Reviewer's report

Title: A meaningful daily life in nursing homes - a place of shelter and a space of freedom: a participatory appreciative action reflection study

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Reviewer: Gørill Haugan

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REVIEW2 - BMC Nursing
A meaningful daily life in nursing homes - a place of shelter and a space of freedom: a participatory appreciative action reflection study
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BMC Nursing - Research article
Reviewer's report

General comments
The authors have done a great job handling the reviewers' concerns; the paper is significantly improved.
Still, I have a major concern about this manuscript.

Major compulsory revisions:
At page 3 the authors state “...the aim of the present study was to describe older persons’ experience and knowledge about obstacles, opportunities and solutions to developing a meaningful daily life while living in nursing homes”.
Consequently, the reader expects that the conclusion of the study will spotlight the results responding to this research aim.
Nevertheless, the Conclusion section at page 24 focuses that:
• “...this study has deepened our understanding of the importance of the reciprocal relationship to balance the power in the interaction between staff and the older person.”
• “...the older persons taught us that to be in command of space, to feel at home, and to have a sense of freedom is an opportunity and solution for a meaningful daily life (Table 1).”
• “...it is important for staff to have insight into their own values and to balance their power in the relationship....values of the staff....reflected in their body language”
• “The staff ‘s relationship and their interaction with the older person are directly related to meaning in life, and are significant for older person’s physical and emotional health and global well-being (4,14,17).”
My point with this is twofold:

1. How do you conclude on what you state is the research aim (close to the research question) of this study? To me it seems like the aim and the conclusion is not clearly corresponding. Since this research aims to describe obstacles, opportunities and solutions for a meaningful life, I expect that the conclusion based on the present results describe the obstacles, opportunities and solutions. But the conclusion does not. Thus, at this point the manuscript seems inconsistent. Maybe the aim can be re-written?

2. Regarding the 4th bullet point of mine over; “The staff’s relationship and their interaction with the older person are directly related to meaning in life, and are significant for older person’s physical and emotional health and global well-being (4,14,17).” Is this a conclusion based in THE DATA OF THIS PRESENT STUDY, or is this from previous studies? If so, I would rather prefer that you clearly state your results from the present study, and then show how your findings find support in previous studies.

Minor essential revisions:

At page 2 is stated: “This can result in an extensive need for elderly care [4] such as long-term care in a nursing home (1,4).” I am wondering if the reference 4 really is the one you have intended to refer to at this point…? Please, check. Reference 17 might be more appropriate than 4?

Besides, the first reference is presented in a [ ], while the next is in a ( ). Please, ensure such details to be consistent throughout the whole manuscript.

At page 2; “Perceived meaning in life for older persons in nursing homes is also significantly associated with quality of life dimensions: physical, emotional, social, and functional well-being [4,16-17].” At this point it would be better referring to the study/article entitled “Meaning-in-life in nursing-home patients: a valuable approach for enhancing psychological and physical well-being? Journal of Clinical Nursing, doi: 10.1111/jocn.12402 which by means of a SEM-model shows that meaning-in-life is significantly associated with all the quality-of-life domains; physical, social, emotional, functional well-being – and since meaning is an aspect of spiritual well-being it is closely related to spiritual well-being as well.

At page 6 the authors state that “since older persons in nursing homes can be expected to have multiple symptoms such as fatigue, pain, depression and anxiety (4, 14)” Because reference number 17 is the article presenting the prevalence of symptoms and plagues among nursing home patients, I am wondering if the references 4 and 14 really are the ones you have intended to refer to…? Please, check.

I have an equal concern regarding the reference 4 at page 25: I guess, that you have meant the reference nb.17 instead of number 4. Please, Check.

Discretionary revisions:
At page 23 in the discussion section you state that “The interaction between the nurse and the older person and activities in nursing homes can increase mental, physical and psycho-spiritual well-being, and prevent despair and meaninglessness [14]”. I just want to make you aware that a recent study has shown that the interaction between the nurse and the older person has significant effect on nursing home patients’ depression and anxiety, which also gives support to your study. (Title: The effect of nurse-patient interaction on anxiety and depression in cognitively intact nursing home patients. Journal of Clinical Nursing, 2013 Aug;22(15-16):2192-205. doi: 10.1111/jocn.12072)

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.