

Dignity in People with Dementia: A Concept Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

- Dignity is a multi-faceted, value-based, dynamic concept of humanity that serves as one of the core guidelines in healthcare delivery
 - Yet, it is an abstract, nebulous concept without immediate application
- The dignity in people with dementia (PwD) is easily compromised due to progressively worsening cognitive, behavioral, and functional capacities
 - PwD are at risks towards receiving disease-related therapy that does not align with personal values or preferences
 - Increases the likelihood of inefficient resource utilization and care-related costs
 - By 2050, more than \$1.8 trillion are estimated as the total cost of dementia care
 - Aggravates discomforts and diminishes quality of life
- Purpose:** *To understand dignity conceptually and integrate dignity harmoniously and practically into dementia care-related planning and management, the concept of dignity for PwD must be first established*

METHOD

- We conducted a concept analysis using Walker and Avant's eight-step process
- A comprehensive literature search was conducted using the PubMed and CINAHL databases
- Search keywords: "dignity", "dementia", "Alzheimer's disease", "dementia care"

CONCEPT SYNTHESIS

Total found articles (n=4,910)

Articles reviewed for relevancy to concept analysis (n=114)

Relevant articles utilized for concept synthesis (n=39)

- Additional articles for identifying attributes of dignity (n=7)
- Articles utilized for definition synthesis (n=23)
- Additional articles for developing antecedents and consequence (n=9)

Concept origin (n=2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latin etymology Meaning of worthiness and values 	Ethical imperative (n=4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Health Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An individual's inherent value and worth Critical value for healthcare practice due to constant human interactions and vulnerabilities from disease states 	Under the healthcare setting (n=14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core value grounded within respect In PwD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive personality traits and personal attributes are retained The dynamic elements of dignity are measured and influenced
Philosophical underpinning (n=3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The excellence and worth based on autonomy and individuality that is essential in all human existence yet relative to external surroundings Cicero, Kant, Thomas Aquinas 		

Figure 1. Data analysis flowchart with article distribution

Promotion of Dignity in People with Dementia (PwD)

Antecedents:

- Empowerment (antecedent)**
 - The process by which people gain confidence and agency successfully make actions or excerpt control
 - Recognition of personal values or identities
 - Supports self-esteem and self-respect
 - External affirming actions or factors ensure the experience of love and appreciation conveying equal status
- Non-maleficence (antecedent)**
 - Provides the minimum level of ethical guidance
 - Asserts the central importance of dignity
 - Upholds dignity through purposeful care practices that seek to understand the wishes of the PwD and fulfill them within the bounds of personal safety
- Adaptive Environmental Scaffolding (antecedent)**
 - Ensures the required resources are in place to sustain dignity in PwD
 - Person-centered care that alleviates suffering and promotes comfort
 - Creating a social environment that recognizes and reflects individualities and personal values, which allows people to carry themselves around comfortably

Subdimensions:

- Absolute Dignity (subdimension)**
 - Immutable, intrinsic factors that are universal in all human beings
 - Acknowledges a person's self-identity and values.
 - Maintains personhood and life meaning
 - Individualities from different people's awareness and self-identification
- Relative Dignity (subdimension)**
 - More lability and variability with interactivity of values during a person's contact with other people or environmental factors
 - It influences those changes in a person's attitudes, feelings, and actions
 - Adaptable when promoting dignity in PwD in healthcare settings

Main Attributes:

- Worthiness (main attribute)**
 - Ascertained by both the feeling experienced and the status conferred on a person
 - Confirms sense of self and personal values
 - Protects personhood
 - Allows PwD to engage in meaningful activities even with potential disease degenerations
- Respect (main attribute)**
 - Self-respect promotes resilience and positive coping mechanisms during disease progression and loss of capacities
 - Sustained with self-esteem
 - Respectful social and environmental atmosphere enables expression of individuality and personal values regardless of cognition and health status
- Autonomy (underlying property)**
 - Permits people to act freely within their capacity
 - Facilitates value-based healthcare decision-making by offering goal-concordant choices
 - Upheld when environmental and social factors provide appropriate and essential options that meet the care-related needs in PwD

Proximal Consequence:

Enhancement of Quality of Life in PwD

- Maintaining the baseline health status and well-being
 - Managing disease symptoms based on personal values and preferences
 - Utilizing care-related resources efficiently
- Supporting emotional well-being and spirituality
 - Having enjoyable qualities in life

Figure 2. Concept diagram of dignity in people with dementia

CASE EXAMPLE

Setting: A person with dementia who lives at home with his wife being the primary caregiver.

Daily Living & Social interactions

- Pre-established daily routine empowers maintaining of regular activities
- Cherishment of quality time with family and his identity as a granddad
- Frequent visits from family members and activities, like cooking together

Medical care

- Palliative care interventions, like music therapy, were introduced when he started to experience agitation
- Chronic kidney disease is one of the medical issues that this person has
 - Instead of dialysis, the person chose conservative management
 - Because it allows more time with the grandchildren while symptoms are controlled

Figure 3. Dignified care case example

Overall implication: Personal wishes are respected, autonomy is well-protected, effective participation in worthiness enhanced activities.

DISCUSSION

- Although the concept of dignity can be grandiose and sound far-fetched, much dementia related scientific advancement and social progression have already started supporting dignity in PwD
- Non-maleficence is an already established core ethical principle in healthcare
 - Should occur naturally for the care in PwD
- Unprecedented opportunities for PwD to establish care based on their personal values with the presence of early diagnosis
 - Empowering "demented with dignity"
- Progressive evolution of policy changes to support dementia-friendly environmental scaffolding
 - National Alzheimer's Project Act
 - Comprehensive Care for Alzheimer's Act

CONCLUSION

- Under the healthcare setting, *dignity is the promotion of worthiness and accordance of respect that allows the unconditional presence of a person's sense of self via both intrinsic and external factors* regardless of health status
 - This concept analysis yields actionable targets for facilitating dignity among PwD
- Dignity is a foundational and essential human value, and its meaningful incorporation into dementia care has the potential to promote efficient and effective care that optimizes the quality of life for PwD throughout their disease progression

CITATIONS

SCAN ME

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