

Review of: "Will You Tell? Factors Influencing Peer Reporting of Illicit Substance Use: A Mixed-Methods Study"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article is highly engaging and introduces new insights that could be explored more thoroughly in future research. I have several suggestions for the authors to consider.

ABSTRACT

"The primary reasons for non-reporting included concerns over potential repercussions and apprehension about affecting the peer's feelings." and "The key factor influencing the likelihood of reporting substance use was linked to the perceived closeness of the relationship with the peer." Please provide any specific results (e.g., statistical findings) that demonstrate these as primary or significant factors.

METHODOLOGY

1. For each stage of the recruitment process, please report the number and percentage of those who agreed and declined to participate. Reporting these in percentages would be acceptable.
2. Given the relatively small population size, it may not be necessary to specify the sample size.

RESULTS

1. For Table 2, it might be more interpretable if percentages are compared by row rather than by column. This approach would make it clearer to see, for example, the proportion of males or females willing to report, or comparisons within each religious group, rather than between different religions.
2. In Table 3, several estimates and confidence intervals are listed as 0.00. Please verify whether the lower and upper bounds of the 95% confidence intervals are indeed 0.00 (and check the p-values as well). It's possible that the results include very small decimals close to zero, either positive or negative. In such cases, consider reporting these values as 0.001 or -0.001 to prevent any misinterpretation. The same approach should be applied to variables like gender, religion, and others for consistency and clarity.

DISCUSSION

1. In the first paragraph of the discussion, several questions come to mind that might deepen understanding:
 - Could the feared consequences (e.g., stigma, ostracism, violence) be further examined to determine which specific concerns most influence reporting decisions?
 - How likely are each of these repercussions perceived to be? Are they primarily hypothetical fears, or are they based on actual experiences or known local cases?

- Are there existing support systems or resources that might alleviate these fears and promote disclosure? For instance, would the availability of anonymous reporting affect these choices?
- How might relationships with authority figures (such as parents or teachers) impact the likelihood of disclosure?
- Does the emphasis on privacy and “non-interference” reflect a broader societal perspective on personal boundaries? If so, how might this perspective shape openness in areas beyond drug use?

2. In the statement, “For a few of our respondents, reporting should be taken up as a legal duty or religious obligation, as these peers should be viewed as criminals or sinners who either need the force of the law, community reprimand, or godly intervention. These views mirror their perceptions of substance or illicit drug users,” further elaboration would enhance clarity. The authors could contextualize these motivations within specific social or cultural settings that shape fear of repercussion, as this is an intriguing aspect of the findings. Relevant articles might help expand this discussion: 1 and 2.

3. The authors mention that “Females in our study had a higher rate of disclosure than males. Previous research has reported that females report more in early adolescence than males.[21] Females may place more importance on how they are perceived in a patriarchal society and hold on to traditional or conservative values regarding substance use.[22][23] These values may have played a role in the larger number of females opting for reporting of substance use by peers.” To enhance this section, consider including further discussion on societal expectations, such as the tendency for women to experience greater social shame and empathy, which may contribute to their likelihood of reporting. The suggested article (10.1097/ADT.0000000000000057) may offer insights, especially in terms of societal pressures around substance use, where some boys might view illegal drug use as an assertion of masculinity.

Thank you and good luck!