Reviewer’s report

Title: Impact of health insurance status among migrants from sub-Saharan Africa on access to health care and HIV testing in Germany: a participatory cross-sectional survey

Version: 0 Date: 18 Jan 2018

Reviewer: Howard Li

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to review the manuscript "Impact of health insurance status among migrants from sub-Saharan Africa on access to health care and HIV testing in Germany: a participatory cross-sectional survey". This study presents large data and has a potential to contribute to the literature. However, the manuscript still needs a lot of works. I have some concerns that need to be addressed by the authors.

1. Please be careful of using specific terms correctly, such as Chi-square test.

2. The background needs to be improved substantially and the authors should refine their research questions as well.

3. It is interesting that the authors claimed to use a participatory study design. However, the authors should describe what types of data they have collected through a participatory study; how they analyze these different types of data; and how they use they in the discussion.

4. It is important to describe how the questionnaire was developed and modified. Was there any qualitative work?

5. In page 5, line 40-41, it is not clear "(HIC vs. MTV or HIC and HIC vs. MTV or NI together)"?

6. The authors should carefully choose their reference group. For example, HIC should be better used as a reference group and coded as 1.

7. It seems that the authors regarded "having health insurance" as being equal to "access to health care". It is problematic.
8. Page 10, line 13, "(p>0.001; adjusted OR=3.1; 95%-KI: 1.85-5.3)" looks problematic.

9. "Last physician or hospital visit within the last year" should be better coded as 1.

10. The discussion needs improvement substantially and think about major themes.

11. "access to health care" is actually more about access to health insurance.

12. Please pay attention to the English writing problems, such as "a regular health insurance was either not long enough or the law was not adhered to".

13. What are the difference between "access to health care" and "utilization of services"?

14. Page 13, line 41-45, "we observed that …". This observation is not mentioned in the above data analysis and suddenly jumps out.

15. It is problematic to claim that "This might indicate that socio-demographical factors play a bigger role in testing behaviour than assumed."

16. It is not clear to say "Within all models we adjusted for mode of administration, which showed no impact."

17. It is problematic to claim "The absence of health insurance increased the odds of no contact to the healthcare system in the past year more than any other socio-demographic characteristic"
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

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If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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