

The Costs and Predictors of Peer Outreach Worker Turnover

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**Thank You for Your
Input in this Analysis!**

Goals of the Session

- **Present methods**
- **Present findings**
 - Costs of turnover
 - Factors associated with turnover
- **Discuss how grantees confront turnover**

Turnover Statistics

- **Total number of POWs: 51**
- **Total number of POWs who left: 29**
 - Grantee average: 3.6
 - Range: 9 to 0
- **Average length of time per POW: 14 months**
 - Average longest time: 22 months
 - Average shortest time: 6 months

Data Sources: Quantitative & Qualitative

- **Turnover tool**
- **Interviews with grantee staff**
- **Budget data**
- **Client enrollment data**

Data Analysis: Costs of Turnover

- **Financial costs**
 - How much does turnover cost grantees in staff time and materials?
- **Program costs**
 - How does turnover affect remaining staff and relationships with clients?
 - How is turnover related to client enrollment?

Data Analysis: Factors Associated with Turnover

- **Explored the correlation between # of POWs who left and...**
 - Geographic characteristics
 - Grantee characteristics
 - POW characteristics

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Variable Costs of Turnover

Grantee	Total Cost
BAS	\$940
LA County	\$1,659
Harris County	\$2,300
WSU	\$2,344
APEB	\$3,943
WFT	\$4,041
UNC	\$6,230
MOCHA	\$24,981

- **Median cost of replacing one POW was \$3,144**

Training Accounts for Majority of Costs

Grantee	Separation	Hiring	Training
MOCHA	\$8,367	\$11,024	\$5,591
UNC	\$1,432	\$980	\$3,817
WSU	\$395	\$261	\$1,688
APEB	\$273	\$1,090	\$2,580
Harris County	\$163	\$1,086	\$1,052
WFT	\$153	\$1,937	\$1,951
BAS	\$90	\$224	\$627
LA County	\$25	\$780	\$853
Median	\$218	\$1086	\$1951

- **Average time to hire a replacement: 2 months 3 weeks**
- **Average time to train: 2 months 3 weeks**

Impact of Program Design and Context

- **Nature of hiring procedures**
- **Degree of training resources available**
- **Experience of POWs hired**
- **Degree of turnover**

