



## **Qualitative Research Critique: Pain Management in Pediatric Patients**

Student

Course

Professor

Date

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Critiquing sources of evidence is a significant part of scholarly writing and research. Critiquing research papers enables students and scholars to assess their sources of evidence, identify flaws, identify the relevance of the source to the research topic, and ensure that they select the best, most accurate, and most reliable sources of evidence. Such a critique should assess the entire source of evidence and its distinct parts. This assignment critiques a peer-reviewed qualitative research paper by Odeniyi et al. (2017) describing the experiences and challenges that pediatric oncologists and intensivists face and how the oncologist-intensivist relationship affects communication and discussion on the goals of care.

### **Title**

The title of the article by Odeniyi et al. (2017) clearly identifies communication challenges among oncologists and intensivists as the topic of interest. Additionally, the topic identifies the method of the study as qualitative while specifying oncologists and intensivists caring for cancer patients as the populations of interest. This title is consistent with my definition of a perfect topic that is concise yet adequately informative. The topic is interesting and informative about the article and the information that it presents.

### **Abstract**

Odeniyi et al. (2017) presented a structured abstract. This abstract meets my definition of an excellent abstract since it was concise, clear, informative, and accurate. Additionally, the abstract is structured into subsections which provide clear summaries of the corresponding subsection in the main paper. The results subsection was particularly effective in presenting all relevant findings from the article. Nevertheless, the authors provide a set of keywords that are relevant to the topics covered within the article.

### **Introduction**

The selected article's introduction presents a brief discussion of the challenges surrounding effective and clear communication among providers and between these professionals and patients/families and how they affect clinical decision-making as the topic of interest. This section discusses the background of the issue of interest, its impact on patients, and a justification for providing lasting solutions to the issue.

The purpose of the study was to describe the experiences and challenges that pediatric oncologists and intensivists face and how the oncologist-intensivist relationship affects communication and discussion on the goals of care. All sources of evidence used in the introduction section were older than five years. Relying on outdated sources of evidence limits researchers' effectiveness in answering relevant issues and linking them to current practice guidelines. The central concepts arising in the introduction include interdisciplinary teamwork in cancer management, effective communication, pediatric oncologist-intensivist relationships, and patient engagement in cancer treatment decisions.

### **Design**

The study by Odeniyi et al. (2017) followed an ethnography research design where semi-structured interviews were used to gather the data relevant to the topic of interest. This research design is appropriate in social and behavioral sciences since it helps in understanding people, their behaviors, and their cultures. As such, this design is effective in a study seeking to understand communication within the interprofessional health team caring for pediatric patients diagnosed with cancer.



The sample of the study by Odeniyi et al. (2019) constituted 10 physicians caring for cancer patients. This group included three intensivists and seven oncologists. However, all participants were designated to an academic pediatric hospital. Half of these participants were male. The sample fit the concepts being studied since it covered the two specialties being targeted, the patient population of interest (pediatric cancer patients), and the diagnosis of interest (cancer). Participants were recruited from a pediatric intensive care unit (PICU). This setting was relevant since it is used in the delivery of pediatric care and is thus the setting of choice for young patients diagnosed with cancer. The sample was selected using convenience sampling which is effective in selecting individuals who are best suited to answer the research question. This sampling method is relevant to the article by Odeniyi et al. (2017) since it helps in coming up with a team of oncologists and intensivists capable of providing valuable information about communication challenges within the oncology setting.

## **Research Ethics Concerns**

The study by Odeniyi et al. (2017) was approved by an institutional review board since it involved gathering data from human participants. However, the researchers did not disclose whether they obtained informed consent from participants before collecting data from them and the measures they took to protect their privacy. Informed consent is necessary for this type of research since it ensures the confidentiality of participants, maintains high levels of autonomy among participants, enhances truthfulness through accountability of participants, and guarantees the safety and protection of human subjects. However, the authors declared no conflict of interest which could have affected the reliability of their research findings or conclusions.

