

Short Communication

Activity Professionals are Avid Readers Seeking More Books about Dementia

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Activity professionals conduct therapeutic recreation for the senior population, especially those suffering from dementia or other age-related disabilities [1,2]. Activity professionals strive to improve the quality of life of individuals with dementia through nonpharmacological interventions, possibly leading to the reduction of medication [3,4]. As the population ages, more individuals will be diagnosed with dementia and need specialized care, including therapeutic activities [5]. This will lead to an increase in the number of individuals entering the activities field.

For my dissertation research, I interviewed nine activity professionals by phone (Walden University's approval number for this study is 08-12-15-0132847) [6]. The nine participants in this qualitative study were from the states of PA, NY, KY, and CA. In a semi-structured interview, I asked open-ended questions about their primary sources of information for staying up-to-date in their field. Five out of the nine participants discussed being avid readers of gerontology-related books. However, three additional participants had certifications that would have involved reading activities-related texts as part of preparing for the certification tests [7]. Participants were especially interested in books discussing dementia from the physiological level to the non-pharmacologic intervention level. Participants approached this reading from diverse educational backgrounds, ranging from the arts to healthcare to the sciences. Activities-related reading was considered to be both enjoyable and essential for professional development. As one participant stated "I love to read and I am very curious..... I've read some fascinating books...."

Considering the aging of the population and the usefulness of books for professional development, one might predict a growing market for books targeted to activity professionals. Health writers, who might have backgrounds ranging from activities to the medical sciences, should consider tailoring more books to the activity profession. Activity professionals need information to better understand the various aspects of dementia and to optimize nonpharmacological interventions. Books also need to be tailored to educated professionals with diverse academic backgrounds. The market, for these types of books, could be expected grow as the tidal wave of Alzheimer's disease impacts the healthcare system [8].

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