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Nurses' knowledge, attitude, and perceptions toward people with dementia: A systematic literature review

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Background: Knowledge, attitude, and perception interact to influence each other differently. The concept of knowledge is ambiguous, however, in nursing, it can be defined as the cognitive ability to care for people since it underpins the role of nurses in healthcare. While perception is an understanding or interpretation of nursing behaviours. The interpretation can be based on people's thoughts or from the viewpoints of the nurses. Though, nurses' perception of their behaviour is significantly influenced by external factors such as knowledge and public opinion. Attitude is the tendency of individual thoughts, beliefs, and feelings relative to a psychological object. The performance of the nurse is influenced by attitude since feelings, beliefs, and behaviours occur in the long-term. Nurses attitudes drive their competence in their performance. The concept of attitude in nursing relates to how nurses feel, thought or belief about their profession and its part of what drives competency in nursing.

Research question: what are nurses' attitude, knowledge, and perceptions when caring for people with dementia globally?

Method: a systematic search was conducted in scientific databases between November 2017 and April 2018 using specific keywords.

Results: N=79 articles were included in the study and NVivo software been used to analyse the literature that emerged the following themes (1) Dementia Knowledge Improves Communications Skills, (2) Tools for Assessing and Improving Nurses' Dementia Knowledge. (3) Nurses' Attitudes in Acute Care Settings, (4) Nurses' Attitudes toward End-of-Life Care, (5) Relationship Between Knowledge and Nurses' Attitudes, (6) Approaches to Care and Nurses' Attitudes, (7) Involving People with Dementia in Decision-making, (8) Managing Dementia with other Complications, (9) Nurses' Perceptions on Their Care for People with Dementia, and (10) Nurses' Perceptions Affected by Their Knowledge.

Conclusion: Nurses attitudes, knowledge and perceptions are important facets that influence the competency of nurses in caring for people with dementia. It can have a profound negative impact on the person with dementia, their families, and the country. Many policy-makers and policy-making organisations, including the WHO, have realised the importance of improving the care that is accorded to people with dementia. Improving care means gathering enough evidence, knowledge, and attitude of people who are directly involved with people with dementia or their close relations.

Biography

Sara Mahmoud Yaghmour PGA, MAdvNur Edu, BSN, CerIII Aged care, RN Sara is a psychogeriatric nursing lecturer at King Abdulaziz University and now a PhD candidate at the University of Southampton. Currently, she is working on a project to investigate nurses' perception and learning needs when caring for people with dementia using a diary-interview method. Her research interests include nursing education, psychogeriatric nursing care, and people with dementia care. "I aim to be capable of developing and communicating new knowledge in psychogeriatric nursing through designing and carrying out high-quality research and training".

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