

Semoya Mc Lean

DEPARTMENT OF LIFE SCIENCES,
FACULTY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, ST. AUGUSTINE

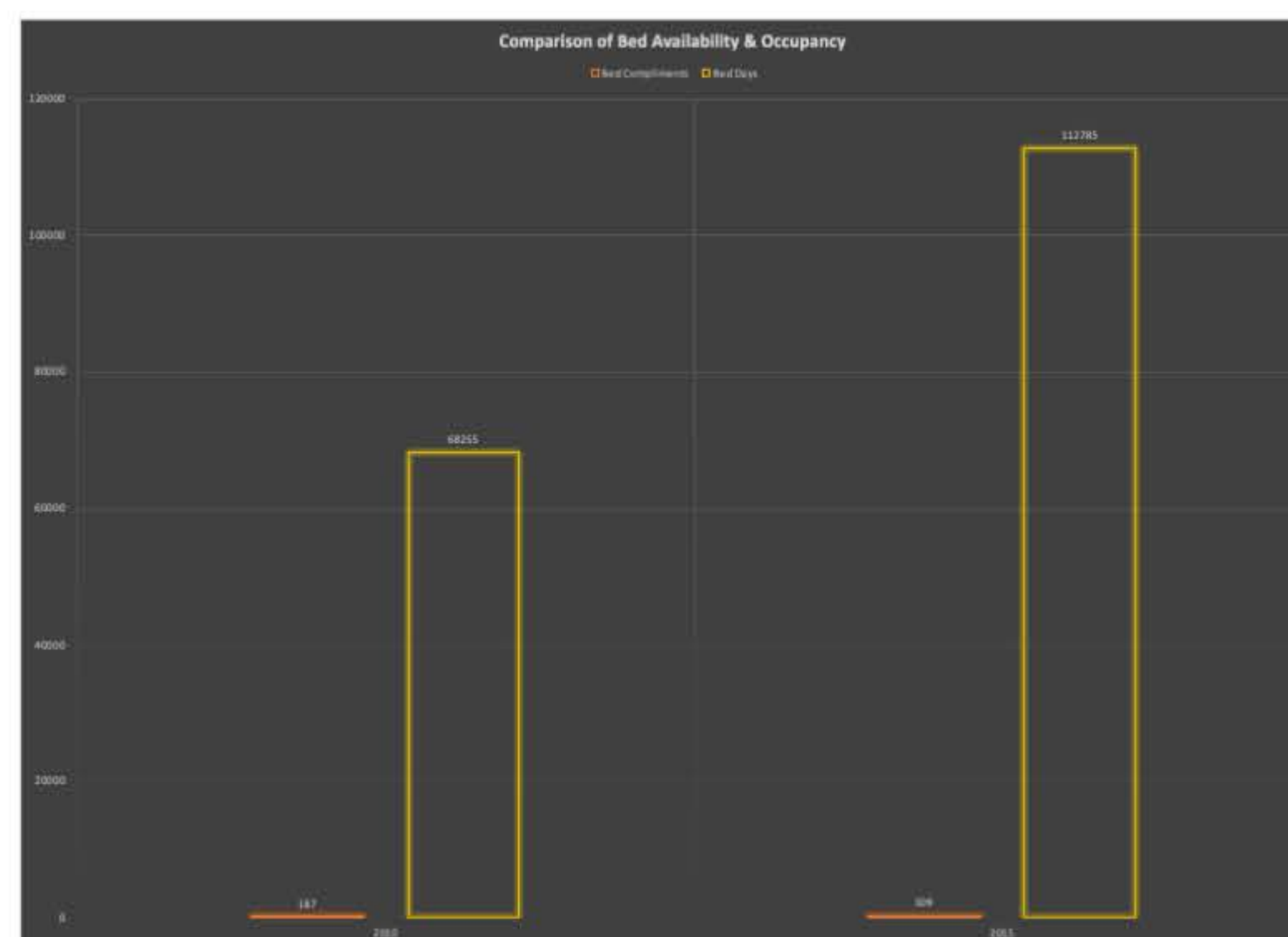
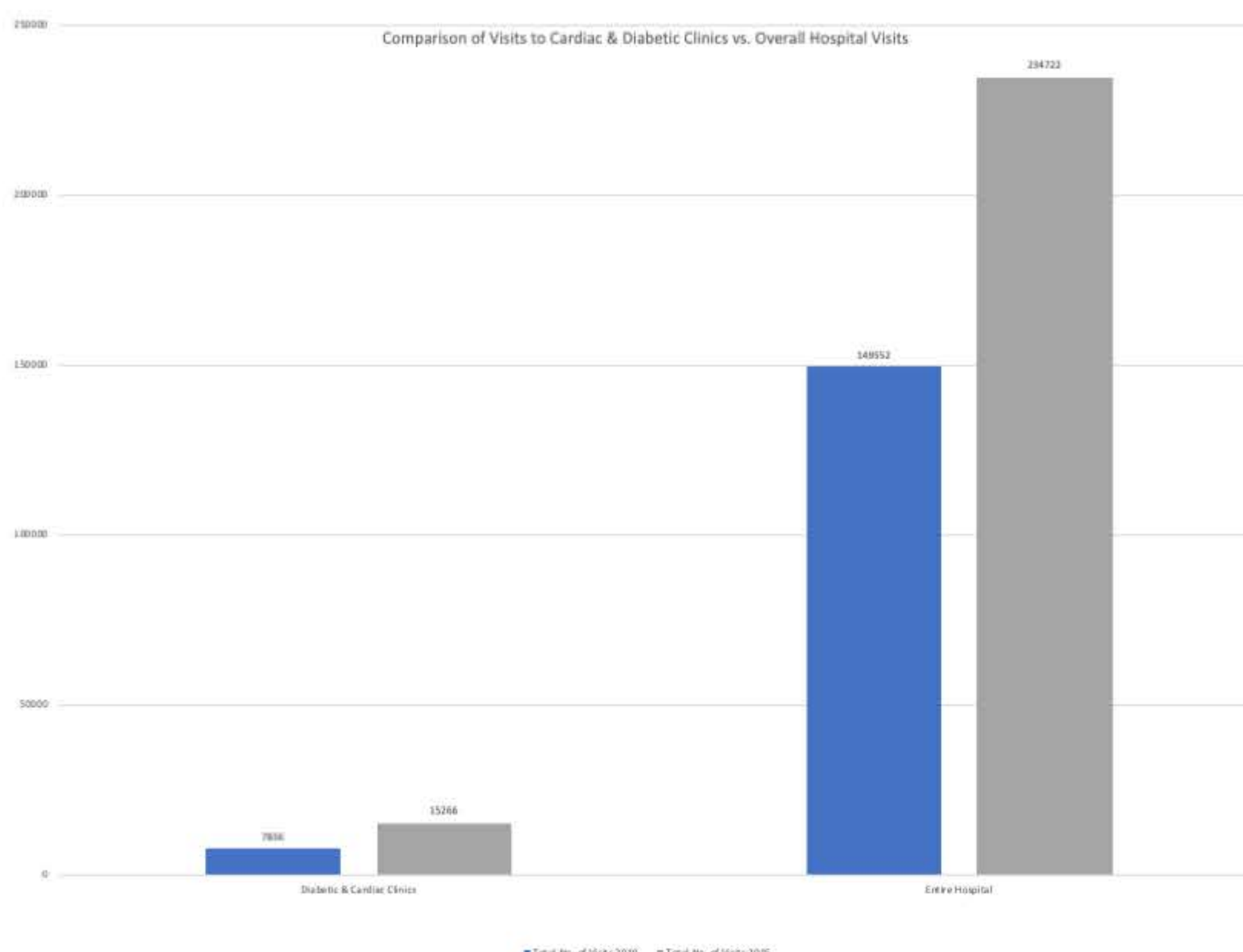
semoyashmclean@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

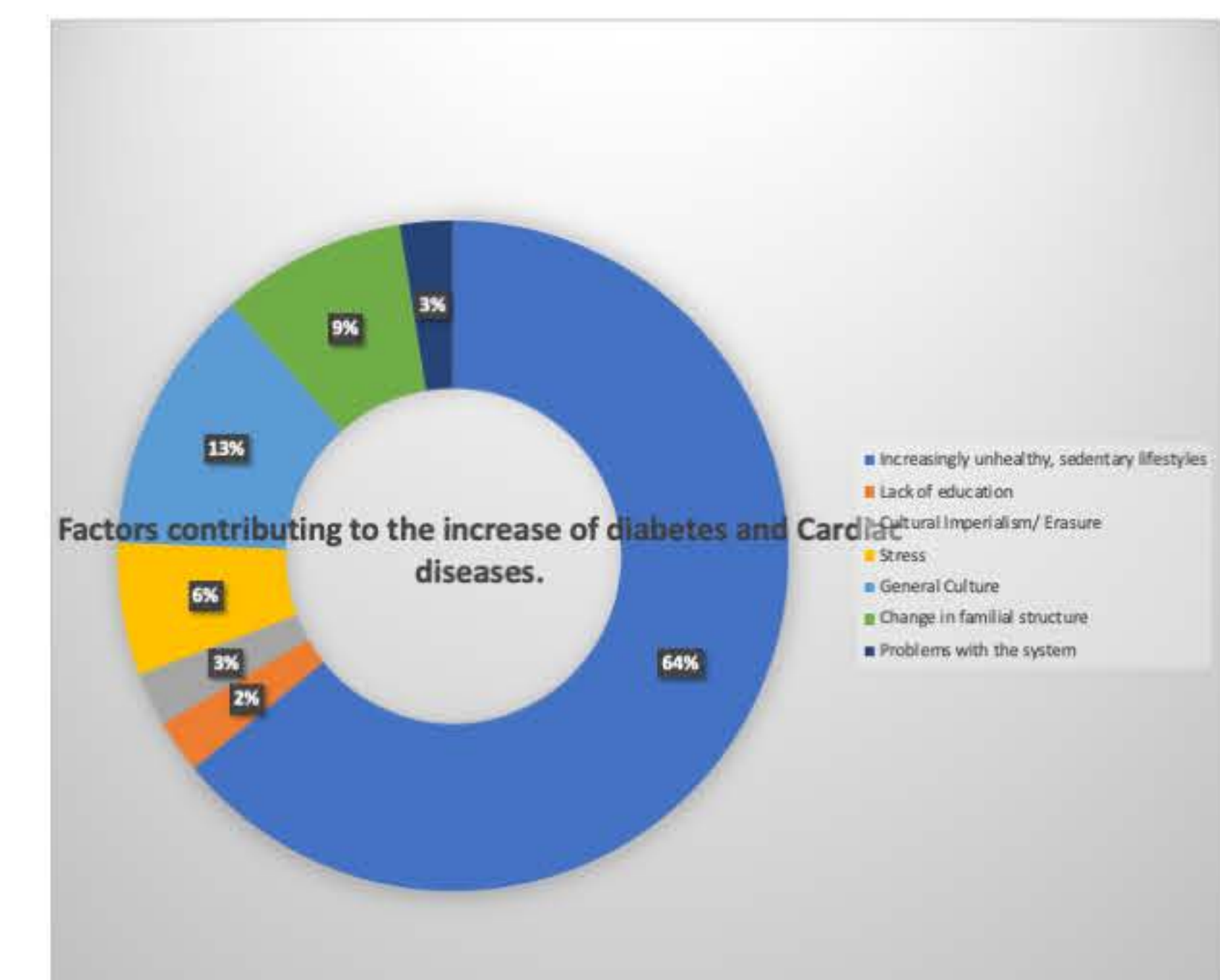
This study seeks to examine the general trend of chronic diseases like cardiac diseases and diabetes in San Fernando over the last 5 years, determining any age group particularly affected, and to obtain an idea of the impact of the trend(s) on the healthcare system in San Fernando. Possible contributing factors to the trends will also be explored.