Grantees with Higher Costs per POW

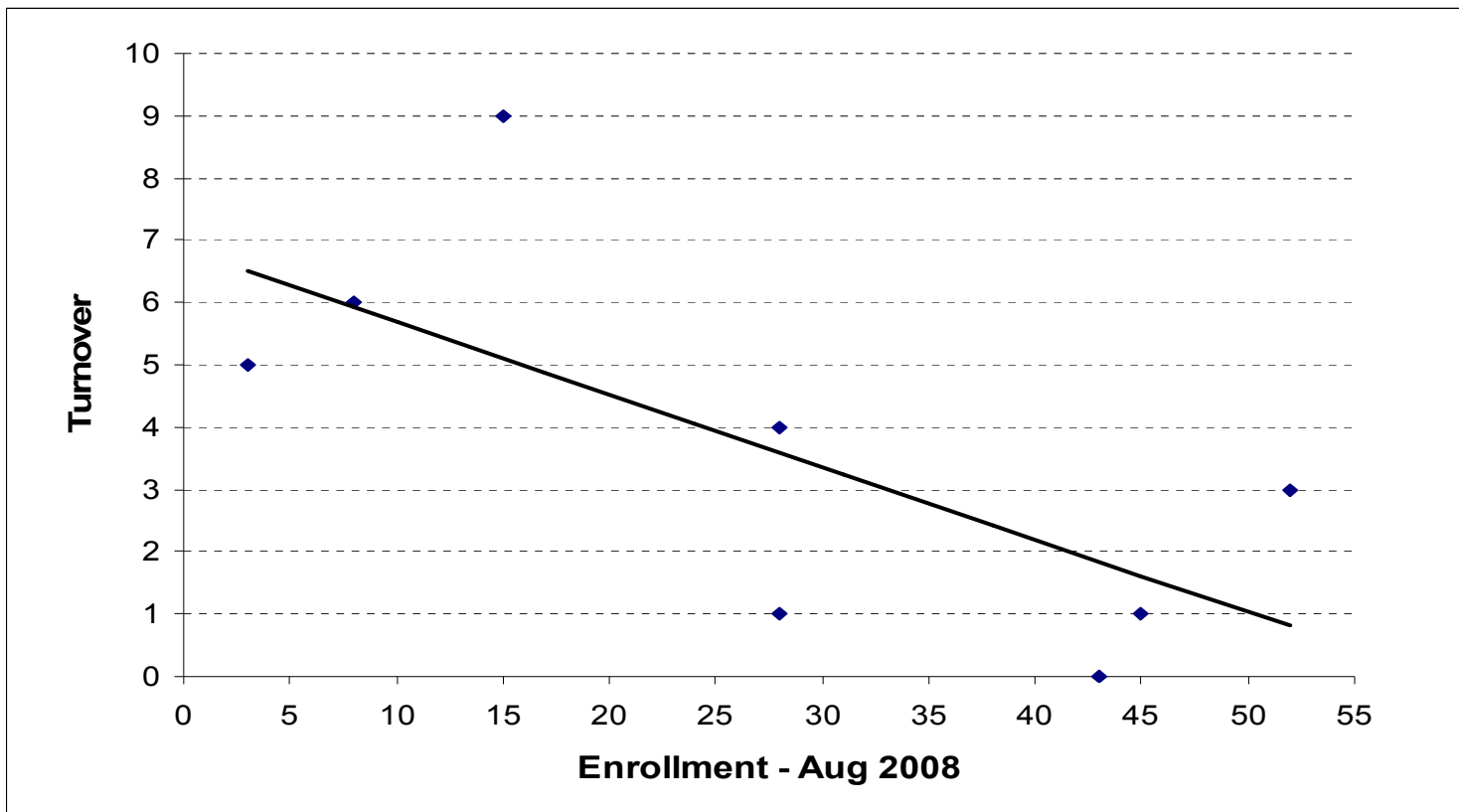
- **Hired POWs who more closely reflected target population**
- **Spent more internal resources/staff time on hiring/training**
- **Had higher turnover - especially terminations**

Minimal Program Costs

- **Clients noticed turnover BUT:**
 - They did not drop out of the intervention more frequently
 - Their information was not lost as a result of turnover
- **No “snow ball” effect of remaining staff leaving**
 - *“More difficult to work with them than without them”*

Correlation Between Turnover and Enrollment

- **R value = -0.70, P value = 0.06**



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Impact of Location on Hiring/Retention

