Application of Reminiscence Treatment on Older People With Dementia: A Case Study in Pingtung, Taiwan

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ABSTRACT
Reminiscence therapy has been utilized for many years in the treatment of dementia in older people. Purposes of the research included examining different methods of promoting interactivity, social participation, cognitive function improvement in those with dementia, and the effectiveness in reducing symptoms of depression following group treatment. This study used pretest and posttest electroencephalography (EEG) measurements to test reminiscence therapy efficacy on participants. This research organized a social group work with 12 elderly clients with dementia (mild to moderate stage) selected from among 90 residents of an older persons care facility in Pingtung. Eleven agreed to join the study, and 10 completed successfully all treatment sessions. Eight sessions of reminiscence cooking lessons were conducted. The effectiveness of interventions was evaluated by comparing pre- and postsession EEG, mental health status, depression scale, and feeling of participation scale scores. Significant differences in values, particularly for EEG, were found between the two sets of scores. The average value of participants' fast waves rose from 43.88 to 55.12, whereas average slow-wave values fell from 56.12 to 44.13. After analysis using the Wilcoxon matched paired signed rank test, significant differences were noted. Findings and suggestions include the following: (a) The rise in Mini-Mental State Examination and reduction in depression scale scores, although noted, were not significant, and (b) the self-achievement, emotional stability, family atmosphere, and physical needs of participants were met. The authors recommend that reminiscence group work be promoted in the home for older persons and that childhood cooking sessions twice each week may be the ideal format for reminiscence group work.

KEY WORDS:
reminiscence treatment, social group work, feeling of participation.

Introduction
It is widely acknowledged that older people do not recover readily after the onset of dementia (Leo, 2001; The Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center, 2008). Despite this, work continues to help slow or reverse the degeneration in health caused by this disease. One such treatment administered within a social group work format is reminiscence treatment (Chong, 2000). The stated aim of this intervention is to retard or reverse the effects of dementia (Graham, Clayton, & Warner, 1999). This may help patients enhance personal interactions and receive greater emotional support. However, no medical evidence has been shown to date that this kind of treatment really works with older persons with dementia.

This research organized a social group in an older persons care facility to test the efficacy of reminiscence treatment. A series of eight sessions of reminiscence cooking lessons and social group work was conducted on participants with mild to moderate dementia (determined by a Mini-Mental State Examination [MMSE] score of 12 to 26). A sample of 12 elderly individuals with dementia was selected from among 90 residents of a care facility in Pingtung. Eleven of the initial sample agreed to join the study, and 10 followed through to completion. Participants were tested before and after the eight administered sessions using electroencephalography (EEG), MMSE, and depression and feeling of participation scales. After research, analyses and findings were discussed. Conclusions and suggestions are presented in the final section of this article.

General Statement of the Problem
Hooyman and Kiyak (1991) estimated that 15% to 22% of older people within communities experience depression. The number of depressed people in institutions is estimated to be three times greater than that in the community (Jefferson & Greist, 1993; Koenig & Blazer, 1996; Parmelee, Katz, & Lawton, 1992). The prevalence of dementia among the entire population of older people...