



Reminiscence Reflecting Cultural Background in Korean Older Adults with Dementia: A Concept Analysis

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한국치매노인의 문화를 반영하는 회상: 개념분석

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Purpose: Reminiscence therapy is a widely used intervention for older adults and those with dementia. However, the attributes of the concept of reminiscence is not clearly proposed. The aim of this study was to clarify the concept of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia. **Methods:** The study applied the concept analysis method of Walker and Avant. The literature review included the previous studies of reminiscence from philosophy, literature, art, neuroscience, medicine, psychology, sociology, and nursing. **Results:** A total of 43 Korean or international papers were analyzed in this study. Attributes of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia were regeneration of memories, internal and external communications, expression of suppressed emotions, and recognition of ego identity. The suppressed emotions and ego identity may result from Korean cultural characteristics based on the suppressed environments of many wars and dictatorships in the past. The consequences of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia are cognitive enhancement, relief of depression, and improvements of social interactions, ego integrity, and quality of life. **Conclusion:** The results of this study suggest that the historical and cultural characteristics should be considered to develop effective nursing interventions including reminiscence for Korean older adults with dementia.

Key Words: Dementia, Mental Recall, Older Adults, Analysis

Introduction

Dementia is one of the most common neurological degenerative

diseases worldwide. The average number of people with dementia among OECD countries is expected to rise from 14.8 per 1,000 population in 2017 to 23.1 by 2037 while in Korea 9.6 in 2017 to 23.8

주요어: 치매, 회상, 노인, 분석

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by 2037 [1]. Older adults with dementia experience not only deterioration of cognition, and difficulty in activities of daily living, but also behavioral and psychological symptoms, social isolation, and decreased quality of life [2]. Thus, effective strategies are needed to improve their cognitive function, behavioral problems, and quality of life.

The reminiscence therapy is a widely used intervention for older adults and those with dementia. Reminiscence reflects one's positive or negative personal traits based on past experiences, and is considered similar to life story, life history, guided autobiography, personal narrative, and life review [3]. Many contents from reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia are related to the past experiences during or after the Korean War and the Second World War [4,5]. Although the war is over, many Koreans still expressed fear and anxiety that the war might start again in Korea through reminiscence [4]. However, the attributes of the concept of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia is not clearly proposed. In order to use the reminiscence effectively, it seems necessary to understand its attributes considering the backgrounds of the subjects in advance.

Concept analyses enable to identify accurate attribute of the concept [6]. Previous studies of the concept analysis of reminiscence have not conducted in Korea since the Chon's study [7], even it's only for general adults. Hence, there is no conceptual analysis of reminiscence in older adults with dementia in Korea. The attributes of the reminiscence may be different between general adults and older adults with dementia. Of the international studies, there was one concept analysis study of reminiscence in dementia in 2014 from Ireland using Rodgers and Knaff' approach [8,9]. However, the attributes of reminiscence also may be different between Irish elders with dementia and Korean elders with dementia.

Therefore, the present study was conducted to clarify the concept of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia, and to identify its attributes through the concept analysis method of Walker and Avant [6] to develop efficient nursing interventions.

1. Purpose of research

The purpose of this study was to clarify the concept of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia through the concept analysis procedure of Walker and Avant [6]. The specific objectives were as below:

- 1) Identify the utilization of the reminiscence through Korean or international literature for Korean older adults with dementia.

- 2) Identify the attributes of the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia and develop the model cases.
- 3) Present the antecedents and consequences of the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia.

Methods

1. Research design

The concept analysis was conducted by literature review of previous studies. We applied the method of Walker and Avant [6] for the concept analysis of the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia. Specific procedures were: 1) to select the concept to be analyzed, 2) to determine the aims of concept analysis, 3) to identify uses of the concept, 4) to determine the defining attributes of the concept, and to provide the model cases and additional examples, 5) to identify the antecedents and consequences of the concept, and 6) to determine the empirical referents.

2. Research subjects

The scope of the literature included previous studies of reminiscence from philosophy, literature, art, neuroscience, medicine, psychology, sociology, and nursing. In order to search for Korean or international literature, two researchers conducted a computerized search with data sources of the Research Information Sharing Service (RISS) in Korea, PubMed, CINAHL, and PsychINFO using the keywords of 'reminiscence,' 'dementia,' and/or 'Korean.' Papers published from April 1988 to March 2018 were identified as 98 from RISS, 16 from PubMed, and 9 from CINAHL. From the 123 papers with the exception of reports or conference proceedings, 75 full-text articles were selected. And then total 43 studies were included for the final analysis with the exception of 32 articles based on the following criteria (Figure 1): 1) data on reminiscence for other diseases or healthy older adults other than dementia, 2) the study subjects were less than 10 persons per group in the case of experimental studies, and 3) it was found that the relevance to the research topic was too low.

