

# Exploring resilience in nurses caring for older persons

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for the degree *Magister Curationis* in *Community Nursing* at  
the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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Co-Supervisor: Prof MP Koen

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**“Be still, and know that I am God!**

**I will be honoured by every nation.**

**I will be honoured throughout the world.”**

**Psalm 46:10**



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## THIS STUDY IS DEDICATED TO

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Thank you for the life and the upbringing that you gave me. Thank you for being there for me all of your life. Thank you for your unconditional love, acceptance and support during all the years. You made me believe that I can accomplish anything in life. Thank you for making it possible for me to study and pursue my career by helping and supporting with our children when needed.

I love you very much.

Your daughter

Petronella.

## **PREFACE AND DECLARATION**

The article format has been selected for this study. The Magister Curationis (MCur) student Ms Petronella Benadé conducted the research and wrote the manuscript under the supervision of Dr Emmerentia du Plessis and Prof Daleen Koen, the co-authors of the article. Dr Emmerentia du Plessis acted as supervisor and Prof Daleen Koen as co-supervisor.

The manuscript: “Exploring resilience in nurses caring for older persons” was written according to the instructions to authors and will be submitted to *Health SA Gesondheid*.

Permission was obtained from Dr Emmerentia du Plessis that the article (manuscript) may be submitted for examination.

As yet no permission was obtained from the editor of the journal for copyright.

### **DECLARATION FROM STUDENT THAT PLAGIARISM HAS BEEN AVOIDED**

I, Ms Petronella Benadé, ID 650617 0032 080, Student number: 10450580, hereby declare that I have read the North-West University’s “Policy on Plagiarism and other forms of Academic Dishonesty and Misconduct” (NWU, 2011).

I did my best to acknowledge all the authors that I have cited and I tried to paraphrase their words to the best of my ability and still portray the correct meaning of their words.

I also acknowledge that by reading extensively about the topic some information may have been internalized in my thinking but I tried my best to give recognition to the original authors of the ideas.

I declare that this dissertation is my own work although I respect the professional contribution made by my supervisors and I would like to give due recognition to them.

**Ms Petronella Benadé**

Date: May 2014

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** A shortage of nurses is experienced in aged care as these nurses experience adverse working conditions. Resilience might empower these nurses to survive, thrive and even flourish. A paucity of research exists regarding resilience in nurses caring for older persons.

**Objectives:** The purpose of this research was to investigate the level of resilience in nurses caring for older persons, and to explore and describe their strengths and coping abilities, in order to formulate recommendations to strengthen resilience in nurses caring for older persons.

**Method:** An explorative, descriptive design with multiple phases was used. An all-inclusive sample of nurses caring for older persons in an urban setting in the North West Province was used. During phase one (sample size n=43) the level of resilience, demographic information and narratives were obtained. During phase two (sample size n=17) focus group interviews were conducted. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and the qualitative data using content analysis.

**Results:** The participants had a moderately high to high level of resilience. Participants did experience adverse working circumstances and they needed resilience due to a need for balance, the emotional nature of the work, work ethics and the work environment. Nurses caring for older persons use personal, professional, contextual and spiritual strengths to handle adverse working conditions.

**Conclusion:** Recommendations to strengthen resilience in nurses caring for older persons were formulated in phase three of the research, focusing on strengthening nurses' personal, professional, contextual and spiritual strengths in order that they can handle adverse workplace conditions.

**Key words:** resilience, nurses, caring, older-persons, strengths

## OPSOMMING

**Agtergrond:** 'n Tekort aan verpleegkundiges word in bejaardesorg ervaar aangesien hierdie verpleegkundiges ongunstige werksomstandighede beleef. Veerkragtigheid kan moontlik hierdie verpleegkundiges bemagtig om te oorleef, te gedy en selfs te floreer. 'n Gebrek aan navorsing bestaan aangaande veerkragtigheid in verpleegkundiges wat ouer persone versorg.

