

ABSTRACT

Introduction:

Human resource in health sector is one of the most important categories of health systems input which determines the success of the health care provision in any given area. Fifty seven countries most of which are found in Africa are identified as having serious crisis in human resource for health. This shortage is worsened by the un even distribution with more skilled health workers found in urban areas than in rural settings. The uneven distribution leaves rural residents disadvantaged with poor health outcome, morbidity and mortality due to lack of sufficient health workforce. The study sets out to asses factors influencing the retention of health care workers in Kapchorwa, a rural district of Uganda.

Methodology:

A descriptive cross-sectional study design using both qualitative and quantitative methods was used. Health workers recruited by Kapchorwa District Local Government were the target population. A total of 160 respondents were interviewed randomly sampled from all public health facilities found in Kapchorwa District. Data was collected using a pre-tested questionnaire with mostly closed ended questions. Univariate bivariate trivariate analysis was used for statistical analysis.

Results:

Of the 160 respondents interviewed, majority where female with an average age group between 31-35years. Male staffs had an average age group of 36-49years. Nearly half of the respondents (49.4%) were certificate holders followed by diploma holders at 43.8% whereas those with bachelors and post graduate qualifications were 5.0% and 1.8% respectively. Pharmacists, Medical Officers, Anesthetists and Dental surgeons were found to be the most problematic carders to recruit in Kapchorwa District. It was also found out that health workers leave or abandon working in rural facilities majorly because of low emolument, lack of extra source of income and prolonged working time, whereas the major challenges faced by these health workers included poor road networks, poor social amenities like access to clean

water. For those who choose to stay and work in the district for a longer time, job satisfaction and being proud of their profession are the major influencing factors for coping with working in rural district.

Conclusion:

i) Most problematic cadres to recruited and retain. Pharmacists, Medical officers, Anesthetic officers and dental surgeons are the hardest carders to attract and recruit in Kapchorwa district.

ii) Reasons why health workers leave. Health workers leave or abandon working in rural health facilities majorly because of low emolument. Other reasons include lack of extra source of income to supplement their salaries and prolonged working time.

iii) Major challenges faced by health workers who chose to stay. The most critical challenges faced by health-care workers in rural based health facilities include poor road network and poor social amenities like access to clean water and electricity. Coping mechanisms of health workers who choose to stay Job satisfaction and being proud of their profession are the major influencing factors for coping with working in rural districts. Recommendations of areas for further research are also presented.