Reviewer's report

Title: Employment and Financial Burden of Families with Preschool Children Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Urban China

Date: 27 September 2014

Reviewer: Jia Wang

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions#
1. Given the selective locations chosen out of 34 Chinese provinces for the studies, I would suggest to refrain the title from wording that might suggest general applicability of the findings described.

2. With regard to Abstract, it is too extreme to claim that “No investigation has been carried out in China.” And this statement is conflicted with the first sentence of 3rd Paragraph Background section “While family care studies of ASD patients have been carried out in many countries, there is little information or little study that has been conducted in China. Recently autism has drawn special increased awareness in China”.

3. The 3rd paragraph of the Background: Instead of website, please use published books or literatures as references.

4. Methods Subjects, line 9: Which common chromosomal diseases were excluded by the Chromosome morphology? Be specifying.

5. Methods Subjects: Please give the detail inclusion criteria of OD group.

6. Methods Measures: “In order to control for potential confounding, family socioeconomic status of parents, family medical history and demographic information were also collected.” The meaning of this sentences is not clear.

7. Results, 2nd paragraph: “Majority of the ASD families (264/459=57.5%) families reported in the past year that childcare problem affected their jobs, of which 240 families (52.3%) had quit a job or not taken a job, and 24 (5.2%) had changed a job.” 57.5% should be used instead of majority. And please correct typo.

8. Table 4: Logistic regression analysis was been done by annual household income. Should annual household income be reported expected income or reported actual income? Please specify. The same modification can be done for Results paragraph 7.

Minor Essential Revisions#
1. Table 3: Why reported expected income is missing in all families & Families with TD child group?

2. Given Chinese health care expenditures associated with autism spectrum data published, I would strongly suggest to cite these literatures as references, such
as “Parent-reported health care expenditures associated with autism spectrum disorders in Heilongjiang province, China. BMC Health Serv Res.”

Discretionary Revisions#
1. Methods Subjects: whether the ADI-R and ADOS were used in the diagnosis of ASD? Please clarify.
2. It would be nice to discuss direct economic burden, not just indirect economic burden, in the context of future perspectives.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests