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Challenges encountered in rendering home care services to the elderly among workers of old people's home at St. Paul's catholic church Awkunanaw, Enugu, Enugu state

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Abstract

This study was embarked upon to identify the challenges encountered in rendering Home Care Services for the elderly among workers of Old People's Home at St. Paul's Catholic Church Awkunanaw, Enugu, Enugu State. The study which utilized description survey design was carried out on 22 workers with at least one month working experience. The structured form of questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected were arranged in tables, percentages, pie charts and bar charts for easy reference. Results of the study showed that in physical challenges, workers encountered difficulty in mobility among the elderly, ineffective communication among the elderly, multiple medical problems on the elderly, lack of more practical information to render the care needed, etc. In organizational challenges, most of the financial benefits come from charitable organizations and few from individuals and government. Some of the psychological challenges workers encountered include having too much work to do, poor payment, inadequate staffing, combative and uncooperativeness of some of the inmates, etc. The researcher made many recommendations and suggested that a similar study should be carried out in other Old People's Home in order to make more generalizations.

Keywords: Home Care Services, questionnaire, physical challenges, psychological challenges.

Introduction

The National Association for Home Care (NAHC) defines home care as the broad spectrum of health care and social services provided in the home environment to recovering, disabled or chronically ill patients (Lewis *et al*, 2017).

In the past decade, many changes had occurred in the healthcare system and in the settings where nurses provide care. Home healthcare had experienced an unprecedented rate of growth and is one of the fastest growing areas of the health care today.

It is on these facts that this study is aimed at identifying the challenges encountered in rendering Home Care Services for the elderly among workers at Old People's Home, St. Paul's Catholic Church Awkunanaw, Enugu.

The purpose of this study was to find out the challenges encountered in rendering Home Care Services for the elderly among workers in Old People's Home, St. Paul's Catholic Church *Awkunanaw, Enugu*. Enugu State, Nigeria.

Research Methodology

Research design

A descriptive research design was to carry out study to find out challenges encountered in rendering Home Care Services for the elderly among workers in Old People's Home.

Area of the research

This research was carried out in Old People's Home (Little Sisters of the Poor), at St. Paul's Catholic Church Awkunanaw, Enugu.

Target population

Target population was made up of 22 workers consisting of 19 females and 3 males working in Old People's Home, St. Paul's Catholic Church

Awkunanaw, Enugu at the time this research was carried out.

Sampling technique

The researcher used the convenience sampling method with a sample size of 22 which was 100% of the target population (Basavanthappa, 2014).

Instrument for data collection

The data was collected using structured questionnaire comprising of sections A and B. Section A contains 7 questions while section B contains 11 questions.

Validity of the instrument

The researcher formulated the questionnaire which was given to his supervisor for edition and approval. The supervisor then will read through the questionnaire, correct it where necessary and approved it.

Reliability of the instrument

Then, the researcher used some of the questionnaires for pilot survey. The researcher used the caregivers of the elderly Home at Holy Rosary Memorial (Old People) Home Ochadamu, Kogi State in which about 10 questionnaires were used for assessment. After testing the instrument and proven to be correct, the researcher used it for conducting the research.

Ethical considerations

The researcher applied the principles of voluntary participation and confidentiality in the study. Voluntary participation means that respondents were not forced to participate in the study. Confidentiality means that the respondents will be assured that information given by them would not be divulged to anyone.

Method of data collection

The researchers collected letter of introduction from the Director NOUN Awka Study Centre to the Sister Superior In charge of the Old Peoples'

Home, to enable him conduct the research at Old People's Home Awkunanaw, Enugu. Thereafter, the researcher went further to see the Sister Superior of the house at Old People's Home where the research was conducted and obtained permissions.

After the Sister Superior had allowed the researchers to carry out the research work, the researcher proceeded with the research work.

Then, the researchers distributed the questionnaires to all the workers, since they were

only 22 in number. Thereafter, all the questionnaires were collected back, arranged and analysed by the researcher.

