

KNOWLEDGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND HOUSEHOLD BEHAVIORAL PRACTICES CONTRIBUTING TO POOR CHILD HEALTHCARE IN OTA NIGERIA

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Abstract

The extent to which a child is exposing to health risks determines the level to which the child contracts disease and mortality. Invariable, exogenous factors such as healthcare practices and environmental factors such as access to improved sanitation and household hygiene among others are crucial in lowering morbidity and better child survival, particularly in sub Saharan Africa with high prevalence of poor health system and poverty. Child morbidity and mortality are highly influenced by socio-environmental practices of the mother and household. Nigeria has a very high child mortality rate (128) and one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - 3, is to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. And specifically, Sustainable Development Goals - 3 has one of its target to achieve reduction of under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1000 live births by 2030. The objective of the study, therefore, was to examine the relationship between mothers' environmental related factors and behavioral practices contributing to child's healthcare in the study area. The study was based on survey of child morbidity and survival in Ogun State, Nigeria. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and regression analysis using SPSS version 19 and 1350 respondents constituted the sample size. Results from linear regression show that time needed to obtain treatment for child at the health facility were significantly associated with key environmental and behavioral factors like type of Cooking Fuel ($P = 0.003$); type of household waste disposal practice ($P = 0.000$); maintaining clean environmental and personal hygiene ($P = 0.000$); number of persons living in the house ($P = 0.000$); and number of times last child fall sick in a month ($P = 0.000$). From the findings, the paper recommends that Government should establish more health facilities in the study area and its environs to reduce the awesome time wasted at health facility during treatment. In addition, health education and mass enlightenment should be strengthened to create greater awareness on adverse environmental and household behavioral practices in order to improve the health of children under-five years and reduce child mortality in the study area and beyond.

Keywords: Under-five mortality, environmental factors, behavioral practices, sustainable development goals, Nigeria

**FULL TEXT
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