Reviewer's report

Title: Early sexual initiation, a risk factor of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection and unwanted pregnancy among university student in China

Version: 1 Date: 21 October 2008

Reviewer: Audrey Pettifor

Reviewer's report:

Abstract: Background. please change word “trend’ as this is cross sectional data so trends cannot be established

Intro

Sex rates? Do the authors mean the proportion of people who have ever had sex?

English language needs a lot of work. many grammatical and language errors. Needs professional editing for language. It is very difficult to follow the train of thought of the paper due to the language.

Methods

The description of participants needs to be clarified. it is hard to follow as currently written.

Please define sexually active- ever had sex or something else?

Can the authors clarify what this means “In this paper, those male sexually active students who responded to the item for the school stage when they initiated their first sex, were included in the analysis;” What does ‘school stage mean” they only included male students who reported having had sex in high school or prior to university? How was the question asked to assess this? Why did so few participants answer this question?

Can the authors provide more information on sampling of students? How was this done? How were participants recruited and where were interviews conducted and by whom?

Was informed consent obtained?

Please clarify “About three fourth of sexually active males among BHS and HS initiators were aged over 19- year- old”. Do the authors mean they were currently over 19 or 19 at time of sexual debut? What is the age range of all participants, if in university one would imagine that most are 19 or older?

The authors need to work on presenting their bivariate results more clearly, as currently written it is difficult to follow. The authors also should perhaps focus
more on their multivariable results than the unadjusted/2x2 results. Too many p-values are presented in the text.

While the results of early debut are rather striking, the significance of these results are lost due to the difficulty in following the flow of the paper and poor language. With a more organized structure and flow of the paper based on a clear outline and editing for English language the paper could be significantly improved.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests