Reviewer’s report

Title: Latin American immigrants have limited access to health insurance in Japan: a cross sectional study

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Reviewer: Arjumand Siddiqi

Reviewer’s report:

This study uses a clear and, I believe, robust methodology to investigate the health insurance profile of Latin American immigrants in Japan. The mixed methods used by the authors to explore their research questions are quite novel and, in this way, make a contribution to the broader literature regarding health insurance among immigrants. I have two main (and related) concerns, which I believe the authors may be able to address more explicitly: 1) a priori, why did the authors expect the health insurance profile of Latin American immigrants to look different than other immigrant groups in Japan? 2) What is the broader/international relevance of this paper? I believe the paper would be much stronger if the authors could provide some more ‘generalizable’ ways in which their results are appealing to an international readership.

Abstract:

In the results section, I think it would be more powerful to compare the prevalence found with that of other immigrant groups.

Background:

It is unclear why the authors expect the proportion of Latin American immigrants without health insurance to be different than that of any other immigrant group.

It is worth saying what the absolute number and proportion of Latin American immigrants is in Japan.

Methods:

Overall, I find the methods very compelling.

The target population (Nagahama City) made me wonder whether there are other social groups in which uninsurance rates are high and in which Latin American immigrants also fall…for example, manual laborers.

Page 8/9: did respondents report whether or not they had received health care?

Page 11: The sentence “most uninsured respondents.....” is a bit confusing, particularly in light of the finding that many people were not insured because they didn’t know about insurance. This seems inconsistent, and deserves clarification or further exploration/explanation.

Discussion: Some of the discussion seems to fit better in the introduction, as part of the premise for the study itself. For example, page 13 “Companies are in part responsible....” ....the idea that companies spare health insurance costs seems
like a reason to explore this research question (or is part of the research question itself), and the findings that, in fact, immigrants tend to have short contracts supports this hypothesis.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests