ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECTING INFANT MORTALITY IN IBADAN NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The Local government area (LGA) in Nigeria is the third level of governance and closest to the rural and mostly poor population, with relatively higher records of infant mortality than the urban population. The objective of this study is to examine the effect of living and environmental condition on infant mortality in a typical LGA in the southwestern part of Nigeria, as a case study of the national 774 LGAs. Demographic records of the Ibadan North LGA from 2006 to 2010 and perceptions of the people were obtained from Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with mothers of between 15 and 49 years at 6 purposively selected residential areas. Analysis of the demographic records shows that the local government, whose average total population was 306,795 as at the 2006 national census recorded about 1431 infant deaths. The number of infant deaths exhibited significant variance based on differences in certain housing/environmental characteristics of selected districts, especially sanitation and waste management concerns ($r < 0.05$). The study indicates that inadequate toilet facilities and poor waste management attitude of the residents of the LGA were the bane of high infant mortality there. The study, therefore concludes that infant mortality can be reduced to the barest minimum if good toilet facilities are mandated for each household by the relevant local authorities and good waste management approach is adopted.

Keywords: Infant Mortality, Public Utilities, Environmental Characteristics.