**Enhancing Dementia Care in Critical Care Settings**

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Enhancing Dementia Care in Critical Care Settings: A Mixed-Methods Approach

# Abstract

This research project intends to investigate if the use of the Dementia Friendly Kit could have better behavioral outcomes in demented patients who are critically ill and hospitalized. A mixed method approach which will engage in-depth face-to-face interviews with nursing staff and dementia patients as well as completion of survey scales will be able to give a wide perspective of the effectiveness of the toolkit. The study will be conducted during the service period of a health care facility, with about 20-24 participants. The qualitative data will Be analyzed using the thematic coding method, while the quantitative data will be described with the help of descriptive analysis. This will allow for critical thinking and the efficiency of the study.

The strategy of data triangulation will be applied here in order to compare and conjoin the outcomes, so that the project can be more reasonable and accurate. The impact of ethical dilemmas like confidentiality, voluntary participation, and informed consent will be seriously taken into account during the implementation of this study. The social ecological model will be the main guideline that will be used in this project. It is established on the premise that individual, interpersonal, community and organizational factors are the ones that set the scene for a good dementia care. The study proposes to achieve this objective by implementing disruption techniques and providing personalized care. The outcome would be improved care for patients with dementia, increased awareness of their special needs, and an overall improvement of health outcomes. The data from studies like these could be used to formulate intervention programs for the management of dementia care in the critical care areas which will benefit not only the patients but also the health care professionals.

# Introduction

Dementia disease is the most common and challenging issue in both chronic and intensive care centers. This research is specifically dedicated to fixing the problems and the behavior of patients with dementia and their outcomes change after they use the Department of Aging Dementia toolkit. The research will adopt a mixed-method approach in general which will give a better picture to be used in identifying the strategies that will be most effective in ensuring proper delivery of dementia management care in critical settings, especially. Through this research work, the effectiveness of music therapy in addressing the agitation behaviors and cognitive abilities of the patients is the main focus. The decision of music therapy as the main tool in the care of the dementia patients is based solely on its ability to give the patients who suffer from dementia a healing and relieving experience.

The next part will focus on the Dementia Friendly Toolkit which was a focus of the past to a music therapy intervention tool which is the simple one. The main aim of the study is the music therapy as a separate or combined therapy which is used to research the capability of the patients with dementia to regain the lost behavioral and functional capabilities. In the next point I would like to reflect on the mind-body connection that is brought by music therapy and how it improves the quality of life as well as general health of patients.

## Background

The subject of our research is how to improve the care for dementia patients in acute health care system, which is also seen as the main problem in the context of the way dementia patients cope in such settings. The studies in the past indicate that having proficient and well-trained healthcare staffs increases the effectiveness of the dementia centers that take care of the acute care field. The study's methodological framework incorporates both qualitative and quantitative research methods as an impact assessment to determine the effectiveness of the Dementia Friendly Toolkit on the behavioral outcomes of dementia patients. The central focus of this research, which is the assessment of the existing gaps in education and training, will be to develop interventions for person-centered care and the individual differences for those with dementia in a critical care setting. This project applies the Social Ecological Model as a framework that provides for intervention on the various factors that affect dementia care, as well as the implementation of evidence-based practices that improve outcomes.

## Purpose of the Project

This research will conduct a study which will explore the impact of Dementia Friendly Toolkit on reducing behavioral issues of dementia patients in a local acute care setting. Social Ecological Model is a framework which the research will use to develop dementia care that will consider aspects of individuals, interpersonal, community and organizational levels. This project envisages person-centred interventions and the public to be educated on the unique needs of the dementia patients which would facilitate the reduction of confusion and the overall care. The research will use an integrative approach combining qualitative interviews with nurses and dementia patients, together with the quantitative data analysis through the use of survey scales, to measure the toolkit’s effectiveness in reducing agitating behaviors and improving cognitive function, functional capacity and social interaction among dementia patients in the hospital. This project is in relation to Essentials III, V, and VI of DNP, because it is built around the evidence-based tools, it acts as an advocate for the patients, and it results to better care in dementia in critical care settings.

## Statement of the Problem

The problem with this study is that it is focusing on the deficiency of the behavioral outcomes of bungalow patients within the critical care facilities. Those patients suffering from dementia are faced with a great number of difficulties during their stay at acute healthcare settings, as they can manifest such disruptive behaviors that not only affect their healthcare quality and well-being but also their mood and behavior. I have to admit that recent studies have shown that the problem is a real one. That is why we need a toolkit which has to be called Dementia Friendly Toolkit. Though the extent of behavioral consequences of such interventions is little known and still remains under investigation, the critical care environment is the unique place where all the elements necessary for testing these interventions are in place. The investigation will cover the gap of the studies that have not yet explored the toolkit’s ability to calm unruly behaviors and care for the patients in an intensive care unit (ICU).

## Research Questions

The research question for this study is: “Do the Dementia Friendly Toolkit by Center for Aging Research and Education (Nursing School, UW-Madison) as well as the document submitted from the National Institute on Aging (NIH, 2020) help to improve the behavioral symptoms in dementia patients?”

The PICOT question for this study is:The PICOT question of this study: “Can a multimodal rehabilitation program improve the functional capacity and reduce the risk of falls in older adults with balance disorders?”

P (Population): Dementia patients

I (Intervention): Dementia Friendly Toolkit is a product from the Center of Aging Research and Education, which is a UW-Madison College of Nursing.

C (Comparison): The Toolkit has provided us with so many differing aspects when compared to the old way we were used to working with staff.

O (Outcome): Behavioral outcomes

# Theoretical Framework

The foundation of this study is a Social Ecological Model, which at its core is a health promotion model, because it considers individual, interpersonal, community, and larger system factors in dementia care. The model suggests an integrated optics which will enable to consider in detail the complex consequences of dementia on the behavioral outcomes. The research suggests that this goal may be attained through the development of new practices and the promotion of person-centered care, while also heightening the awareness about the needs of the individuals suffering from dementia. The Social Ecological Model serves as a guide to address disruptive behaviors, obtain good outcomes for patients, and promote initiatives that are aimed at a balanced state of physical, social and psychological needs of dementia patients in the acute healthcare settings.

**Significance of the Project**

The project’s significance, consequently, is in its making sure that dementia patients who are under care in critical care facilities are improved through the Dementia Friendly Toolkit. The study will use a multi-method approach and adhere to the ethical standards to achieve results that will be useful for providing better behavioral outcomes in dementia patients. The Social Ecological Model is the project’s primary theory, as it serves as the basis for the project’s holistic and all-inclusive approach. The approach considers the individual’s, interpersonal’s, community’s, and organizational factors that can ensure that care is person-centered and the community’s awareness is raised about the unique needs of people with dementia. In addition, a project that follows DNP key points III, V, and VI will be of great help in implementing evidence-based practices, patient advocacy, and teamwork among nurses and other members of healthcare setting, hence, a high success rate in patients’ outcomes in dementia care within critical care units.

**Limitations**

However, the project might have some flaws like time limits which may affect data collection and analysis by the deepest way, but this does not eliminate project opportunities. It is possible that the self-subjectivity of the qualitative interviews may introduce bias, which might change the perception of the results. In addition, the sample size is very small and is 20-24 participants only with a study population that may have a limited generalization of the findings to a larger population. In the light of the above, the challenge of using the survey scales as a tool to collect data might be one of the problems in data collection which is not just a single dimensional factor but involves many factors. By posing limitations that are attached to the study outcomes, researchers need to be objective and mindful when interpreting the data in order to have a comprehensive insight on the impact of the toolkit in dementia care in the critical care settings.

# Literature Review

The literature review for this study is going to focus on the role of “dementia-friendly toolkits” and on the improvement of health practitioner education in acute health facilities. The essay is about the problems with dementia patients in intensive care units, and provides analysis of the theoretical components of dementia-friendly toolkits, historical context of dementia toolkits and education, and research papers that support educaton is vital in patient care.

The review then pinpoints the areas where both dementia education and training are absent, it highlights some successful dementia education models, and it finally lists the key components of effective dementia education campaigns. The study will be a combination of both qualitative and quantitative studies on nursing staff which include dementia patients. This framework tries to develop a comprehensive picture of those concepts which already exist and are relevant to dementia care, education, and toolkits. The framework will then act as a foundation for the research methodology to be explored, which will aim at how the Dementia Friendly Toolkit will affect the behavioral outcomes in dementia patients in the critical care setting.

