drugs prescribed, state the mean, median, and the mode.
- Cost-effectiveness Analysis: The study evaluates the cost-effectiveness of different drug combinations for controlling blood pressure. While this analysis provides valuable information for healthcare decision-making, it could be improved by considering a broader range of outcomes, such as quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) gained, and conducting sensitivity analyses to assess the robustness of the findings.

Discussion

- The discussion highlights the financial burden on patients. It could be strengthened by exploring how unemployment and low education might affect medication adherence or treatment seeking behavior.
- The discussion mentions combination therapy being common but doesn't delve into reasons behind it. Explore if it relates to disease severity or ineffectiveness of monotherapy in this population.
- The discussion compares medication costs with other studies. Consider a more comprehensive cost analysis. This could include breakdown of medication types and exploring reasons behind the higher cost in this study compared to others.
- Include a clear section on limitations of the study. Discuss how the low SES sample might affect generalizability and the need for further studies with broader populations.
- Analyze the correlation between SES factors (unemployment, education) and treatment outcomes or medication

adherence. Did these factors influence clinic visits or medication costs?

- Discuss the reasons for the high prevalence of combination therapy. Was it due to disease severity, ineffectiveness of monotherapy, or other factors?
- The discussion of the study findings could be enhanced by providing a more in-depth analysis of the implications for clinical practice, healthcare policy, and future research. Specifically, the study could explore potential strategies for improving the affordability and accessibility of hypertension treatment, as well as the need for targeted interventions to address disparities in treatment outcomes among different patient populations.

Conclusion

- Instead of a broad statement about subsidy, suggest specific mechanisms like price controls on medications, insurance coverage for low-income groups, or medication adherence support programs.
- Future research directions: While including complication costs is important, consider proposing additional research areas. This could involve investigating the cost-effectiveness of different treatment strategies in low-resource settings or exploring the impact of health education programs on medication adherence and cost management.