

Review of: "Youth Patterns of Use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Use, Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Waves 4 – 5.5"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Thank you to the authors for their work on youth patterns of ENDS. This research is an important contribution to the field, as understanding how policy change affects the prevalence of youth ENDS use is imperative to addressing public health needs. I thought this paper was well-written and insightful. Please see my comments below.

Abstract

Authors wrote: "(a 12-fold increase from 4.4% to 58.4% of fruit/sweet/other-flavor users)." **Comment:** This is ~13-fold (same comment in Discussion section)

Methods

Comment: Please describe the PATH study in more detail (i.e., study design, participants).

Results

Authors wrote: "Use of pod-based ENDS declined by over 40% from 54.4% to 31.7% (Figure 2, Table 1; $\chi^2(df=1)=43.92, p<.0001$)."

Comment: Isn't this a 22% difference?

Authors wrote: "However, consistent with the shift away from replaceable filled cartridge devices to disposable devices, reporting JUUL as the regular/last-used brand declined substantially between 2019 and 2020 ($\chi^2(df=1)=10.90, p=.001$), both as a share of P30D use (from 23.9% to 15.3% of P30D users) and in absolute terms (2.1% to 0.7% of all youth ($\chi^2(df=1)=73.22, p<.0001$))."

Comment: Please note the strikethrough/underlining to indicate my edits. Also, I am unclear about what the authors mean by "as a share of P30D users."

Discussion

Authors wrote (P3): "The declining cigarette smoking during a period of increasing ENDS use an help alleviate concerns that ENDS are a 'gateway' or catalyst to smoking."

Comment: I'd rewrite as follows-- "The decline in cigarette smoking during a period of increased ENDS use might ease concerns that ENDS are a 'gateway' or catalyst to smoking."

Comment (P5): I would spell out 2nd (i.e., second).

Comment (P6): You do not need “US national” in the second sentence because the first sentence indicates that you are referring to the United States. Rather, you can say, “...ENDS sales at the national level...”