

**CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION SKILLS FOR THE
WORKPLACE (HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE)
LCHS4007 DIGITAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODS
Component 2 – Research Report**

Name of the Student: Mohammad Adil

Student ID: 2541273

Date of Submission 20th July

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introducing the Research Paper and Topic Development	2
Section 2: Understanding the Purpose and Research Question	2
Section 3: Understanding the Research Methods	3
Section 4: Conclusion	5
References.....	6

Section 1: Introducing the Research Paper and Topic Development

The chosen research article is titled '*She didn't know how to go back*': School attendance problems in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic—A multiple stakeholder qualitative study with parents and professionals, authored by Brontë McDonald, Kathryn J. Lester and Daniel Michelson. This article was published in the *British Journal of Educational Psychology* in 2023 and conducts research to explore the growing issue of school attendance among primary school children in England after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The research was created because of the prevalent disruption by the COVID-19 pandemic that had led to extended school shutdowns in the United Kingdom. Despite the reopening of schools, many children found it challenging to resume normal schooling. This was not the first study that proven that bad school attendance correlates with adverse educational, psychological and social consequences. Nonetheless, little research had been conducted on how both families and education professionals were impacted by the pandemic in terms of attendance. The authors thus aimed at examining the factors that could add to school attendance issues and find useful interventions that may assist kids and families (McDonald *et al.* 2023).

The study targeted parents of primary school students with school attendance issues and those professionals working in an educational context, such as headteachers, teachers, educational psychologists, special educational needs coordinators and mental health practitioners. Recruiting the participants in Southern England meant that the researchers would be able to investigate the experiences in the context of the UK education and social care.

This coverage is very relevant to the UK health and social care since frequent school attendance plays key role in determining the mental health, emotional wellbeing, education success and future opportunities of children. Special Educational Needs (SEN) and children with anxiety, family problems often need coordinated services with the schools, medical and social care services. This research notes how education and health and social care fields should work together to deliver early intervention and other related answers to the needs of vulnerable children. The study, therefore, has provided insights on essential evidence that can be used by professionals aiming at implementing beneficial, child-focused support interventions in the UK (McDonald *et al.* 2023).

Section 2: Understanding the Purpose and Research Question

The main outcome of the study was to create a complex picture of school attendance issues among primary school children during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the development of community-based interventions that could lead to increased attendance and wellbeing. The

researchers wanted to get the stories of parents and education professionals, so that they could get different perspectives on the matter.

The study focused on three questions: what were the factors behind school attendance issues in COVID-19; what formal and informal support was offered and its effectiveness; what extra interventions and implementation strategies would further benefit children and families with attendance issues.

Section 3: Understanding the Research Methods

Research methodology is the method of systematically gathering, analysing and interpreting information employed by researchers to respond to research questions. Proper choice of a methodology is important as it would establish the credibility, reliability and utility of the information. As detailed in the lecture materials, the research usually takes the quantitative, qualitative or a mixed-method approach based on the type of research problem.

Quantitative research entails gathering numerical data which can be statistically analysed to establish relationships, trends or patterns. Structured questionnaires, experiments or available numerical data are usually the type of researcher-guided device used. Samples of quantitative studies tend to be bigger, and its results are more easily generalised. Nonetheless, they commonly offer absent enlightenment of the individual experiences of the participants (Vidal et al. 2024).

Qualitative research is concerned with the experiences, opinions and ideas and behaviours of people expressed by non-numerical data. The scholars tend to use interviews, focus groups, observations and open-ended questionnaires as their method of gathering qualitative data. This method gives in-depth information about intricate problems and also allows the participants to narrate their experiences using their own vocabulary. Nevertheless, samples of qualitative research are typically small, implying that their results might not be applied to the general population.

Mixed-methods studies are research methods that integrate both qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study. When numerical data and the experiences of the participants are combined, the researchers can get a more detailed picture of such complex issues. Mixed-method designs have the advantages of both approaches but in most cases, take up more resources, time and methodological skills (Totsika et al. 2024).

A qualitative research approach was mainly utilized in the chosen article since the authors aimed to learn about the lived experiences of parents and professionals with school attendance issues after the COVID-19. The study did not use statistics but it investigated the perceptions of the study participants on the factors that caused attendance problem, the support that they got, and what interventions they thought were the most effective. This methodology was suitable since the experiences around mental health of children, anxiety and

family-school associations are multifaceted and cannot be completely comprehended by relying on merely numerical data.

The research was grounded on the primary research indicating that the researchers used the original data obtained first hand as opposed to depending on the already existing researches. Though the literature review used some secondary source to provide the research context, primary results were developed through new qualitative data collected specifically to this study. The process of collecting data took place in two stages. The researchers administered qualitative surveys of six open-ended questions to education professionals and parents in Phase One. The parents recounted their even attendance problems prior to and throughout the pandemic, the assistance they had and the supplementary assistance they thought could be pertinent. The high-risk groups, barriers to attendance, successful practice, and priorities of service improvement were discussed by professionals (Qutishat et al. 2022).

The results of the surveys served as inputs of the Phase Two which involved semi-structured interviews with targeted parents and professionals. These interviews took about 45 to 60 minutes, and they were interviewed either through telephone or zoom. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researchers to ask standard questions but still providing them the opportunity to elaborate and discuss the issues which appeared during the conversations. The flexibility produced high quality qualitative data and more profound knowledge of the experience of the participants.

The recruitment of the participants was well planned so that it could represent relevant experiences. Social media (specifically Facebook and Twitter) ads were used to recruit parents whereas schools, educational psychology services and local authority networks were used to recruit professionals. All in all, there were 29 parents and 19 professionals involved in Phase One, and there were 10 and 12 professionals and parents in Phase Two, respectively. This was a purposive sampling technique that guaranteed that the respondents had a first-hand experience on issues of school attendance during the pandemic.

The researchers used thematic framework analysis as a qualitative analysis method to analyse the data. First, all interview transcripts and survey responses have been read repeatedly to make the researchers get acquainted with the data. Significant thoughts were then coded and then placed into more general themes. During the analysis, both deductive coding (depending on research questions) and inductive coding (depending on the answers that you get) have been applied. The systematic process resulted in three broad themes that were contributors to school attendance problems, responses to attendance problems and priorities to support further (Havik and Ingul, 2022).

The selected methodology was suitable as it enabled the participants to recount on sensitive experiences in details and gave concrete suggestions to enhance support to attend school. However, there are certain drawbacks. The sample was White British-dominant, and thus it

lacks cultural diversity, whereas the sample size is also rather small and restricts the external generalisability of the results. The study had good ethical practices, and qualitative analysis and evidence worth of implementation in health, education and social care practice in the UK, despite these limitations.

Section 4: Conclusion

This report reviewed a research article by McDonald, Lester and Michelson, who examined the issue of school attendance in primary school children in the post-COVID-19 era. The research showed that the issue of attendance is akin to a number of interacting factors involving anxiety, interrupted routines, special education needs, academic demands, and poor communication between the school and the families. Implicating both the parents and the education professionals, the research dressed the entire picture of the challenges confronted in the education system and in health and social care system in the UK.

An evaluation of the research approach taken in carrying out the study was also included in the report. The qualitative approach was suitable since it allowed the participants to characterize their experiences in detail using surveys and semi-structured interview. Thematic framework analysis and primary data collection produced valuable evidence that could be used to further policy and professional practice. Despite some limitations in the study due to sample diversity and generalisability, the research was able to complete its research objectives and gave realistic recommendations on how to support children with problems in terms of attendance (Klosky et al. 2022).

The analysis has reinforced my knowledge on the research methodology, especially the distinction between the qualitative and quantitative and mixed-method research. I have become more confident in determining the questions to be answered in the research, assessing the data collection methods and interpretation of research findings. These research literacy skills will prove useful in my future courses as well as in preparing an evidence-based response in working conditions in the health and social care field.

References

Chosen Article

McDonald, B., Lester, K.J. and Michelson, D., 2023. 'She didn't know how to go back': School attendance problems in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic—A multiple stakeholder qualitative study with parents and professionals. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(1), pp.386-401.

Citations

Havik, T. and Ingul, J.M., 2022, June. Remote education/homeschooling during the COVID-19 pandemic, school attendance problems, and school return—teachers' experiences and reflections. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 7, p. 895983). Frontiers Media SA.

Klosky, J.V., Gazmararian, J.A., Casimir, O. and Blake, S.C., 2022. Effects of remote education during the COVID-19 pandemic on young children's learning and academic behavior in Georgia: Perceptions of parents and school administrators. *Journal of School Health*, 92(7), pp.656-664.

Qutishat, D., Obeidallah, R. and Qawasmeh, Y., 2022. An Overview of Attendance and Participation in Online Class During the COVID Pandemic: A Case Study. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies*, 16(4).

Totsika, V., Kouroupa, A., Timmerman, A., Allard, A., Gray, K.M., Hastings, R.P., Heyne, D., Melvin, G.A. and Tonge, B., 2024. School attendance problems among children with neurodevelopmental conditions one year following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 54(8), pp.2998-3007.

Vidal, C., Hinson, L. and Bartolini, E., 2024. School absenteeism and the COVID-19 pandemic: The role of pediatricians. *Clinical pediatrics*, 63(1), pp.5-9.