3. Data collection and data analysis

The researchers identified how the concept of reminiscence in older adults with dementia was used within the selected literature. A data table was created for each of the documents, and the systematic concept analysis was made by extracting and describing the types of definitions

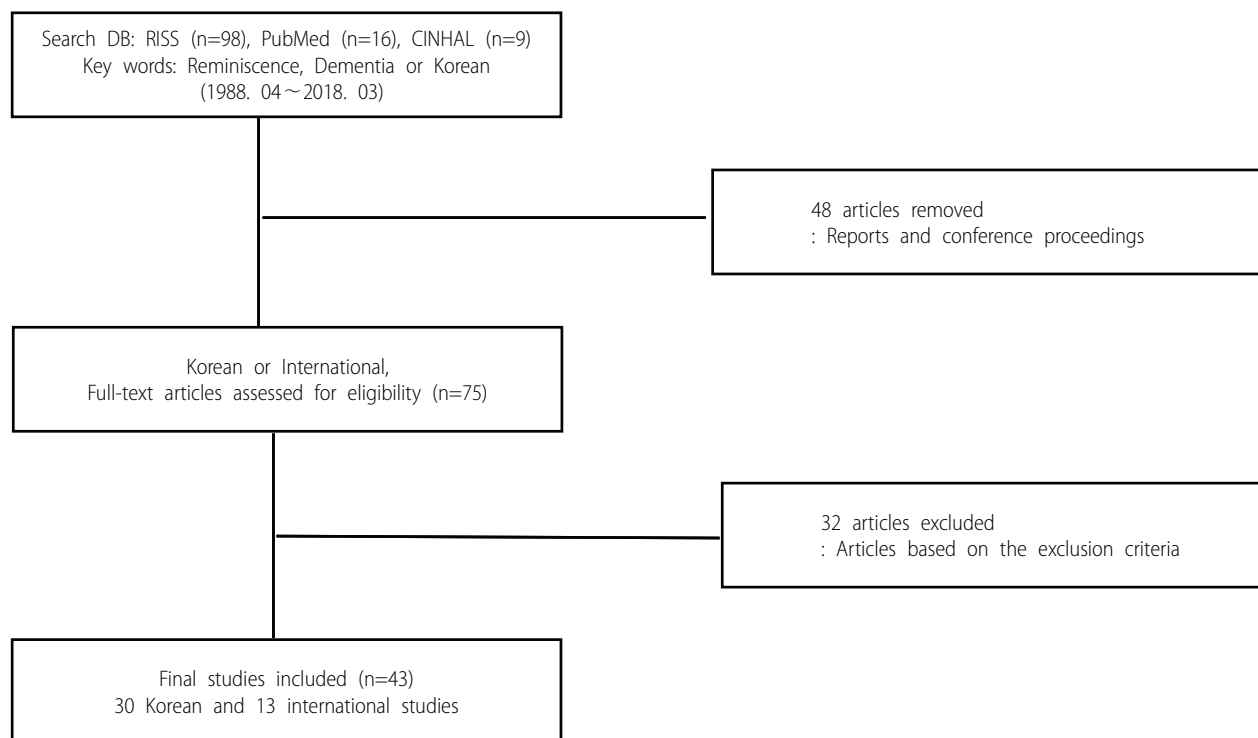


Figure 1. Flow of the searching strategies applied

and attributes of concepts. The data table included the name of the author, publication date, the type of document (dictionary definition, nursing theory, research in nursing or other disciplines), research design, measures or context, and results. After two independent researchers have independently created and discussed and agreed upon, the data were selected and analyzed, and the meaning and attributes of the concepts were extracted to ensure the reliability and validity of this study. The deterministic properties of the concept were identified and model cases, additional cases, antecedents and consequences were derived, and the empirical references were derived by synthesizing them.

Results

1. Uses of the concept of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

1) Dictionary definition

In Korea the reminiscence means thinking back to the bygone days or reminding a thing once experienced in the past [10] while its international definition is recalling to mind of a long-forgotten experience or fact, or the process or practice of thinking or telling about past experiences [11].

As dementia has a wide range of symptoms associated with a decline

in memory or other thinking skills severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities [12], the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia can be defined encyclopedically as recalling past experiences by Korean older adults with cognitive decline.

