Author’s response to reviews

Title: Challenges and Opportunities towards the road of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Nepal: a systematic review

Authors:
Chhabi Ranabhat (chhabir@gmail.com)
Kim Bae (kimcb@yonsei.ac.kr)
Ajanta Singh (ajanta2034@hotmail.com)
Dev Acharaya (drabmc@gmail.com)
Krishna Pathak (krishnopathak@gmail.com)
Basundhara Sharma (basundharasharma@gmail.com)
Shiva Mishra (shivarajmishra@gmail.com)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor/Editor-in-Chief,

We have submitted the revision of manuscript entitled on "Challenges and Opportunities for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Nepal: a scoping review".

We provide sincere thanks to editor-in-chief and all reviewers to upgrade our manuscript providing their critical evaluation report.

As per evaluation reports of two reviewers, we need to address as major revision and acceptance from one reviewer. In this line, we included more co-authors who are experienced in this area. Now as suggested by reviewer, we made advance our manuscript considering health related SDG goal and measuring index. The revised part is in red text.

Another comment was related to English language. We made simple but clearly understanding each sentence with the support of native English Prof. Joseph Dieleman University of Washington. Some syntax and spelling may not matching due to American style (who prefer British one). It will not be big concern.
We realized that EIC and reviewer provided very constructive comments to encourage this types of research in future too. Now, this manuscript is their property too. If they have more contribution by page, paragraph and line, we will happy to incorporate during proof reading time too.

Again we really appreciate to all editorial team for AOPH providing their valuable time to our manuscript.

Chhabi Ranabhat and authors team

Point by point response from each reviewer:

Reviewer #1:

Questions related to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) are important and deserve close attention as access to adequate and affordable health services is fundamental to thriving individuals/communities/societies. The authors of this study propose to examine the challenges associated with the implementation of a universal coverage in Nepal through a literature review. The article provide a good background about what UHC entails, a brief (too brief) overview of countries around the world with universal coverage followed by an analysis of the situation of Nepal. The Background section as such is helpful although it could go deeper in its analysis.

Response: Thank you for your valuable time to examine our manuscript and positive and encouraging comments. We have added more specific and updated description of universal health coverage in SDG scenario.

The Methodology section however should be expanded for sure. For instance, more should be said about the inclusion and exclusion criteria. What tools were used for analysis and what keywords were used. I am not sure Pub Med and Google Scholar are sufficient instruments for a literature review of this type. What is striking/arresting/capturing is the number of articles identified (n=1912) vs. the number of articles included (n=22). The authors should describe how articles were excluded.

Methodologically the paper needs to be strengthened - maybe seeking expertise in this type of review might help.
Response: We got the important comments from you which makes the manuscript more standard. Obviously, the searching browsers were, Google, Google Scholar, Pubmed, HINARI.

We have added the inclusion and exclusion criteria to confirm the literature.

The Results section should integrate more carefully the four tables which subsequently will provide the basis for a more robust/strong/vigorous Discussion section.

Response: The results section has been elaborated re-categorized according to the updated concept in SDG and WHO and WB monitoring report 2017.

In the Discussion section the authors should expand their analysis on Nepal. Why discuss other countries whereas the focus of the paper is Nepal?

Also, the paper needs careful editing (syntax, etc.).

Response: We have elaborated and analyzed the discussion section in Nepalese context but scenario of another countries could be the good references and UHC situation would be reference like similar countries (Both ways)

My recommendation would be to ask the authors to revise extensively the paper and resubmit.

Reviewer #2:

Very nicely written article and very apt for the present time.

Few observations:

1. In results section the findings need to be elaborated.

Response: Thank you for your incredible time to check our manuscript we want to provide sincere thanks to you. We have elaborated the results section as your recommendation.

2. In result section, some typographical errors and English language errors need to be addressed.

Response: We carefully reviewed and revised as suggested by you.
Reviewer #3:

Dear Authors,

I have read with interest your narrative review on the challenges and opportunities for Universal Health Coverage in Nepal as my personal knowledge of the situation of the Health System in your country is very limited.

Reading your article, it seems that Nepal is in a shifting point to be able to work through the challenges in order to achieve Universal Health Coverage, led by the alignment of national policies with the goals of sustainable development proposed by the UN in the area of health. Although some of the challenges identified by you seem of a certain relevance, a decisive contribution in the form of a high-level political commitment, the government stewardship and the contributions of experts and stakeholders would be able to advance in the path towards Universal Health Coverage in Nepal in the next times.

