

Table 2 Results of subgroup analysis of self-medication in university students

| Variable                            | No. studies | No. participants | Prevalence (95% CI), % | Q test    | I <sup>2</sup> , % | P-value |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------|
| <b>Income</b>                       |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| High                                | 19          | 17 532           | 65.0 (44.8–80.9)       | 4976.93   | 99.63              | < 0.001 |
| Middle                              | 62          | 40 225           | 71.8 (66.8–76.3)       | 5523.91   | 98.89              | < 0.001 |
| Low                                 | 8           | 3 181            | 67.2 (46.5–82.9)       | 1 006.87  | 99.30              | < 0.001 |
| <b>Region</b>                       |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| Asia                                | 54          | 29 371           | 71.7 (66.6–76.4)       | 4 082.90  | 98.70              | < 0.001 |
| Europe                              | 7           | 5063             | 55.8 (28–80.4)         | 1 485.80  | 99.59              | < 0.001 |
| Americas                            | 13          | 18 183           | 65 (38.8–84.5)         | 4 901.85  | 99.75              | < 0.001 |
| Africa                              | 14          | 8 201            | 71.6 (56.7–83.0)       | 2 050.22  | 99.36              | < 0.001 |
| Oceania                             | 1           | 120              | 91.7 (85.2–95.5)       | –         | –                  | –       |
| <b>Sample size</b>                  |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| ≤ 400                               | 37          | 9 104            | 61.9 (55.1–68.3)       | 2 752.36  | 98.69              | < 0.001 |
| > 400                               | 52          | 51 834           | 75.3 (66.7–82.2)       | 11 739.21 | 99.56              | < 0.001 |
| <b>Quality of study</b>             |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| High (16–22)                        | 52          | 40 864           | 68.7 (60.2–76)         | 10 794.22 | 99.52              | < 0.001 |
| Medium (7–15)                       | 28          | 16 359           | 72.3 (63–80)           | 2 780.98  | 99.02              | < 0.001 |
| Low (1–6)                           | 9           | 3 715            | 71.2 (58.7–81.1)       | 481.24    | 98.33              | < 0.001 |
| <b>Year of publication</b>          |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| 1995–2001                           | 2           | 1 034            | 91.7 (85.4–95.5)       | 8.18      | 87.77              | < 0.001 |
| 2002–2006                           | 4           | 10 656           | 30.2 (8.9–65.6)        | 582.55    | 99.48              | < 0.001 |
| 2007–2011                           | 20          | 16 868           | 68 (56.4–77.7)         | 2 894.05  | 99.33              | < 0.001 |
| 2012–2017                           | 63          | 32 380           | 71.8 (66.66–76.4)      | 5 061.25  | 98.77              | < 0.001 |
| <b>Type of students<sup>a</sup></b> |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| Medical                             | 46          | 15 497           | 97.2 (95.4–98.3)       | 1 802.02  | 97.5               | < 0.001 |
| Non-medical                         | 25          | 23 799           | 44.7 (29.7–60.7)       | 8 431.75  | 99.71              | < 0.001 |
| <b>Sex<sup>b</sup></b>              |             |                  |                        |           |                    |         |
| Female                              | 23          | 9 392            | 76.6 (65.0–85.2)       | 1 956.78  | 98.87              | < 0.001 |
| Male                                | 23          | 7 021            | 66.9 (56.4–75.9)       | 1 177.13  | 98.13              | < 0.001 |

<sup>a</sup>The faculty of the students was not given in 18 studies.

<sup>b</sup>The sex of the students was not given in 43 studies.