Reviewer's report

Title: The Epidemiology of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections in African, Caribbean and Black Men in Toronto, Canada

Version: 2 Date: 21 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Research Square

Reviewer's report:

"STATISTICAL REVIEWER ASSESSMENT:

Is the study design appropriate for the research question (considering whether the analyzed population accurately reflects the design and whether you see any problems with control/comparison groups, e.g., likely confounders)?
Yes - overall design, population, and control groups are appropriate

Are methodologies adequate and well implemented (considering whether assumptions are addressed and whether analyses are robust)?
Yes - methodologies are adequate and well implemented, assumptions are addressed, analysis is robust

Are the analyses adequately communicated (considering whether reporting details are adequate and whether figures and tables are well labeled and described)?
No - there are minor issues

Does the interpretation accurately reflect the analyses without overstatement (considering whether limitations/bias are acknowledged and whether accurate descriptors, e.g., 'significant', are used)?
No - there are minor issues

Could an appropriately REVISED version of this work represent a statistically sound contribution?
Yes - current version has sound statistics

STATISTICAL REVIEWER COMMENTS:

I think the paper is much improved. There are some things that still need to be addressed: 1) There are still some inconsistencies in language that should be addressed. For example, the authors use ""HIV-positive and non-infected"" to describe HIV serostatus, but should use the conventional terminology in HIV prevention--either ""HIV positive and HIV negative"" or the preferred terminology ""HIV infected and HIV uninfected"". Whichever the authors chose, be consistent across the entire manuscript. 2) Also, the authors use the word predictors which
implies longitudinal models, since you cannot ""predict"" with cross sectional data. So, for example, the authors say ""Logistic regression assessed past STIs as predictors of HIV infection."" The correct way to say this is ""Logistic regression models were constructed to assess whether or not history of STIs are associated with current HIV serostatus."" 3) in the abstract and the body of the paper, need to operationalize ""high risk anal"" -- what does that mean? Do you mean ""engaging in condomless anal sex""? 4) the results presented in the abstract should follow a logical order... for example, when listing prevalence estimates, you start with HIV, then some STIs, then anal sex, then more STIs -- this looks messy. Report the data in groups: HIV, all STIs, anal sex, etc. 5) need to change some of the language throughout. So, for example, this sentence (should be corrected throughout the paper) ""There were increased odds of HIV infection for men with histories of syphilis (OR=6.48, p<.01), genital warts (OR = 4.32, p<.01) or genital ulcers (OR = 21.3, p<.01)."" This would be better stated as ""MSM with a history of syphilis infection (OR=6.48, 95%CI: XX,XX), genital warts (OR = 4.32, 95%CI: XX,XX) or genital ulcers (OR = 21.3, 95%CI: XX,XX) had an increased odds of HIV infection."" ***need to report 95% confidence intervals. 6) I am not sure that highlighting their finding that ""Self-reported history of having an STI with a name that could not be recalled (i.e. ""Other STI") was a stronger predictor of HIV infection for MSW than for MSM"" really adds much to the paper. What does this mean for intervention development or HIV prevention approaches? 7) Table 4, remove the R-squared. It generally is not reported unless there is a specific reason to do so.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

See my comments detailed above. This revised analysis section is much much better -- nothing with that needs to be changed."

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

This reviewer has been recruited by a partner organization, Research Square. Reviewers with declared or apparent competing interests are not utilized for these reviews. This reviewer has agreed to publication of their comments online under a Creative Commons Attribution License attributed to Research Square and was paid a small honorarium for completing the review within a specified timeframe. Honoraria for reviews such as this are paid regardless of the reviewer recommendation.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments
which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal