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Nurse practitioner student's knowledge and attitudes of sexuality in older adults**Rosa Terrance Green**

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While the older adult continues to participate in sexual activities, health care practitioners often neglect to adequately assess and screen for sex beliefs and behaviors in this group. Stereotypes, ageism and negative attitudes regarding sexual activity in the old aged adult and inadequate education of healthcare providers are identified as contributing factors for the omission of sex screenings in the older adult population. The purpose of this capstone project was to explore the aging sexual knowledge and attitudes of advanced practice nursing students enrolled in a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program. More specifically, the two-fold purpose of this study is to explore the knowledge levels of FNP students regarding changes (and non-changes) in sexual response to advanced age and general attitudes of FNP students about sexual activity in older adults. A quantitative, descriptive study design was used to conduct this project. The sample for this study consisted of 23 students enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner program that had successfully matriculated to the first nurse practitioner practicum course. Data was collected using a demographic questionnaire and the Aging Sexual Knowledge and Attitudes Scale (ASKAS), a tool designed to measure two realms of sexuality, knowledge about changes in sexual response in advanced age and attitudes about sexual activity in older adults. Descriptive statistics were utilized to report the findings. In this study, participants' ages ranged from 24 to 48 years with a mean age of 40 years (SD=6.76), the majority of the participants (n=18, 78%) were African American with 6 to 10 years of experience as a registered nurse (n=12, 52%), over half (n=15, 62.22%) of the participants self-rated their knowledge of old age sexuality as fair (n=15, 62.22%). The findings revealed a mean score on the knowledge portion of the ASKAS questionnaire of 50.38 (SD=7.88), indicating a moderate level of knowledge of regarding old age sexuality. The participants' mean attitude score was 65.27 (SD=28.23), representing a conservative attitude toward old age sexuality. The knowledge scale demonstrated an internal consistency ($\alpha=0.79$) and the attitude scale demonstrated an internal consistent ($\alpha=0.85$), both of which are at acceptable levels. Additionally, findings from this study showed that while the advanced practice nursing students were moderately knowledgeable about old age sexuality, specific areas of deficit were noted. The findings from this study yield preliminary data that can be useful in future curriculum planning.

Biography

Rosa Terrance Green has been a Registered Nurse for 16 years and has been a Gerontological Nurse Practitioner (GNP) for 8 years. She has completed her Doctoral studies and obtained a DNP.

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