

Motivation

There were very few systematic studies based on nationally representative data that gave insight into the extent of provider absence in health and its causes.

Objectives

This study enabled the construction of an internationally comparable dataset on provider absences. The goals of the study were to document the extent of the problem of provider absence in a range of jurisdictions at different levels of development and with different institutional structures, characterized provider absence, and examined institutional correlates of provider absence across countries.

Absenteeism

40% of health workers were absent. Absence rates were generally higher in poorer regions. Absence was fairly widespread, rather than being concentrated on a small number of “ghost” workers. Higher-ranking and more powerful providers, such as doctors, were absent more often than lower-ranking ones. There was little evidence that pay strongly affected absence; by contrast, we did find evidence suggesting a role for the quality of infrastructure at the facility.

Sample design

Sampling of districts and facilities within districts was done centrally. First, the larger jurisdiction was stratified geographically. Within each region, districts will then be selected randomly on a population-weighted basis, for a total of ten districts per state.

For the health sector, we plan to sample using a facility-based rather than population-based approach. Where it is available, we will acquire a list of all the Primary Health Centers (PHCs) within each district. Facilities will then be chosen randomly for visits, after stratification by rural/urban location. Lists would ideally be obtained from both central government and district authorities.

Resources monitored**Absenteeism**

3 levels:

- national
- facility
- health care worker

Contact

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Main report

World Bank (2002) “Initial Project Description: Survey of Education and Health Providers,” Background Study for the World Development Report 2003/04 on Basic Service Delivery, World Bank Research Group on Public Service Delivery.