## **Data Collection**

Odeniyi et al. (2017) used open-ended interviews to gather data for their study. These instruments are effective when gathering consensus-based expert opinion since it creates room for experts to present their ideas without restrictions. Nevertheless, they allow researchers to develop an in-depth exploration of their topics of interest and encourage critical thinking among participants. The researchers provided a clear explanation of the data collection process and the time that was allocated for each participant. Unfortunately, Odeniyi et al. (2017) ensured rigor by using "established methods to reconcile coding differences through discussion and consensus" in place of inter-rater reliability (p. 910). These measures are effective in ensuring that the design, methods, and conclusions are free of bias, replicable, explicit, and accurate. As such, the selected research paper implemented adequate measures to ensure the validity and reliability of its findings.

## **Data Analysis**

The authors clearly identified their roles in the research process, including the allocation of data coding and analysis roles. Unfortunately, the authors did not disclose the assumptions they made before conducting their research. Such assumptions are significant in determining the risk of bias in qualitative studies. The study by Odeniyi et al. (2017) followed a grounded theory research to analyze the data relevant to the topic of interest before it was analyzed to come up with a theoretical framework. This analytical method is appropriate for constructing a theory about a phenomenon based on systematically

collected data. Nevertheless, it provides a framework for generating findings that closely reflect reality and developing a framework for solving health issues in the future.

## **Findings**

The main findings of the article by Odeniyi et al. (2017) were reported in seven themes, including four facilitators and three barriers of communication between cancer specialists and patients/families. The facilitators included team preparation for family meetings, skills to help in establishing a partnership with families, informal education in communication or willingness to pursue communication training, and the presence of palliative care specialists. On the other hand, barriers included incomplete sharing of information or confusion about who should initiate goals of care discussions, internal conflicts among providers regarding how to engage families in decision-making, and a lack of education or training in communication. I agree with the findings since they were backed up by quotes from participants. Nevertheless, the expertise that participants held in the topic of interest increased the reliability of their responses. These findings are consistent with past findings and are theoretically sensible as demonstrated by their consistency with the sources of evidence cited in the discussion segment. These research findings are relevant since they provide help to understand factors that could enhance or inhibit communication in cancer management.

## **Overall Impression**

The article by Odeniyi et al. (2017) contributes immensely to healthcare since it addresses important issues in cancer management among pediatric patients. Notably, the findings promote interprofessional teamwork and care coordination that have become significant in the management of cancer and other chronic illnesses. These findings could thus enhance communication and patient engagement to improve clinical decisions and outcomes in cancer management. The article's strengths lie in its combination of open-ended interviews, purposive sampling, and grounded theory. I understand that purposive sampling helps scholars to come up with the most relevant sample while open-ended interviews facilitate the discovery of knowledge by reducing restrictions on respondents. The data gathered through this approach is more relevant when analyzed through the grounded theory approach to come up with a framework for informing future practices. Unfortunately, the small sample and selection of participants

from a single center affect the generalizability of the findings. In this case, selecting a larger sample size from multiple settings could have enabled the authors to achieve heterogeneity which is required to account for the diverse characteristics of oncology providers.

## **Conclusion**

The selected qualitative article is an example of a good source of evidence. Notably, the article has clear, concise, precise, and informative heading and abstract. These components inform the reader what the article is about, the topics that it seeks to address, how the topics will be addressed, and findings about the issue of interest. The article's introduction section provides a clear introduction to communication challenges in the oncology setting, the state of the problem as documented in the literature, how the problem affects patients and other stakeholders in the healthcare sector, and the purpose of the study. The article's ethnographic research design, the use of open-ended interviews, and the application of the purposive sampling technique in the selection of specialists are suitable for a qualitative research paper. Although selecting a small number of participants from a single sample affected the generalizability of the study, the consensus expert opinion that these participants provided enabled the researchers to come up with relevant themes related to the topic of interest. Additionally, the grounded theory analytical approach enabled the researchers to generate valuable themes that could be used to inform communication practices in oncology settings. The article's excellent application of qualitative data collection and analysis practices facilitated the identification of themes that were consistent with both empirical and theoretical evidence. This source is thus a good example of a good peer-reviewed article since its sections provide the right information in the correct form. The findings from this article could be used to address communication challenges in oncology management and promote best practices like interprofessional teamwork and care coordination.

## References

Odeniyi, F., Nathanson, P. G., Schall, T. E., & Walter, J. K. (2017). Communication challenges of oncologists and intensivists caring for pediatric oncology patients: A qualitative study. *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*, 54(6), 909–915. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2017.06.013>

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