



Mobile Diagnostics in Urban Youth Centers: An Ethnographic Study of Tuberculosis Screening Apps in Nairobi

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Abstract

Mobile diagnostics apps are increasingly used in healthcare settings to improve access and efficiency for screening conditions like tuberculosis (TB). This study examines their application within urban youth centers in Nairobi, focusing on cost-effectiveness over a year. The study employed ethnographic research involving observations at five selected urban youth centers. Data collection included participant observation, interviews with staff and users, and document review of app usage logs. During the one-year study period, mobile apps were used for over 80% of TB screenings in youth centers, reducing time by approximately half and saving an average of \$50 per user compared to traditional methods. Mobile TB screening apps proved highly cost-effective and improved operational efficiency in urban youth centers. These findings suggest a promising model for integrating mobile health diagnostics into broader healthcare systems. Health authorities should consider implementing these apps in under-resourced settings where traditional diagnostic tools are limited, provided they ensure privacy and user-friendly interfaces.

Keywords: *African contexts, ethnography, mobile health, qualitative methods, TB screening, urban youth centers, cultural adaptation*

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