

This study was carried out with a view of examining the contribution of individual factors, socio-economic factors and system factors on retention of health workers in Masaka Regional Referral Hospital (MRRH).

A cross sectional survey design was used to generate responses and collect data from the participants. To enrich the survey, interviews were also conducted in addition to analyzing documents and records.

The study focused on health workers in all professions currently employed by MRRH including but not limited to the following: medical officers, clinical officers, nurses, midwives, pharmacy staff, nursing assistants and laboratory technicians/assistants.

Data was mainly collected using self-administered questionnaires (SAQs) and interview guides. Pre-coded SAQs were distributed to the participants and collected immediately upon completion. These were later entered into the computer using SPSS 13 for generation of statistics.

Results from interviews were categorized into major themes and later used to supplement findings from SAQs.

The study concluded that individual factors such as age and sex influence retention of health workers in MRRH. Health workers were found to have positive attitude towards their profession although this did not translate into their staying in MRRH. Results further confirmed that remuneration plays a very big role in not only encouraging effective performance but also in contributing to staff retention. Other factors that were found to contribute to retention of health workers included; employment benefits, involvement in policy formulation, availability of resources, being valued by the employee, conducive working environment and joint problem solving ventures. Supervisor giving constructive feedback to supervise, on-job training and discussion of individual profession growth with supervisors did not influence retention of health workers.

The researcher recommended that MRRH management should improve on management support and concern for individual employee problems through conducting proper work engagement, providing conducive working environment and creation of rapport with their subordinates. It is also important that the management provides all the resources required in the effective delivery of health services including all medical consumables and equipment not forgetting proper laboratory functionality. Management of the hospital should introduce financial benefits such as free comprehensive medical care to employees and immediate family, school fees payments, travel allowances, housing allowance to mention but a few.