2) Using the concept in other disciplines

In philosophy, reminiscence among Koreans is not just physiological function to reflect the contents of the past as a mirror, it refers to the active performances to go back to the past and to overcome the painful memories [13]. The French philosopher, Bergson [14] classified the memories into pure memory, memory-image and perception, and emphasized that the perception was never a mere contact of the mind with the object present, but it was impregnated with memory-images as individuals interpreted it.

In literature, the concept of reminiscence in the Korean poem 'nostalgia' by Jang [15] was described as a self-recovery process in terms of a way to overcome human limitations and the feelings of heartlessness, isolation, and loneliness. In the book of Leman [16], 'what your childhood memories say about you,' the concept of reminiscence became a master key that allowed to realize one's identity and to see what made an individual to move.

Reminiscence can also find its meaning in art. Music [17,18],

photograph [5], painting [19-21], horticulture [22,23], tea [24], and video [25,26] are very suitable media for reminiscence to keep social interactions. Persons take pictures to remember the pleasant moments because the photos strengthen their recollection [5]. In other words, people can remember their youthful days through the pictures and feel a sense of happiness again.

Neuroscience and medicine focus on the reminiscence as a mechanical process that brings various memories. The reminiscence refers to a process of recalling past experiences and episodes, indicating a retrieval of explicit memories that occur with interactions between prefrontal lobe and medial temporal lobe [27]. Recalling memories of behaviors or skills means a retrieval process of implicit memories with interactions between cerebellums, corpus striatum, and amygdala [28]. The reminiscence among Korean older adults with dementia improves cognition, memories, and behavioral problems [29-31].

In psychology and sociology, the reminiscence improves ego integrity, depression, social interaction, and quality of life [20,32,33]. Korean older adults in high risk of dementia showed clear decline of implicit memories, which means that past experiences and learning can affect symptoms of dementia [34]. Because older adults face changes in personal sense of experiences in the process of aging, the reminiscence is looking back upon their lives with verbal or non-verbal, and individual or collective memories to reintegrate the painful changes [35].

As a result of the above literature review in philosophy, literature, art, neuroscience, medicine, psychology, sociology, and nursing, the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia is a self-recovery process of recalling the meaningful or inherent memories of the past experiences [15,27,34]. It also improves self-understanding and allows older adults to identify ego identity in the process of aging [20,23,35]. Music, photograph, painting, horticulture, tea, and video play media of reminiscence to keep internal and external communications [18,22,24].

3) Using the concept in the nursing literature

Although there is no nursing diagnosis associated with the concept of reminiscence in North American Nursing Diagnosis Association (NANDA) [36], it is used as a nursing intervention for grieving or adult failure to thrive, and is described to allow individuals to achieve ego integrity in the psychosocial development phases [37].

A concept analysis paper in Korea defined the reminiscence as the review, reconfiguration and evaluation of past experiences [7]. Reminiscence refers to internal and external communications to explore

the meaning of an individual's life, and to evaluate personal activities and situations [38]. Reminiscence also allows Korean older adults to express their suppressed emotions and to provide an outlet for fear, unresolved emotions or depression [39]. Through the reminiscence, Korean older adults with dementia can overcome guilty feelings and conflicts by cleaning up or rationalizing the past to achieve self-realization, and ego integration, to find the meaning of life, and to overcome their cognitive decline [40].

The reminiscence in older adults can be understood through a holistic approach rather than a single structure. In a phenomenological study of reminiscence in Korean older adults, the essence of the reminiscence refers to repentance of life, named 'Han,' which appears dynamically and organically in Koreans who experienced the extremely suppressed environments [4]. A study of grounded theory with depth interview of nursing home residents with dementia and their caregivers defined that reminiscence is to allow seeing and understanding things in the depths of the older adults with dementia [41]. Reminiscence increased the interactions between residents with dementia and caregivers. Caregivers could understand the older adults with dementia through the reminiscence, leading to accept the current behaviors of the residents [41]. A study of nursing home residents with dementia also described that reminiscence could be facilitated by the stimuli of the five senses (hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste) [24,42,43]. Reminiscence can be carried out individually or in groups in a structural or non-structural classification, and caregivers require careful access to negative memories of the residents [43].

