

Oncology nursing research paper

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



Overview/ Summary

The ' Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Oncology Nurse's Knowledge and Attitudes' is a research paper whose main purpose is to describe the knowledge and attitudes of a number of oncology nurses on complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). The research paper takes the design of a description and also a cross- sectional design. The research used a sample of 850 of nurses picked at random from the Oncology Nursing Societies. All these nurses were RNs who were directly involved with health care. The setting of the research was at a national medical center and research institute. The main variables of the research were complementary and alternative medicine attitudes and knowledge (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009).

The research used questionnaires to obtain data and information from the nurses. The nurses had to fill a demographic questionnaire in addition to the survey on Nurse Complimentary and Alternative Medicine Knowledge and Attitude. To describe the subjects' knowledge and attitudes towards CAM, the study applied the descriptive analysis model. In addition to the above methods, the comments of the participants were also transcribed and analyzed for content. The survey recorded a number of findings from the study. For example, it was found that the mean score of the subjects' CAM knowledge was about 70 percent, with their attitude significantly varying especially when their beliefs, roles and practices were considered; but all in all the score was positive.

What the study concluded was that assessing and testing the knowledge of nurses on CAM is very crucial for creating proper educational and training

programs that will train nurses on how to advocate for, and support their patients (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009). Moreover, the study also drew conclusions that assessing nurses' attitudes towards CAM is also important because it gives administrators insights for finding and applying effective changes to health care. The study was also found to have meaningful implications for the nursing profession. One of the main implications of the survey was that oncology nurses must be ready with insightful knowledge and attitudes on CAM so as to be able to provide their patients with unbiased and prudent information on health care.

Critique of the Research Question

The research question has been formulated from deductive narrowing in that the subject has been narrowed from a general topic into a specific question. The general subject of the study is that CAM is a common treatment alternative with most cancer patients. However, it has been found that most patients do not disclose that they are using or thinking of using CAM to their health care providers. Just as well nurses have been found to lack the ability to initiate the conversation about use of CAM to cancer treatment. After introducing the broad subject, the study goes on and narrows it into a single question, what are the attitudes and the knowledge of oncology nurses on CAM (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009). The research question therefore, gives evidence of deductive narrowing. This is a very appropriate approach in research as it focuses on identifying the problem, and also the gap that exists between what is known about that particular problem and what is to be known about the same problem. The deductive narrowing technique

therefore, gives the researcher an opportunity to fill in this gap especially through literature review.

The problem in this case is very clearly stated, that the research intends to find out what are the attitudes and the knowledge of oncology nurses about CAM. The problem is not stated in the form of a question, but in a statement. The FINER criteria for importance of a research question dictates that the research question must be feasible, interesting, novel, ethical, and relevant. The research question in this survey seems to qualify according to these guidelines because the question is answerable through research, it is both interesting to the researcher and the spectators, it has been done before, it also is ethical in that it does not expose its participants in excessive risk and it is also very relevant in medicinal science because it can be used in furthering the cause of medicine through enlightening the nurses and other health care stakeholders on how to be prepared with insightful CAM attitudes and knowledge for the purposes of giving the patients unbiased information on their conditions (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009).

The research questions in the survey also have all of the PICO requirements; that is population, intervention, comparison and outcome. For the patients' population, the most prevalent characteristic is that patients do not disclose the desire to use or usage of CAM. The main intervention the research question is aiming to get, is the opinions, attitudes, and knowledge of oncology nurses on CAM, and in so doing get the patients and health care providers talking about the CAM treatment options. The study is comparing this intervention to an occurrence whereby patients do not discuss with their

nurses about CAM, resulting to unintended results in treatment. The study is trying to describe some of the attitudes and knowledge oncology nurses have on CAM. These are the four main elements of PICO, which this particular research seems to have complied with. There are various research designs which could have been used to answer the research question. Some of them include a case study, a descriptive research, or even a survey.

Critique of the Literature Review

The research seems to have relied heavily on material that is not so recent. Some of the research sources are from more than twenty years old like the *Modern Practice of Adult Education: from Pedagogy to Andragogy*, by Knowles published in 1980. A good literature review should only depend on recent materials that are not more than five years old. The research utilized a number of these published in 2005, 2007, 2004, and 2006. These can be said to be reliable sources as the information they contain can be taken to be relevant to both time and subject of the study. Other materials used in the study like the ones published in 2000 and 1999, can also be considered inappropriate for the survey because they are more than five years old to the year the survey was carried out (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009).

