Evidence Based Practice

Dorothea Orem’s Self Care Deficit Theory
Self Care Deficit Theory

Theory Overview

- The question “What is the condition that indicates that a person needs nursing care?” was the basis of the Self Care Deficit Theory.
- Theory focuses on what a person requires and what actions need to be taken to meet those requirements (Alligood & Tomey, 2010, p. 278)
- Theory includes Universal Self-Care Requisites- needs all people have and Power Components- influences on a persons ability to perform self care (Nunnery, 2008, p. 59)
Self Care Deficit Theory

- **Rationale for Nursing Theory**
  - Clear and concise theory allows nurses to assess patients’ ability to care for themselves.
  - Increasing healthcare costs result in more patients being cared for at home.
  - Patients expected to take more responsibility for self-care sooner because of decreased length of hospital stays.
Self Care Deficit Theory

- Relevance for Practice
  - Individuals strive to meet their own healthcare needs; people do not want to be dependent on others.
  - Nursing care is focused on helping people to meet their own, and their dependent others’, self care demands (Nunnery, 2008, p. 60).
  - Pertains to all areas of nursing.
  - Provides a unique focus on nursing that can be applied to other fields.
Research Studies

- Conducted in many areas of nursing including:
  - Hemodialysis
    - Patient perceptions of home dialysis and self care.
  - Heart Failure
    - Supportive educative program for advanced heart failure patients and quality of life in heart failure patients.
  - Pediatric Oncology
    - Self-care operations and nursing interventions for pediatric oncology patients.
  - Home Care/Caregiver Strain
    - Relationship between self-care and caregiver strain by female caregivers
  - Learning Disabilities
    - Self care deficit theory applied to people with learning disabilities.
Research Review

Hemodialysis

- Research study conducted to determine if dialysis patients are capable of doing home hemodialysis care.
Hemodialysis

- **Research Approach**
  - Qualitative study done using Orem’s Theory of Self-Care.
  - Conducted at a hemodialysis unit in Ontario, Canada.
  - Research participants were required to be over 18 years of age, alert and oriented, able to read and write English, and have visual acuity to perform tasks. Total participants were 49.
  - Participants were given a survey and assessment tool to assess their perceptions on home dialysis and their ability to do self-care.
Research Review

Hemodialysis

- Research Findings

- To be capable of performing home hemodialysis, according to Orem’s theory patients must first be able to do activities of “human functioning, human well being and the development within social groups” (Visaya, 2010, p. 27).
- 24.5% of participants scored “good” in human functioning.
- 61.2% of patients scored “good” in managing self-care.
- 57.1% of patients scored “good” in social support (development within social groups)

**Results** 83.7% of participants would NOT be able to perform self-care and home hemodialysis
Research Review

Hemodialysis

- Research Critique:
  - Study was conducted only on newly diagnosed end-stage renal failure patients who were starting hemodialysis. A more accurate sample would have also included patients already on hemodialysis.
  - Relatively small sample comprised of only 49 participants.
Hemodialysis

- Implications for Practice:
  - Orem’s Self-Care Theory can be used to screen patients for self-care at home in many areas of nursing, not just hemodialysis.
  - Pre-screening patients to determine ability for self-care can help determine if they are ready to go home or will need rehabilitation and continuing care first.
Heart Failure (Study 1)

- Journal article from *Nursing Science Quarterly* entitled “Developing a supportive educative program for patients with advanced heart failure within Orem’s general theory of nursing” (Jaarsma et. al., 1998, p. 79-85).
- Research study of heart failure patients and how the use of Orem’s Universal Self-Care Requisites can identify educational needs and self-care deficits.
Research Review
Heart Failure (Study 1)

- **Research Approach:**
  - Supportive educative nursing program was designed for heart failure patients.
  - To help nurses assess patients possible limitations in knowing, judgment/decision-making, and actions a checklist of questions was formulated based on theoretical self-care demands and required self-care agents.
  - Based on the responses to the checklist questions nurses are able to determine the amount of supportive educative education the patient needs.
  - Sixty patients were in a control group that did NOT receive the education, sixty were in the experimental group that did.
Research Review

Heart Failure (Study 1)

- Research Findings:
  - 60 patients were placed into a control group where they did NOT receive supportive education from a nurse.
  - 60 patients were placed in an experimental group where they DID receive supportive education from a nurse.
  - Evaluation of outcomes was determined by data collected on self-care agency, self-care, hospital readmission, and quality of life before intervention (supportive education) and 1, 3, and 9 months after intervention (Jaarsma et al., 1998, p. 84).
Research Review

Heart Failure (Study 1)

- Research Critique

  - Focus of the research study was on the patient only and did not include the family as a whole.
  - Study did not take into account other diseases/illnesses that the patient may have and how those would further affect their ability to perform self-care.
Heart Failure (Study 1)

- Implications for Practice:
  - Careful assessment of all of the potential self-care demands a patient will have is important as well as who will perform the demands (self-care agent).
  - Nurses need to assess a patient's perception of their ability to perform the self-care demands.
  - Nurses need to continue to improve upon the education heart failure patients receive.
  - Similar tools as the one used in the study could be developed for many diseases such as renal failure and COPD.
Research Review

Heart Failure (Study 2)

- Patients admitted with acute, chronic congestive heart failure were asked to complete the Self-care of Heart Failure Index and the Minnesota Living with Heart Failure questionnaires. This information was then used to determine if there was a relationship between self-care abilities and quality of life.
Heart Failure (Study 2)

Research Approach:

- Self-care of the heart failure patients was measured using the Self-Care of Heart Failure Index (SCHFI) scale.
- Quality of life was assessed using the Minnesota Living with Heart Failure (MLHF) questionnaire.
- Participants were comprised of a convenience sample at a Midwestern hospital. All patients had an admitting diagnosis of heart failure, were over 18 years of age, and were able to read, write, and understand English.
- Patients who were NOT considered included those with new onset or acute/transient heart failure and those coming from a long-term care facility where most if not all of their self-care needs were met by healthcare providers.
Research Review

Heart Failure (Study 2)

- Research Findings:
  - Thirty subjects completed the study.
  - Fifty percent of participants reported their general health as “poor”.
  - Patient reported self-care included: Using a pill system, checking their ankles for swelling, daily weighing, and doctor visits.
  - Patients felt that their heart failure had very little effect on family burden, loss of control, and making them feel worried and depressed (Britz & Dunn, 2010, p. 482).

