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Title:

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT MILITATE AGAINST
TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL AMONG THE SOMALI
COMMUNITY IN EASTLEIGH SECTION OF NAIROBI,
KENYA. //**

BY

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ABSTRACT

TB has remained a health challenge in developing world and has negative impact to the economic growth due to cost of treatment and many working hours wasted by the patients and supporting family members. It mainly affects community with low social economic status and impoverish further through illness. It is therefore not a wonder that WHO and World Bank have classified TB as disease of poverty along side Malaria and HIV/AIDS.

Kenya is among Sub-Sahara Africa countries heavily burdened with TB and has been observed that some communities are more vulnerable than others. In particular, Somali community seems to lead in TB prevalence as well as in number of MDR TB so far diagnosed in Kenya.

The specific objective of this study was to establish socio-economic factors that militate against TB control among the Somali community in Eastleigh section of Nairobi, Kenya. Specifically the study sought to examine TB awareness level, appropriateness of available TB services, level of accessibility of TB services and the cultural approach to TB among the Somali.

Data for this study was obtained through fieldwork that was conducted among the Somali community in Eastleigh section of Nairobi, Kenya. Data collection utilized a variety of instruments namely; individual questionnaires, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and direct observations. Descriptive statistic and cross tabulation was done during data presentations.

The results generally indicate that TB control is a problem among the Somali community for reasons which includes low awareness level, inaccessible services due to language barrier and cost of treatment, cultural practices and lack of identification documentations which creates a security and mobility challenges. The results however indicate that the TB services provided in Eastleigh are appropriate although no targeting at risk groups like Somalis.

The Somali community being mainly refugees hosted by minority local Somalis faces numerous challenges in terms of communication, awareness of the existence of TB and their entitlement to those services, accessibility of services due to cost and mobility which makes DOT difficult for them, poor living and environmental conditions which favours spread of

TB and cultural barriers all that make makes it easier for TB infection, spread and delayed or interrupted treatment.

The study observed that the TB Program in Kenya has put a lot of effort to ensure the level of TB services in Eastleigh is very well comparable with those provided in the other part of country and Nairobi. However, the TB program seems to have assumed that the community in Nairobi is homogeneous hence having a common approach of TB services. It fails to recognize the uniqueness of various groups so as to develop group specific TB control approaches.

The study therefore recommends that the government of Kenya and other humanitarian agencies should work together to develop Somali specific health and TB programs putting into considerations their language, culture, mobility with focus to improving their health seeking behaviours as well as mobilizing community participation for support of TB patients and disease control. This includes having in place a policy framework for housing to ensure adequate ventilations and affordability to prevent overcrowding brought about by high cost of renting a house. The study also recommends that the law re-enforcing agents like police be trained to not only look at legal status in isolation of that their actions could affect public health and burdens social services delivery when conditions like TB are not well controlled due to hide and seek game between the police and aliens.