Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessing Ghana's eHealth workforce: implications for planning and training

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Topic

Assessing Ghana's eHealth workforce: implications for planning and training

* Needs revision. It should indicate IT or HIM ehealth workforce include both IT and other health workers with digital technology skills

Abstract: not concise

Background

* It says according to the framework, four main strategic themes were outlined. How these themes contextualize to the research question?

46-48 "Nonetheless, the potential of the country's eHealth strategy cannot be fully realized without a well-trained workforce [14, 16].

* What is ehealth and ehealth workforce need to be operationalize and detail description should be provided.

* I think, ehealth workforce has broader scope and definition.

* Be specific to the scope and objective of the study

Although capacity building is one of the four main themes of Ghana's eHealth strategy, very little is known, if at all, about the characteristics of the required workforce. Thus, there is a critical need to identify the requisite numbers and balanced mix of eHealth cadres, including their training needs, necessary for effective and efficient adoption of eHealth [1, 17]

* How do you define the ehealth workforce in the context of this study? How do you relate with the four main strategic themes which you outlined above?

From the context of ehealth workforce please consider the following:
In the health care system nowadays the system require a robust supply of both highly proficient eHealth/IT professionals as well as an overall workforce that has a sufficient level of digital skills to make the optimum use of eHealth information technology.

To be effective and efficient in the health service delivery both need to work together because they are interdependent.

The characteristics, sufficiency and number as well as the availability of technology has to be assessed simultaneously. Because the IT people may not the only one who involve in information recording and generation.

Objective

Four objectives are to many.

For a manuscript clear and manageable objective is good than listing too many objectives. Use one manageable objective.

Methods

Table 1

Characterization of workforce??

Characterization of workforce might be a good idea. However, in research one of the role of the researcher is making the issue to suite to the local context. Is this characterization adaptable to the context? Or just you brought what was written for Canada? Measurement ? are they valid or standard? any thing that you have done before using it?

One of the purpose of using qualitative research should be for such kind of research purpose.

Setting

All hospitals use electronic health management information system. This system involve not only the IT professionals but also other HWs.

If so why you pick the IT workforce as ehealth workforce? The role of other workforce and the time they share is also important.

In HRH, unlike other programs and projects the workforce/or the system we establish can serve for long time in the system, health workers so that you have to be clear and make
sure its implication for now and future effect on the workforce and other components of the system.

Study cohort 19-22

* The eHealth workforce as all hospital employees whose work involves technical/software support (IT) and health records/information management (HIM)

* Taking the IT people as study population might inflate the number of IT people required by a hospital. This may also mask the role of other health workers involved digital technology use.

Data collection

* Why you used the qualitative and quantitative data collection methods together?

* Which study objective addressed by which method of data collection?

* Why you interviewed 76 staff members from IT and HIM? What is the ideal sample size for qualitative study? Why you did not involve other health workers in the qual methods?

* How did you manage the data and what was analysis procedure? What are the main findings?

* Observation: reporting the type and procedure of observation is also essential. Why 45 (60%)? Type of observation? was that participatory or non-participatory. What is the advantage and disadvantage of each? nothing has been reported.

* For each method of data collection the reason behind has to be reported in detail.

* Similarly, you have to give detail and adequate information on the data analysis.

N.B Multiple data collection methods put the finding of the study and its reliability questionable unless all fit to the purpose and properly managed to the end.

In pp 12

* For example, the service standard for patient discharge by a HIM staff member can be expressed as "10 minutes per inpatient", or "25 inpatients per day

* In patient discharge, who is going to record the discharge summary, no health care provider involve in this activity?
* Are there IT people in each in patient unity? If so where is interoperability of the IT system?

* HMIS, Lab. Pharmacy, finance and other units? Including HRIS and functionality of the IT system?

**PP20**

* Because the HIM cadres are heavily involved in the management of patients' information at the point of care, their numbers are almost proportional to bed-size and patient-volume.

* What does it mean? Are no health workers electronically manage patient information? doctors and nurses

**Result**

* For quantitative method the findings seems fine however since the sample size small it can put the validity of the finding into question? issue of measurement as well

* Moreover, what about the findings from the qualitative and observation. Where are they?

* For me the result is section seems incomplete.

* N.B have you noticed the proportion of IT staff? The implication of feasibility even without having interoperable system and full functioning IT system.

**Discussion**

* Paragraph one: is not in line with the findings of the study. Use the findings of your own study as a point of reference to discuss.

* About women you discussed a lot : What is the implication of under representation

* Paragraph three:

* The intent of this paragraph is not clear.

Are this based on the findings? Or is that from literature? Choose either stand, using your own findings or literature. Make this very clear
The main purpose of discussion is:

1. To explain the findings of the study using personal experience and previous literature,
2. Consulting previous researches in the area is very important,
3. Moreover it is a section which you highlight the implication of the findings,

To the system in terms of health service delivery, effectiveness and efficiency

Workforce development and emerging skills: cost and training

Skill mix is not only with IT but such skills are also crucial with health care providers, the ways how such skills can be networked to be effective and efficient. Since IT is more of about communication.

Summary

* Ehealth workforce is highly required but as the author you need to look the issue from different perspective. Look the above comments and consider them. Looking previous researches in the area is also helpful.

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