



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Awareness, possession and use of insecticide-treated nets for prevention of malaria in children under five in Abeokuta, Nigeria

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Aim: A survey was carried out to assess awareness, possession and use of insecticide-treated nets (ITN) by mothers in preventing malaria among children under 5 years old.

Methods: Pretested questionnaires were administered by trained research assistants to women that have had a child in the last 59 months, irrespective of place of child delivery.

Results: Malaria was considered dangerous by almost all respondents (98.5%); the level of awareness of ITN as a malaria preventive tool was 75.1% while possession was 45%. Awareness and possession of ITN were positively and significantly influenced by high educational qualification of mothers and attendance of a public hospital for antenatal care. Hospitals were identified as the major source of awareness among respondents; women that delivered their babies in traditional birth home displayed least awareness (38.6%) and recorded low possession (10%). There was no significant relationship between ITN usage, birth order and age of child. Heat experienced while sleeping under ITN and problem of how to hang the net were major limitations identified in the use of ITN.

Conclusion: The need to involve women receiving antenatal care outside the hospital in malaria control intervention is hereby recommended. Methods of bridging ITN possession and use needs to be developed.

Key words: children under five; hospital; insecticide-treated net (ITN); malaria; traditional birth home.
