Predicting Attitudes Toward Drugs by Loneliness in University Students in Shiraz

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1.   Round 1

1.1.   Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The abstract should succinctly summarize the key findings, methods, and implications of the study. Currently, it is somewhat verbose and could benefit from conciseness. Consider refining sentences to enhance clarity and readability. For instance, the sentence "Specifically the study aimed to investigate how emotional and social loneliness predict students' attitudes toward substance use utilizing a cross-sectional design" could be shortened to "The study investigated how emotional and social loneliness predict attitudes toward substance use using a cross-sectional design."

The description of the statistical methods (e.g., "Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to explore the relationships between the dependent variable (attitudes toward drugs) and each of the independent variables") could benefit from more detail. Explain why these specific statistical tests were chosen and how they are appropriate for the data.

Provide more detail on the data collection procedures. For instance, how were the questionnaires administered during class sessions and university events? Was there any potential for selection bias or response bias, and how was this mitigated?

The interpretation of findings (e.g., "These findings suggest that higher levels of loneliness particularly emotional loneliness are associated with more negative attitudes toward substance use among university students") could be more nuanced. Discuss alternative explanations and the potential impact of unmeasured confounding variables.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The literature review in the introduction (e.g., "Loneliness a subjective feeling of social disconnection has been identified as a potential contributor to substance abuse impacting mental health and behavioral outcomes") could be expanded to include more recent studies and a broader range of perspectives on the link between loneliness and substance use. Including meta-analyses or systematic reviews could provide a more comprehensive background.

In the methods section, it is mentioned that participants were recruited from various faculties at Shiraz University. It would be helpful to specify which faculties and the criteria used to ensure a representative sample of the student population. This will strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

The operational definitions of key variables (e.g., emotional loneliness, social loneliness) should be clearly stated in the "Measures" section. For example, "Emotional loneliness refers to..." This helps readers understand how these constructs were specifically measured.

The statement on ethical considerations should be expanded to include more specific details about how participant confidentiality was maintained and any potential risks were addressed. Mention the ethical approval process explicitly.

While assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were checked, consider including more detailed results of these tests (e.g., Shapiro-Wilk test statistics, plots) in the supplementary material or appendices to enhance transparency.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.