

MALARIA AND CHILD SURVIVAL IN NIGERIA: BEYOND THE STETHOSCOPE

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Abstract

This study examines child survival in Nigeria, particularly as it relates to malaria, while looking beyond the provisions of public health facilities. The study population includes all parents who are sixteen years and above with the condition that the respondent must have at least one child. A sample of five hundred respondents were interviewed on their attitude and perception to the ailment of their children. They were required to provide information on their first response to the ailment of their child, the intervention option they would seek (whether hospital or other sources), their attitude to sick children and their understanding of the causes of malaria among others. Apart from simple descriptive analysis, the log-linear method was used to obtain the interaction of these variables in explaining the parental attitude to the ailment of their children. The result shows that gender is not significantly related to the opinion of parents about the sickness of children but it is found to be highly significant in explaining the choice of intervention method chosen by parents for treatment of such children. Education is found to be important in determining the choice of healing method, time to seek for treatment and understanding of the cause of malaria. Religion also is found to be important in the choice of healing method for a sick child, though, it is not important in the way parents perceive sick children. First reaction of parents to the ailment of their children and the promptness in which they respond to such sickness are found to be dependent on marital status.