Reviewer's report

Title: How Adolescents Perceive Their Communities: A Qualitative Study That Explores the Relationship Between Health and the Physical Environment

Version: 2 Date: 16 February 2014

Reviewer: Michael J Mann

Reviewer's report:

This article was exceptionally well-written and very interesting. I only have two suggestions for the authors to consider that might help strengthen this manuscript.

First, I'm not sure whether this is an article about health among urban adolescents or health among urban-poor adolescents. Because you chose not to describe how participants were selected for the study or to provide any description beyond age, gender, and location, it is hard to determine exactly whose observations are being described. I suggest you consider including a brief description of how participants were selected and any other characteristics that might help us better understand whose observations/thoughts we are reading about.

Second, describing "urban" as a broad descriptor seems problematic. The health outcomes/life experiences for urban poor, middle class, and wealthy are quite different from one another. Additionally, there is literature that suggests some urban environments contribute quite substantially to higher levels of quality of life, productivity, and creativity than do rural environments. However, no positive outcomes associated with urban living were listed as possibilities in your paper. Again, this may because of an unstated focus on the urban poor. In this case, I suggest you describe/cite literature related to the full range of health possibilities among urban dwellers and describe your participants in a manner that lets the reader understand which portion(s) of that spectrum participated in your study.

Again, this study was very interesting and worthwhile. I hope the authors find the suggestions above help strengthen the manuscript. However, I have identified these as discretionary suggestions that can be ignored if the author's deem them unhelpful.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare I have no competing interests.