RESULTS

There was a general increase in NCDs across all age groups. Visits to the cardiac and diabetic clinics increased by 97.2% from 2010-2015, accounting for 6.5% of visits in 2015, with new visits increasing by 470%. Visits to the outpatient cardiac clinic tripled by 2015. Specialists noted an increase of heart attacks in males aged 20-30, and a change of demographic in diabetic clinic visits: a rise of Type I Diabetes and obesity in adolescents, persons aged 20-40 and Type II Diabetes in mature folk (>40). Although the system coped with the increase, it added to the strain on available resources as the hospital continued to operate filled to maximum capacity, with bed compliment (availability) and occupation both increasing by 82.6% from 2010-2015. Both the general public and medical professionals agreed that poor lifestyle habits and attitudes towards health, socio-economic and cultural factors contributed to the trend.

**METHODS**

Data was collected from annual utilization reports from the San Fernando General Hospital for 2010-2015. Supplementary data for analysis and recommendations was provided by interviews with 13 medical professionals at the hospital, and 25 surveys distributed to citizens in the metropolitan and suburban areas of San Fernando to capture a diverse group of participants. All data was compiled and analyzed using basic statistical techniques.

**CONCLUSION**

There has been an increase in chronic diseases especially cardiac diseases and diabetes from 2010-2015 across all age groups, but with a noticeable increase in the ≤ 40 age category. This contributes to overcrowding in tertiary healthcare institutions in San Fernando, therefore impacting resources and efficiency.