

# Review of: "Purchasing and sourcing of e-cigarettes among youth in Scotland and England following Scotland's implementation of an e-cigarette retail register and prohibition of e-cigarette sales to under-18s"

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Potential competing interests: The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

Generally, this is an interesting and timely paper looking at e-cigarette purchasing behaviour, sourcing e-cigarettes and refusal to sell these products in retail to young people in Scotland, following changes to legislation to prevent their sales to under 18's. I think the paper would benefit from a little bit more content to e-cigarette use and why it is important in this age group.

Please see comments on each aspect of the paper below.

Abstract:

- Throughout the paper, when an age range is given, please include the word "years" after each presentation of this.
- The survey data being used is 4-5 years old, is this the most current data that could be used for comparison to pre-legislation? The use of this data needs to be justified in the introduction.
- Results section is a bit confusing, % are being presented that suggest a good difference in e-cigarette purchasing and then goes on to say there were no significant differences – this needs to be clarified further – as it reads as being contradictory.
- Are there any implications for the observation that incidence of e-cigarette purchasing appear to have increased?
- Implications for policy and practice?

Introduction:

- Would it be possible to give an overview of e-cigarettes, what they are and why they are important to monitor in young people – just to give some context to the need for regulations.
- The second paragraph of the introduction talks about social sources, can you please elaborate on this and explain what it means.
- More information on why it is important to understand purchasing, sale refusal and sourcing of e-cigarettes in this age group would be beneficial – even if only briefly covered.

Methods:

Sample:

- Would it be possible to include some information and rationale for the inclusion/exclusion criteria used in this sample?

Were they all e-cigarette users – and could you define use e.g. regular/ever use.

- If ever use of e-cigarettes included, this needs to be discussed as a potential limitation in the discussion.
- How was the study powered for the analysis? Was a power calculation carried out?

Outcomes:

- Can I ask if social class was assessed? If so, why was this not included, as a covariate in the analysis. From our own research, more frequent use in greater in lower socio economic groups.

Results:

- Can you provide a rationale for the statistical analyses used – more specifically why logistic regression.
- Paragraph just under table 3, first 4 lines - could you please elaborate a little bit more on the findings presented here. Also, what covariates specifically ironed out this effect – need to explain this fully in the discussion

Discussion:

- Remind the reader of the main hypotheses and how they relate to the findings
- Can you please explore further the sourcing of e-cigarettes from social situations – can you give examples from your research of the most popular sources?
- Could you elaborate further on the issues around reducing statistical power in the research due to sample size?
- The two survey dates are very close to the new legislation in Scotland that was passed, could this have influenced the results in any way?
- Consider the implications and recommendations more fully in the discussion
- What impact would these findings have on policy and practice?