

SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS AND TINDER USAGE AMONG YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

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Background: Tinder is a popular smartphone application connecting nearby users for social or sexual encounters. Young people are the heaviest users of Tinder. Australians aged 15-29 years have high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and Tinder may facilitate partner change. We compared sexual behaviours of young Australians who had used Tinder in the past year with those who had not.

Methods: Using social media, we recruited 15-29 years olds for an online survey. Participants reported on socio-demographics, drug and alcohol use, general health, sexual behaviours, and technology use. Using logistic regression we identified univariable and multivariable correlates of using Tinder in the past year among participants who had ever had sex. Odds ratios (OR), adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and confidence intervals (CI) with $p < 0.05$ were statistically significant.

Results: Overall 1103 participants completed the survey; 74% had ever had sex ($n=824$). Of these participants, 41% reported using Tinder in the past year ($n=334$). Univariable correlates of using Tinder included reporting a new partner in the past three months (OR=7.2; 95%CI=5.2-9.8), a casual partner in the past year (OR=6.8; 95%CI=5.0-9.3), multiple partners in the past year (OR=7.6; 95%CI=5.5-10.5), and over 10 lifetime partners (OR=2.8; 95%CI=2.0-3.8). Females were less likely to use Tinder than males (OR=0.6; 95%CI=0.4-0.8). Independent correlates of using Tinder included reporting a new partner in the past three months (AOR=2.7; 95%CI=1.63-4.39), multiple partners in the past year (AOR=3.9; 95%CI=1.9-7.3) and reporting over 10 lifetime partners (AOR=2.1; 95%CI=1.1-3.0). Females were less likely to use Tinder than males (AOR=0.6; 95%CI=0.4-0.9). There were no significant differences in condom use or STI testing.

Conclusion: Young people who had used Tinder reported more sexual partners than young people who had not, suggesting Tinder facilitates partner change. These findings highlight the need for sexual health promotion to increase condom use and STI testing among Tinder users.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: Nothing to declare.