**Results:** Self-care confidence was significantly related to quality of life.
Heart Failure (Study 2)

- Research Critique:
  - Small sample population
  - Patients were all from one Midwestern hospital; limited geographical range.
  - Cross-sectional study preventing knowledge of self-care abilities over time.
Heart Failure (Study 2)

Implications for Practice:

- Better education for patients and family members regarding heart failure symptoms and dietary requirements.
- Nurses should ensure that patients and families understand the disease process so they are more likely to follow recommended treatment (diet, medications, etc...).
Pediatric Oncology

- Research article from *Nursing Science Quarterly* entitled “Self-care operations and nursing interventions for children with cancer and their parents” (Moore & Beckwitt, 2006, p. 147-156)

- Research study focusing on determining what self-care and dependent-care actions the children and their parents performed and their perceptions of nursing interventions that promoted and supported their actions.
Research Review

Pediatric Oncology

- Research Approach:
  - Qualitative study based on Orem’s theory of self-care.
  - Sample population of 27; 9 children and 18 parents.
  - Children involved in the study had received care at 11 different institutions in 7 states.
  - Study was comprised of interviews about self-care with children participants and dependent-care with parent participants.
  - Data was obtained about perceived supportive nursing interventions.
Pediatric Oncology

- Research Findings:
  - Overall patients and families felt that nurses did well at teaching, supplying information and supporting self-care actions.
  - Nurses could improve on involving siblings in dependent-care, emotional support, celebrating recovery, and referring patients and families to support groups, social workers, and mental healthcare professionals.
Research Review

Pediatric Oncology

- Research Critique:
  - Wide range in patient ages (7 to 21 years).
  - Limited racial/ethnic group.
  - Few male parents included in study.
  - Small sample population.
  - The research study did undergo the peer review process, which gives it credibility.
Pediatric Oncology

Implications for Practice:

- It is important to assess all possible caregivers (including siblings).
- Emotional and spiritual support are important to patients just as being taken care of physically is.
- Many patients and families felt the nurses should have provided a referral to a support group.
Research Review

Home Care

- Journal article from the *Journal of the New York State Nurses Association* entitled “The relationships of self-care agency and self-care to caregiver strain as perceived by female family caregivers of elderly parents (Baker, 1997, p. 7-11).

- Research study examining the relationships of self-care agency (potential or capacity of individuals to meet their own needs) and self-care actions to perceived caregiver strain among female family caregivers of elderly parents (Baker, 1997, p. 1).
Home Care

Research Approach:

- Study based on Orem’s 1991 conceptual model.
- Perception of caregiver strain as a self-care deficit; an imbalance between the caregiver’s capability to meet her own needs (Baker, 1997, p. 3)
- Participants were solicited from a certified home health agency in a large metropolitan city.
- 131 participants satisfied study requirements; all were heavily involved with caregiving tasks such as personal care, household tasks, personal management tasks, and emotional support.
- Participants received a questionnaire booklet containing: The Burden Interview, the Denyes Self-Care Agency, the Denyes Self-Care Practice Instrument, and a demographic sheet.
Home Health

Research Findings:

- Length of time as a caregiver, quantity of multiple roles of caregiver, and types of caregiving tasks were examined (Baker, 1997, p. 3).
- Self-care actions was determined to be the single significant contributor to the variance of caregiver strain.
- Self-care agency (potential to do actions) was related to, but not predictive of a decrease in caregiver strain.

Results: There is a notable change in self-care deficit (caregiver strain) in the presence of self-care actions (Baker, 1997, p. 6).
Research Review

Home Health

- Research Critique:
  - Study did not take into account if the person was the sole familial caregiver.
  - No consideration of the caregivers support system.
  - Relatively small sample population all from one geographical location.
  - All participants were selected from the same certified home health agency.
Home Care

Implications for Practice:

- It is important to assess what help a patient will have available and who will provide that help.
- If a family member will be the main caregiver it is important to educate that person on the importance of self-care.
- Make referrals to care management or social work to develop a plan of who will care for the patient at home.
- Assess the support system that the caregiver has; do they have a spouse who will help support them?
Research Review

**Learning Disabilities**


- Examines the ability of Orem’s self-care model to meet the needs of people with varying degrees of intellectual disabilities and additional physical care needs (Horan et al, 2004, p. 1)
Research Review

Learning Disabilities

- Research Approach:
Research Review

Learning Disabilities

- Research Critique:
Research Review

Learning Disabilities

- Implications for Practice:
Critical Reflections

- Through research theories are tested and improved upon.
- Nursing research helps to improve the nursing profession; we learn how to take better care of our patients and they can help to take care of themselves.
- Research is needed to know what nursing practices are functional before putting them into use.
- Research, theory, and nursing practice are all interrelated.
- Theory creates the framework for research, research findings guide our practice, and our practice directs our theories and research.
- Research helps us to understand what areas we do well in and what we as nurses can improve upon.
- Research shows us that patient education is an important aspect of nursing because it helps patients to take better care of themselves and prevent relapse and hospitalization.
References


References
