OPEN PEER REVIEW

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As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

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- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

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https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

International Journal of High Risk Behaviors and Addiction
Article DOI: 10.5812/ijhrba.92893
Published in: International Journal of High Risk Behaviors and Addiction: 8(3); e92893

Peer Review Report for "Is Inclusion of a Dummy Drug Necessary for Estimating Perceived Prevalence of Substance Use by Classmates?"

Author(s): Ali Bahramnejad, Abedin Iranpour, Nouzar Nakhaee

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 4 May 2019
Revised Date: 18 Jul 2019
Accepted Date: 29 Jul 2019

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 18 Jun 2019

Dear AE,
Thank you for inviting me to review manuscript titled "Is Inclusion of a Dummy Drug Necessary for Estimating Perceived Prevalence of Substance Use by Classmates?" The manuscript has presented data regarding the importance of asking "dummy drug" questions in epidemiological studies among school children. The topic is important and valuable.
Please find my comments as below:
- In page 2, second paragraph authors mentioned that "One of the other methods employed in this domain is to estimate the prevalence via nominative techniques, so that respondents are asked to comment on the prevalence of specific behaviors, including substance use among others (11). Most studies have shown that students tend to overestimate the prevalence of drug use by their peers and those who are over-estimating are more likely to use them (12)." The sentence referenced as 11, describes indirect estimation of actual drug use in friends/peers/classmates of study participant. In this type of studies students were asked to consider 4 of their close friends and then answer to the question that "ow many of them smoked cigarette during last month?". While the sentence referenced as 12 explains "perceived estimation of drug use" in peers. The recent studies do not provide any data regarding the actual epidemiology of the behavior. These two types of studies could not be compared as different epidemiological studies in a single paragraph.

- In METHODS section, authors mentioned that the question for perceived estimation of drug use has been "What percentages of your classmates use each of these substances?" The question for perceived use of substances is not in the form of "yes" and "no". Therefore, it is expected that authors report mean, range and standard deviation of perceived estimations provided by students. But in RESULTS section and table 2 & 3, the data for percentage of perceived Relevin and other substances use were presented as binary (yes/no) data.
- It would be valuable if authors present the percentage of using Relevin in the students themselves and compare differences between reported prevalence between students who admitted Relevin use and students who not.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 15 Jul 2019

Dear AE,
There is no similar study in Iran. The work is acceptable and suitable for publishing.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 18 Jul 2019

Dear EIC,
The author should revise the article according to the comments and mention:
- Ethical and Legal Considerations
- Conflict of Interests
regards,

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (0) 18 Jul 2019

Dear Author,
Your article is reviewed by the reviewers carefully. According to their comments, this document needs minor revision. Please follow their comments as requested.
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer 1:
There is no similar study in Iran. The work is acceptable and suitable for publishing

Thanks

Reviewer 2:
Thank you for inviting me to review manuscript titled "Is Inclusion of a Dummy Drug Necessary for Estimating Perceived Prevalence of Substance Use by Classmates?" The manuscript has presented data regarding the importance of asking "dummy drug" questions in epidemiological studies among school children. The topic is important and valuable. Please find my comments as below:
- In page 2, second paragraph authors mentioned that "One of the other methods employed in this domain is to estimate the prevalence via nominative techniques, so that respondents are asked to comment on the prevalence of specific behaviors, including substance use among others (11). Most studies have shown that students tend to overestimate the prevalence of drug use by their peers and those who are over-estimating are more likely to use them (12)." The sentence referenced as 11, describes indirect estimation of actual drug use in friends/peers/classmates of study participant. In this type of studies students were asked to consider 4 of their close friends and then answer to the question that "How many of them smoked cigarette during last month?". While the sentence referenced as 12 explain "perceived estimation of drug use" in peers. The recent studies do not provide any data regarding actual epidemiology of the behavior. These two types of studies could not be compared as different epidemiological studies in a single paragraph.

Using the Reviewer's comment we added further clarification to the first sentence and then the aforementioned paragraph was splitted to two separate ones.

In METHODS section, authors mentioned that the question for perceived estimation of drug use has been "What percentages of your classmates use each of these substances?" The question for perceived use of substances is not in the form of "yes" and "no". Therefore, it is expected that authors report mean, range and standard deviation of perceived estimations provided by students. But in RESULTS section and table 2 & 3, the data for percentage of perceived Relevin and other substances use were presented as binary (yes/no) data.

The title of Table 2 was revised. A Phrase was also added to the statistical analysis for better explanation of the recoding of data. The title of Table 3 was already correct.

It would be valuable if authors present the percentage of using Relevin in the students

themselves and compare differences between reported prevalence between students who admitted Relevin use and students who not.

We agree with this comment. But it was not included in the questionnaire. Meanwhile, It had been mentioned in the last part of Discussion as the limitation of our study as below:

The limitation of the study was exclusion of relevin from the list of drugs which might be used by students themselves. If it was included in the logistic regression model it might have potential impact on the results.

Ethical considerations and Conflict of interest were added to the manuscript too.

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Revision (1)

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REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (1)** 29 Jul 2019

Dear Author,

The document is reviewed carefully by the reviewers. According to their comments and your revisions as requested, this manuscript is accepted.

Thanks.