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Socioeconomic inequalities in childhood under-nutrition in Nigeria**Blessing J Akombi and Kingsley E Agho**
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Background & Aim: Under-nutrition is the underlying cause of child morbidity and mortality in Nigeria, accounting for more than 50% of deaths among under-five year old children. This study examined socioeconomic-related inequalities in child under-nutrition in Nigeria using the decomposition approach.

Methods: The study analyzed data from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2003 to 2013. Trends in child under-nutrition were examined against socioeconomic factors. The outcome variables were stunting (HAZ<2 SD), wasting (WHZ<2 SD) and underweight (WAZ<2 SD) among children 0-59 months. The magnitude of child under-nutrition was estimated via a concentration index, and the inequality was decomposed to ascertain the contribution of socioeconomic factors to child under-nutrition over time.

Results: Socioeconomic inequality in child under-nutrition increased between 2003 and 2013. The decomposition of the concentration index showed that the consistent contributing factors to the increase in socio-economic inequalities in child under-nutrition were: Child's age (0-23 months), maternal education (no education), household wealth index (poorest household), type of residence (rural) and geopolitical zone (North East, North West).

Conclusions: This result suggests the need for a multifaceted nutrition intervention that involves improving maternal education and the adoption of social protection policies, to reduce inequalities in child under-nutrition especially among socioeconomically disadvantaged groups in Nigeria. This would set the country on its path to achieving the post-2015 sustainable development goals of improving children's health.

Biography

Blessing J Akombi has a background in public health with a passion for improving maternal and child health through evidence-based research. Her current research interest lies with epidemiology, child nutrition, international health, systematic reviews and meta-analyses. She has an MPH from the University of Newcastle, Australia. She recently concluded a self-sponsored PhD within 2 years with a track record of 5 peer-reviewed journal articles. Her PhD research focused on child under-nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa and provided policy insights to improve child nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular focus on Nigeria. She has conducted several systematic reviews and is currently involved in data collection and evaluation of the FRESH Health promotion aspects; a project funded by Western Sydney University partnership grant.

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