Reviewer’s report

Title: Do changes in social and economic factors lead to changes in drinking behavior in young adults?

Version: 2  Date: 15 June 2014

Reviewer: Ahmed Yaogo

Reviewer’s report:

The study reviewed utilizes a sample of 1,260 respondents of the New Zealand longitudinal Survey of Family, Income and Employment (SoFIE) aged 18-24 years at baseline to estimate the impact of changes in both social and economic factors (living arrangement, education/employment status, income, and deprivation) on two different measures of alcohol use (average weekly alcohol consumption and frequency of hazardous drinking sessions). The authors found that:

- Becoming a parent or moving in with a partner or spouse in young adulthood may act as protective factors with regard to alcohol use.
- Moving into a one person household appears to be associated with at least a short-term increase in the average alcohol consumption of those who move into young adulthood.
- Moving into more deprivation appears to be associated with an increase in both average weekly alcohol consumption and the frequency of hazardous drinking.

The authors highlight an important research surrounding alcohol-related problems across young adult development.

1) There is a need to conduct sensitive analyses. Indeed, the analysis could be strengthened by using analyses better suited for assessing long term outcomes with multiple data points such as growth curve modeling, which would allow for assessment of change in alcohol consumption over time as well as social and economic factors.

2) Please provide more detailed statistics comparing study participants to non participants.

3) The authors seem to discuss the results in only one process. It would be contributive to discuss both the fact that alcohol consumption affects individuals’ socioeconomic attainment and the fact that social and economic factors may lead to alcohol consumption, through deleterious exposures and experiences that are associated with disadvantaged social standing. In order for this to better contribute to the literature; it would be useful to at least briefly discuss how one might "disentangle" the contribution of multiple processes.

4) There is also a need to discuss that analyses did not control for some factors known to influence young adulthood alcohol use.

I hope that these suggestions will be helpful and constructive.
Sincerely,
Ahmed Yaogo

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.