

## **Psychological Stress, Distress, Anthropometric and Lifestyle as Correlates of Hypertension in a Sample of Pakistani Population**

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This study examines the psychological, lifestyle and anthropometric correlates of hypertension. The objective of the study is to find out whether high level of stress, distress, BMI ( $\geq 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ) and high WHR (Waist Hip Ratio), lack of useful level of physical activity, smoking cigarettes, presence of family history of hypertension, are likely to predict hypertension. To conduct this study, seventy eight ( $n = 78$ ) cases with diagnosis of hypertension, aged between 25 to 60 years and ( $n = 78$ ) community matched controls were recruited through purposive sampling technique. To measure psychological factors; The Perceived Stress Scale by Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein (1983) and Kessler Psychological Distress Scale developed by Kessler, Andrews, and Colpe (2002) were used. Waist Hip Ratio and Body Mass Index were calculated with the help of height, waist, hip circumference and weight measurements. Information regarding smoking status and frequency and duration of physical activity was ascertained. Information sheet was constructed to gather demographic and medical information. Binary logistic regression analysis model revealed that women, current smokers and those having a family history of hypertension were at a risk for hypertension. High level of distress and absence of four or more hours of physical activity per week were significant predictors for hypertension. In order to circumvent certain temporal confounds we propose prospective longitudinal and interventional studies to be carried out in the future.

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