Reviewer's report

Title: Substance Use and Related Problems Among U.S. Women Who Identify as Mostly Heterosexual

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Reviewer: Riq Pouget

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript describes analyses of alcohol and drug use indicators by levels of a sexual identity measures that is not widely used. The authors make a convincing case that the "mostly heterosexual" category is more precise in regard to associations with alcohol and drug use for women. They appropriately point out limitations based on the relatively small samples of some categories, and interpret the results in the context of potential stigma, and in relation to other potential social determinants of alcohol and drug use.

Minor essential revisions

The authors should discuss how likely underreporting of lesbian and bisexual categories may have affected the results. Why did so few women report being lesbian? Perhaps some lesbian women reported as mostly heterosexual due to response bias. A more detailed description of the interview methods would provide more context to evaluate potential interview bias.

Confidence intervals would be more informative than the df and p-values given in the results text along with the odds ratios.

Line 212 states that "findings highlight the omission of a large population..." However, these populations have not been omitted from previous work, rather, they have been misclassified as being in one of the 3 more common identity categories.

The implications section refers to "health risk behaviors," but this study presents data only on alcohol and other drug use. The authors should specify which implications should be drawn from this study, and which other specific findings are relevant to draw other conclusions.

Discretionary Revisions

Sentences declaring the novelty of the findings are rarely more than superficially informative. The Discussion could be improved if this was omitted or deemphasized, and the Discussion began instead with the interpretation of the findings.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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