As for my comments on the manuscript, as on its present state, it lacks some major revisions focused mostly in three areas: a) quality of written English (please, see several comments included in the description of minor issues at the end); b) methods; c) discussion; and d) figure design and conformance with PRISMA standards.

Response: we really hats off for your valuable time and input to make advance for this manuscript and approach of examining the manuscript microscopically. You are one of the best reviewers in my paper publication. We advanced the English writing as you recommended in minor section. We simplified the methodology, arranged in discussion section.

Major comments:

01-- The manuscript would greatly benefit for the copy-editing of an English native speaker (whenever possible). Please, see several comments included in the description of minor issues below).

Response: We completed the copy editing by native research professor Prof Joseph Dieleman to adjust the English writing.

02-- Methods section should include the search strategy for each of the search engines used in the search (including the search syntax used as supplementary materials in order to be able to reproduce the search results whenever necessary).
Response: we described in details with searching syntax and sorting criteria for each search engine.

03-- Although some inclusion criteria are mentioned in the methodology, I would suggest commenting on the main keywords and thematic areas targeted by the search, including time periods, etc. and on the exclusion criteria specified in the PRISMA flow diagram within the text to improve the readability and the understandability of the methodology and the reproducibility of the study.

Response: We have added the inclusion and exclusion criteria and described briefly.

04-- Methods section should also provide an explanation on the process of revision of the articles and sources retrieved by the search, such as who conducted the review; if there was peer-review or triangulation of the sources, how was established the topic classification (as used in the result tables), what was the ruling decision for discarding an article in case of discrepancy between reviewers, etc. (For further clarification, please see the Archives of Public Health submission guidelines for Systematic Reviews available at: https://archpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/systematic-review)

Response: We have followed the guideline as you suggested

05-- PRISMA flow diagram design should be re-done to conform with the PRISMA standards (please see PRISMA flow diagram examples available at http://prisma-statement.org/prismastatement/flowdiagram.aspx)

You also have some tools to generate a standard PRISMA flow diagram available online at http://prisma.thetacollaborative.ca/

Response: Thank you for suggestion, we updated as you recommended.

06-- While Discussion currently focuses on the scope, similitudes and differences of the challenges identified by the authors to the progression of the Universal Health Coverage in Nepal compared with other countries, it should also comment addressing the potential limitations of the study regarding both the results and the description of the methods used.
Response: The challenges of UHC found similar to other countries too. It is important to jointly solve the problems and successfully implementation of health interventions. In other words, these are the lesson learns for similar countries.

Minor comments:

07-- I would suggest to provide a comprehensive list of the abbreviations used in the manuscript and their meaning or at least introduce each abbreviation along with the mention of the full concept at which is referred.

Response: Thank you we added all abbreviation list.

08-- I would suggest including the term "Nepal" and "Health Insurance", as keywords of the manuscript for indexing as it is included in the MeSH (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/?term=Nepal | https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/68007348)

Response: We added those terms in key words from MeSH.

09-- In the Background section; page 3, line 9, the sentence "Universal Health Coverage should implement through legislation (...)" should read "Universal Health Coverage should be implemented through (...)."

Response: We changed it.

10-- In the Background section; page 3, line 11, please consider substituting the sentence by "All people can use the health promotion, prevention, assistance, rehabilitation and palliative care services they need, (...)"

Response: we updated it.

11-- In the Background section; page 3, line 30, please clarify in which standard definition is UHC defined as the legislative provision of universal health insurance and > 90% coverage of skill birth attendance.

12-- In the Background section; page 3, line 39, please review and correct the sentence "Germany is the first country to start UHC by sickness fund and after 2010, few countries have started as well."

Response: We updated.

13-- In the Background section; page 3, line 51, please consider introducing "between" in the sentence "There is gross inequality of health status between developing and developed countries, (...)

Response: We added it.

14-- In the Background section; page 4, line 1, please consider rephrasing the sentence commencing by "For the high (...)" by "There are yet many challenges for delivering high-quality medical services without financial burden to the entire population."

Response: We changed it.

15-- In the Background section; page 4, line 5, please consider substituting "2/3rd population" by "two-thirds of the population".

Response: We changed it

16-- In the Background section; page 4, line 9, please substitute "owing" by "due to expensive ("

Response: We replaced it.

