

Supervision Support and Health Worker Performance at Kilembe Hospital, Kasese District, Uganda

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of supervision support on health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital, Kasese District, Uganda. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design with mixed methods approach. A sample size of 152 respondents was considered for the study, 130 respondents participated, giving a response rate of 85.5%. The content validity index was calculated from the questionnaire and it was 0.94 while the computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.922 which is above 0.7 considered indicative of acceptable internal consistency therefore the questionnaire was deemed reliable. For qualitative data, to ensure consistency the KII and documentary review were guided by the research objective and question to keep the study focused. The study discovered that supervisors are sometimes not accessible at Kilembe hospital. The study therefore, recommends the need for Ministry of health to recruit more health workers since the study discovered workload as one of the major reasons where supervisors are sometimes not accessible.

Keywords: Supervision Support, Hospital, Health Worker, Performance, Risks and Disease.

Introduction

The success of any organization is closely tied to the performance of its employees which is largely affected by work-place environment and quality of the employees' workplace environment impacts on their motivation level and hence, performance, thus organizations deemed as a positive place to work will most likely have a competitive edge since they are in a better position to attract and retain highly skilled employees (Tesmanto & Rina, 2022). This study concurs with Okoroafor, Osubor and Nwachukwu (2022), who argued that an effective work environment is

important for providing optimal patient care and attracting and retaining healthcare professionals.

Globally, Health systems largely depend on Health Worker Performance (HWP) to provide health for all and supervision support is intended to improve the quality of healthcare delivery (Deussom et al., 2022). Thus, providing health care services requires multidisciplinary teamwork and healthcare workers are able to maintain stable emotional state and experience, less job stress if their superior provides continued work support (Nasurdin, Ling & Khan, 2018). To achieve better

performance in health facilities, Park and Yoo (2019), are of the opinion that health workers who received a lack of support from the supervisor tend to not dedicate their abilities and efforts to the assigned task, which subsequently lead to poor job performance. This concurs with Talukder and Galang (2021) findings that employees who receive high supervisor support tend to increase their efforts to exceed their responsibilities, in return for the benefits provided by their supervisors. As a result, empirical findings indicate that supervisor support is positively

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related to employee performance.

Supervision support involves guiding, helping, offering assistance and encouraging staff to improve their performance continuously in order to provide high-quality health services. This assertion is confirmed by Qureshi et al. (2018), who describe supervisor support as the extent to which employees perceive that supervisors offer assistance, concern, encouragement and resource mobilization, with job-related problems, concern, and care about their well-being. This in return facilitates outstanding job performance. Similarly, a study by Gopalakrishnan et al. (2021) found out that higher intensity of supportive supervision is associated with improved Community Health Worker performance and that leveraging institutional mechanisms such as supportive supervision could be important in improving service delivery to reach beneficiaries. However, their study used observational data reduces our ability to make any causal inference and this methodological gap was

bridged by collecting primary quantitative data that was used to make causal inference.

It has consistently been found that supervisor support positively and significantly associated with employee performance (Hannang & Qamaruddin, 2020; Talukder & Galang, 2021; Msuya & Kumar, 2022). Supervisor support can take many forms such as the provision of required job resources or the expressions of concern by the supervisor with the sole aim of enhancing the well-being of the employee, performance feedback and communication agent between the organisation and employees. Thus, according to Amoo and Adam (2022), supervision support is vital in development of organisational culture that motivates employees to excel. Therefore, it is vital for supervisors to actively play their part to ensure that employees feel valued and supported by the organization, so that they can respond with increased job performance. In addition, research has shown supervisor support to be a major driver of employee performance, with many

arguing that when employees receive adequate supervisor support, they respond with increased commitment to work (Quratulain & Al-Hawari, 2021).

In health worker context, health workers who have a supportive supervisor tend to have supportive behavior and effective communication that motivates their patients, which in turn, patients satisfied with the services (Assegai & Schneider, 2019). Thus, support supervision is intended to ensure adherence to health facility guidelines. Similarly, Aftab et al. (2018) assessed the effect of enhanced supportive supervision of lady health workers (LHWs) by lady health supervisors on integrated community case management of childhood pneumonia and diarrhoea and found out that supportive supervision through effective communication, feedback, logistics and commodities improved community case management performance. However, the study was done in Pakistan with clear supervision support system (Aftab et al., 2018), and therefore, the study findings

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cannot be generalized to other many countries like Uganda, where little is known about supervision support.

A study by Zahrah, Aziz and Abdul-Hamid (2019) examined the effect of supervisor support and job performance among nurses in public hospitals. The study found out that there is no significant relationship between supervisor support and job performance and this finding indicates that the supervisors were not able to

provide the necessary support they need and indicates that the support given to each staff may seem not to work well with many staff. However, the study did not cover how supervisor support affects availability, productivity, competence and reliability as measures of health worker performance. This current study bridged the conceptual gap by examining how supervisor support affects health worker performance.

Nevertheless, despite of the importance of supervisor support in enhancing performance among health workers, some studies found that the relationship between these two constructs is insignificant (Nasuridin, Ling, & Khan, 2018). Therefore, in response to these inconsistent findings, this study further examines the effect of supervision support on health worker performance in Kilembe Hospital.

Statement of the Problem

A well performing health workforce is a significant component of a strong health system that together with other social determinants can improve the health status of the population. Work environment plays a major role in the performance of a health worker and determines how the health workforce operates in ways that are reasonable, responsive and efficient to achieve favorable health outcomes (Krijgsheld, Tummers & Scheepers, 2022).

In the same pursuit, Kilembe Hospital has put in place effective work environment for its employees intended to secure their commitment to their work and enhance their performance. Such work environment practices include but not limited to management skills, performance feedback, resource mobilization, functional equipments, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs), Job aids, and training programmes (KNRH, 2021). The presumption is that the work environment will enable effective timely occupation execution, incentivize employees

to be committed to the organization, have the willingness to help the organization achieve its goals, increase efficiency of employees and ensure presentism by increasing employee willingness to be available for work and stay as member of the organization.

Despite the good work environment practices above, Kilembe Hospital is still faced with employee performance challenges. In the period between 2017- 2021 for example, health workers were accused of absenteeism and untimely provision of services to their clients, low productivity, poor attitude toward clients and poor quality of health care services provided to clients (BMAU, 2021). Even with supervision support, learning opportunities and work place safety strategies in place, Kilembe Hospital working environment is associated with high absenteeism, high workers stress levels, low job commitment and personal loyalty, and high turnover affecting

achievement of its strategic objectives (MOH, 2021).

If this low health worker performance continues unabated, Kilembe Hospital runs a risk of disruptions in provision of patient care, raise mortality rate and wastage of health resources, as well as a general decline in belief and confidence in

the health worker's competence and compromised quality of healthcare and patients' access to care. It is against this background that the study seeks to investigate how supervision support influences health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital, Kasese District, Uganda.

Objective of the Study

To examine the effect of supervision support on health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital

Research Question

What is the effect of supervision support on health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital?

Research Hypothesis

This study tested the following hypotheses;

Supervision support has a significant effect on health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital.

Methodology

The study adapt a cross-sectional survey research design. A cross-sectional survey design was preferred because it enables collection of data or information at a given point in time (Bakker, 2018). The researcher used a cross-sectional survey because of the limited time it will involve to conduct the study. Besides, it is less expensive to conduct cross sectional studies compared to other studies (Spector, 2019). The study also adopted a mixed method approach which involve both quantitative and qualitative approaches in response to research questions to enable generalization of findings and implications of the researched issues to the whole population (Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021).Whereas the quantitative paradigm was used to obtain numerical data thereby enabling generalization of findings, the qualitative approach was used to provide a deeper and broader understanding of the phenomenon (Rohr, 2022).

Study population in this study refers to a group of people about which the researcher will wish to make broad generalizations and where inference could be made (Kowalczyk, 2018). The study population was 190 health workers at Kilembe Hospital consisting of one (1) Director, ten (10) top management employees, and 180 health workers at Kilembe Hospital including Doctors, Nurses, Clinical Officers, Hospital Administrators, and other health workers. Furthermore, this population was selected because it is these people that are at the frontline of health service delivery in the hospital environment, where better performance can be attained. It is also these people that are most relevant to the study topic in terms of expertise.

The study sample size was 152 determined using the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample determination cited from Amin, (2005). These respondents were selected from population categories as indicated in table 1 below.

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Table 1: Showing study population, Sample size, and Sampling technique

Population Category	Study Population	Sample size	Sampling Technique
Directors	1	1	Purposive sampling
Top Management	10	10	Purposive sampling
Doctors	18	17	Simple random sampling
Clinical Officers	5	05	Purposive sampling
Nurses	116	86	Simple random sampling
Laboratory technicians	01	01	Purposive sampling
Other health workers	39	32	Simple random sampling
Total	190	152	

Source: Kiruddu National Referral Hospital Staff list, (2022)

Results

Findings on Health worker performance

Health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital was evaluated on questionnaire using fifteen statements to which the respondents were required to provide their level of agreement or disagreement and the findings are presented in Table 2. Qualitative findings collected using the interview guides were used to supplement the quantitative findings.

Table 2: Health worker performance

Statement on Health Workers	SDA		DA		NS		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev
Performance	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%		
I am always present for all my scheduled shifts	63	54.3	20	17.2	0	0.0	2	1.7	31	26.7	2.29	1.720
I arrive on time for my assigned shifts	2	1.70	15	12.9	0	0.0	84	72.4	15	12.9	1.70	1.372
I respond promptly to urgent requests or emergencies	83	71.6	22	19.0	0	0.0	1	0.9	10	8.6	1.56	1.159
Health workers at Kilembe hospital give timely patient care	99	85.3	9	7.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	6.9	1.35	1.032
I promptly and timely delivery healthcare services to patients	78	67.2	9	7.8	18	15.5	0	0.0	11	9.5	1.42	1.136
I provide quality healthcare services to patients	66	56.9	1	0.9	17	14.7	0	0.0	32	27.6	1.77	1.281
I am satisfied with knowledge and expertise of the health workers in their respective roles at the hospital	48	41.4	1	0.9	2	1.7	0	0.0	65	56.0	2.41	1.749
I accurately diagnose health	58	50.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	57	49.1	3.28	1.964

Statement on Health Workers	SDA		DA		NS		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev
Performance	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%		
condition of patients												
I have the skills and abilities to provide appropriate and effective treatment to patients	64	54.3	12	10.3	2	1.7	00	0.0	39	33.6	2.97	2.002
I stay updated with the latest medical advancements and evidence-based practices	00	0.0	71	61.2	3	2.6	41	35.3	1	0.9	2.48	1.839
I have the ability to explain medical information and treatment options in a clear and understandable manner to patients	45	38.8	1	0.9	2	1.7	0	0.0	68	58.6	3.51	1.909
I demonstrate good clinical judgment and decision-making skills	00	00	21	18.1	00	00	74	63.8	21	18.1	3.39	1.946
I show empathy and compassion towards patients	87	75.0	20	17.2	1	0.9	00	0.0	8	6.9	4.11	1.949
Health workers are prompt in	75	64.7	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	40	34.5	1.47	1.050

Statement on Health Workers	SDA		DA		NS		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev
Performance	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%		
providing care to patients.												
I adhere to protocols when providing medical care	00	0.0	21	18.1	0	0.0	74	63.8	21	18.1	2.39	1.905

Source: Primary data (2023)

Results in Table 2 indicate that the majority of respondents at 71.5% were in disagreement with the statement that I am always present for all my scheduled shifts; 54.3% strongly disagreed and 17.5% disagreed. This implies that majority of the staff are discontented with their scheduled shifts. These shifts makes it difficult for the staff to cope with the current hospital demands. This demotivates them and demotivated staff are most likely not perform to their best.

In respect to whether the staffs arrive on time for their assigned shifts, the majority, 85.3%, were in agreement; 72.4% strongly agreed and 12.9% agreed. This means that majority of the staffs at Kilembe arrive on time for their assigned shifts.

On whether staffs respond promptly to urgent requests or emergencies, the majority, 90.6%, were in disagreement; 71.6% strongly disagreed and 19.0% disagreed while 9.5% were in agreement. This indicates that the majority respondents were of the view that staffs at Kilembe hospital do not respond promptly to urgent requests or emergencies at the hospital. This is partly explained by majority of patients seeking for medical services amidst limited staff.

Furthermore, on whether Health workers at Kilembe hospital give timely patient care, majority of respondents at 93.1% were in disagreement; 85.3% strongly disagreed and 7.8% disagreed. This means that majority of respondents were with a view that the hospital does not give timely patient care.

On the other hand, when respondents were asked whether they promptly and timely delivery healthcare services to patients, the majority, 75% were in disagreement; 67.2% strongly disagreed and 7.8% disagreed. Hence indicating that majority respondents expressed their views that they do not promptly and timely deliver healthcare services to patients.

In addition, on whether healthcare staffs provide quality healthcare services to patients, there were reactions amongst the respondents, the most, 57.8%, were in disagreement; 56.9% strongly disagreed and 0.9% disagreed while 27.6% strongly agreed and 15.5% were not sure. This indicates most respondents' do not provide quality healthcare services to patients.

In regard to whether the healthcare staffs were satisfied with knowledge and expertise of the health workers in their respective roles at the hospital, the most, and 56% were in disagreement, 56.0% strongly disagreed and 41.4% strongly agreed on the statement. This means that health workers at Kilembe hospital are not satisfied with knowledge and expertise in their respective roles.

In relation to the above, the most of the respondents, 50.9%, were in disagreement with the statement that I accurately diagnose health condition of patients; 50.0% were highly opposed, and 0.9% disagreed while 49.1% strongly agreed. This implies that there were mixed reactions on whether they accurately diagnose health conditions of the patients due to drugs being out of stock.

Table 2 also shows that when the respondents were asked whether they have the skills and abilities to provide appropriate and effective treatment to patients, the majority, 64.6%, were in agreement; 54.3% strongly agreed and 10.3% agreed while 33.6% strongly disagreed. This implies that staff at Kilembe hospital possess skills and abilities to provide appropriate and effective treatment to patients

On whether they stay updated with the latest medical advancements and evidence-based practices, the majority, 61.2%, were in disagreement; 61.2% strongly agreed and 35.3% strongly agreed. This means that majority respondents were of the view that they do not stay updated with the latest medical advancements and evidence-based practices.

Leaving the above apart, respondents were asked whether they have the ability to explain medical information and treatment options in a clear and understandable manner to patients, the majority, 58.6%, were in agreement; 58.6% strongly agreed and 38.8% strongly disagreed. This means that they have the ability to explain medical information and treatment options in a clear and understandable manner to patients.

Results from the table 2 above further indicate that majority 81.9% of the respondents were in agreement that they demonstrate good clinical judgment and decision-making skills; 63.8% strongly agreed and 18.1% agreed while 18.1% strongly disagreed. This means that majority respondents were of the view that they demonstrate good clinical judgment and decision-making skills.

Interestingly, on whether they show empathy and compassion towards patients, the majority, 92.2%, were in disagreement; 75.0% strongly disagreed and 17.2% disagreed. This means that majority respondents were of the view that health workers do not show empathy and compassion towards patients at the hospital.

On whether Health workers are prompt in providing care to patients., results from table 4.4 indicate that the majority of the respondents at 64.7%, were in disagreement; 64.7% strongly disagreed and 0.9% disagreed. This means that majority respondents were of the view that Health workers are not prompt in providing care to patients.

Lastly, on whether I adhere to protocols when providing medical care, majority of respondents, 81.9%, were in agreement; 63.8% strongly agreed and 18.1% agreed. This means that the majority of the staffs do adhere to protocols when providing medical care.

The above findings were supplemented by findings from a qualitative data where the researcher conducted interviews and documentary review in respect of health worker performance at Kilembe hospital as discussed below;

In regard to adherence to protocols when providing medical care to patients at Kilembe hospital, one of the key respondent was quoted saying

“In our profession, the protocol for administering medicine to patients is the same irrespective of the geographical location. The way doctors administer medicine in Mulago hospital is the same procedures as

Kilembe hospital. In fact, a doctor can be transferred from Kilembe Hospital to Mulago hospital and will perform his/her duty diligently without any challenge'' KII4.

This implies that health workers at Kilembe hospital adhere to protocol while administering medicine to patients.

From documentary analysis, Ministry of Health annual performance report 2022, reveal that health worker follow the same protocol while performing their duties.

Regarding whether health workers accurately diagnose health condition of patients. One of the key interviewee intimated that;

''Our health workers at Kilembe hospital have the capacity to accurately diagnose health condition of patients. However, we are betrayed by absence of modern equipment necessary to detect such conditions and where the available equipment detects such conditions, absence of the required medicine to arrest the condition worsens the situation'' KII2.

This implies that health workers at Kilembe hospital have the capacity to accurately diagnose health condition of patients, however, they lack equipment and medicine necessary to treat such conditions.

Regarding whether healthcare staffs at Kilembe hospital provide quality healthcare services to patients. One of the key respondent was quoted saying that;

''Our mission is to provide quality services to our clients, however, due to overwhelming number of patients seeking for our services, it often compromises the quality of services we render to our clients'' KII1.

This implies that health workers at Kilembe hospital do not provide quality services to patients. The interpretation from both qualitative and quantitative data indicate health worker performance at Kilembe hospital has to smaller extent improved. This is partly explained by health workers reporting on time, they have the skills and abilities to provide appropriate and effective treatment to patients and adhere to protocols when providing medical care to patients. However, to a larger, extent, the study discovered covered concerns with health workers performance at Kilembe Hospital in terms of absenteeism, failure to respond promptly to urgent requests or emergencies, delays in the provision of patient care, failure to accurately diagnose health condition of patients, they are not empathetic and compassionate towards patients, health workers are not prompt in providing care to patients, quality of services at Kilembe hospital is still wanting and they have inadequate skills and abilities to provide appropriate and effective treatment to patients.

Supervision support influence on health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital

The study used eleven statements in the questionnaire that required respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement in order to understand the respondents' perceptions of supervision support influence on health worker performance and analyze whether it had an impact on health worker performance at Kilembe hospital. The quantitative findings shown in Results in Table 2 were supplemented by qualitative data gathered utilizing the interview guide and documentary review

Table 3: Descriptive results on supervision support influence on health worker performance at Kilembe Hospital

Statement on Supervision support	SDA		DA		NS		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fr	%	Fre	%	Fre	%		
Influence on health worker performance					e							
My supervisor is accessible when I need guidance or support	40	34.5	47	40.5	0	0.0	3	2.6	26	22.4	2.38	1.530
My supervisor provides clear instructions and expectations.	51	44.0	36	31.0	0	0.0	20	17.2	9	7.8	2.14	1.351
The supervisor creates a supportive and empathetic environment.	63	54.3	25	21.6	0	0.0	20	17.2	8	6.9	2.01	1.367
The supervisor provides guidance in managing challenging situations.	61	52.6	26	22.4	0	0.0	1	0.9	9	7.8	2.11	1.609
The supervisor monitors and evaluates my performance regularly	13	11.2	15	12.9	0	0.0	20	17.2	68	58.6	3.99	1.460
My supervisor weekly checks on employees' level of meeting set targets	23	19.8	17	14.7	0	0.0	21	18.1	55	47.4	3.59	1.642
I receive timely and relevant feedback from my supervisor	56	48.3	13	11.2	0	0.0	20	17.2	27	23.3	2.56	1.726
My supervisor encourages collaboration and teamwork among team members	24	20.7	13	11.2	1	0.9	21	18.1	57	49.1	3.64	1.644
The supervisor fosters open communication and dialogue within the team	52	44.8	26	22.4	1	0.9	18	15.5	19	16.4	2.36	1.563
The supervisor provides resources required to provide health care services.	69	59.5	23	19.8	1	0.9	17	14.7	6	5.2	1.86	1.285
The supervisor provides guidance in managing	87	75.0	23	19.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	5.2	1.41	0.932

SDA	DA	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
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work-related stress						

Source: Primary data (2023)

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, NS=Not-Sure, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed,

Results from table 3 above reveal that majority of respondents at 75% were in disagreement with the statement that their supervisor is accessible when they need guidance or support; 34.5% strongly disagreed and 40.5% disagreed while 22.4% strongly agreed. This means that the majority respondents illustrated that their supervisors are not accessible when they need guidance or support.

In respect to whether my supervisor provides clear instructions and expectations., majority of the respondent 75%, were in disagreement; 44% strongly disagreed and 31% disagreed while 17.2% agreed to the statement. This means that their supervisors do not provide clear instructions and expectations.

On whether the supervisor creates a supportive and empathetic environment, the majority, 75.6% were in disagreement; 54.3% strongly disagreed and 21.6% disagreed. This indicates that the majority respondents were of the view that the supervisors don't create a supportive and empathetic environment.

Furthermore, on whether the supervisor provides guidance in managing challenging situations, majority respondents, 75% were in disagreement as well as 7.8% were in agreement. This means that majority of respondents were of a view that the supervisors do not provides guidance in managing challenging situations.

On the other hand, when respondents were asked whether the supervisor monitors and evaluates my performance regularly, the majority, 75.8% were in agreement; 58.6% strongly agreed and 17.2% agreed. Hence indicating majority respondents expressed their views that their supervisor monitors and evaluates my performance regularly.

In addition, on whether all my supervisor weekly checks on employees' level of meeting set targets; majority of the respondents 65.5% were in agreement with the statement; 47.4% strongly agreed and 18.1% agreed. This indicates that my supervisor weekly checks on employees' level of meeting set targets.

In regard to whether I receive timely and relevant feedback from my supervisor, the majority, 59.5% were in disagreement, 48.3% strongly disagreed and 11.2% disagreed while 40.5% were in agreement on the statement implying that they do not receive timely and relevant feedback from my supervisor.

In relation to the above, the majority, 67.2%, were in agreement with the statement that my supervisor encourages collaboration and teamwork among team members; 49.1% strongly agreed and 18.1% agreed.

Also, on whether the supervisor fosters open communication and dialogue within the team, the majority, 67.2%, were in disagreement; 44.5% strongly disagreed and 22.4% disagreed while 31.9% were in agreement

According to the study, on whether the supervisor provides resources required to provide health care services, majority respondents at 79.3% were in disagreement; 59.5% strongly disagreed and 19.8% disagreed. This means that the supervisor do not provide resources required to provide health care services.

Lastly, on whether the supervisor provides guidance in managing work-related stress, majority of respondents at 94.8%, were in disagreement; 75% strongly disagreed and 19.8% disagreed. This means that the majority of the respondents believe that their supervisor does not provide guidance in managing work-related stress.

The above descriptive findings were supplemented by findings from a qualitative data where the researcher conducted interviews and documentary review in respect of supervision support and health workers performance at Kilembe hospital as discussed below:

Regarding whether the supervisor monitors and evaluates my performance regularly. One of the key informant was quoted saying that

“Supervisor are mandated by the law to evaluate staff performance and it is through this performance appraisal that staff are promoted. Failure to do so affect the overall performance of the institution” K112.

This implies that supervisors at Kilembe hospital evaluate the performance of their staff in order for them to meet the requirements for promotion.

When analysis was done from documentary review, Ministry of Health Annual performance Report 2022 hinted that performance evaluation is one of the cardinal roles of supervisors. It was also observed that some supervisors are failing to perform their duties.

Regarding whether the supervisor provides resources required to provide health care services. One of the key interviewee was quoted stating that;

“We try our best to provide the necessary resources required by staff in order for them to perform their duties effectively. However, due to resource constraints, we are incapacitated to provide all the necessary resources which at times affect the performance of the hospital. This is mainly due to budget to budget cuts which has not spared the health sector too” K116.

This implies that supervisors are incapacitated by budget cuts in order to provide resources to staff mainly due to budget cuts which has negatively affected the performance of the sector.

From documentary analysis, Ministry of Health Report 2023 indicate that health sector witnessed 80.6billion budget cuts year in the financial year 2023-2024 and this has a great bearing on the performance of the sector. This implies that budget cuts has greatly affected performance of the health sector.

Finally, regarding accessibility of supervisors, one of the key informant was quoted stating that;

“Supervisors are accessible, but sometimes are overwhelmed by too much work which make their availability quite challenging. This justifies why some health workers complain of supervisors unavailability” K117.

This implies that supervisors at Kilembe hospital are overwhelmed by too much work which sometimes comprise their availability. The interpretation of both qualitative and quantitative data reveal that supervisors at Kilembe hospital weekly checks on employees' level of meeting set targets, encourages collaboration and teamwork among team members and monitors and evaluates staff performance regularly. However, it was also discovered that supervisors are not accessible at Kilembe hospital, they do not offer clear instructions and expectations, they don't create a supportive and empathetic environment, supervisors do not provide timely and relevant feedback to staff, they do not provide guidance in managing work-related stress, they do not provide

resources required to provide health care services and they do not foster open communication and dialogue within the team and this negatively affect the performance of health workers.

Discussion of the study findings

The study findings established that there was positive moderate effect of supervision support on health worker performance at Kilembe hospital and the findings are supported by Park and Yoo (2019), are of the opinion that health workers who received a lack of support from the supervisor tend to not dedicate their abilities and efforts to the assigned task, which subsequently lead to poor job performance.

Furthermore, study findings on supervision support are supported by Talukder and Galang (2021) who stated that employees who receive high supervisor support tend to increase their efforts to exceed their responsibilities, in return for the benefits provided by their supervisors. As a result, empirical findings indicate that supervisor support is positively related to employee performance

Amoo and Adam (2022), supports the findings of the study by asserting that supervision support is vital in development of organizational culture that motivates employees to excel. Therefore, it is vital for supervisors to actively play their part to ensure that employees feel valued and supported by the organization, so that they can respond with increased job performance. In addition, research has shown supervisor support to be a major driver of employee performance, with many arguing that when employees receive adequate supervisor support, they respond with increased commitment to work.

Finally the study findings are supported by Aftab et al. (2018) when they assessed the effect of enhanced supportive supervision of lady health workers (LHWs), supervisors on integrated community case management of childhood pneumonia and diarrhoea and found out that supportive supervision through effective communication, feedback, logistics and commodities improved community case management performance

Therefore, the study finding above principally follow the same line of argument with what other scholars had earlier established on the effect of supervision support on health worker performance.

Conclusions

It was established that supervision support has had a positive effect on performance of health workers in Kilembe Hospital. The study therefore, concludes that effective and efficient supervision in terms of equipping health workers with managerial skills, clear performance feedback, involving them in resource mobilization, effective communication style and proper reward system would result into improvement in the performance of health workers at Kilembe hospital in terms of being available, productive, competent and responsive to patients needs.

Recommendations

- i. There is need for Ministry of Health to strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure that hospital supervisors are not only available at the station but also accessible
- ii. There is need for Ministry of health to recruit more health workers since the study discovered workload as one of the major reasons where supervisors are sometimes not accessible.

- iii. There is need for Ministry of Health through Ministry of Finance to increase hard to reach allowance in order to attract health workers to work in rural areas like Kilembe hospital.

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