Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of glass shape on alcohol consumption in a naturalistic setting: a feasibility study

Version: 2 Date: 12 March 2015

Reviewer: Lucy Gell

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The authors have substantially revised their original submission in line with reviewer comments and the result is a more coherent paper. I have suggested a number of relatively minor modifications in my comments below.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Demand (paragraph 3): Licensing is not an area of my expertise; however, it is my understanding that licensing conditions can only be imposed on new premises or existing premises where there is a concern raised e.g. by the police. In this case most premises would not be forced to introduce straight glasses and this could create an unfair disadvantage (in terms of competition) for any new pub. Could the authors please clarify this and consider suggesting how the intervention might be implemented for existing licensed premises?

2. Background (paragraph 3): ‘This slowing of drinking rate is likely to have two effects: reduced intoxication and reduced consumption overall.’ Is there any evidence to support these effects you state that you can reference, or are they a common sense/intuitive suggestion? I think you need to be a little clearer about this as it is an important part of the translation from the intervention changing drinking behaviour to actually having an impact on alcohol-related outcomes.

3. Table 1: Is the * in the table linked to the sentence ‘Curved and straight refer to the shape of experimenter supplied glassware…’ If so, please could you make this clearer by including the * at the start of the table footnote.

4. Procedure (paragraph 2): Double check for consistency across the paper. Only a very minor point but here you state that ‘Glasses were delivered to each of the three public houses by the experimenters at the beginning of the first weekend’ but earlier (under Study Design) you mention that glasses were exchanged before the first weekend.

5. Practicality (paragraph 1): Could the authors be more cautious in making the statement ‘The three public houses, as suggested during post-study feedback, found the intervention practical to implement, notwithstanding the challenges encountered.’ One public house clearly did not find the intervention practical to implement – they pulled out in part because of the disruption to normal service. I would like to see this paragraph revised to better reflect that there are practical challenges to implementation.
6. Practicality (paragraph 3): Check consistency of tense throughout the paper. For example in this paragraph you switch between tenses in the following sentence ‘However, if there was a larger number of participating public houses involved, as will be the case in future studies, reporting aggregate amounts of monetary takings may have been possible’.

7. Integration (paragraph 2): Given that some regular patrons expressed dislike at the new glassware, I would consider being more cautious about the statement ‘Moreover, since glassware is replaced regularly (due to breakages etc.) any transition will have negligible impact.’

Discretionary Revisions

8. Abstract (paragraph 4): Consider removing the sentence ‘Customers and staff are willing to engage with public health research in settings where alcohol is consumed, such as public houses.’ Did the customers know that they were engaging in public health research? If so, I would be concerned that this may have influenced their behaviour, but from reading the paper I was under the impression that that they did not know.

9. Background (paragraph 1): Are you referring to the UK government guidelines in the sentence ‘defined as consuming above the recommended daily amounts of alcohol’? If so, I think it would be useful to be explicit here as some of the journal readership will be international.

10. Practicality (paragraph 2): Please consider explicitly in the text that the reduction of 24% was not significant. I think most of the value in estimating the change in monetary takings in this feasibility study is to use the figure to estimate effect size in a sample size calculation for the full trial. It might help to be explicit about this in your reporting.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.