

HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AT MBAGATHI COUNTY REFERRAL HOSPITAL KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined staff perceptions of human resource capacity at Mbagathi County Referral Hospital, Kenya, and considered its operational implications. A descriptive cross-sectional survey yielded 120 usable questionnaires from a planned sample of 162 (74% response). Five human-resource indicators were rated on a five-point scale. All indicators recorded positive mean ratings: regular training and professional development ($M = 4.192$, $SD = 0.934$), staff motivation supporting service delivery ($M = 4.108$, $SD = 0.918$), adequate staffing ($M = 4.045$, $SD = 0.988$), fair workload distribution ($M = 4.023$, $SD = 0.843$), and employee skills and competencies ($M = 3.915$, $SD = 0.853$). The findings indicate a generally favourable human-resource environment, with professional development emerging as the strongest attribute. The study recommends protecting training budgets, undertaking regular workload and staffing reviews, and strengthening recognition practices. The results are descriptive and should not be interpreted as causal estimates of operational performance.

Keywords: human resource capacity; hospital operations; staffing; training; Kenya

1. INTRODUCTION

Public hospitals depend on adequate and capable staff to sustain timely, coordinated and patient-centred services. Yet evidence that describes staff perceptions of staffing, competencies, workload, professional development and motivation in county referral hospitals remains limited. This study examined the human resource capacity dimension of organizational resources at Mbagathi County Referral Hospital.

Operational performance in a hospital includes the timely, efficient and coordinated delivery of services, effective use of resources and responsiveness to patients. The broader parent project examined organizational resources and operational performance at the hospital. This manuscript presents the findings for one specific objective and positions them as staff-reported evidence for management improvement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Human resources influence the capacity of a hospital to maintain service continuity, quality and responsiveness. Akoi and Yesiltas (2020) found that human-resource development practices strengthen human capital and organizational performance, while Anwar and Abdullah (2021) reported that human-resource management practices are associated with organizational performance. In Kenya, Okoroafor et al. (2022) documented the importance of health-workforce investment, size, composition and distribution. These studies provide useful direction but do not describe staff perceptions of staffing, competence, workload, training and motivation within Mbagathi County Referral Hospital. This study addresses that facility-level gap.

3. METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted among employees of Mbagathi County Referral Hospital in Nairobi County, Kenya. The target population was 273 staff members drawn from management, clinical, administrative, procurement and finance functions. Stratified random sampling produced a planned sample of 162; 120 usable questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 74%. The questionnaire used five-point agreement items. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to summarize staff perceptions. Because the available project results do not include bivariate or multivariable coefficients, the findings are interpreted as descriptive evidence rather than proof of causation.

Ethical considerations: Participation was voluntary. The questionnaire did not require respondents to disclose personal identifiers, and responses were collected for academic purposes and treated confidentially.

4. RESULTS

Table 1 presents the descriptive results for the study objective. Mean values above the neutral midpoint indicate generally positive staff perceptions of the measured practice.

Table 1: Staff perceptions of the study indicators (n = 120)

Indicator	Mean	Standard deviation
Adequate staffing for patient demand	4.045	0.988
Necessary staff skills and competencies	3.915	0.853
Regular training and professional development	4.192	0.934
Fair workload distribution	4.023	0.843
Staff motivation supports service delivery	4.108	0.918

5. DISCUSSION

The consistently positive ratings suggest that respondents viewed workforce capacity as a practical foundation for hospital operations. Training and professional development had the highest mean, indicating that continuing learning may be a visible organizational strength. Skills and competencies had the lowest, though still positive, mean; this makes competency mapping and targeted development a useful priority. The findings are consistent with literature that links human-resource development and management practices to organizational performance (Akoi & Yesiltas, 2020; Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). The current results are perception-based and do not establish the size of the association with operational outcomes.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The indicators were rated positively by respondents, but differences in mean ratings identify concrete areas for quality improvement. Hospital management should maintain regular professional-development opportunities, conduct workload and staffing assessments by department, and use structured recognition and supportive supervision to sustain motivation. Future analytical studies should test the association between these human-resource indicators and patient-flow, quality and timeliness outcomes.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

The study used cross-sectional, self-reported questionnaire data from one hospital. The descriptive statistics summarize perceptions and cannot establish temporal order, causality or generalizability to other facilities. The available results did not include inferential outputs; consequently, no correlation or regression effect is reported in this manuscript.

DECLARATIONS

Conflict of interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Funding: No external funding was reported for this student research project.

Data availability: The underlying project data are not publicly shared because they were collected for academic purposes within the study setting.

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