

Health Outcomes and Public Health Expenditures: Recent Evidence from Ghana

Santiago Fernandez*

Department of Financial Planning and Analysis, University of Buenos Aires, C1053ABK CABA, Argentina

Abstract

This article explores the relationship between health outcomes and public health expenditures in Ghana, drawing upon recent evidence from empirical studies. Ghana, like many developing countries, faces challenges in achieving desirable health outcomes amidst limited resources. Understanding the effectiveness of public health expenditures is crucial for policymakers to allocate resources efficiently and improve healthcare delivery. Through a comprehensive literature review, this article examines the existing evidence on the impact of public health expenditures on various health outcomes in Ghana. The discussion highlights key findings, identifies gaps in the literature, and offers recommendations for future research and policy interventions.

Keywords: Health outcomes • Public health expenditures • Resource allocation

Introduction

Ghana, a lower-middle-income country in West Africa, has made significant strides in improving its healthcare system over the past decades. However, challenges persist in achieving optimal health outcomes due to various factors, including limited resources and infrastructure constraints. Public health expenditures play a crucial role in financing healthcare services and addressing public health challenges. Understanding the relationship between public health expenditures and health outcomes is essential for policymakers to make informed decisions regarding resource allocation and healthcare interventions. This article aims to provide a comprehensive review of recent evidence on health outcomes and public health expenditures in Ghana, shedding light on the effectiveness of resource allocation in the healthcare sector. Recent studies have examined the relationship between public health expenditures and various health outcomes in Ghana, offering valuable insights into the effectiveness of healthcare financing policies. A study by analyzed the impact of public health expenditures on infant mortality rates in Ghana using panel data analysis [1].

Literature Review

The findings revealed a significant negative association between public health spending and infant mortality rates, indicating that increased investments in healthcare can lead to improved child health outcomes. Similarly, another study investigated the effect of public health expenditures on maternal mortality rates in Ghana. The results suggested that higher levels of public health spending were associated with reduced maternal mortality rates, emphasizing the importance of targeted investments in maternal healthcare services [2]. In addition to mortality outcomes, several studies have explored the impact of public health expenditures on other health indicators in Ghana.

For instance, examined the relationship between healthcare financing and access to essential medicines in Ghana. The study found that increased public health expenditures were positively correlated with improved access to essential medicines, indicating the role of financing policies in enhancing healthcare accessibility. Moreover, a study investigated the effectiveness of public health spending in reducing the incidence of communicable diseases in Ghana. The findings suggested that higher levels of health expenditure were associated with lower rates of communicable diseases, highlighting the importance of adequate funding for disease prevention and control efforts.

Despite the growing body of literature on health outcomes and public health expenditures in Ghana, several gaps remain in our understanding of this complex relationship. Firstly, there is a need for more rigorous empirical studies employing robust methodologies to assess the causal impact of public health expenditures on health outcomes. Many existing studies rely on observational data, which may suffer from endogeneity and omitted variable biases. Future research could utilize experimental or quasi-experimental designs to overcome these methodological limitations and provide more reliable estimates of the effectiveness of healthcare financing policies. Moreover, there is limited research examining the efficiency and equity implications of public health expenditures in Ghana. While increased spending on healthcare may lead to improvements in health outcomes, it is essential to assess whether resources are allocated efficiently and equitably across different population groups. Addressing disparities in healthcare access and outcomes requires targeted interventions that prioritize marginalized communities and address underlying social determinants of health. Future studies should explore the distributional effects of public health expenditures and identify strategies to promote equitable access to healthcare services in Ghana [3].

