



A qualitative study of organisational resilience
in care homes in Scotland

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Section 1: Introducing the Research Paper and Topic Development (Approx. 350 words)

The research paper selected for this report is “A qualitative study of organisational resilience in care homes in Scotland” by Ross et al. (2022). The study was published in the peer-reviewed journal PLOS ONE and investigates how care homes develop organisational resilience while providing care for older adults. Organisational resilience refers to the ability of an organisation to adapt to challenges, respond effectively to change, and continue delivering safe, high-quality care despite pressures or unexpected events.

The research focuses on care homes across Scotland that provide long-term care for older people. The participants included care home staff, managers, residents, family members and inspectors. By gathering views from different groups, the researchers aimed to understand how resilience is developed and maintained in everyday practice. Rather than concentrating only on problems within care homes, the study explored the positive strategies and behaviours that help staff continue to provide person-centred care in demanding situations.

The researchers developed the topic because previous studies had identified concerns about the quality of care in residential settings, including medication safety, pressure ulcers and meeting the complex health needs of older adults. They recognised that although many studies focus on identifying problems, less research has explored what enables care homes to perform well under pressure. The study therefore aimed to identify the everyday practices that support resilience and improve outcomes for residents. The findings can inform future improvements in care home management, staff training and policy development, helping organisations deliver safer and more effective care for older people throughout the UK.

Reference

Ross, A., Anderson, J.E., Selvendran, S., et al. (2022) A qualitative study of organisational resilience in care homes in Scotland. PLOS ONE, 17(12).

Section 2: Understanding the Purpose and Research Question

The main purpose of this research was to explore how organisational resilience is developed and maintained in care homes in Scotland. The researchers wanted to understand how care home staff, managers, residents, family members and inspectors adapt to everyday challenges while continuing to provide safe, person-centred care.

Rather than focusing only on problems, the study aimed to identify the factors that help care homes respond effectively to change and maintain high-quality care. The research sought to answer how organisational resilience operates in practice and what strategies can be used to strengthen resilience and improve care for older adults (Ross et al., 2022).

Section 3: Understanding the Research Methods (Part 1)

Introduction to Research Methods

Research methods are the techniques researchers use to collect and analyse information so they can answer a research question. There are three main research approaches: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods.

Quantitative research collects numerical data that can be measured and analysed using statistics. It often uses surveys, questionnaires or experiments to identify patterns or relationships. This type of research is useful when researchers want to test theories or compare results across large groups of people.

Qualitative research focuses on people's experiences, opinions and behaviours. It usually involves interviews, focus groups or observations to gain a deeper understanding of a topic. Instead of producing numbers, qualitative research produces detailed descriptions and explanations. This approach helps researchers understand why people think or act in certain ways.

Mixed-methods research combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches within the same study. Researchers collect numerical data alongside personal experiences to gain a broader understanding of the research topic. Using both methods can improve the overall quality and depth of the findings.

Which Method Was Used?

The research paper by Ross et al.

(2022) used a qualitative research method. This approach was chosen because the researchers wanted to understand how organisational resilience is experienced in everyday care home practice. They were interested in the views, experiences and behaviours of staff, managers, residents, family members and inspectors rather than collecting numerical data. Qualitative research allowed the researchers to explore these experiences in depth and identify themes that explained how resilience develops within care homes.

Section 3: Understanding the Research Methods

Primary and Secondary Data

Primary data is information that researchers collect directly from participants for a specific study.

Examples include interviews, observations, focus groups and questionnaires. This type of data is original because it comes straight from the people involved in the research.

Secondary data is information that has already been collected by someone else. It includes books, journal articles, government reports, official statistics and previous research studies. Researchers use secondary data to build background knowledge and compare their findings with existing evidence.

In this study, Ross et al. (2022) mainly used primary data because they collected new information directly from people involved in care homes. They also used secondary sources when reviewing previous research to explain why the study was needed and to support their discussion of the findings.

Data Collection

The researchers collected data over a 24-month period in several care homes across Scotland. Using different methods allowed them to develop a detailed understanding of organisational resilience from a range of perspectives.

The main method of data collection was semi-structured interviews.

These interviews gave participants the opportunity to describe their experiences while allowing the researchers to ask follow-up questions. Participants included care home staff, managers, inspectors, residents and family members. This approach produced detailed information about the challenges faced in care homes and the ways staff adapted to provide safe, person-centred care.

The researchers also carried out non-participant observations. This meant they observed daily activities and interactions within care homes without becoming involved.

Observing staff in their normal working environment helped the researchers understand how resilience was demonstrated in everyday practice rather than relying only on what participants said during interviews.

In addition, the study included focus groups, where groups of participants discussed their experiences together.

Focus groups encouraged

participants to share ideas, compare experiences and identify common issues. This helped the researchers gain a broader understanding of organisational resilience.

Using several methods of data collection strengthened the study because the researchers were able to compare information from different sources. This process, known as triangulation, improves the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research by checking whether similar themes appear across different types of evidence.

Data Analysis

After collecting the information, the researchers audio-recorded and transcribed the interviews and focus groups. This meant every conversation was written down exactly as it was spoken, ensuring that no important information was missed during the analysis.

The researchers then analysed the data using thematic analysis with the support of NVivo 12 software. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method that identifies patterns, ideas and recurring themes within large amounts of text. Instead of calculating statistics, the researchers carefully read the transcripts many times, coded similar responses and organised them into meaningful themes.

The analysis identified several important themes that explained how organisational resilience is developed in care homes. These included balancing demand with available resources, coordinating everyday care, supporting flexible teamwork, providing person-centred care and involving families in decisions about residents' quality of life. These themes helped explain how care homes continue to provide effective care despite challenges such as increasing demand, staffing pressures and complex resident needs.

Why the Qualitative Method Was

Appropriate

The qualitative approach was appropriate because the researchers wanted to understand people's experiences rather than measure numerical outcomes. Organisational resilience is a complex concept involving communication, teamwork, leadership and decision-making.

These areas are difficult to measure using numbers alone.

By using interviews, observations and focus groups, the researchers gained rich, detailed information about how resilience operates in everyday care home settings. This allowed them to identify practical strategies that could improve care quality and support staff in responding to challenges. The findings can help care home managers, healthcare professionals and policymakers strengthen organisational resilience and improve outcomes for older people living in residential care.

Section 4: Conclusion

This report examined the research paper "A qualitative study of organisational resilience in care homes in Scotland" by Ross et al.

(2022). The paper explored how care homes adapt to challenges while continuing to provide safe, effective and person-centred care for older adults. The study highlighted the importance of organisational resilience in maintaining high-quality care despite pressures such as increasing resident needs, staffing shortages and the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report identified that the researchers used a qualitative research approach, which was appropriate because it focused on understanding the experiences and perspectives of staff, managers, residents, family members and inspectors. Primary data were collected through interviews, focus groups and non-participant observations, while thematic analysis using Naive software was used to identify key themes within the data. These methods enabled the researchers to gain a detailed understanding of how resilience is developed in everyday care home practice.

Completing this report has improved my understanding of research literacy and the different stages involved in carrying out research. I have learned how to identify the purpose of a study, recognise different research methods, distinguish between primary and secondary data, and understand how qualitative data are collected and analysed. I have also developed a better understanding of the importance of critically reading research papers rather than simply accepting the findings. These skills will support my future studies in Health and Social Care by helping me evaluate evidence more effectively and apply research findings to improve professional practice. As a future health and social care practitioner, understanding research will help me make informed decisions that contribute to safe, person-centred and evidence-based care.

Reference List (Harvard)

Use these references (or check with your lecturer if they have a preferred Harvard style):

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