THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE (ETS) ON PNEUMONIA RISK IN CHILDREN UNDER 7 YEARS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

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Background: The numerous adverse effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) on the non-smoking public have been evidenced through decades of research. This does not only affect adults but children. ETS effects on children prove to worsen asthma conditions, increase pneumonia cases and cause SIDS.

Methods: Most residents in all 44 (LGAs) in Kano State of Northern Nigeria took part in a population-based large-scale cross-sectional survey in Kano state from 2007-2010. Demographic information coupled with socioeconomic status, smoking status and house environment of each household member, was collected from participants. Pneumonia cases reported among children aged 7 years and below in each household in the previous 18 months were recorded based on parent's/guardian's report.

Results: Out of a total of 528,800 people resident in 102,334 homes identified in the survey areas and visible/present as at the time of the study, 52,888 (10%) were children aged 7 years and below. While the prevalence of ETS exposure on children was 81%, the prevalence of reported pneumonia cases was 3.5%. Multiple logistic regression analysis showed that exposure to ETS was independently associated with reports of pneumonia cases (adjusted odds ratio 1.55, 95% CI 1.25 to 1.92). The prevalence of tobacco smoking was higher among men than women (63.5% vs 44.1%). It is estimated that 32.7% of childhood pneumonia in the northern region of Nigeria is attributable to ETS.

Conclusions: Attention should be given to reduction of children's exposure to ETS all over the world.