Therefore, in nursing literature, the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia is described as a process of internal or external communications for review, reconfiguration, and evaluation of past experiences to overcome their cognitive decline and suppressed emotions, and to achieve ego integrity [4,7,40]. Families and caregivers can understand the older adults with dementia through the reminiscence, which allows to see things in the depths of them [41,43]. The reminiscence could be facilitated by the stimuli of the five senses (hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste) [24,42,43].

2. Defining attributes of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

1) List of characteristics

- ① The reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia is a self-recovery process of recalling the meaningful or inherent

memories of the past experiences [10,15,34].

- ② The reminiscence of Korean older adults with dementia is a process of internal and external communications for the review, reconfiguration, and evaluation of past experiences [7,20,38,40].
- ③ The reminiscence of Korean older adults with dementia refers to expression of suppressed emotions based on historical crises and cultural backgrounds [4,39].
- ④ The reminiscence of Korean older adults with dementia refers to a process of rediscovering ego identity and values in life leading to ego integrity in the process of aging [20,23].
- ⑤ Families and caregivers can understand the older adults with dementia through in-depth communications during the reminiscence therapy, which allows to see things in the depths of them [41,43].
- ⑥ The reminiscence of Korean older adults with dementia could be facilitated by the stimuli of the five senses (hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste) [24,42].
- ⑦ Music, photograph, painting, horticulture, tea, and video play media of reminiscence to keep internal and external communications [5,17,19,20-22,24,25].

2) Defining attributes of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

The literature review found that the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia enhances the recognition of their identities by facilitating effective communication, and expressing suppressed emotions through the regeneration of memories. Therefore, the attributes of the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia identified in this study are (1) regeneration of memories, (2) internal and external communications, (3) expression of suppressed emotions, and (4) recognition of ego identity (Table 1).

3. Developing model cases of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

A model case is an example of the use of the concept that demonstrates all the defining attributes of the concept [6].

A 92-year-old man, Mr. Kim was a high school teacher in the past and currently diagnosed with dementia. He participated in a cognitive improvement program at a dementia center with his daughter, but he was silent all the time. The nurse asked the daughter to bring back his old pictures. At the next visit the nurse showed him the pictures

Table 1. Defining Attributes of Reminiscence in Korean Older Adults with Dementia

Defining attributes	Meaning [Reference number]
Regeneration of memories	Recalling the meaningful or implicit memories of the past experiences [10,15,34]
Internal and external communications	Reviewing, reconfiguring and evaluating past experiences [5,7,17,19,20-22,24,25,38,40-41,43]
Expression of suppressed emotions	Providing an outlet for unresolved emotions, depression or fear based on historical crises and cultural background [4,24,39,42]
Recognition of ego identity	Rediscovering ego identity and values in life [20,23]

and said ‘Mr Kim, your daughter brought these pictures. They are awesome. When was this time?’ He concentrated on the pictures for a while and answered (internal and external communications). ‘These are the pictures taken at school when I had worked as a new teacher (regeneration of memories). At that time, I was not allowed to speak Korean when I was teaching Korean students, and before long, the Korean War destroyed everything (regeneration of memories). Sometimes I still feel the fear and death of that time because I couldn’t do anything for the dying (expression of suppressed emotion).’ The nurse reminded him that peace had arrived after the war and his beloved family is next to him now. ‘You are right. Now I’m a father of five children (recognition of ego identity).’ Their conversation continued afterwards, and the daughter who listened to the story said. ‘I never thought my father would still remember all these things (regeneration of memories), and it’s nice to see my father talking so much for a long time (internal and external communications).’

4. Developing additional cases of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

1) Borderline cases

Borderline cases are those examples or instances that contain most of the defining attributes of the concept being examined but not all of them [6].

A 76-year-old woman Lee who had been diagnosed with dementia six months ago visited the psychiatric clinic with her son because her memory and agitation were getting worse rapidly. During the interviews, the nurse asked some questions about her family tree. ‘My children? I have no child. Here is my husband next to me.’ The nurse showed the wedding picture of her son. ‘This is my son’s wedding picture. It was the beautiful weather (regeneration of memories). Oh,

my husband is here in the picture. Where is my husband? Where is my husband? Her son said that his father had been passed away a year ago and showed her the funeral picture. 'You are right. He's dead of liver cancer (internal and external communications). I'm tired, now.' The interview was continued with her son on behalf of Ms. Lee.

2) Contrary cases

Contrary cases are clear examples of not the concept and what is not shown in the model case [6].

Mr. Park, 82-year-old man with dementia who had been admitted to the hospital due to his left arm fracture was sitting in the living area and watching TV. He saw the travel advertisements on the TV, and talked to other patients. 'I had run a travel agency in the past. It was a good company.' Mr. Park's wife suddenly cut off his talking, and blamed him for having a bankruptcy with a lot of debt (interruption to regeneration of memories). Mr. Park seemed to hesitate. A few minutes later, another patient asked him about his company. 'Have you ever heard the Korean Express travel? I was the CEO of the company' However, his wife blocked him again and said that the company disappeared (obstruction of internal and external communications). Mr. Park appeared to be daunted for a while (repression of suppressed emotion). He said. 'Now I don't know who I was in the past (loss of ego identity).' The nurse made a decision to intervene both of them and participated in the conversation.

5. Antecedents and consequence of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

Antecedents are those events or incidents that must occur prior to the occurrence of the concept while consequences are those events or

incidents that occur as a result of the occurrence of the concept [6].

The antecedents of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia can be classified as physical, psychological, and environmental factors as below: (Figure 2)

- 1) Physical factors: gender, aging, severity of dementia, verbal capacity, and attention ability [29,31].
- 2) Psychosocial factors: suppressed emotions, depression, anxiety, personal relations, and social isolation [17,20,23,25,29,33,39].
- 3) Environmental factors: historical crises and cultural backgrounds as environment, and photograph, music, painting, horticulture, tea, and video as means [19-23,25,26,39].

The consequences of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia are as follows:

- 1) Cognitive enhancement [30,40].
- 2) Relief of depression [21,44].
- 3) Ego integrity [20,23].
- 4) Increased social interactions [21,20,33,44].
- 5) Improved quality of life [19,20,22,33].
- 6) Improved caregiver's understanding [41,43].

6. Empirical referents of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

Empirical referents are classes or categories of actual phenomena that by their existence or presence demonstrate the occurrence of the concept itself [6].

The instruments that are commonly used to measure reminiscence in Korean older adults are the Reminiscence Functions Scale [44], and

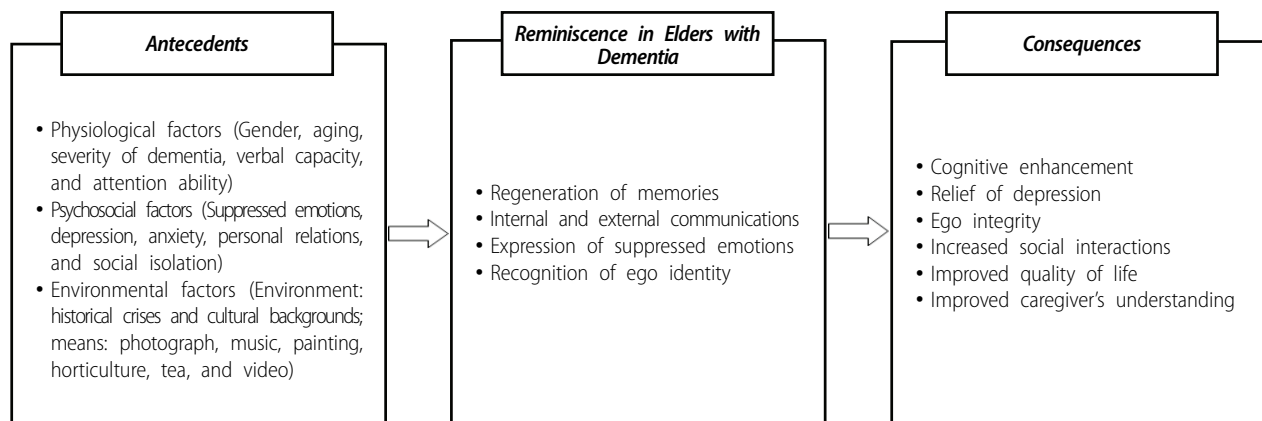


Figure 2. Antecedents and consequences of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia

the Reminiscence Functions Scale-Short Form [45]. These instruments are developed for healthy older adults or older adults with mild cognitive impairment, and include the domains of ego integrity, communication, and suppressed emotion. Another instrument, The Story Recall Test for the Elderly Korean Population is used to measure recalling memories [46].

The present study identified empirical referents of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia as below:

- 1) Regeneration of memories: recall ability of explicit or implicit memories
- 2) Internal and external communications: vocabulary and comprehension ability, and social relationships
- 3) Expression of suppressed emotion: level of depression, anxiety, and happiness
- 4) Recognition of ego identity: degree of ego integrity, self-esteem, life-satisfaction, quality of life, and well-being

Discussion

This study focused on a comprehensive review of the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia through a broad range of literature.

