POSTER ABSTRACT

Management of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea: addressing the needs of under-fives via culturally appropriate community – level strategy in Benue state, Nigeria

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Although children below the age of five years in sub-Saharan Africa bear a high burden from malaria, pneumonia, and diarrhoea, few studies have reported on the influence of culturally competent care within the context of integrated community case management and its effectiveness in improving health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Using the archival method of research as well as data gleaned from interviews of 341 caregivers of children under the age of five years in four wards of a local government area in Benue state, Nigeria; we note that individual and community characteristics have the potential of increasing the utilisation of integrated community case management services across households accessing the service. This paper argues that child health services are likely to improve when interventions utilise the dynamics of individual and community factors in meeting the needs of families within systems of care. The paper adopts a conceptual framework that is sympathetic to health service utilisation and the policies that give rise to the problems associated with the use of integrated community case management of childhood services as seen in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria. It suggests the use of targeted measures to strengthen utilisation of child health services at the community level.

Keywords: nigeria; integrated community case management; vulnerable populations; malaria; pneumonia; diarrhea