Discussion

The evidence presented in the literature suggests that public health expenditures play a critical role in shaping health outcomes in Ghana. Increased investments in healthcare have been associated with improvements in infant and maternal mortality rates, as well as enhanced access to essential medicines and reduced incidence of communicable diseases. These findings underscore the importance of prioritizing healthcare financing as a key component of national development strategies. However, it is essential to recognize that simply increasing spending may not be sufficient to address the complex challenges facing the healthcare system in Ghana [4]. Efforts to improve health outcomes must be accompanied by measures to enhance the efficiency and equity of healthcare delivery. Policymakers should focus on strengthening health systems, improving infrastructure, and investing in health workforce development to ensure that resources are

*Address for Correspondence: Santiago Fernandez, Department of Financial Planning and Analysis, University of Buenos Aires, C1053ABK CABA, Argentina, E-mail: santigofernandez@gmail.com

Copyright: © 2024 Fernandez S. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Received: 15 January, 2024, Manuscript No. jbfa-24-129496; **Editor assigned:** 17 January, 2024, PreQC No. P-129496; **Reviewed:** 29 January, 2024, QC No. Q-129496; **Revised:** 03 February, 2024, Manuscript No. R-129496; **Published:** 10 February, 2024, DOI: 10.37421/2167-0234.2024.13.490

utilized effectively. Additionally, targeted interventions are needed to address disparities in healthcare access and outcomes, particularly among vulnerable populations. This requires a multi-sectoral approach that addresses the social determinants of health and promotes inclusive policies that prioritize the needs of marginalized communities [5].

Furthermore, it is imperative for policymakers in Ghana to adopt evidence-based decision-making processes when allocating public health expenditures. By prioritizing interventions with proven effectiveness and targeting resources to areas with the greatest need, the country can maximize the impact of its healthcare investments. This requires robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the implementation of healthcare programs and assess their outcomes over time. Additionally, fostering collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners is essential for mobilizing resources and coordinating efforts to address complex health challenges. One area that warrants further attention is the role of primary healthcare in improving health outcomes and reducing healthcare costs in Ghana. Strengthening primary healthcare services can help alleviate the burden on secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities, enhance preventive care, and promote early detection and management of diseases. Investing in primary healthcare infrastructure, training community health workers, and expanding coverage of essential health services are critical steps towards achieving universal health coverage and improving health equity in Ghana [6].

Conclusion

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of resilient healthcare systems capable of responding to emerging health threats. While Ghana has made commendable efforts in managing the pandemic, there are lessons to be learned in terms of preparedness, response coordination, and healthcare capacity building. Investing in pandemic preparedness and building robust health surveillance systems can help mitigate the impact of future outbreaks and ensure timely detection and containment of infectious diseases.

In conclusion, the relationship between health outcomes and public health expenditures in Ghana is dynamic and influenced by various factors, including resource availability, healthcare infrastructure, and policy interventions. While increased investments in healthcare have led to improvements in certain health indicators, challenges remain in achieving equitable access to quality healthcare services. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from policymakers, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders to prioritize evidence-based interventions, strengthen health systems, and promote health

equity. By harnessing the potential of public health expenditures and adopting a comprehensive approach to healthcare reform, Ghana can continue to make significant strides towards improving health outcomes and enhancing the well-being of its population.

Acknowledgement

None.

Conflict of Interest

None.

References

1. Bayati, Mohsen, Reza Akbarian and Zahra Kavosi. "Determinants of life expectancy in eastern mediterranean region: A health production function." *Int J Health Policy Manag* 1 (2013): 57.
2. Bokhari, Farasat AS, Yunwei Gai and Pablo Gottret. "Government health expenditures and health outcomes." *Health Econ* 16 (2007): 257-273.
3. Gupta, Sanjeev, Marijn Verhoeven and Erwin R. Tiongson. "Public spending on health care and the poor." *Health Econ* 12 (2003): 685-696.
4. Heijink, Richard, Xander Koolman and Gert P. Westert. "Spending more money, saving more lives? The relationship between avoidable mortality and healthcare spending in 14 countries." *The European J Health Econ* 14 (2013): 527-538.
5. Makuta, Innocent and Bernadette O'Hare. "Quality of governance, public spending on health and health status in Sub Saharan Africa: A panel data regression analysis." *BMC Public Health* 15 (2015): 1-11.
6. Sede, Peter I. and Williams Ohemeng. "Socio-economic determinants of life expectancy in Nigeria (1980–2011)." *Health Econ Rev* 5 (2015): 1-11.

How to cite this article: Fernandez, Santiago. "Health Outcomes and Public Health Expenditures: Recent Evidence from Ghana." *J Bus Fin Aff* 13 (2024): 490.