A study of concept analysis of reminiscence in dementia in Ireland defined its attributes as a process of recall, an interaction which involves recalling, and an interaction between the individuals [9]. In this study, the attributes of reminiscence of Korean older adults with dementia were identified as regeneration of memories, internal and external communications, expression of suppressed emotions, and recognition of ego identity. The suppressed emotions and ego identity in this study represent historical crises and cultural backgrounds in Korea. These may be due to the suppressed environments such as loss of human rights and bloody massacres during the Second World War, Korean War, and military dictatorship. A phenomenological study of Korean elder's reminiscence also revealed that the essential theme of the Korean elderly was regretting one's life, swallowing one's suppressed emotion (Han), identifying strength, and rewarding one's life [4]. As the reminiscence is recalling of past experiences, the historical and cultural backgrounds of the individuals should be considered to understand its contents. Therefore, the reminiscence for Korean older adults with dementia needs to include the process of expressing grief and discovering oneself. That is, nurses who want to use the reminiscence

therapy for Korean older adults or the elderly who had experienced traumatic suppression in the past should include a process of regeneration of memories and internal and external communications as well as the process of expressing suppressed emotions positively and finding ego identities.

Physical factors as the antecedents of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia were gender, aging, severity of dementia, verbal capacity, and attention ability in this study. A study of gender differences in reminiscence revealed that Korean male elders showed greater frequency in identity exploration, and conversation whereas the Korean female elderly focused on intimacy maintenance, and escapism [44]. These results seem to be influenced by traditional Confucian culture. However, gender differences are beginning to ease as the Korean society is currently in a period of transition from a traditional Confucian society to gender equality culture [47]. Psychosocial factors of the antecedents were suppressed emotions, depression, anxiety, personal relations, and social isolation. Suppressed emotions in Korean older adults is a concept that has not appeared in other cultures' studies, and are similar to depression. If Koreans cannot express their suppressed emotions such as injustice, angry and resentment, they cannot maintain their health, and get a cultural syndrome of Korea, Hwa-Byung [48]. Hwa-Byung is a Korean psychosomatic disorder which arises when people are unable to confront their anger as a result of conditions which they perceive to be unfair, and is originated in the unique social backgrounds of Korea, and has listed in the DSM-IV since 1994 [48]. Hwa means fire, and Byung means a disease. In order to understand the psychosocial factors, we need to understand the historical and cultural backgrounds which an individual experienced in the past. Therefore, environmental factors of the antecedents were identified as historical crises and cultural backgrounds as well as music, photograph, painting, horticulture, tea, and video in this study. Photo, music, and art are the most common facilitators for reminiscence in older adults in Korea, and are also used for intergenerational programs between older adults and younger generations [49].

The consequences of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia are cognitive enhancement, relief of depression, and improvement of social interactions, ego integrity, and quality of life. These results were consistent with the previous study that the reminiscence increased the interpersonal interactions, maintained individual values, and achieved ego integrity in dementia [9]. A meta-analysis also found that the reminiscence therapy for persons with

dementia facilitated cognition and communication, whereas there were no clear effects in mood, functioning in daily activities, and relationship quality [50].

Through this study, we realized that in order to understand the reminiscence in older adults with dementia sufficiently, we need to understand the historical and cultural backgrounds of individuals in advance. Because each country has different cultural backgrounds, the contents of the elderly's reminiscence may be different. The study findings are useful to develop the efficient and realistic nursing interventions, and the measurement tools for the reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia.

Several limitations existed in this study. First, because of the lack of concept analysis of reminiscence in elders with other illness such as stroke and chronic illness, further research is needed to compare with attributes of reminiscence in older adults with other diseases. Second, it is necessary to be careful when developing the reminiscence program because it can change the attributes of the concept considering that society and people's perceptions change.

Conclusion

The results of this study will extend the commonly used reminiscence therapy for older adults into the efficient nursing interventions for Korean older adults with dementia. The attributes of reminiscence in Korean older adults with dementia in this study will enhance nursing researchers to understand the contents of reminiscence and to develop the reminiscence programs for Korean older adults with dementia to enhance cognition, to relieve depression, to facilitate ego integrity, and to increase social interactions. Based on the results of the study, it is recommended to conduct further concept analysis studies of reminiscence in each country considering historical and cultural backgrounds. In addition, we suggest a program development study using reminiscence to relieve suppressed emotion for Korean older adults with dementia and examine its effect on depression or other behavioral and psychological symptoms.

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