

ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS EFFICIENCY IN CAMEROON

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ABSTRACT

In Cameroon, the public health system is consisted of three sectors: public, private and traditional sectors. Quantitatively, the public sector is the dominant sector, in terms of its staff and equipment. The private sector is marginal. However, the national survey tracking public expenditures in the health sector shows that 65% of those surveyed prefer public hospitals and 34.7% prefer private hospitals. In the cities of Douala and Southwest, 55.6% and 56.6% of their population prefer private hospital services respectively. This result is paradoxical given that public hospitals usually have more structured technical support, higher budget allocations, increasing number of doctors and nurses and in addition practice relatively low charges. The objective of this study is to analyze the determinants of the efficiency of public hospitals in Cameroon. The methodology for measuring efficiency is the nonparametric approach (data envelopment analysis) and sources of inefficiency are analyzed using a censored Tobit model. We can retain that District health centres and integrated health centres, characterized mainly by low levels of available resources, are more efficient than district hospitals that have more resources. This result corroborates the fact that the fall in production of public hospitals in Cameroon is better explained by a lack of efficiency than by a lack of resources. Furthermore, the inefficiency of Cameroonian public hospitals is particularly explained by the occupation rate of hospital beds, corruption, the cost of health care and the degree of specialization.

KEYS WORDS: public hospitals, data envelopment analysis model, efficiency, Tobit censored