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Effects of different intergenerational programs for older adult with dementia in day care centers: A Quasi-Experimental study

Abstract:

Intergenerational programs are structured interventions designed to facilitate interactions between younger and older adults. Involving adolescents in such activities has been shown to evoke positive emotions and increased engagement among older adults with dementia. This study employed a quasi-experimental longitudinal design to examine the comparative effects of exergame and companion interventions on cognitive function, verbal fluency, memory span, depressive symptoms, and attitudes towards children among dementia patients aged 56 to 91 across 13 adult day care centers in Northern Taiwan. Participants were assigned to 8-week exergame, 8-week companion, and control groups using a single-blind trial procedure. Post-intervention assessments were conducted within two weeks following the conclusion of the activities, with follow-up evaluations performed up to one-month post-intervention. Long-term effects were analyzed using Generalized Estimating Equations (GEE). The results indicated that companion interventions significantly improved cognitive function and memory span in older adults with dementia. While exergame interventions did not show immediate effects, they demonstrated delayed enhancements in verbal fluency, memory span, and attitudes towards children. Moreover, intergenerational programs facilitated increased interactions between older adults with dementia and adolescents through participation in emerging exergame activities, thereby enhancing cognitive function, verbal fluency, and fostering positive mutual attitudes.

Biography

Yuan Ju Liao completed her Ph.D. in Nursing from National Yang-Ming Chiao-Tung University in Taiwan, focusing on the effectiveness of intergenerational programs for adolescents and older adults with dementia. Currently, she serves as a Postdoctoral Researcher at Asia University's Department of Nursing, where she continues to foster her expertise in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research, as well as intervention in long-term care.