ABSTRACT

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is arguably the greatest threat facing the world today. The pandemic has a far-reaching impact on society and the workplace, in particular, including a reduction in certain skills levels, mortality and declining job performance of employees living with HIV or AIDS. In addition, the fear of discrimination and stigmatization prevents infected employees from disclosing their HIV status, thus driving the pandemic underground. Despite the potential negative impact that is looming, many employers still do not have any workplace support programmes in place to manage HIV/AIDS in their organizations. However, some employers have implemented workplace support programmes. This research, which was conducted in three districts within Kigali City in Rwanda, explored the influence of workplace support programmes on the job performance of employees that were living with HIV or AIDS. The findings suggest that job performance is positively influenced where workplace support programmes have been implemented. The findings were obtained from analyzing the participants’ responses and that of their employers by conducting interviews, and the results indicated that 58.3% of the participants’ employers had a formal HIV/AIDS committee or policy and a combination of workplace support activities to manage the influence of the pandemic in the workplace. The findings also indicate that 72.7% of participating employers appeared to have no mechanisms in place to manage HIV/AIDS, nor much workplace support programme activities that specifically focused on managing the influence of the pandemic in the workplace. Thus this study underlies the need for advocacy to increase awareness among employers to pro-actively put in place support programmes for HIV/AIDS infected employees as a matter of good business, besides the social obligations to do so.