

Health Seeking Behaviour of Tuberculosis Patients in Ekiti State, Nigeria

Oluwadare Christopher and Ibirinde Bosede

Department of Sociology, University of Ado Ekiti, Nigeria, P.M.B. 5363, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria

**Telephone: +234-8033976565, *E-mail:ctoluwadare@yahoo.co.uk;*

***E-mail: bosslany@yahoo.com*

KEYWORDS Poverty. Choice. Stigma. TB-DOTS. Treatment.

ABSTRACT This study was conducted in the capital city of Ekiti State of Nigeria. It was aimed at exploring the health seeking behavior of TB patients also as proxy for understanding the treatment choice of HIV positive persons. 117 TB patients were selected from the chest clinic register of the State Specialist Hospital and at family level using snowball method. 55% of the respondents are male while 46% are female. 10 in-depth interviews were also conducted among the patients and health workers. The mean age of male respondents is 36 years and 22 years for female; about 155 are not married while 60% and 51% of female and male respectively are either divorced or widowed. This high marital separation is related to the stigma and death due to AIDS or TB. 32% of the female and 20% of male have no formal education. And most earn less than equivalent of US\$2 per day. More than 20% of male and 10% of female access TB treatment centre until after two months of the onset of the symptoms, 1/3 after the third month. Male also use public medicine while female access more traditional care. The major factors are perceived cost of treatment and privacy due to fear of stigma. Gender and level of education of respondents are most significantly related to treatment choice of TB patients. Conclusively improved TB treatment serves as veritable entry point for HIV screening and treatment.