

Ethnicity and Religious Diversity as Determinants of NHIS Penetration in Ghana

Osei-Akoto Isaac¹ and Adamba Clement²

¹University of Ghana , Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research , Legon, Accra, Ghana

²University of Ghana , Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research , Legon, Accra , Ghana

clem_me@live.com

Health insurance has been reckoned across the world as an important health policy that serves to protect households from the direct financial consequences of health care. In developing countries, health insurance, indeed, has emerged as an important mediating factor in providing relief to poor households hit by illness and requiring substantial health expenditure outlays. Renewed uptake however has been a major problem for sustenance of publicly subsidised health insurance schemes in sub-Saharan Africa. We used two models to study this phenomenon. A zero-inflated Poisson model was used to capture two decisions simultaneously; the willingness to join the scheme, and also the number of people that will be insured in a household. The other comparative econometric approach was an application of a finite mixture to analyse characteristics of latent class populations with respect to the uptake of the scheme. The result presents new evidence that shows that African countries can take advantage of their internal ethnic and cultural diversity to make health insurance reach majority of its people especially in its largely less educated and mostly rural communities. With Africa getting more and more diversified each passing day, new ways of including its people in the development process is imperative and studies such as this are key in providing the needed information.