

Peer Review

Review of: "Prevalence and Patterns of Tobacco and Nicotine Product Use in Italy: Findings from 2018–2024 Repeated Cross-Sectional Surveys"

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The manuscript is well-structured and highly informative, requiring no further revisions for readability. It offers a comprehensive analysis that serves as a pivotal contribution to the field. By detailing evolving product trends, this work provides essential insights for both healthcare providers and policy stakeholders; I recommend it for acceptance.

A secondary objective of the study was to quantify perceived changes in health and functioning using the ABOUT™ Health & Functioning Instrument, a 7-point scale developed specifically for TNP research. Particularly interesting are the findings regarding the "dose-response" relationship observed in the data: exclusive THS users (those who do not smoke) reported significantly higher perceived health improvements compared to dual users (those using THS alongside combustible cigarettes). Specific improvements were reported by over 60% of the sample in oral health, physical health, and overall health status. Despite the fact that these are "subjective" measures, I would like to emphasize the clinical relevance of the ABOUT instrument in capturing the patient-reported experience of switching to smoke-free products.

The results are encouraging, particularly regarding the substitution effect; they suggest these products act as an alternative to smoking rather than a gateway for adult users. Additionally, the study clarifies that dual use is a contained phenomenon in Italy, with most users moving toward exclusivity.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.