

Review of: "Which sociocultural determinants of pre-drinking amongst undergraduate university students influence motivation"

Jonathan G. Tubman¹

¹ American University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The present manuscript summarizes an international, survey-based study of 351 undergraduate students regarding their pre-drinking behaviors, their participation in drinking games, and factors associated with these behaviors. Surveys were distributed to convenience samples of students and their responses were described in this exploratory, descriptive study. Correlates of heavy episodic alcohol use among undergraduates is an important public health issue due to the unintended consequences to both persons engaging in unhealthy alcohol use and others in their immediate vicinity. While this study addresses timely and important public health issues, a number of revisions and clarifications may strengthen the manuscript and improve its general usefulness.

- The introduction to the manuscript is generally disorganized and would benefit from additional structuring and organization to better support a conceptual rationale for the study. In its present form, the introduction does not state how the study is intended to add substantively to the existing research literature. The study is intended to be descriptive and exploratory – but it may be too exploratory given available research studies.
- The term ‘sociocultural determinants’ is used throughout the manuscript, but this concept is poorly defined and the findings of the study did little to shed light on these influences on problem patterns of alcohol use among undergraduates.
- The rationale for the specific countries sampled is not clear.
- Aim 4 (the only hypothesis) is not supported by the literature review. The purpose of the study would be clearer if there were clearly articulated research questions at the end of the literature review.
- It is not clear what the sample is representative of, and to what extent the findings of the study can be generalized to any specific group of undergraduates.
- The measures in the study are poorly described. There is no indication of the reliability or validity of the measures used.
- The rationale for the section on COVID-19 restrictions is unclear.
- The connection between the research questions and the descriptive data analyses is not clear or particularly useful. Most of the analyses provided are simply presentations of granular descriptive statistics without much effort to consolidate them to tell a clear and meaningful story to the reader.
- The discussion section is weak and is largely a secondary summary of the results of the study. The discussion section

could be strengthened further if the authors stated clearly how the present study adds meaningfully to the existing research literature.