

The Prevalence of, and Risk Factors for, Dementia in a Hospital in Tanzania

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Introduction

- The global burden of dementia is increasing, with the greatest rise predicted to occur in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (1).
- Despite this there are limited previous data on the prevalence of, and risk factors for dementia in SSA.

Aims

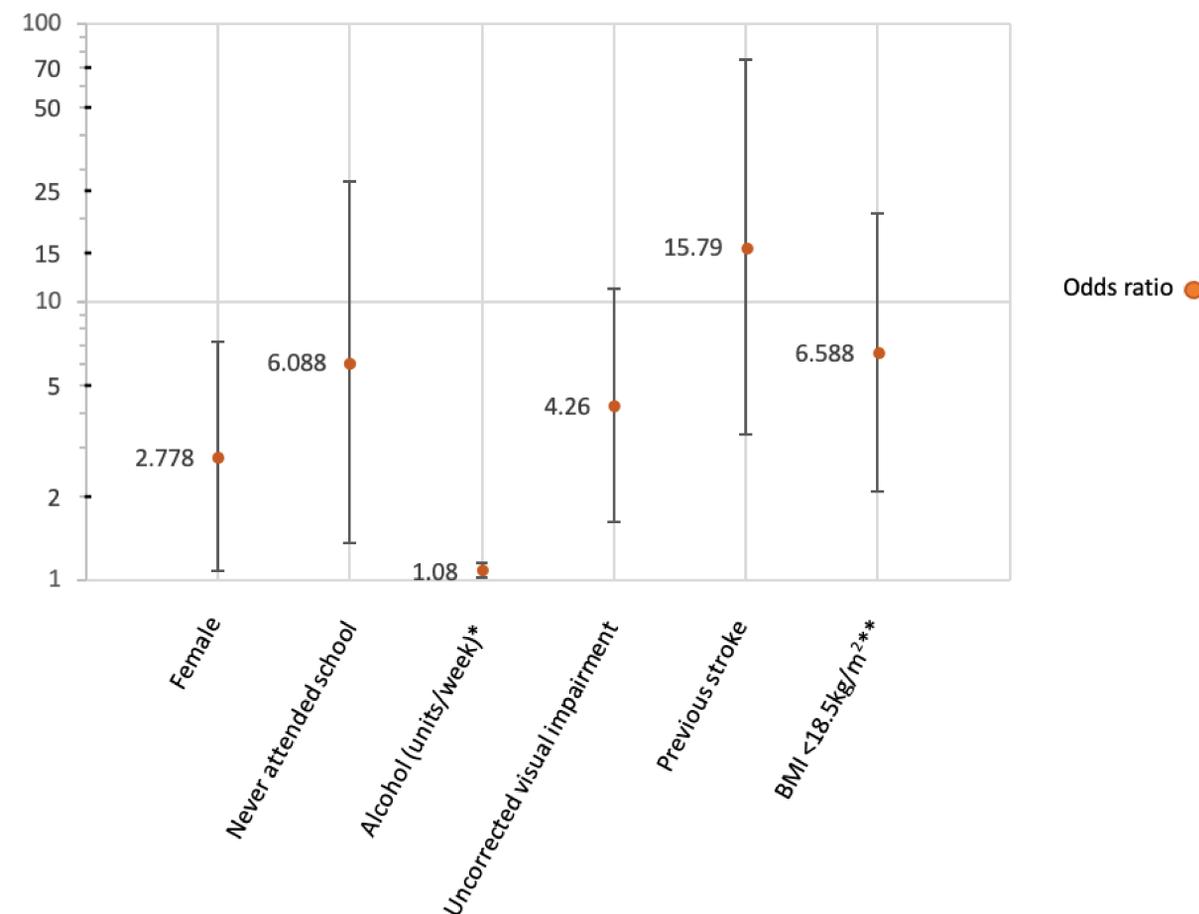
1. Estimate the prevalence of dementia in those aged 60 years and over attending the outpatient department of Mount Meru Hospital, Arusha, northern Tanzania.
2. Investigate the risk factors for dementia in this population.

Methods

- Adults aged 60 years and over were screened for dementia using The Identification of Dementia in Elderly Africans cognitive screening tool which has been specifically developed and validated for use in Tanzania (2).
- Those who scored ≤ 9 were clinically assessed for dementia using The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 4 criteria.
- Demographic information including age, gender, education, literacy and marital status were collected during a clinical assessment.
- Lifestyle variables including smoking, alcohol consumption and body mass index (BMI) were also assessed.
- Medical comorbidities information on HIV, stroke, hypertension and diabetes mellitus were collected during a clinical assessment.

Results

- Of the 1141 patients who were assessed (52.4% female), average age was 69.9 years, and 57 individuals met the criteria for dementia.
- Prevalence of dementia was **5.0% (95% CI 3.7 to 6.3)**
- Significant results of binary logistic regression are displayed in the graph
- *Average increase in alcohol consumption of one unit per week was associated with a 1.08 increased risk of dementia.
- **Low body mass index is likely a result, rather than a cause, of dementia



Graph displaying the variables that were found to be independently associated with dementia on binary logistic regression, their odds ratios and the 95% confidence intervals of the odds ratios. Plotted on a logarithmic scale.

Conclusion

- Prevalence of dementia in this group was lower than a previous reported community-based rate in Tanzania (3).
- This is the first time the association between uncorrected visual impairment and dementia has been demonstrated in SSA.
- Other associations have previously been identified in SSA populations.



Mount Meru, Tanzania

References

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