NURSES’ OPINION OF PAIN IN PATIENTS WHO SUFFER FROM DEMENTIA

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that NURSES OPINION OF PAIN IN PATIENTS WHO SUFFER FROM DEMENTIA is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE                               DATE
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ABSTRACT

Ageing is a process that starts from the moment of conception. It is accompanied by gradual impairment of body functions rendering the elderly less active socially as well as physically as a result of organ failure and compromised immunity system, leading to physical illness that may cause pain as well as mental illness such as dementia. In the United Kingdom majority of elderly people suffers from dementia and are cared for by nurses in the nursing homes.

Patients with dementia experience pain as a result of other co-morbidities such as arthritis, but may be undiagnosed and therefore under-treated due to change in their behaviour. Inability to express pain causes concern to the nurse who provides care to the patient. Although some consequences of ineffective pain management have been evaluated, the question of nurses’ opinions of pain experience in patients who suffer from dementia has, according to the extensive literature search done by the researcher, not been investigated.

The purpose of this study is to describe and explore nurses’ opinion of pain in patients suffering from dementia. The researcher adopted a qualitative approach to capture the participants’ experiences and opinions of the nurses. A non-experimental qualitative research approach which is exploratory-descriptive and contextual in nature guided the researcher to explore and describe the nurses’ opinion of pain in patients who suffer from dementia. Structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with seven participants involved in elderly care delivery. Biographical data were analysed and presented using descriptive statistics. The program for qualitative data analysis guided the process of categorizing and coding the data.

KEY CONCEPTS:
Dementia in the elderly; Grosvenor Nursing Home, pain in the aged, pain in dementia
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my parents, Mr AK Ramasehla and my late mother Mrs HM Ramasehla.

It’s comforting to know you’re there,
Always showing how much you care.
So I just want to say:
Thank you for always being there, Mohlokwa.