

# Exposure to Mass Media Messages and Use of Insecticide-Treated Nets and Artemisinin Combination Therapy among Rural Residents in Three Southeast States

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## Abstract

Rural areas are critical in Nigeria's drive to eliminate malaria in view of the fact that Nigeria has a large rural population. The National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP) uses communication extensively to persuade Nigerians to sleep under insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) and treat malaria with Artemisinin combination therapy (ACT). This study therefore examines the effect of exposure to mass media messages on the use of ITNs and ACT among rural dwellers. Data were collected with a structured questionnaire from 405 respondents across nine rural communities in three states. Data analysis was carried out using percentages and logistic regression. Exposure to radio ( $p < 0.000$ ) and television ( $p < 0.003$ ) messages were found to significantly increase the odds of ITN and ACT use, though their use is not widespread in the study areas. Secondary education ( $p < 0.001$ ) and tertiary education ( $p < 0.000$ ) were found to be positive predictors of ITN and ACT use. Although exposure to malaria messages was high the use of ITNs and ACT has not become diffuse. It is important to continue to use the media to educate the population on the need to adopt ITNs and ACT in place of ineffective practices like mixing of drugs and use of insecticide sprays.

**Keywords:** Exposure, Mass Media, Malaria, Insecticide-Treated Nets, Artemisinin Combination Therapy, Media Messages, Rural Areas.