

Digital Skills and Research Methods

LCHS4007

Component 2 – Research Report

Topic on: Support worker

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TASK 1: RESEARCH TOPIC IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Identification of the Issue

The Support Workers play a very important role in the health and social care industry because they give the necessary care and support to people in need particularly the elderly, the disabled or those with a mental illness. Nonetheless, the rate of attrition of Support Workers has been a major issue in the field (Saks, 2021). This is not only a problem on the quality of service offered, but also an extra burden to the remaining workforce, which has an effect on service delivery and continuity of care. Workers are exposed to low wages, excessive workloads, emotional and physical stress, and lack of professional development, which are the factors that lead to job dissatisfaction and high turnover rates.

The implication of the turnover of Support Workers is not only to the workers but also to the people they are taking care of who may be inconvenienced and face inconsistency in their care (Carbone et al., 2022). Specifically, this is a widespread problem with the UK health and social care system in which the pressure on the care services is constantly growing with the ageing population and the following rise in the healthcare demands. The issue of Support Worker turnover requires research in order to find the ways of improving retention, job satisfaction and eventually raise the standards of care provided to vulnerable people.

1.2 Justification for the Research

The Support Worker turnover research is essential as the effects of such high turnover rates are much more than the problems with staffing and directly influence the quality of the offered services and patient outcomes. Although the role of Support Workers in the provision of care is a very important one, little is known about the mechanisms that underlie their turnover (Billings et al., 2021). To help inform the strategies which can be effective in averting the factors which lead to job dissatisfaction and consequently, turnover among Support Workers, it is important to investigate the factors that lead to job dissatisfaction, and result in turnover.

The health and social care sector especially in the UK is becoming very strained as more and more care services are demanded. Positive and qualified workforce is the key to delivering quality care, but Support Workers have to deal with unfavourable working conditions, lack of support, and low payments (De Kock et al., 2021). The study may provide informative

information on how the policy changes, workplace interventions, and better support systems can keep Support Workers in the profession.

Also, the knowledge on reasons that result in turnover can be used in workforce planning and formulating strategic HR policies that will focus on attracting and retaining qualified Support Workers. The sector can also increase the quality of care, decrease the cost of training and increase job satisfaction by the workers by improving the rate of retention.

1.3 Review of Information Sources

1.3.1 Source 1: Herber, O.R. and Johnston, B.M. (2013). The role of healthcare support workers in providing palliative and end-of-life care in the community: a systematic literature review.

This system review focuses on the roles, issues, and facilitating conditions of healthcare support workers (HCSWs) providing palliative and end-of-life care in the community. The results reveal that HCSWs are giving considerable emotional and social assistance, personal care, and respite to the families. Some of the challenges are emotional attachment, role ambiguity, and insufficiency of training. Peer grief-support groups and role definition are some of the suggested supportive measures that need to be improved to improve their effectiveness.

1.3.2 Source 2: Senek, M., Long, J., Ohlsen, S., Finn, R., Weich, S., Ryan, T. and Wood, E. (2025). Factors affecting the retention of healthcare assistants in English mental health services: a qualitative interview study.

The qualitative research paper investigates the variables that determine healthcare assistant (HCA) retention in English mental healthcare. The major aspects that are found out are large workloads, role ambiguity, and perceptions of undermining. Good relationships with colleagues and managers were reported to be very supportive. It has been recommended to use better role definitions, career development and recognition to enhance retention.

1.3.3 Source 3: Edwards, D., Trigg, L., Carrier, J., Cooper, A., Csontos, J., Day, J., Gillen, E., Lewis, R. and Edwards, A. (2022). A rapid review of innovations for attraction, recruitment and retention of social care workers, and exploration of factors influencing turnover within the UK context.

The present study focuses on the fast review of how to attract, recruit, and retain social care workers in the UK. It determines the causes that attract turnover, which include poor remuneration, inability to grow in the workplace, and emotional stress. The proposed innovations such as flexible working schedules, enhanced training, and rewards schemes are addressed as the possible steps to make the workforce more stable.

TASK 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

2.1 Overview of Research Approaches

The quantitative research is concerned with obtaining numeric data to form patterns, generalize findings, and predict results. It is normally associated with surveys, experiments, and statistics. Hypotheses and the measurement of variables that include frequency, behaviour and correlations are commonly tested using this method (Saharan et al., 2024). Qualitative research on the other hand studies the phenomena in depth using non-numerical data, that is, it studies experiences, perceptions and meanings. It is more subjective and entails such approaches as interviews, focus groups, and observations (Phillips, Tichavakunda and Sedaghat, 2023). Mixed-methods research is a combination of both methods providing a deeper insight with the benefit of using the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative information.

2.2 Justification for Chosen Methodology

In this study, researcher will adopt the qualitative research as the most suitable research methodology. This paper will be aimed at trying to comprehend why the turnover rates of the Support Workers in the UK health and social care sector are so high, especially when it comes to the mental health services (Furidha, 2023). Qualitative enables a greater investigation of individual experience, motivation and issues that Support Workers encounter that might be missed in a quantitative research.

Specifically, qualitative interviews will make it possible to gather rich and descriptive data directly as provided by Support Workers. Such a method will help gain a better insight into how the workplace-related variables (workload, emotional strain, career progression) are related to their job satisfaction and retention. Also, qualitative studies allow flexibility to consider emerging themes and insights which could be unforeseen thus giving context specific information to use in retention strategies (Bentalha and Alla, 2024). The qualitative data are subjective, and therefore, best suited to researching human-centred and complex problems such as job retention.

This qualitative method will enable the research to offer detailed information about the lived experiences of the Support Workers that in turn can be deployed to shape interventions and policy reforms in the health and social care industry.

TASK 3: DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Overview of Data Collection Methods

In research, there are two broad types of data collection that are primary and secondary data. Primary data is gathered directly by means of surveys and interviews, focus groups or observation. It is deep-rooted in the research question and offers novel knowledge (Mishra and Alok, 2022). On the other hand, secondary data is a type of data that has been collected, analysed and published by some other researcher or organization. Such data entails reports, scholarly articles, governmental publications, and databases. Secondary data is applicable to give background, trend or comparison data to support or build on primary data results.

3.2 Choice of Data Type

In this study, the information collection method would involve the use of secondary data. The study will seek to understand the determinants of retention of Support Workers within the UK health and social care services, that is, in the mental health services. Since the number of existing literature on the same is abundant, secondary data will offer a holistic background of the issue.

The secondary sources such as academic research articles, government sources, and industry reportages will ensure that the study has a wide range of findings about the factors contributing to a high turnover rate among Support Workers (Cheong et al., 2023). The available data can be used to discuss the current trends, challenges and possible solutions in detail, and therefore, it can be included in the knowledge base on the retention issue.

Moreover, second-hand information will allow conducting a comparative analysis and capitalizing on other researchers to determine the most common themes and interventions that may be useful in keeping the labor force (Schneider et al., 2023). Such a method will offer contextual data of the issue and possible solutions to the retention of Support Workers in mental healthcare.

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