

Abstract

There are numerous occupational hazards that prevail in many hospitals in Sub-Saharan Africa and Uganda. This study therefore sought to determine the factors influencing identification of occupational safety and health hazards and their causes health care workers of Mengo hospital.

The objectives of the study were identifying occupational hazards among health workers in Mengo hospital, individual factors influencing identification of occupational safety and health hazards and their causes health care workers of Mengo hospital and health system factors influencing identification of occupational safety and health hazards and their causes health care workers of Mengo hospital.

A hospital based cross sectional study was carried out, enrolling a total of 105 health workers in Mengo Hospital. Data was collected which included socioeconomic characteristics, individual factors and health system factors with the use of a researcher administered questionnaire. On encountering occupational hazards, all the respondents 105 (100%) had experienced them while at work in the hospital. The Chi-square statistical test was employed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) program and variables such as interpersonal conflict, exposure to work related violence or threats, sleep deprivation, training on safety in the hospital , resources put in place by the hospital management to promote occupational safety and health , imposing of hospital management system by senior management without consultation , management systems customized to the organizational needs and occupational safety marginalized by hospital management system showed a statistically significant association with encounter of occupational hazards ($p < 0.05$). Variables such as rate of relationship between the health workers and the hospital management showed no statistical association on encounter with occupational hazards in this study.

In this study, all the respondents 105 (100%) had experienced some form of occupational hazard while at work in the hospital. However, those which were specifically more experienced by the health workers included infectious disease, (53.3%), needle pricks (64.8%), working beyond a stipulated shift, repetitive strain injuries and conflicts.

The results in this study showed that occupational health hazards were prevalent among the health workers in Mengo hospital with the most prevalent being needle stick injuries, interpersonal conflicts, repetitive strain injuries, working beyond stipulated shifts, sleep deprivation, and interpersonal conflicts. The researcher's recommendations are as follows: The hospital management should do a barrier analysis where communication plays a vital role in risk analysis to ensure that risk management strategies effectively minimize occupational hazards among health workers, training on hazards and emergency response; The health workers should adapt safety culture and adhere to universal precaution practices; The academia should conduct further studies in hospitals to establish if the health workers do adhere to health and safety measures put in place.