**Doelwitte:** Die doel van hierdie navorsing was om die vlak van veerkragtigheid in verpleegkundiges wat ouer persone versorg te ondersoek, om hul sterktes en hanteringsvermoëns te verken en te beskryf, om sodoende aanbevelings te kan formuleer wat veerkragtigheid versterk in verpleegkundiges wat ouer persone versorg.

**Metode:** 'n Verkennende, beskrywende ontwerp met verskeie fases is gebruik. 'n Alles-insluitende steekproef van verpleegkundiges wat ouer persone in 'n stedelike gebied in die Noordwes Provinsie versorg, is gebruik. Gedurende die eerste fase (steekproefgrootte n=43) is die vlak van veerkragtigheid, demografiese inligting en verhale verkry. Tydens fase twee (steekproefgrootte n=17) is fokusgroep-onderhoude gevoer. Die kwantitatiewe data is ontleed met behulp van beskrywende statistiek en die kwalitatiewe data met behulp van inhoudsontleding.

**Resultate:** Die deelnemers het 'n matig hoë tot hoë vlak van veerkragtigheid getoon. Deelnemers het ongunstige werksomstandighede ervaar en hulle het veerkragtigheid nodig as gevolg van die behoefte aan balans, die emosionele aard van die werk, werksetiek en die werksomgewing. Verpleegkundiges wat ouer persone versorg gebruik persoonlike, professionele, kontekstuele en geestelike sterktes om die ongunstige werksomstandighede te hanteer.

**Gevolgtrekking:** Aanbevelings om veerkragtigheid in verpleegkundiges wat ouer persone versorg te versterk is in fase drie van die navorsing geformuleer, met die fokus op die bevordering van verpleegkundiges se persoonlike, professionele, kontekstuele en geestelike sterktes sodat hulle die ongunstige werksomstandighede kan hanteer.

**Sleutelwoorde:** veerkragtigheid, verpleegkundiges, omgee, ouer persone, sterktes

## PERMISSION LETTER: DR E DU PLESSIS



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### Permission letter

Hereby permission is granted that the following manuscript "Exploring resilience in nurses caring for older persons" that will be submitted to "Health SA Gesondheid" for publication, may be submitted by Ms. P. Benadé for the purpose of obtaining a M. Cur in Community Nursing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E du Plessis', written over a horizontal line.

Supervisor: Dr. E du Plessis

Date: 5 May 2014

## LANGUAGE EDITING LETTER : DR CD SCHUTTE



*Actus Editing and Research*

5 May 2014

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to certify that I have fully edited the Magister Curatoris thesis of Ms Petro Benadé entitled "Exploring resilience in nurses caring for older persons" for North-West University.

The text was checked for clarity and ease of reading, grammar and usage, spelling and punctuation, consistency in the use of text and figures in illustrations and tables, completeness and consistency in references, consistency in page numbering, headers and footers and suggestions were offered. The editor makes no pretension to have improved the intellectual content of the thesis and did not rewrite any text. The editor's suggestions are to be accepted or rejected by the author. The author effected the final changes herself.

Yours sincerely,

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**Re: Dissertation Ms P Benade, student number: 10450580**

We hereby confirm that the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University had analysed the data and assisted with the interpretation of the results. However, any opinion, findings or recommendations expressed in this document are those of the author and the Statistical Consultation Services of NWU (Potchefstroom Campus) do not accept responsibility for the statistical correctness of the results reported.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S M Ellis', is written over a horizontal line.

**DR. S M ELLIS (Pr. Sci. Nat)**

**Head: Statistical Consultation Services**

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>ICU</b>	Intensive Care Unit
<b>MCur</b>	Magister Curationis
<b>NIA</b>	National Institute on Aging
<b>NWU</b>	North-West University
<b>ORU</b>	Oral Roberts University
<b>RAU</b>	Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit
<b>RISE</b>	Strengthening the resilience of health caregivers and risk groups
<b>SANC</b>	South African Nursing Council
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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