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HOUSEHOLD AIR POLLUTION: AFRICAN HOMES AND DWELLINGS

Abstract:
It has been reported that indoor air can exhibit higher levels of pollution than outdoor air. This is of significant concern given that people spend the majority of their time indoors. Various factors exert influence over household air pollution, including outdoor air quality, ventilation, building materials, and indoor activities such as cooking fuel choices, cooking methods such as frying, roasting and insecticide spray use. Household air pollution (HAP) in Africa is a complex issue, with far-reaching consequences such as premature mortality in both adults and children.
This paper highlights that the majority of research on HAP in Africa has predominantly employed qualitative methodologies and there is a need for an increase in air pollution measurements and monitoring to better understand exposure levels. Cultural and behavioural factors also play a significant role in shaping indoor air quality and notably, access to modern energy sources for cooking in Africa remains substantially limited.
Addressing HAP in African dwellings requires a multifaceted approach that takes into consideration cultural practices, socioeconomic status, and educational initiatives to ensure improved health outcomes. Additionally, efforts should focus on promoting affordable and cleaner cooking fuels, especially in rural areas, as well as supporting sustainable housing initiatives. There is a need to advocate for policy implementation to enhance the overall quality of life for residents of African homes.

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