

Abstract

Background to the study:

In a country with increased demand for better health services, the role of a nurse has become even more demanding than ever before. The country's ratio of nurses to patient at 1:11,000, which is way below the WHO recommended figure of 3: 1,000 patients. The country is characterized with about 2500 public health facilities yet only 44009 nurses exist in Uganda public sector. This low number of nursing staff could be greatly contributing to the reported low quality of health care in public health service.

Purpose and problem statement:

The study was assessing the relationship between hospital nurse staffing and quality of care in Kasangati health center. This was mainly because with the low nurse staffing in the country would predispose the population to poor quality health care services and therefore a burden to the country with an ill health population.

Methodology:

The study made use of a descriptive design to examine the relationship between nurse staffing and patient care. It employed qualitative and observational methods of collecting data in which focus group discussions constituting of health care staff in Kasangati Health Centre were undertaken. The thematic approach to qualitative data analysis was used.

Findings and recommendations:

The study found out that nurse staffing affects the quality of the health care provided in such a way that low nurse staffing never gives quality services to patients. The study also found out that much as many factors affect the quality of health care, a health facility with many registered nurses at higher level of education in this case diploma provide better health care services in terms of quality than those at certificate level and though many standards of operating procedures such as registering patients, seeking doctors consultation and giving drugs among others exist, they are not in any way related to the qualifications of the nurses and staffing but related to the quality of health care in such a way that once used effectively, they quicken procedures and things are done as documented. Basing on the study findings, we recommend among others, that the administration of Kasangati Health Centre use all the available options to push for more health care nurse staffing as to reduce on items of under staffing, overworking nurses and as a means to improve quality of care services and that the health care staff at Kasangati health centre upgrade their training to higher level of education in order to provide better health care services in terms of quality.