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Missed the proper diagnosis timing: Dementia diagnosis process of the elderly with dementia from the perspective of middle-aged adult children in Korea**Jeong Sun Kim and Ae Ree Shin**

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Statement of the Problem: Dementia has a profound effect on society as a whole, including individuals with dementia and their families. Early detection and prevention of dementia, which is an irreversible geriatric medical problem, is the first priority at the present time before entering a super-aged society in Korea. Therefore, exploring the diagnosis process of dementia experienced by middle-aged adult children, the immediate family members of demented elderly who are more likely to develop dementia than anyone else, will identify the relevant factors for early detection of dementia and provide basic data to explore an active intervention strategy for prevention of dementia. The purpose of this study is to explore dementia diagnosis process of the elderly with dementia from the perspective of middle-aged adult children in Korea.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Grounded theory methodology was utilized. Data were collected from 17 middle-aged adult children, the immediate family members of demented elderly during individual in-depth interviews. Theoretical sampling was used until the data reached saturation. Data were analyzed using the constant comparative analysis method.

Findings: The core category emerged as “missed the proper diagnosis timing” explaining the diagnosis process of dementia. It was found that middle-aged children of the demented elderly experienced 8 stages of the process from the time when they recognized the initial symptom of dementia to the diagnosis of dementia according to the time: Overlooking, hesitating, avoiding, being silent, keep passing the buck, coordinating, persuading and getting the diagnosis.

Conclusion & Significance: The results suggested the strategy for early diagnosis of dementia and the basis of nursing intervention to eliminate obstacles through the process of diagnosis of dementia experienced by middle aged children of demented elderly. Furthermore, it is valuable as a basic data of dementia prevention policy for dementia families.

Biography

Jeong Sun Kim is a Professor of Gerontological Nursing in College of Nursing and is Head Professor of the course of Advanced Gerontological Nursing Practitioner (AGNP) in the Graduate School at Chonnam National University of Korea. She is the Vice-President of Korea Gerontological Nurses Association in Korean Nurse Association and is Vice-President of the Council for the curriculum of AGNP. She is an Editorial Member and Board Member of the Korean Gerontological Society. Her major areas of research include prevention of dementia, polypharmacy, falls and long-term care for the elderly, etc. She has been studying geriatric or gerontological nursing for decades and is currently conducting a research project on prevention of dementia supported by National Research Foundation of Korea.

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