

Does Proximity to Health Care Facilities Mean Access to them? The Trauma of Choice between Public and Private Health Care by Households in Lagos State

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This research work is part of a larger project that analyses spatio temporal persistence of malaria in social and physical environments at household levels in the localities of Ikeja and Kosofe local government area of Lagos state. The work assesses access in terms of geographic and social access to both private and public treatment options used by households for malaria disease in the study area.

Five hundred households were interviewed on their socio economic characteristics and knowledge, attitude and practice for the malaria disease. Amongst the questions included type of health care treatments used, its location, means and duration of transport to reach them. The social access to health care was also explored in terms of costs to household, the length of time since the health care has been used by the household, treatment seeking behaviour, education and level of knowledge. These variables were related to the socio economic status of these households, education, level of knowledge and the locality characteristics using a mixed methodological approach in data collection and analysis. An asset based approach was used to define socio economic status.

Results show interesting trends in the choice and use of different health care treatment options irrespective of their location, socio economic status, knowledge and presupposed inequalities. It also reveals who uses what and how the role of governmental and nongovernmental infrastructures in influencing accessibility types within these localities. Contradictions existed between socio economic status and choice of health care as well as knowledge about the disease.

In this research private health care treatment options include traditional and orthodox health care as well as spiritual, chemist and pharmacy type etc.