17-- In the Background section; page 4, line 14, please correct the verb tense "(\ldots) all these initiatives were piloted (...)"


Response: we added the verb.

18-- In the Background section; page 4, line 21, please correct the term "immerging diseases" by "emerging diseases".

Response: We corrected it.

19-- In the Background section; page 4, line 24, please correct the sentence "After the people's movement in 2006 (...)" to increase readability. I would suggest to rephrase it as "The People's Movement, in 2006, set the popular expectation of quality health services accessible to everyone and guaranteed by the Constitution."

Response: we changed the sentence as you recommended.

20-- In the Background section; page 4, line 29, please consider rephrasing the sentence "Nepal is struggling (...)" to remove reiterations and improve readability.

Response: We updated it.

21-- In the Background section; page 4, line 33, please provide information on WHEN it will be extended the social insurance scheme in the other 22 districts.

Response: We added the time "up to the end of 2018."

22-- In the Results section; page 6, line 10, please substitute the verb "to grave" by the more usual "to seize", "(...) some opportunities to seize in this time."

Response: We updated it.

23-- In the Results section; page 6, line 30, please rephrase the paragraph for improving understandability and clarify the main arguments extracted from the mentioned articles challenging the achievement of UHC.

Response: We rephrased in simple and clear language.
24-- In the Results section; page 6, line 35, please correct the sentence "Table 3 (...)" by "Table 3, includes information on 6 studies relating health service coverage with maternal and child health care services (...)"

Response: We changed it.

25-- In the Results section, page 6, line 43, please correct the sentence "Remaining 6 studies (...)", with "The remaining 6 studies were related to health care providers having inconsistent and inadequate information technology (IT), (...)"

Response: We updated it.

26-- In the Results section, page 6, line 51, final paragraph, please refer the source from which you identified all those factors as actual opportunities for the progression to UHC in Nepal.

Response: We have added some resource on it.

27-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 8 and line 9, please correct the sentence to include the articles (a, an, the) whenever necessary to improve the readability (e.g., "However, a small subsidy (...), etc.)

Response: We updated it.

28-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 12, please remove the word "the" form this sentence in "after the some years of implementation."

Response: We removed it.

29-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 20, please add a comma after "(...) groups, etc.; and none of (...)". I would suggest rephrasing the entire sentence to improve readability.

Response: We rephrased the sentences.
30-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 26, I am not sure what are you trying to convey with the sentence "The UHC has emerged through different theories and values or belief systems" but seems meaningless in the context of your discussion thus I would suggest you delete or rephrase the entire sentences.

Response: We carefully observed it and we updated it.

31-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 35, please substitute "the structural challenge" by "a structural challenge".

Response: We changed it.

32-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 37, please substitute "Developed country" by "A developed country like France", and correct "also" by "ago" and other grammatical mistakes in the sentence.

Response: We changed it.

33-- In the Discussion section, please discuss why the countries commented are relevant to compare with the insights found for Nepal.

Response: The challenges and opportunities of UHC in Nepal has been focused for Nepal however it is global challenge too. It is important because the challenges occurred in Nepal would be the similar to other countries and challenges arises in other countries have some sort of matching. To design the program toward achieving UHC in Nepal and other countries, it helps to co-work and coordinate each other.

34-- In the Discussion section, page 7, line 56, please correct "there is no enough" with "there is not enough".

Response: We changed it.

35-- In the Discussion section, page 8, line 3, although "UHC friendly human resources for health" can be understood as that personnel promoting the adoption of UHC policies, it can be a source of confusion. I would suggest you look for another term to convey a similar meaning.
Response: We updated the sentence differently.

36-- Please, standardise the titles of the tables 3 and 4.
Response: We modified the title for table 3 and 4.

37-- In Table 2, S.N. 1, Opportunities, please review the meaning of the sentence from the original source. I would suggest it reads more accurate in the form "The social health insurance manual should be prepared after discussion with the different stakeholders."
Response: We updated the sentence.

38-- In Table 2, S.N. 5, Opportunities, please substitute the term "coops" with "cooperatives".
Response: We updated it.

39-- In Table 4, S.N. 3, Challenges, please delete the first "health" as it is redundant in the sentence.
Response: We deleted it.

40-- In Table 4, S.N. 6, Opportunities, please substitute "hospital" by its plural "hospitals".
Response: We changed it.

Note: For the minor revision section, some paragraph and section have been completely revised and may not appear the same sentences.