Reviewer’s report

Title: Reported oral and anal sex among adolescents and adults reporting heterosexual sex in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review

Version: 0 Date: 15 Jun 2018

Reviewer: Zoe Duby

Reviewer's report:

Specific comments:

Page 2, Line 5: sub-Saharan Africa is not a country - this sentence needs to be rephrased

Page 3, line 4: 'health problems' - sounds informal and is imprecise and stigmatising - needs to be rephrased

Page 3, line 7: not being regarded as normal - by whom - statement needs to be qualified

Page 3, line 11: 'contraception' would not be needed for anal or oral sex - barrier methods would be used for HIV prevention

Page 3, line 25: "protection" against what? - language is outdated and needs to be rephrased

Page 4, line 2: "unprotected" - language is outdated considering HIV prevention options such as PrEP and microbicides - language needs to be more specific - talk about "condomless"

Page 4, line 23: "high-risk populations: - preferable to use other language that is less stigmatising

Page 4, line 26: "drug addicts" - language is stigmatising and moralising - refer to "people who use drugs"

Page 4, line 39: I haven't read further yet - but do you elaborate on how they were defined / categorised as "heterosexual" ?

Page 4, line 45: "penetrative anal sex" does not specify what the anus is being penetrated with - be more specific - "penile-anal penetrative" ?

Page 9, line 7: Was the oral sex reporting investigated? Was "oral sex" defined specifically as being oro-genital? i.e. oro-vaginal, oro-anal, or oro-penile? Or just "oral"

Page 14, line 21: irregular word and punctuation spacing - pay attention to this throughout the paper

Page 14, line 36: same comment above regarding "unprotected" - does this mean "condomless"?
Page 15, line 2: "performing anal sex" - needs to be rephrased

Page 15, line 9: incorrect capitalisation. This paragraph also has incorrect and inconsistent use of semi-colons

Page 17, line 1: method should be plural

Page 17, line 4: "illicit drug use" - again moralising and judgemental language - what does "illicit" mean and how is it defined?

Overall comments:

This is an important piece of work - and this kind of evidence is urgently needed to put anal sex more on the agenda for HIV & STI prevention in the SSA region.

Pay attention to the language and terminology used throughout the paper. How were terms defined in the studies - and how does this reflect the categorisation of data for this systematic review?

Need to pay heed to non-barrier method based HIV prevention technologies

**Level of interest**

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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