Reviewer’s report

Title: Problem drinking among Flemish students: beverage type, early drinking onset and negative personal & social consequences

Version: 0 Date: 03 Aug 2017

Reviewer: R Hingson

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Data from 19,253 Belgian college students were analyzed. Personal negative consequences occurred more frequently among daily beer drinkers. Social negative consequences were higher among both daily drinkers of beer and daily drinkers of spirits. Early drinking onset was associated with both outcomes.

A major weakness in the study is the low response rate. The survey was conducted in 11 universities. Five were excluded because of low response (under 4%). The overall response rate was 22%.

A strength is that the analysis controlled for age, sex, institution, living situation, and use of other substances using negative binomial regression.

Because of the extremely low response rate, even after exclusion of five universities with the lowest response rates, the authors should compare the characteristics of their respondents with those enrolled in the 5 universities and the 11 initially sampled. This very low response rate seriously dampens my enthusiasm for this article.

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?
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Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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