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MODIFIABLE CARDIOVASCULAR RISK FACTORS: A KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND PRACTICE (KAP) STUDY AMONG LAW UNDERGRADUATES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, NIGERIA

Onyinyechukwu G. Odimegwu

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Background: Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of preventable and premature death worldwide, largely driven by modifiable risk factors. Data on cardiovascular health literacy among non-medical Nigerian undergraduates remain limited.

Objective: To assess knowledge, attitudes, and preventive practices of modifiable cardiovascular risk factors among law undergraduates at the University of Lagos.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 326 undergraduates selected via multistage sampling. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered online questionnaire and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27. Chi-square tests assessed associations, with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Mean age was 21.57 ± 2.01 years; 57.4% were male. Only 9.5% demonstrated good knowledge of modifiable cardiovascular risk factors, while 47.2% held positive attitudes and 58.3% reported good preventive practices. Just 53.1% correctly identified that most heart disease is preventable, and 43.3% were unsure. Physical inactivity was widespread: 74.3% rarely or never exercised for at least 20 minutes during leisure time. Knowledge was significantly associated with age ($p = 0.031$), level of study ($p < 0.001$), and family history of CVD ($p = 0.003$). Preventive practices were significantly associated with the level of study ($p < 0.001$) and knowledge ($p = 0.024$).

Conclusion: Cardiovascular health literacy was poor despite relatively favourable preventive practices, indicating a knowledge–behaviour gap. Early, targeted cardiovascular health education is needed to strengthen understanding and sustain healthy behaviours among university students.

Keywords: Cardiovascular risk factors; health literacy; knowledge attitude practice; undergraduates; Nigeria