Reviewer's report

Title: Socioeconomic status, urbanization and risk behaviours in Mexican youth: an analysis of 3 cross-sectional surveys

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Reviewer: Danielle Ompad

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BMC Public Health
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Title: Socioeconomic status, urbanization and risk behaviours in Mexican youth: an analysis of 3 cross-sectional surveys

Summary:
The authors explore the relation between locality size, SES and risk behaviors among Mexican youth. Locality size was associated with tobacco and alcohol consumption for all SES groups. For condom use, locality size was associated with odds of condom use among the most impoverished youth in urban localities. This is a very interesting paper.

Comments:
Major Compulsory Revisions

1. There is some sense on p5 that rural is “bad” and urban is “good.” But as your results, and those of others, have shown the relation is more complex.

2. You make the point the urbanization, as the process of increasing the urban share of the total populations, is an important focus as a potential exposure. However, you measure are measuring urbanicity – that is, the extent to which a place is currently urban. Despite the issue with terminology, the analysis is valuable.

3. More detail on the household inclusion criteria is needed.

4. More detail on the components of the poverty index is needed, since it is one of your main variables.

5. Your definitions of locality are based on population size. Are these the standard definitions for the census? If so, please provide a reference. If not, why are you not also considering area (i.e., population density) rather than just population size.

6. Did you need to use sampling weights for the analyses?

7. The third paragraph on p10 is not helpful. Draw parallels between studies in the discussion if helpful.

8. Figure 2 replicates table 2. Please remove.
9. You make the point that married individuals are less likely to use condoms with comment on p13. I do not think you are implying that this would be risky behavior, but you should make that explicit.

10. I am not sure what you mean on p14 when you say, “However, it should be noted that adolescents’ localities are clearly not influenced by behaviors in general.” I think you are saying that adolescents’ behaviors do not shape their communities. However, previous research suggests otherwise. Please clarify what you mean here.

11. The findings are interesting, but the manuscript would be stronger if you could comment more on the potential mechanisms for the associations.

Minor Essential Revisions

12. Some help is needed with English grammar.

13. It is unclear in the background (p6) whether there is no universal definition of urban in Mexico or worldwide. There should be a reference either way.

14. In the background (p6), you provide a definition for rural localities in Mexico, but not for others.

15. Table 1 is overwhelming because there are so many numbers. Consider presenting the demographics and risk behaviors in separate tables.

Discretionary Revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests