Reviewer's report

Title: Inputs for universal health coverage: a methodological contribution to finding proxy indicators for financial hardship due to health expenditure

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Reviewer: Anna Bettina Haidich

Reviewer's report:

This was an interesting paper investigating the association of national level indicators on the risk of financial hardship. Well defined concepts of financial burden were used such as catastrophic health expenditure from out-of-pocket payments (OOP) and impoverishment due to OOP. Moreover, different thresholds were used for the first outcome and different poverty lines for the second one and were appropriately referenced. Moreover, generalized linear mixed models were rightly used for the analysis, that allows for a much more rigorous examination of national level factors and their influence on the financial burden while simultaneously examining the effects of household level factors.

Some minor comments follow:

1. Maybe a reference of how the Gini coefficient is calculated should be added with a small description of the meaning of its values, such as the closer it is to one, the greater the household expenditure inequality between countries.

2. Page 6 line 4 the sentence “the choice …” should start with capital letter “The choice …”

3. The legend of Table 5 should give a better explanation than just regression model’s results. Are these the beta-coefficients or the odds ratios? Since the results can be interpreted as logistic regression as mentioned in the text, then the odds ratios together with the 95% confidence intervals should be given instead.

4. In Appendix Table 1, in terms of replicability the coefficients of Spearman correlations together with their p-values are preferred rather than the +/- sign and the asterisks.

5. In terms of model diagnostics as mentioned in the last paragraph of the results, it would be nice to show these models in the appendix for the reader to see.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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