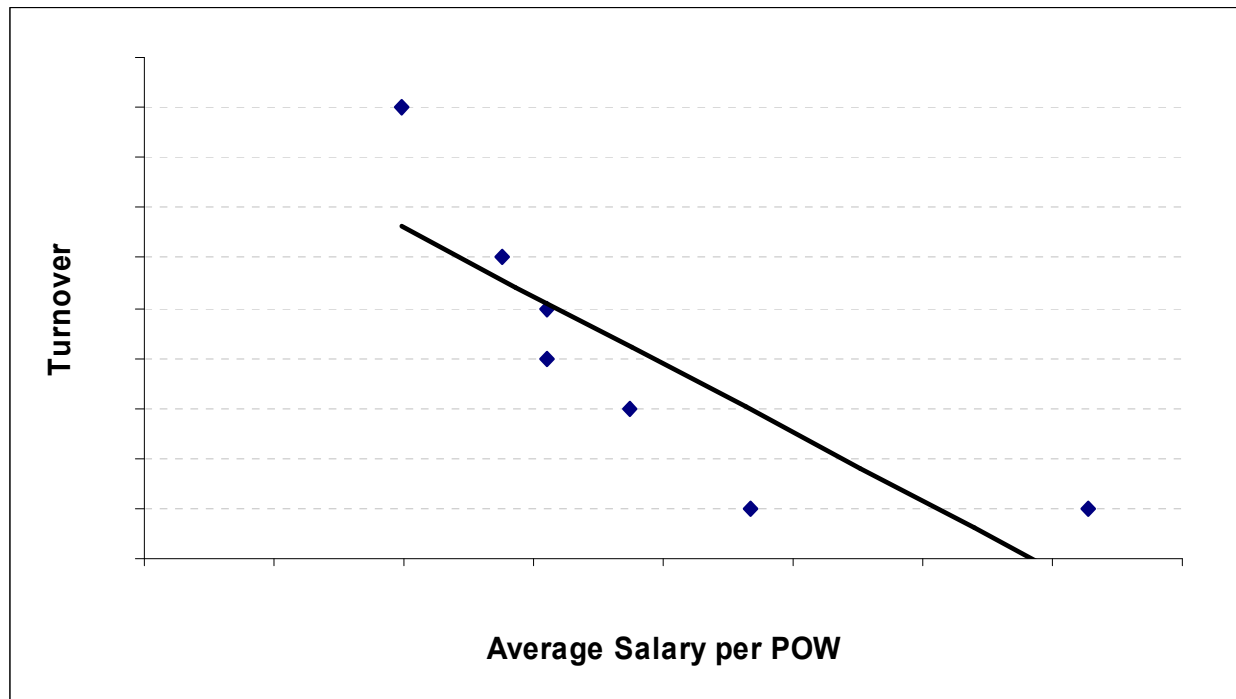
- **Grantees report that in small communities:**
 - POWs often sacrifice social life
 - Especially when internet use is restricted
 - Harder to replace POWs who leave
- **No statistically reliable relationship between population size and turnover**

Importance of Salaries and Benefits

- **Higher salaries correlated with less turnover**
- **Almost all grantees staffed POWs as full-time employees with benefits**
 - Important to treat POWs the same as other employees
 - *“We thought they would stay longer with benefits. It did help, but what got in the way was the lack of maturity”*

Correlation Between Turnover and POW Salary

- **R value = -0.8, P value = 0.02**



Difficulties Experienced with Younger POWs

- **Overlap between social and work spheres:**
 - *“You’re asking them to give up the ability to go out and get drunk at parties.”*
- **Extensive responsibilities and flexibility of the position:**
 - More than “street outreach”, need to represent the project
 - *“When I was 17 or 18, I wouldn’t have wanted to give that information to a young person.”*
- **Lack of maturity:**
 - *“You cannot excuse them for being young or learning, you have to follow agency protocol as for any other employee.”*

Voluntary POW Separations

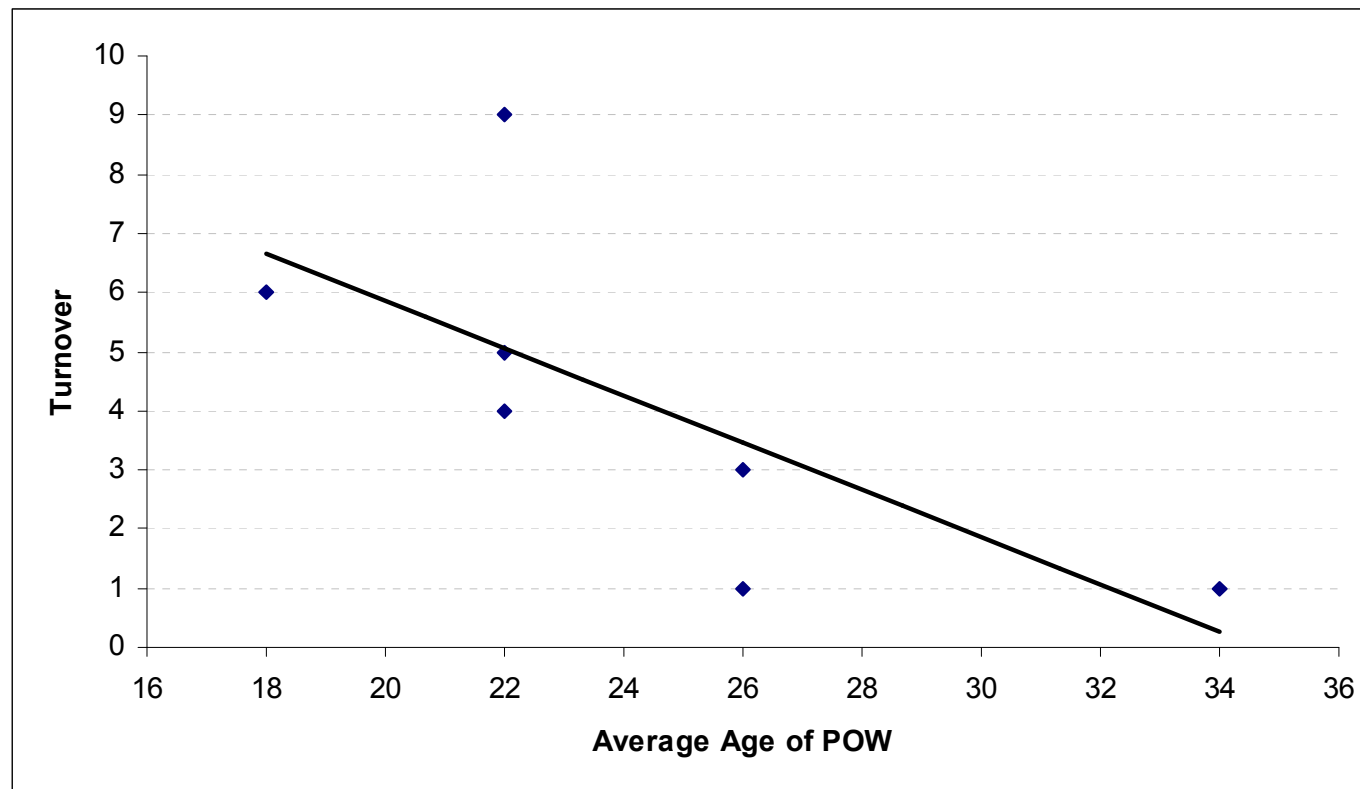
- **Total: 10**
- **# of grantees reported they left because...**
 - Better paid position: 4
 - Different expectations: 2
 - Lack of support: 2
 - Work in a different field: 1
 - Other: Health, relocation, misconduct

Involuntary POW Separations

- **Total: 19**
- **# of grantees reported they left because...**
 - Not dependable: 3
 - Qualifications were a poor fit: 2
 - Behaved inappropriately with clients: 2
 - Other: Misconduct, failure to adhere to program/agency policies

Correlation Between Age and Turnover

- **R value = -0.7, P value = 0.07**



No Correlation Between Experience and Turnover

- **1-2 years in the field was most common level of experience**
 - E.g. volunteers or program participants
- **Education varied - less than high school to college degree**
 - Related to hiring requirements

Factors Associated with Turnover: Summary

Factor	Qualitative Association	Quantitative Association
Population/location	Yes	No
Employee status	Yes	No
Salary	Yes	Yes
Age	Yes	Yes
Education	No	No
Work Experience	Yes	No

Strategies Used to Support POWs

- **Create a rigorous interview process**
- **Integrate POWs into project team**
 - E.g. cross-training, meetings, conferences
- **Approach supervision as mentorship**
 - Include staff with experience in youth development
 - Discuss POWs' personal/professional goals and create a plan
- **Create a space to vent**

Strategies Used to Support POWs, continued...

- **Separate POW training from research project**
 - Desire for training on professionalism/public speaking/representing your organization
 - Importance of informal training
- **Hire POWs on short-term placements**

“It’s a balance between relate-ability and professionalism”

- **“Inherent tension” creates a Catch-22 situation with POWs**
 - *“The more closely the peers matches your population, the more problems you will have with boundaries”*
 - Issue of boundaries and lacking professionalism at core of terminations

Questions

- **What characteristics of being a “peer” are most important with YCMSM?**
 - Age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, HIV status?
- **What is the most effective process for training POWs?**
- **How can grantees deal with the connection between POW turnover and turnover of higher level staff?**