

Education and Religious Beliefs: Supportive Determinants in the Understanding of Health Issues in Sub-Saharan Africa

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ABSTRACT In the aftermath of the 1978 WHO conference where the Alma Ata Declaration on *primary health care* was issued, the Cameroonian government was striving to guarantee equity in health care by developing a policy targeting social justice and assurance of “*health for all*” by 2000s. From this, a research programme based on health in the urban milieu was conceived in 2000 to address the population’s state of health. The epidemiological and transversal study was carried out in April-May 2005 on children aged between 6 and 59 months in Yaoundé (Cameroon). The objectives of this study were to identify risk factors predisposing people to diarrheas in the city, to measure their prevalence, and ascertain their spatial distribution, all in a bid to evaluate the progress made in infant health since 1978. The microbiological analyses carried out revealed an average diarrhea prevalence rate of 14.4% (437 cases of diarrhea on the 3034 infants tested). Amongst many other factors, the level of education and the religious belief of the household head were seen to be associated with the occurrence of infants’ diarrhea. In addition, it was acknowledged that the level of diarrhea infection in the city varies considerably from one household to another.