Reviewer’s report

Title: Condom use peer norms and self-efficacy as mediators between community engagement and condom use among Chinese men who have sex with men

Version: 1 Date: 13 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Ting Sa

Reviewer's report:

Review Report

In this paper, the authors studied the potential mediating roles of peer norms and self-efficacy in the association between community engagement and condom use. The authors concluded that the condom use peer norms and self-efficacy may be mediators in the pathway between community engagement and condom use, and suggests the importance of peer-based interventions to improve condom use. After reading the paper, I'd like to provide the following comments.

Comments

1. The mean values for the peer norms (3.75, max score is 5 and higher score is better) and self-efficacy (3.98, max score is 5, higher score is better) are quite high comparing to the mean values of community engagement (0.35, max score is 1 and higher score is better) and condom use (2.37, max is 4 and higher score is better) by looking at Table 2. Based on the mean values, they don't show a good support to the conclusion. I would suggest the authors to run the regression model to further verify the relationship.

2. For the four scale values (peer norms, self-efficacy, community engagement, condom use), I would suggest the author to provide more details for these four scale values, including the median, q1, q3 and n counts as well. From the paper, we also don't know for each scale, if there are a lot of missing values and how the authors handle the missing values to calculate the means.

3. Also I would suggest the author to create a new table, list the basic descriptive statistics for these four scales based on the categories in Table 1 so that it may indicate other factor effects.
4. Also for the peer norms and self-efficacy questions, the author should list the questions so that we could see what information they've collected from the participants.

5. In table 1, the sections "Individual monthly income" and "Sexual identity", values are not completed listed in the table.

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 recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

'I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal