

Review of: "Prevalence of Buruli Ulcer Among Residents in Jasikan Municipality: A Cross-Sectional Study"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Prevalence of Buruli Ulcer Among Residents in Jasikan Municipality: A Cross-Sectional Study

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The purpose of this study is to report the prevalence of Buruli Ulcer in the Jasikan Municipality of Ghana. Based on the authors' account, the number of cases reported has varied a great deal in recent years, so these data will help to establish the public health importance of the disease in this locality. The population of the Jasikan district was reported by the Ghana Statistical Service in 2021 as just under 60,000 persons.

As other reviewers have noted, the aims are clear, but the methods are not described with sufficient clarity.

'A census method was conducted to establish the prevalence of Buruli ulcer disease in the study setting in the form of a case search.' The Kelsey 1996 reference is not given in the reference list, and it's not entirely clear from a PubMed search which article is being referenced.

It appears that the source of information is the selection of a certain number of persons in each health district for a detailed interview. It was not entirely clear if these are health care providers or patients identified by health care providers.

Calculation of prevalence would be relatively straightforward if the data are based only on a random selection from all persons (clearly, that would be a huge task). However, the calculation of prevalence based on the passive accumulation of cases that present for treatment to (certain?) medical facilities would be much less precise, and the methods, again, for identifying cases would need to be described in more detail. What is not clear from this approach is how many cases there are in which patients do not present for treatment.

The paper opens with a demographic description of the population in the Jasikan Municipality and its geographic section. It was disappointing not to see a demographic comparison of the identified cases with the general population, or a statement about the onset during the wet or dry season.

For any epidemiologic study of a disease, a case definition is needed. It would be useful if the authors were to state very clearly the diagnostic criteria used to define a 'case'. In particular, since biopsies are not done for all participants and results were pending for some, is a positive PCR or a history of a prior positive PCR from the same wound required? Could the authors attach their questionnaire so that the reader could understand the information collected?

Again, this is an excellent and worthwhile effort. More clarity in the explanation, and perhaps the inclusion of updated biopsy results, would greatly add to the value.

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