

# RADARS<sup>®</sup>

S Y S T E M

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| <b>Title:</b>   | The interaction between gender and severity of prescription drug abuse among college students on ability to correctly identify photos of recently abused drugs |
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## Abstract:

**Background:** Prescription drug abuse among college students is a growing public health problem.

**Objectives:** To explore characteristics of college student non-medical drug users (NMDU) who correctly identify photos of recently abused prescription drugs.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study design was utilized using data from the RADARS<sup>®</sup> System College Survey, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2010 launch (N=1925). Respondents endorsing one or more of seven selected brand name prescription stimulant drug(s) non-medically in the prior 3 months (n=134) were included in analysis. Respondents were considered “correct identifiers” if, when presented with a photo array of common brand name prescription stimulants, they selected the photo of one or more of the prescription stimulant drug(s) they previously reported abusing on the survey. Respondents were asked demographic information, and presented with the DAST-10 screening questionnaire for severity of drug abuse. “Less severe” drug abuse was defined as a DAST-10 $\leq$ 2, and “more severe” drug abuse” a DAST-10 $\geq$ 3. The odds of being a “correct identifier” were modeled using logistic regression with an interaction term of gender and severity of drug abuse.

**Results:** Sixty-three percent of NMDU were found to be “correct identifiers” (n=86). In terms of ability to correctly identify drug photos; there was a significant interactive effect between gender and severity of drug abuse. Females who were “more severe” drug abusers were 6.6 (95%CI 1.2, 35.2) times as likely to be “correct identifiers” than men who were “less severe” drug abusers, when race and age were included in the model. Significant differences were also found in terms of race. Compared to Whites, African Americans were 0.18 (95%CI 0.03, 0.99) times and Asians 0.20 (95%CI 0.05, 0.80) times as likely to be “correct identifiers”, when age and the gender/severity of drug use interaction term were included in the model.

**Conclusions:** Ability to identify recently abused prescription stimulant drugs is linked with more severe drug abuse among female college students.