Reviewer’s report

Title: Predictors of primary and secondary sexual abstinence among never-married youth in urban poor Accra, Ghana

Version: 0 Date: 06 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Amelia Odo

Reviewer's report:

Background

The study examined factors that predict primary and secondary sexual abstinence among never-married youth in urban poor Ghana

1. The background is not clear on why this study is needed.

2. The first sentence of the background (page 4, line 69-70) is a strong statement that needs to be supported by an authority.

3. The literature review section should be summarized and integrated into the background section in order to fit in to the journal format.

Methods

1. The selection of households and individuals from the households should be properly described. As it is, it is not clear how many households per community and how many individuals per household.

2. Under ethical consideration, why this sentence "For the respondents who were below 18 years, consent was further obtained from parents and caregivers" when it had already been mentioned that only youth 20-24 years were included in the study?

3. Assigning numbers to categorical variables maybe just for easy coding and should not be in the text. This run across the measurement of variables' section. This section should also be summarized, if at all these details are needed.

4. Statistical tools used are appropriate

Results

1. The characteristics of the sample is not what was presented first. Lines 318-328 should be presented first before the sexual status.

2. Line 321, is not clear; after males (24.3%).
Discussion

1. 1st, 2nd and 6th paragraphs did not compare the findings presented with other previous studies. The implications were mentioned but should not stop at that.

2. Each paragraph should present a finding, interpretation of the find, it's implications and what other related studies has as their findings.

Conclusion

1. Separate conclusion and implications for abstinence programmes

2. What is this "abstinence programme"? It is not clear what it entails. Moreover, it was not conceptualized in the background.

3. The limitation is clear but the strength of the study is weak.

References

1. Many of the references are old

2. List of references is 51 while in-text citation is 50. Cross check all the references with the corresponding in-text citation

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
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.

I declare that I have no competing interests

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.