

MOI UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
RESEARCH THESIS

**FIRE HAZARD PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
CAPACITY OF INDUSTRIAL AND NON-
INDUSTRIAL PREMISES IN ELDORET**

RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF
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BY:
NGUKU, JULIUS NJATHI

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ABSTRACT

Fire is a major hazard in a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing world. The rapidly emerging towns of developing countries eventually become major industrial centers that are constrained by horizontal space. This poses a major challenge in both preparedness for a fire hazard and the response to such a hazard when it inevitably occurs.

Eldoret is a major transit town in North Rift Valley Region of Kenya which has had seven major fires between 2000 and 2005 where almost Ksh. 200 million was estimated to have been lost in property. The response to the fire outbreaks left a lot to be desired. Fire preparedness and response can be realized through Education, Design, Legislation and Response.

This descriptive, cross-sectional study aimed at assessing the level to which fire hazard preparedness and response measures are in place in Eldoret. A stratified sample of 33 industrial and non-industrial firms with occupancy of 50 or more people were selected and inspected using a checklist for fire hazard prepared buildings. A random sample of 417 people responded to a KAP standard interviewer-administered questionnaire. In-depth interviews were also held with 22 key informants drawn from managers and caretakers of the industrial and non-industrial premises and administrators in fire agencies.

On average, the premises scored poorly (38.1%) on the basis of the fire-prepared buildings checklist. Attitude was found to be contributing more to fire practice than knowledge. Kenya has no fire policy and the existing legislation is weak and not comprehensive. In-depth interviews with Key Informants showed that the main constraints encountered in effecting fire safety are ignorance and lack of funds.

From the study, it is recommended that; a National Fire Policy be formulated, relevant legislation be enacted and the existing one be reviewed, strengthened, and be more stringently enforced.