The research also makes a clear comparison with previous studies on the subject by stating that only a few studies have actually researched on the issue of nurses and CAM. In this case, these previous studies were focusing mainly on whether oncology nurses really discuss the CAM treatment alternatives with cancer patients. There were therefore, no studies available that had studied the attitudes and knowledge of oncology nurses on CAM.

Hence, this study was looking to describe the knowledge and attitude of these nurses towards the treatment alternatives. The study seems to have included a number of other researches related to the topic of interest. For example, the survey includes a study done to find out the prevalence of CAM usage among patients, another study was done to find out if there was a communication in existence between nurses and cancer patients on CAM (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009).

In addition to this, the survey reviewed another research done to find out the reasons why patients do not talk about CAM to their care givers. The literature review is well written in to the extent that it can be linked to the research question both directly and indirectly. For example, the literature review on the prevalence of CAM usage among patients relates indirectly to the research question by showing how and why this happens; which is mostly due to lack of knowledge and assessment on the part of the nurses, and uncertain feelings about the reception of the news by the nurses, on the part of the patients (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009). The review adequately provides for the importance of the need for the study; the need to describe the attitude and knowledge of oncology care givers on CAM because no other study has been conducted to give out such information. What specifically makes the study so credible is the fact that it has mainly utilized primary sources instead of secondary sources. These primary sources are mainly in the form of research papers.

Evidence that the study is reliable is that these primary sources have been critically examined and objectively reported in research to reflect a study

that is well presented and sufficiently supported. With all these primary sources, there is no evidence of bias in the study because all of the sources and their review are conclusive. The opinion of the author is also not present, so one can be sure that the study is not biased. The review is properly structured in a form that presents the ideas in a logically unfolding form to conclude with what the author feels is the use of the study. The research does however, not end with a summary of what is known about the subject, because as the author points out, there had been no recorded research on the subject by the time this particular research was commencing (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009).

Critique of the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the study has been clearly identified and outlined early in the study. The study's framework for example, is said to be formulated around three main components; change theory, CAM attitudes and knowledge, and principles of adult education (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009). After outlining these theoretical frameworks of the study, the author goes into depth to analyze and describe the theories for the purposes of deduction of the content of the study. The need for the study to establish and create its own theory is therefore, eliminated because a theoretical foundation is clearly stated in the study.

What is notable in the study is the fact that the theoretical framework identified by the study remains consistent with the subject of study, its design, interpretation and variables. The theories' concepts, operational definitions and constructs are also sufficiently provided for in the study. For

example, the change theory is said to be a theory useful in aiding the modification of the practice of nursing by the utilization of three concepts; unfreezing, refreezing and movement. The other two theories are as well explained in depth in the study. The survey reports that there indeed will be a relationship between the concepts and the study subject in that the attitude and knowledge data provided by the study will be useful in the movement and unfreezing phases of one of the theories; the change theory (Rojas-Cooley & Grant, 2009). This reached through a logical flow from the theories to the expected relationships expected. One of the most obvious shortcomings of the study is that the author does not sufficiently refer to the theoretical frameworks of the study at the interpretation stage.

Overall Evaluation

The research paper 'Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Oncology Nurse's Knowledge and Attitudes' is a very well written research paper with very few irregularities. The background of the paper for example, is sufficient enough to launch a new study. This reflects the originality of the paper in that it is not a simple reduction of another paper but a research well researched on. The methods used by the research to obtain data and information are also valid enough because it conforms to various guidelines and procedural norms in nursing research, like FINER and PICO. The research is for that reason highly reliable. The study gives results that have been derived objectively, and well organized. The conclusions are also based on the implications of the results and the results themselves. However, the researchers should have utilized materials that are much more recent than

the ones they utilized. This is because most research guidelines require a survey to utilize recent materials as its sources for credibility.

Reference

Rojas-Cooley, M. T. & Grant, M. (2009). Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Oncology Nurses' Knowledge and Attitudes. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 36 (2).