# Methodology

The research will be using the mixed-methods research design to interrogate the role of music therapy in alleviating the behavioral symptoms of dementia patients. The mixed-methods approach is chosen for this study, and it is a combination of the qualitative and the quantitative approaches to have a complete evaluation about the effect of music therapy on the behavioral functions of the dementia patients. In-depth qualitative interviews with a nursing staff and dementia patients who participated in music therapy sessions will be conducted to have their experience of it. Another data set collected through survey scales which are used to measure cognitive performance, symptoms, and functional abilities completed by nursing staff will be compared to them for the objective measure the effectiveness of the intervention. The research team can thereby establish if music therapy has a holistic impact on the behavioral functions of dementia patients subjectively and objectively. Through the data collection from different sources, the research study will be able to conduct a full analysis which will answer the question whether music therapy may indeed lead to positive behavioral outcomes.

To acquire the thoughts of the patients with dementia and nursing staff, we will carry out qualitative interviews. This will help us to better understand the music therapy from their point of view. These interviews therefore, will fulfill the purpose of looking at music therapy as a subjective contributor to the behavioral functions in dementia patients. This study seeks to gain a general perspective of both the patients and the nurses through this study that has the range of views about music therapy in dementia care.

The most straightforward way of data acquisition will be through the scales which will be filled in by the nursing staff. Scales could include the following: cognitive function, symptoms and functional abilities. NPI (Neuropsychiatric Inventory) will be deployed for tracking symptoms and MMSE-2 (Mini-Mental State Examination-2) will be used to gauge cognitive functioning in these patients. The data collection will be conducted both before and after the program so as to determine the changes. The data will be compared with the 2 periods of pre-intervention and post-intervention to find out the level of improvement in the behavioral functions after music therapy. The social-ecological model (SEM) is chosen as the theory guiding this investigation and this model is very useful to understand in depth the difficulties and challenges of dementia care. The SEM evaluates individual, interpersonal and community levels at the same time respectively, which we do as a part of a comprehensive research of the music therapy as a substitute for dementia-related behavioral problems.

# Theoretical Framework

Two key theoretical frameworks will guide this study are the social personality theory and the social characteristic theory. The Patient-Centered Care theory in which the medical needs of an individual are customized to the patient’s own preferences and autonomy could fit in the philosophy of music therapy for dementia care because the music played for patients would be selected based on a patient’s own music preferences (Harrison et al., 2019). Undividedly, the social cognitive theory will help the researcher on the grounds of which the patient can change their behavior through music therapy by focusing on individual characteristics, environment modifications and new behavior.

The person-centered approach with its principles that are similar to the philosophy of music therapy in dementia care is based on fulfilling patients’ wishes and providing them with autonomy. The patients will be provided with the music that has been chosen for them specially, taking into account their tastes, so that each of them can feel special. This suggestion is consistent with the Social Cognitive Theory, which would substantially enable us to understand the effects music therapy in dementia patients in terms of aggressive behavior. This study will focus on the investigation of individual differences, environmental factors, and behavioral patterns that can help to unravel the ways in which music therapy can be a therapeutic tool for the patients. To ensure that the theoretical framework has a foundation, the social personality theory along with the social conditional theory would be included in the framework so that the approach is inclusive and it covers the various factors affecting care of the dementia patients such as, individual traits, social influences, and environmental contexts.

This concept lies at the heart of understanding cognition, social bonds, and environment recognition (behaviorism). Music therapy, seen from the perspective of the patient’s mind dementia (Dooley et al., 2015), as a means of influencing these functions and behavior can be used. The primary objective of this study, in turn, will be to integrate music therapy and cognitive processes theories by using them to explain how music therapy works. In order to achieve this goal, we would like to explore the possibilities of linking up these approaches in a synergistic way so that they could be applied as a whole unit alongside the music therapy interventions for people with dementia. However, one of the major goals of this investigation is to broaden the existing view about music therapy intervention in the dementia care.

A crucial aspect of this Theory of Planned Behavior in this regard is the blending of behaviorism principles that focus on the interconnection between cognition, social relationships, and the environment and the formation of behaviors. Music therapy, which is recognized as a vital aspect of dementia patients’ neurobehavioral abilities and behaviors, is now being seen as a way of helping these patients. This study’s aim is to create a comprehensive project that is centered on the relationship of music therapy to the cognitive process theory, which will present how the two approaches can work together to increase effectiveness of music therapy on dementia patients. The paper is based on an attempt to combine these theories, which will eventually lead to a more holistic understanding of how music therapy assists in the treatment of dementia and in the improvement of patient care outcomes and life quality.

## Data Collection Process

The data will be gathered by the pre-intervention evaluation, which will aid the recognition of early signs of dementia symptoms among dementia individuals. The final step would be a post-intervention assessment to be done to detect if or not any attention and/or functions levels have been improved. The evaluation will be done after the treatment to validate the effectiveness of music therapy in the promotion of the behavior among the dementia patients. Data analysis will involve use of both pre intervention and post intervention results as a basis for comparison to determine if music therapy is useful in focus behaviors and functions. Data from qualitative interviews and questionnaire surveys will be triangulated to be utilized. Using this technique will provide a clear view of the end results.

For the qualitative data collection, the viewpoints of nursing staff will be obtained through observation and interviews in order to get their views about music therapy on patients outcomes. After this all-round process, the result that should be achieved is the generation of a considerable knowledge base, which contains the project outcome. Observation is the qualitative method that I would apply to understand the music therapy impact of patients fully. The process of data collection which is very data intensive for the accurate information extraction, which is the key to the research outcomes. We will be evaluating the intervention by using interviews, observations and data analysis. This will make up for a reliable evidence of the effectiveness of music therapy in dementia care in terms of patient outcomes.

The overall goal of this study is to measure the effectiveness of the interventions by relying on the mixed approaches of quantitative analysis and qualitative assessment done by the healthcare workers, who act as the front line of providing healthcare and monitoring the changes in user behavior and functioning which will gives both the objective and subjective context and help to enrich the interpretation of the intervention outcomes.

## Data Analysis

This research study would apply both quantitative and qualitative data analysis to assess the impact of music therapy on behavioral and functional profiles of patients suffering from dementia. From the qualitative point of view, I will use the numerical comparison to find out the percentage of the improvement of music therapy which is effective in improving patient outcomes. The quantitative analysis Is commenced by identification of the cognitive functions, symptoms, and level of function to dementia patients through music therapy.

Our thematic approach will be used to identify the common themes and occurrences of benefits for the patients and assisting role of music therapy in dementia care. With this methodology, the researchers will be able to record qualitative data systematically and then analyse it in such a way which will allow them to discover the core insights about subiective experiences and perceptions of patients and nursing staff. The main purpose of this research is to uncover more details about the way music therapy improves cognitive functions and well-being among patients with dementia as the result of these topics investigation. The study will use the thematic method to be able to provide a comprehensive perspective on the exclusive effects of music therapy in elderly care.

Integration of the two data analysis methods (qualitative and quantitative analysis) in our research made it possible for us to have the full picture of the impact of the music therapy on the lives of individuals with dementia. The article uses the combination of quantitative and sensory aspects to provide a full picture of how music therapy affect the behavioral functioning of elderly in nursing homes patients with dementia. It is a multifaceted and comprehensive study which is not only limited to quantitative examination of the effectiveness but also to the contribution of varied viewpoints on its role within the care process.

## Conclusion

The qualitative data analysis will require for the numeric comparison that will enable us to estimate the extent at which the music therapy has benefitted the patients to have improved behavior and function. This research will try to expose the various musical therapy areas that such patients in nursing homes who are exposed to music therapy benefit. The purpose of this research is to conduct a mixed-methods study to explore the impact of music therapy for dementia patients in a detailed way using quantitative and qualitative methods. In the end of the research, the data analysis will present the findings which will be divided into two groups – the overall effect of the intervention and the views of the residents about the role of the intervention in nursing homes for dementia.

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