



Patterns of Substance Abuse Among Young Males in Hargeisa of Somaliland: A Mixed-Method Exploration

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1. Round 1

1.1 Reviewer 1

Date: 29 July 2024

Reviewer:

The definition of substance abuse as a "chronic condition characterized by the compulsive use of drugs" might benefit from referencing specific DSM-5 criteria for substance use disorder to provide a more precise clinical definition.

The description of data collection sites (e.g., "cafeterias, parks, teashops, and Khat centers") should be justified. Explain why these specific locations were chosen and how they are representative of the target population.

The sentence "Participants in the 19-21 age category constituting at 41% display notable characteristics that could suggest variations in substance preferences" is vague. Clarify what specific variations in substance preferences were observed and how they compare to other age groups.

The phrase "representing non-formal education and contributing to a diverse range of educational backgrounds" is unclear. Provide more detail on what constitutes "non-formal education" in the context of Somaliland, and discuss how this diversity impacts substance abuse patterns.

The statement "alcohol consumption within this group is relatively minimal" should be expanded with a discussion on how cultural, legal, or economic factors in Somaliland influence these findings. Compare this with regional or global trends if possible.

The exploration of cultural influences on substance use, such as "ideas about masculinity," is intriguing but underdeveloped. Consider providing more detailed narratives or quotes from participants that illustrate these cultural attitudes.

The discussion on perceived disadvantages, such as "adverse health effects," would benefit from a more nuanced analysis that links these perceptions to specific health outcomes observed in the population.

The impact of "political turmoil" on youth substance abuse is mentioned but not fully explored. Provide more evidence or examples that demonstrate the connection between political instability and increased substance use among young people.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

1.2 Reviewer 2

Date: 01 August 2024

Reviewer:

The claim "Limited research has been conducted in Hargeisa Somaliland regarding substance abuse among young people" needs support from more recent or broader literature to strengthen the argument. Consider citing additional sources that underscore the research gap.

The description of the study design as a "triangulation design" could be enhanced by specifying the exact types of qualitative and quantitative methods used. Mention how these methods complement each other to provide a comprehensive understanding.

The sentence "The study aimed for a sample size of 384 participants but 300 participants took part in quantitative analysis" requires further explanation on how the shortfall from 384 to 300 participants might affect the study's statistical power and generalizability.

The sentence "Khat stands out as the most widely used substance" should include a discussion on why Khat is culturally significant in Hargeisa and how its use compares to other substances in terms of social acceptance and health risks.

The assertion that "substance use affects various segments of the youth population" should be supported by data or literature that compares these effects across different socio-economic or educational groups in Hargeisa.

The conclusion that "the study underscores personalized interventions" needs elaboration on what specific types of interventions would be most effective in this context, supported by examples from similar settings.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.