Method of data analysis

The researchers gathered the data collected, using frequency tables, percentages, pie chart and simple bar chart in presentations. Thereafter, the researcher analysed and interpreted the data, and made suggestions where necessary.

Results

Table 1: Questionnaire return rate

	Number of questionnaire distributed	Number of questionnaire returned	Number of questionnaire completely filled
Total Percentage (%)	22 100	22 100	22 100

From table 1, it showed that all the questionnaires were distributed to the total number of respondents, 22 (100%) and the same number was

equally returned, 22 (100%) questionnaires. In addition, number of questionnaires that were completely filled were 22 (100%) questionnaires.

Section A

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 2: Age distribution

Age (yrs)	Respondents	Percentage(%)
20-30	5	22.73
31-40	4	18.18
41-50	10	45.45
51 and above	3	13.64
Total	22	100

Table 2 above showed that majority of the respondents, 10 (45.45%) were between the age range of 41-50 years, 5 (22.73%) respondents were between the age range of 20-30 years, 4

(18.18%) respondents were between the age of 31-40 years and 3 (13.64%) respondents were 51 years and above

Table 3: Gender distribution

Age (yrs)	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Males	3	13.64
Females	19	86.86
Total	22	100

From table 3, it showed that majority of the respondents, 19 (86.36%) were females while 3(13.64%) respondents were males.

Table 4: occupation distribution

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Physician	1	4.55
Nurse	2	9.09
Physiotherapist	-	-
Dietician	2	9.09
Social Worker	3	13.64
Home health aide	12	54.55
Pharmacist	-	-
Occupational therapist	-	-
Dry cleaners	2	9.09
Total	22	100

Table 4 above showed that majority of the respondents, 12 (54.55%) were home health aides, 1 (4.55%) was a physician, 2 (9.09%) were dieticians, 3 (13.64%) were social workers, 2

(9.09%) were nurses, 2 (9.09%) were dry cleaners.

None of the respondents was physiotherapist, pharmacist or occupational therapist.

Table 5: Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Igbo	22	100
Hausa	-	-
Yoruba	-	-
Total	22	100

Table 5, showed that all the respondents, 22 (100%) were Igbos.

None was Hausa or Yoruba.

Table 6: Marital Status

Marital Status	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Single	-	-
Married	22	100
Divorced	-	-
Separated	-	-
Widow	-	-
Widower	-	-
Total	22	100

Table 6 indicated that all the respondents, 22 (100%) were married.

Table 7: Highest Educational Qualifications

Highest Educational Qualification	Respondents	Percentage (%)
No Formal Education	-	-
FSLC	-	-
WAEC/NECO	17	77.27
RN/RM	2	9.09
MBBS	1	4.55
B.Sc (specify)	2	9.09
Total	22	100

From table 7, it showed that majority of the respondents, 17(77.27%) had WAEC/NECO as their highest educational qualification, 2 (9.09%) respondents were RN/RM, 1 (4.55%) respondent

was a doctor, 2 (9.09%) respondents had B.Sc in Nutrition and Dietetics, none of the respondents had only First School Leaving Certificate or did not attend school at all.

Table 8: Religion

Religion	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Christianity	22	100
Islam	-	-
Traditional	-	-
Others	-	-
Total	22	100

Table 8 showed that all the respondents, 22 (100%) were Christians. None was Islam or Traditionalist

Physical challenges encountered while caring for the elderly

Questions on table 9 and 10 are for the physical challenges encountered while caring for the elderly.

Table 9: what are the physical challenges you encounter while rendering Home Care Services for the elderly?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Ineffective communication among the elderly	6	27.27
Multiple medical problems on the elderly	5	22.73
Difficulty in mobility among the elderly	20	90.91
Disagreement and discord among the relatives of the elderly regarding the care needed	-	-
Nurses and physicians struggle with communication barriers, especially telephone communication	-	-
Elders' inability to afford the care needed	-	-
Lack of more practical information to render the care needed	12	54.54

From table 9, it showed that majority of the respondents, 20 (90.91%) complained that there is difficulty in mobility among the elderly, 5 (22.73%) respondents said that the elders experienced multiple medical problems, 6

(27.27%) respondents said that there is ineffective communication among the elderly, and 12 (54.54%) respondents said that they lack more practical information to render the care needed.

Table 10: What is the caregivers' unmet information needs while caring for the elderly

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Details on medical issues	18	81.82
Treatment options	1	4.55
Complementary therapy	-	-
Alternative therapy	10	45.45
Proactive information	5	22.73
Other information needs which are not met	-	-

Table 10 showed that majority of the respondents, 18(81.82%) responded that their unmet information needs were details on medical issues, 10 (45.45%) respondents replied that they need information on alternative therapy, 5 (22.73%) respondents responded that they need proactive information so that they know what to expect in the future, and 1 (4.55%) respondent responded

that he/she needs information on treatment options.

11 Organizational challenges encountered as it renders its services to the elderly people

Question on table 11 is for the organizational challenges encountered.

Table 11: How does the organization make financial benefit to continue to improve the performance of the home?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Through admissions	-	-
Through charitable organization	22	100
Through government grants and funds	2	9.09
Through individuals	2	9.09

Table 11 showed that all the respondents, 22 (100%) said that the organization benefit financially through charitable organization, 2 (9.09%) respondents said through government grants and funds, and 2 (9.09%) respondents responded through individuals.

111 Psychological challenges encountered while caring for the elderly.

Question on tables 12, 13, 14 and 15 are for the psychological challenges workers encounter while rendering Home Care Services for the elderly.

Table 12: How does your job primarily motivate you?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Through social commitment	4	18.18
Through achievement motivation	10	45.45
Being responsible for solving diverse human problems	8	36.36

From table 12, it showed that 10 (45.45%) respondents said that it was through achievement motivation that their job mainly motivate them, 8(36.36%) respondents chose the responsibility of

solving diverse human problems as how their job motivate them, and 4 (18.18%) respondents responded through social commitment.

Table 13: What are the sources of stress encountered while caring for the elderly?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Inadequate staffing	-	-
Having too much work to do	6	27.27
Interruptions	-	-
Poor payment	10	45.45
Being responsible for the elderly	-	-
Having non-health professional to determine how to do the job	-	-

From table 13, it showed that 10 (45.45%) respondents responded poor payment as their source of stress while 6 (27.27%) respondents

replied having too much work to do as their source of stress.

Table 14: What are the factors related to higher work stress you encounter in the home?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Having a fixed schedule	-	-
Night work	3	13.64
Feeling burden among the workers	10	45.45
Inadequate facilities for the workers	9	40.91
Less enthusiasm	-	-

Table 14 showed that 10 (45.45%) respondents responded feeling burden among the workers as the factor related to higher work stress among

them, followed by inadequate facilities for the workers (40.91%) and finally night work, 3 (13.64%).

Table 15: What are the reason(s) for job dissatisfaction among workers in Old People’s Home?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Ineffective communication	-	-
Frequent deaths	-	-
Combative and uncooperativeness of some of the inmates	2	9.09
Inadequate staffing	5	22.73
The presence of non-health professionals to choose how the caregivers must do their job	-	-

Table 15 showed that 5 (22.73%) respondents responded inadequate staffing as a reason for job dissatisfaction, followed by combative and

uncooperativeness of some of the inmates as responded by 2 (9.09%) respondents.

IV Interventions which can be used to handle these challenges

Question on tables 16, 17 and 18 are for the interventions used to handle these challenges.

Table 16: What are the interventions used to handle these challenges?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Using non-verbal means of communication on the elderly who cannot communicate effectively	6	27.27
Provision of hearing aids to the elders in need	1	4.55
Invitation of speech therapist where necessary	3	16.64
Provision of assistive devices for those with difficulty in mobility for easy ambulation	18	81.82
Provision of financial aids by government, individuals, etc.	22	100
Provision of more practical information to the workers	2	9.09
Having concrete agreement and avoiding quarrel among the relatives of the elderly.	-	-

Table 16 shows that all the respondents, 22 (100%) suggested provision of financial aids by government, individuals, charitable organizations as one of the interventions, . 18(81.82%) respondents suggested that the elders should be provided with assistive devices for those finding it difficult to ambulate. 3 (16.64%) respondents suggested invitation of speech therapist where

necessary, 6 (27.27%)b respondents suggested use of non-verbal communication on those elders who cannot communicate effectively, 2 (9.09%) respondents suggested provision of more practical information to the workers, and 1 (4.55%) respondent replied provision of hearing aids to the elders in need.

Table 17: What measures should be used to handle organizational challenges?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
The organization should carefully consider before using agency staff	-	-
Provision of financial assistance through, government, individuals, charitable organizations, etc.	20	90.91
Provision of grants and funds by the government to the organization.	20	90.91

From table 17, majority of the respondents 20 (90.91) suggested that in handling organization challenges, individuals, government, charitable organizations, etc should provide financial

assistance to the Old People’s Home. Moreso, government should provide grants and funds to the organization.

Table 18: In psychological challenges, suggest ways stress can be handled.

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Adequate staffing	1	4.55
Better payment of workers	10	45.45
Non-involvement of non-health professionals to determine how caregivers should render their care	-	-
Provision of adequate facilities for the workers	11	50
Caregivers should have strong enthusiasm to render care	2	9.09
Provision of competitive compensation in the home.	-	-

Table 18 showed that 11(50%) respondents suggested that provision of adequate facilities for the workers helps in handling stress among workers, 10(45.45%) respondents suggested better payment of the workers, 2(9.09%) replied

that caregivers should have strong zeal to render their care, and 1 (4.55%) respondent said adequate staffing as one of the ways stress can be handled

Table 19: In what ways can job dissatisfaction be handled?

Options	Respondents	Percentage(%)
Promotion of positive communication techniques	3	13.64
Adequate staffing	5	22.73
Improvement in the survey process	-	-
Care-related stressors should be addressed	2	9.09
Non-health care professionals should not decide how the caregivers should do their job	-	-

Table 19 showed that 5(22.73) respondents suggested adequate staffing as one of the ways job dissatisfaction can be handled among workers, 2 (9.09%) respondents suggested that care-related

stressors should be addressed, and 3 (13.64%) respondents suggested that there should be promotion of positive communication techniques on the elderly.

Discussion

From the data analyzed, it was discovered that 12 (54.54%) respondents replied that there was lack of more practical information to render the care needed. This is in line with Karla *et al.* (2018) in their research work where they conducted a systemic literature review to identify studies of caregiver information needs. From the studies, 32 (51.72%), respondents replied an acute desire by caregivers for practical and timely information on their clients situation.

Also, in the caregivers unmet information needs, 18(81.92%) respondents mentioned details on medical issues, 10 (45.45%) respondents said alternative therapy and 5 (22.73%) of the respondents said proactive information as their unmet information needs. This is also in line with Karla, et al (2018) on the research conducted where 152 (85.30%) respondents replied details on medical issues, 120 (42.1%) of the respondents responded alternative therapy, and 58 (21.98%) of the respondents said proactive information as their unmet information needs.

From the data analyzed, it was discovered that 22 (100%) respondents said that the organization benefits financially through charitable organizations, 2 (9.09%) of the respondents said through individuals, government grants and funds. This finding does not correspond with Robin (2018) on study to determine how nursing homes benefit financially from investments made in improving performance where the financial benefit is mainly through admissions, 69 (81%) respondents said. The difference may be attributed to different areas of the study.

On how the job mainly motivated the workers, the findings of the data analyzed showed that 10(45.45%) of the respondents said through achievement motivation, 8(36.36%) of the respondents said being responsible for solving diverse human problems, and 4 (18.18%) of the respondents replied through social commitment.

This agrees with the work of Bergler (2012) when he conducted research on psychology of nursing personnel in home care nursing. He used 100 employees of home care centres from which were 51 qualified nursing staff, 28 assistants and/or trainees and 21 young people doing community service as an alternative to military service. The results obtained showed that caregiver's job motivation was through social commitment said 25 (23% respondents); achievement motivation replied 54 (51% respondents) but 21 (13%) of the respondents said being responsible for solving diverse human problems which is not in line with the researcher's findings. The difference may be due to different areas of the study.

On the sources of stress workers encountered, 10 (45.45%) of the respondents replied poor payment and 6(27.27%) respondents said that they have too much work to do. This corresponds with the work of Lapane and Hughes (2014) when they conducted a research on considering the employee's point of view: perceptions of job satisfaction and stress among nursing staff in nursing homes. In the results, 70 (44.96%) of the respondents replied poor payment and 36 (23.03%) respondents replied having too much work to do.

On the reason(s) for job dissatisfaction, 5 (22.73%) respondents said it was inadequate staffing and 2 (9.09%) respondents replied that some of the inmates were combative and uncooperative. This is in line with Cherry *et al.* (2014) when they conducted a research on perceptions of job satisfaction and the regulatory environment among nurse aides and charge nurses in long-term care.

In the results, the reasons for job dissatisfaction included inadequate staffing as replied by 60 (24.08%) respondents and 30 (12.04%) respondents replied combative and uncooperative residents.

In the factors related to higher work stress, 10 (45.45%) respondents replied that the workers feel burdened and 9 (40.91%) respondents replied inadequate facilities for the workers. This is in line with the work of HSU *et al.* (2014) when they conducted a research on work stress among nursing home care attendants in Taiwan.

From the result obtained, factors related to higher work stress included feeling burdened as replied by 19 (47%) of the respondents and inadequate facilities for the workers as said by 17 (38.01%) of the respondents.

In organizational challenges, 22 (100%) respondents said the organization benefits financially through charitable organizations. In psychological challenges, 10(45.45%) and 6 (27.27%) of the respondents said that poor payment and having too much work to do were sources of stress they encountered respectively. Also, 5(22.73%) and 2 (9.09%) of the respondents said inadequate staffing and combative and uncooperativeness of some of the inmates as reasons for job dissatisfaction respectively. Finally, in the factors related to higher work stress, 10 (45.45%) of the respondents said that they feel burdened, 9(40.91%) replied inadequate facilities for the workers, and 3(13.64%) said night work.

On the interventions used to handle these challenges, 22 (100%) of the respondents suggested that in handling physical challenges, individuals, government, charitable organizations should provide financial aids. In handling organisational challenges, 20 (90.91%) of the respondents also suggested that government should provide financial assistance to the home. In handling psychological challenges, 10 (45.45%) respondents suggested better payment of workers and 11 (50%) suggested provision of adequate facilities for the workers.

Conclusion

The study revealed difficulty in mobility among the elderly, ineffective communication among the elderly, multiple medical problems on the elderly, and lack of more practical information to render the care needed are the physical challenges workers encountered while rendering Home Care Services for the elderly at Old People's Home. Also, the caregiver's unmet information needs include details on medical issues, proactive information, alternative therapy, and treatment options. It also showed that most of the financial benefits the organization makes came from charitable organization while few were through individuals, government grants and funds. The psychological challenges workers encountered were their primary sources of job motivation were through achievement motivation, followed by being responsible for solving diverse human problems and finally, through social commitment. Most workers were poorly paid and they had too much work to do. These constitute stress to the workers. Many workers feel burdened followed by inadequate facilities for them and finally night work and these were the factors related to higher work stress workers encounter while caring for the elderly in the home. Inadequate staffing, combative and uncooperativeness of some of the inmates were the reasons for job dissatisfaction among workers.

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