Reviewer's report

**Title:** Cannabis use and other predictors of the onset of daily cigarette use in young men: what matters most? Results from a longitudinal study

**Version:** 1  
**Date:** 28 May 2015

**Reviewer:** Tahir Khan

**Reviewer's report:**

Minor Essential Revisions

Comment 1: Abstract, Methods, Line 10:
Please mention in the abstract from where this population belonged. Since Cannabis use is not a common phenomenon in all countries. Point being, can cannabis use be generalized as a predictor for daily smoking initiation in all populations?

Comment 2: Abstract, Methods, Line 10:
Would be better if age range is given

Comment 3: Background, Para 1, Lines 1-9:
The title deals with ‘Onset of daily cigarette use, however, in these lines Tobacco use is mentioned? Please make it uniform.

Comment 4: Methods, 2nd para, line 1:
Please describe briefly in parenthesis what a Swiss canton means

Comment 5: Methods, religion and religiosity, para 1, line 23-27:
As I understand, the question “What is your religion (even if you do not practice or believe in God)?” points towards in which religion were you born and raised?!
In that case who were labeled as having 'no religion’?

Comment 6: Results, sample characteristics, lines 1-5:
5.1% of these were smoking cigarette 5-6 days a week at baseline (who then proceeded to smoking 7 days a week). Do you think this would have contaminated, or, effected in any way, the comparability between dichotomous categories of OCCATIONAL SMOKERS and DAILY SMOKERS? That is progression to daily smoking?

Comment 7: Table 1: Category ‘Substance use’ No use of cigarettes (previous 12 months) (Ref) vs Occasional (non-daily) cigarette use:
Comparing 18.6% with 81.4%, a huge difference of onset of daily use between those who never smoked (past12 months) and those who occasionally smoked, Do you think this difference can be the result of inclusion of people who smoked 5-6 days a week? To me they are almost 'regular smokers' who just changed
categories from 'No Onset' to 'Onset'

Comment 8: Table 2: Category ‘Substance use’ No use of cigarettes (previous 12 months) (Ref) vs Occasional (non-daily) cigarette use:
How much of this effect can be explained due to the presence of occasional smokers 5-6 days a week in this category? Please discuss in Discussion section.

Discretionary Revisions:
Comment 1: Background, 5th para, Lines 14-18:
Does this mean Religiosity has a 'U' shaped association with substance use?

Comments 2: Methods, para 1, line 5:
Remove 'are'. Additionally, were the participants were previously informed about the 30 Swiss Francs reward/incentive? How a possible selection bias was minimized/controlled?

Comment 3: Discussion:
Is there any data on how many participants, who used Cannabis at baseline and started daily smoking, actually left cannabis use and switched only to daily smoking? If there are some such individuals, how would you comment on this practice?
Can this transition be seen as a possible risk reduction behavior since they might be switching from an illicit to licit substance use?!

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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