Reviewer's report

Title: Modeling Predictors of Drug Use among Male Street Laborers in Urban Vietnam

Version: 3 Date: 21 January 2013

Reviewer: Colleen Fisher

Reviewer's report:

While this study addresses an important gap in the literature and contributes to theory development with regard to the IMB model, the quality of writing in the revised manuscript is not significantly improved from the original version. Much of this appears to be due to errors typical of a non-native English speaker which are easily corrected with careful revision. At other points, the writing is simply unclear or uses terms that appear to be incorrect. Specific recommendations for revision are as follows:

Major Compulsory Revisions

None.

Minor Essential Revisions

Introduction

1. It is not until the Findings section (p.9) that the authors note that the Motivation component of the IMB model is made up of three sub-constructs (i.e., attitudes, norms and behavioral intentions); this should be articulated clearly in the Introduction.

2. Although the author(s) have made a case for the need to adapt the IMB model, several things remain unclear. It would be helpful if the recommendations by Aronowitz and Munzert cited [p. 4] were listed for readers who are unfamiliar with them. More importantly, it is still not clear how the authors propose that the model should be modified until later in the paper—yet this should be made clear in the Introduction. Readers should know from the outset how the model will be adapted and what additional constructs will be examined.

3. [p.5] The last paragraph of the Introduction does not make sense since the proposed modifications to the IMB model have not been previously explained. Further, it would be helpful if the components of the construct “psychosocial stress” were articulated more clearly.

4. [p.5] “. . . and less psychosocial stress are less likely to uptake drug”—In addition to the awkward wording here, it appears that the focus is on whether or not respondents began using drugs. Yet, the measures reported appear to assess “level of drug risk.”

Method
5. [p.6] What does it mean that “up to 3-6” venues in each district were selected? Was it less than three in some districts?

6. [p.7] The statement “many of them interviewed many participants at the same time” suggests that respondents were interviewed in groups rather than individually. Please clarify this.

7. [p.8] Content in paragraph 1 of the Data Analysis section is repeated in paragraph 2.

Findings

8. [p.9] It would be more meaningful if the descriptive statistics were reported for each of the three Motivation constructs individually.

9. [p.10] The last sentence of paragraph 1 describing the original IMB model fit should state more clearly that only one of the three fit criteria were met.

10. [p.10] It is not clear what makes the significant relationship between behavioral skills and behavior “notable” since this is the relationship hypothesized by the original IMB model.

11. [p.10] “...were more likely to have behavioral skills necessary to do so...”—it should be clarified that these were “perceived behavioral skills” since self-efficacy rather than actual behavioral skills were assessed.

Discussion

12. [p.11] “Compared with other populations, the addiction proportion of our sample...”—are the terms “drug use” and “addiction” being used synonymously?

13. [p.12] “...close to 60% of the sample of current drug users injected drugs...”—the authors should clarify whether “current drug users” refers only to the 17% of the sample referenced earlier.

14. [p.13] As noted above, the DV is stated as likelihood of “taking up a drug” at the bottom of paragraph 2 when it is described elsewhere as a composite level of drug risk.

15. [p.14] I would suggest revising sentence 3 in paragraph 2 as self-report bias and recall are separate measurement issues.

16. [p.14] The statement about construct validity requires further revision as it is not clear how this was done or what correlations are referenced.

Table 1

17. [Footnote] For the motivation and skills scales, do you mean “semantic differential?”

18. [Footnote] “All of the above variables” should read “All of the above measures”

19. [Footnote] If existing IMB measures have been adapted, a brief explanation of how this was done should be included here or in the manuscript body.

Additionally, there are many places where the language is confusing or otherwise
problematic; some specific examples requiring revision to enhance clarity of the manuscript are:

20. [Abstract] “to account for [predicting?] drug use among the above population”
21. [Abstract] “indicated that the study provides a better fit”—do you mean the original model provides a better fit?
22. [Abstract] “men who are better informed and motivated for HIV prevention are more likely to predict behavioral skills” (the men are not predicting the skills)
23. [p.3] “besides migrants’ most individual characteristics”—what does “most individual” mean?
24. [p.4] “behaviors among migrants have received an enormous attention”
25. [p.5] “we conducted the qualitative research”
26. [p.5] “aimed to explore the living experiences”—do you mean “lived experience?”
27. [p.5] “The purpose of this study . . . than the original version to predict drug use behavior for HIV”—do you mean “HIV-related drug use?”
28. [p.5] “It was hypothesized that male street laborers who have better HIV prevention”—do you mean “HIV prevention information?”
29. [p.6] “. . . aiming to generate as many as possible the venues . . .”
30. [p.6] “. . . participants were screened if they met (1) being male . . . “—do you mean “if they were (1) male?”
31. [p.8] “These items were summed to form a composite score of drug use level”—do you mean “drug risk?”
32. [p.8] “As most single variables and model constructs were relatively of normality”
33. [p.8] “. . . then their fitness was examined which one is better to predict drug use.
34. [p.9] “The an average income . . .”
35. [p.9] “The response rate was high, reaching 95%”—do you mean “representing 95%?”
36. [p.10] “All, but one path from the main construct to sub-constructs”—can the author(s) clarify what is meant by this?
37. [p.12] “The findings of this study seem to support previous data.”—do you mean “support previous research?”
38. [p.12] “. . . scored to the medium level of willingness . . .”—do you mean medium level of motivation?
39. [p.12] “. . . and scored to the ceiling for behavioral skills for HIV prevention”—consider revising “to the ceiling” and “for perceived behavioral skills?”
40. [p.13] “Overall, the current modified model is likely to have a substantial prediction. . .”
41. [p.13] “men doing low-skilled unregistered labors who are more informed and motivated are more likely to result in better behavioral skills which predicted a less likelihood . . .”

42. [p.14] “Further, we measured all, except for some, the model constructs . . .”

43. [p.14] “Interventions in this population . . .”

Discretionary Revisions

1. [p.3] Is the full date necessary for the statistics presented in sentences 3 and 4 (e.g., “by 31 December 2009”)? The year would seem to be sufficient here. Also note run-on sentence 4.

2. [p.7] I would suggest using the term “variables” or “constructs” rather than “elements” in the first sentence of the Measures section. In the second sentence, “items” or questions may be a more appropriate term than “variables.”

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.