

## Abstract of Master's Dissertation

No.1

Course	International Health Development (MPH)	Name	Sayaka Doi
Thesis Title	Assessing the social determinants associated with biological and behavioral risk factors of noncommunicable diseases among market vendors in Suva, Fiji		

### **Background:**

Fiji has been experiencing a noncommunicable disease (NCD) crisis with high premature mortality due to NCDs. Behavioral factors of NCDs have often been highlighted as the main risk factors for NCDs. This aim of this study is to illustrate the association of the social determinants with biological and behavioral risk factors of NCDs. The market vendors were selected as the target as the working age group suffers most from NCDs.

### **Objectives:**

The objectives of this study were to: I. Identify the prevalence of biological and behavioral risk factors of NCDs among market vendors that were previously undiagnosed with hypertension and/or diabetes in Suva market II. Examine the social determinants and behavioral risk factors associated with biological risk factors of NCD among the market vendors in Suva, III. Explore the social determinants associated with behavioral risk factors of NCD among the market vendors in Suva.

### **Methods:**

This study was a cross-sectional study to assess the social determinants and its association with the behavioral and biological risk factors of NCDs. The target group was market vendors working in the three main markets in Suva, Fiji. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and physical measurements. The questionnaire asked about the sociodemographic characteristics, social capital, social support, psychological factors, and behavioral risk factors of NCDs. Physical measurement was carried out by taking blood pressure, height and weight for BMI (Body Mass Index), and urine glucose testing. Data was collected from March 26<sup>th</sup> to April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

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<p><b>Results</b></p> <p>A total of 262 market vendors participated in this study. The prevalence of biological risk factors was: 29.8% for raised blood pressure, 53.8% for obesity, and 8.0% for positive urine glucose. 21.8% were current smokers, 9.6% were binge drinkers, 79.4% consumed insufficient amount of vegetables and fruits, and 48.1% had low levels of physical activity.</p> <p>Higher odds were found in men for raised blood pressure (AOR: 2.62, 95%CI: 1.36-5.07), smoking (AOR: 4.45, 95%CI: 2.15-9.19), whereas women had higher odds for low levels of physical activity (AOR: 3.16, 95%CI: 1.74-5.76). Married individuals had higher odds for obesity (AOR:3.02, 95%CI: 1.17-7.83), whilst Indo-Fijians (AOR: 0.13, 95%CI: 0.06-0.28), and those living out from central Suva (AOR:0.25, 95%CI: 0.09-0.75) had significantly lower odds for obesity. Individuals with moderate levels of social support were more likely to binge drink alcohol and were physically inactive.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>This study is the first study to target market vendors to assess the NCD risk factors among them with a focus on the social determinants, in Fiji. Although the association of social determinants were not clearly drawn out in this study, it has revealed the prevalence of the NCD risk among vendors and has provided insight that the workers in the informal sector should also be considered as key targets for health promotion and organized screening.</p> <p>More researches are needed to investigate the social determinants of NCDs in Fiji to identify who is more at risk and to enable effective intervention. The community context and social support should also be considered as entry points for health promotion.</p>			