

## Demographic Characteristics as a Determinant of the use of Health Care Services: Case of Nsukka, Southwest Nigeria

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**Abstract :** Studies have associated social and demographic characteristics as strong determinants of utilization of health care services; however, not much has been done to explore the dynamics of these variables in Nigeria. This empirical study explores the link between demographic factors and the future use of health care services in Nsukka, southeast Nigeria. A total of 543 respondents were selected using multi-stage sampling technique. The findings of the study showed that majority (56.9%) of the respondents were female while 43.1% were male. More of the respondents were married (50.3%) while 41.80% of the respondents were between ages 26-35. Testing the demographic characteristics regarding where people will prefer to go first for treatment with multiple regression, It is only Sex as a demographic variable that indicates positive association for future occurrence to where people will prefer to go first for treatment with 0.08 significance. Age and education indicates no association considering their level of significance. This result shows that sex is one of the determinant factors of where and when people will go for treatment. This is pointing out the realities regarding African society where in the family setting, it is the father that dictates the cause of action. Also to buttress these findings, cross tabulating age with who determines where and when to go for treatment, findings show that majority (58.9%) within age 26-35 said their spouses decide on where and when to go for treatment. Findings showed that patriarchy still plays an important role in the utilization of health care delivery among the people studied.

**Keywords :** Demographic characters, Determinant, Health Care, treatment, self-medication, symptom,

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