

ORIGINAL PAPER**Knowledge and Prevalence of Hypertension among Cleaners in a University in the Southwestern region of Nigeria****Oginni Monisola Omoyeni, MSc, BNSc RN, RM, RPHN**

Lecturer, Department of Nursing Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Oluyide Omolara Adekemi, BNSc, RN, RM

Tutor in Seventh Day Adventist School of Nursing, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Popoola Oluwafeyikemi Eunice, BNSc, RN, RM, RPHN

Nursing Officer in one of the Osun State owned hospitals in Modakeke-Ife; Osun State, Nigeria

Correspondence: Oginni Monisola Department of Nursing Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. E-mail address: nursemoj@yahoo.co.uk.**Abstract**

Background: Hypertension has become an important public health challenge globally because of its high prevalence and concomitant increase in its risk for cardiovascular, cerebrovascular and renal diseases. A major characteristic of this disease is its insidious onset and the inability of the affected individual to detect it on time until it has become complicated, for this reason, it is usually referred to as a 'silent killer'.

Aims: This study was conducted in a University in the Southwestern region of Nigeria. It assessed the prevalence of hypertension among the cleaners and their knowledge about it. It further examined the association between their educational status and knowledge of hypertension, relationship between age, Body Mass Index and development of hypertension.

Methodology: A non-experimental descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The Cluster Sampling Technique was employed to select a total of 228 respondents. A self-developed, semi-structured and interviewer-administered questionnaire was used as the research instrument.

Results: Respondents' knowledge on hypertension was just fair. A quarter was not aware of their hypertensive status yet on examination, about 26.3% had developed it. For the unaffected ones, almost half (44.6%) were doing nothing to prevent them developing it. Hypothesis testing showed that respondents' educational status and Body Mass Indexes had no significant association with their hypertensive statuses. However, age was found to have significant association with occurrence of hypertension.

Conclusion: There was a sub-optimum knowledge of hypertension and practices of its management and prevention among the cleaners of this Nigerian southwestern University. There is a need for general enlightenment with emphasis on preventive measures and adoption of more positive lifestyles as people grow older.

Key Words: Hypertension, Knowledge, Prevalence, Blood pressure, Body mass index.