Reviewer’s report

Title: Awareness of Energy Drink Intake Guidelines and Associated Consumption Practices: A Cross-Sectional Study

Version: 0 Date: 05 Nov 2015

Reviewer: Jesse Kosiba

Reviewer’s report:

This is my first review of manuscript PUBH-D-15-00695; "Awareness of Energy Drink Intake Guidelines and Associated Consumption Practices: A Cross-Sectional Study".

The current study examined associations between awareness of Australian energy drink guidelines with the frequency and quantity of (1) energy drink consumption, and (2) consumption of energy drinks mixed with alcohol. The study utilized self-reported cross-sectional data obtained using a non-random, online sample from New South Wales, Australia.

Results indicated that a minority of participants reported awareness of the Australian energy drink (ED) guidelines. Awareness was higher among participants reporting higher frequency of ED consumption. Among participants reporting past year ED consumption, accurate reporting of the intake guidelines was associated with greater ED consumption and consumption exceeding the guidelines. Additionally, being aware of the intake guidelines was associated with greater odds of exceeding these guidelines in the average instance of ED consumption, but was not associated with exceeding the guidelines during the average instance of AmED consumption.

This paper presents cross-sectional associations between awareness of ED intake guidelines with ED and AmED consumption. The current study has a number of strengths including being the first to document awareness of ED guidelines among Australians and use of a large participant sample. Findings represent a necessary and important step in better understanding relations between ED/AmED guidelines and actual consumption of both EDs and AmEDs. The study has a number of positive aspects yet a few points might be worth considering.

Primary concerns:

1. The authors note that covariates were chosen for inclusion in the regression models based on previous research indicating associations with ED consumption. However, the authors do not comment on these relationships among the current sample. It might be helpful to characterize how the current sample compares to previous samples with regard to these associations. It would also be helpful to know if the models produced similar outcomes without the covariates.

2. The manuscript was a bit difficult to follow in places. First, a portion of the introduction discusses cigarette/tobacco packaging (lines 73-83). These substances were not analyzed
in the current set of analyses and have their own set of unique use characteristics and history with health advisory statements. Characterizing the research on advisory statements and warning labels more broadly and quickly focusing on alcohol consumption and/or energy drink consumption might result in a more compelling and focused paper. Secondly, the first paragraph of the discussion (lines 276-283) would fit better in an introduction section and notes a number of factors not tested in the current study (i.e., motivation for use, characteristics of health advisory statements). Simply removing this paragraph might result in a more cohesive and persuasive discussion of current findings.

Secondary concerns:

* The authors might consider reporting their a-priori hypotheses. If the authors did not have any such hypotheses, it would help to note this in the introduction.

* The authors might usefully comment on how their sample from New South Wales might generalize (or not) to other areas of Australia.

* Consistent use of labeling would improve continuity throughout the paper. Specifically, changing "i"/"ii" to "1" and "2" (Lines 334-336), would improve consistency with the labeling in the introduction section.

* In the discussion section, the authors label Aim 3 and Aim 4 but do not specify Aim 1 or Aim 2 (Lines 151-155). Including this information would likely improve continuity and readability.

* Authors mention the possibility of low statistical power affecting their results (Lines 220-221), but do not report power calculations for the current sample. It might be helpful to either note this in the limitations section or omit any mention this possibility, if it is not that important.

* Swapping out the term "fortnight" for "two weeks" throughout the paper and tables would improve readability for a broad audience.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**

If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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