Reviewer's report

Title: Sexual behaviors and their correlates among young people in Mauritius: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 2 May 2007

Reviewer: Audrey Pettifor

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a well-written manuscript on the sexual behaviors of young people in Mauritius and factors associated with sexual activity and condom use. The study was well planned and the methodology strong. The study instrument was developed and validated using a rigorous process. The authors should be commended for their attempt to measure the effect of reporting bias on sexual behaviors.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
None

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

More information on how the multivariate models were built would be useful. For example, was effect modification measured? Were all the variable that went into the final model presented or was their any attempt to remove variables from the model that did not appear to be significant (ie, did you attempt to attain a more parsimonious model?).

It is curious that the analysis for ever having had sex was stratified by gender yet the analysis for condom use was not. One would hypothesize that the factors associated with condom use may be very different for men versus women? It would be useful to explain more on why this was or was not done. If one model was kept for statistical power reasons, did the authors examine effect modification by gender?

The prevalence of ever having had sex seems particularly low. It might be useful to present this by age group, one would imagine it would be much higher in the 20-24 year age group? The authors cite DHS data showing that 38% of men and 30% of women in SAA reported sex in the past year. This is not the same as ever having had sex it would seem. Given that the median age of first sex in most countries in SSA is around 17-18 (see Wellings K Lancet 06), it would seem that reported sexual activity is much, much lower than in other countries, not on par. Is there any idea why this is?

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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

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 that I have no competing interests