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The job performance of village health teams in Pader district

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Statement of the Problem: VHTs (village health teams) treat common childhood illnesses and conduct health education as well as refer patients, but their ability to create a substantial health impact within their communities is questionable. Pader HMIS unpublished report (2013/2014) show an increase in the number of patients under 5 years seeking care in health facilities with malaria 36%, pneumonia 25% and diarrhea 30% registered in outpatient and inpatient on monthly basis, yet their actions should have led to improved health outcomes. This study used a cross sectional design with quantitative and qualitative methods. VHTs were selected by stratified random sampling techniques while other respondents were purposively selected. Data was collected using sets of questionnaires, key informant interview guide and observational checklist.

Findings: 94% of the VHTs were elected by the community and 78.8% of them were trained but 34.4% had not attended refresher training. The Correlation Coefficient=0.809 indicates very high relationship between client's satisfaction and VHTs job performance, with P value=0.000<0.05 indicating that VHTs job performance was significant. Gaps identified are risk identification in pregnancy, support to pregnant mothers, and provision of family planning, condom distribution and ANC services. The key variables that were significantly related to VHTs job performance that needs addressing were: incentives, supervision, recruitment with gender considerations, refresher trainings and regular drug supply and managerial capacity of government health systems.

Conclusion: VHTs job performances in the delivery of health service in the community were below the expectation despite of positive client's satisfaction on VHT services. Gender considerations, lack of logistics supplies, no refresher trainings, and no incentives were major challenges affecting VHT job performance in Pader District that needs critical support.

Recommendations: The findings from this study will be useful to policy makers, programme officers and communities in focusing interventions aimed at improving community strategy and programs, ultimately improving community high health impact indicators.

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