

DETERMINANTS OF CHILD MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY IN SOUTH SUDAN

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to examine factors associated with childhood mortality and morbidity in South Sudan. The specific objectives were to establish childhood mortality, examine the effect of childhood factors on morbidity as well as examining the contribution of mother factors on childhood mortality and morbidity. The study used both descriptive and inferential analysis using secondary data from Second South Sudan household health survey (SSHHS2). Using univariate, bivariate, logistic regression and nested logistic models, the study estimated the odds of dying and survivorship probabilities for under-five mortality. The results provided estimates of childhood mortality by bio-demographic, socio economic characteristics, residence and state level. The results showed unexpected pattern for infant and under five mortality rates across residence, mother education and wealth quintiles. Therefore, these childhood indicators are higher in urban areas (118), primary education (118) and richest household (117).

The proportion of children who received all vaccinations is very low (54.1%) compared with those who didn't receive any vaccinations. Children residing in urban areas (61.8) are more likely to be fully immunized compared to children in rural areas (38.2%). This is due to availability of health facilities in urban areas. The education of the mother has got a very poor relationship with the overall level of child mortality ($\chi^2 = 0.647$, $P\text{-value} < 0.05$). Based on the results, it can be concluded that birth interval affects survival when there is an interval of less than two years between pregnancies, demonstrating the importance of spacing on child survival.

These factors were important in affecting child mortality. These factors may require to be taken into account in efforts that seek to address child mortality in South Sudan. The Childhood contributors to mortality and morbidity risk is diarrhea, because of large number of males and females that took part in the survey had diarrhea at least in the previous weeks prior to the study. Breast feeding, malaria infections were also great contributors to morbidity since they presented infection figures that were high in the study. In order to avoid prevalence of malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia in infants and under five years of age, the government of South Sudan in conjunction with NGOs should implement effective educational programs that aim at promoting and prolonging breastfeeding that may have a considerable effect on child survival.