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# ASSESSMENT OF CAREGIVER BURDEN AMONG THE PRIMARY CAREGIVERS OF SENIOR CITIZEN

Nursing

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## ABSTRACT

During the 20th century the proportion of senior citizens continued to rise, and this trend is expected to continue into the 21st century. Caregiver burden refers to a high level of stress that may be experienced by people who are caring for another person with some kind of illness. Caregivers are 'hidden patients' and their role is stressful.The role of the primary caregiver is stressful.The primary caregivers of senior citizen who experience care giving – related stress have a 63% higher mortality rate non caregivers of the same age.it is a paramount responsibility of the nurses to assess the degree of caregiver burden among primary care givers of senior citizen and to desire coping strategies, to reduce their level of care giver burden.

**Objectives:** Assess the level of caregiverburden among primary caregivers of senior citizen and associate the demographic variables with level of caregiver burden.

**Materials and Methods:** Non experimental research approach of descriptive design was adopted.This study was conducted at selected rural community in Bangalore.The primary caregivers (100) of senior citizen were recruited for this study by purposive sampling technique. Zarit's Caregiver Burden five point likert Scale (ZCBS) was used to collect the data.

**Findings:**The over all caregiver burden is moderate to severe among 92 % of the primarycaregivers.It shows that active coping skills and management strategies are inadequate among the primary caregiver's of senior citizens.

**Conclusion:** assessing the degree of caregiver burden among primary care givers of senior citizen and to desire coping strategies, to reduce their level of care giver burden is an essential part for the health care providers.

## KEYWORDS

Caregiver, subjective demand, objective, burden, primary caregivers.

## INTRODUCTION

During the 20th century the proportion of senior citizens continued to rise, and this trend is expected to continue into the 21st century. The proportion of senior citizens were 8% in 1950, and 10% in 2000 and is projected to reach 21% in 2050.60% of this number would live in developing countries, and unfortunately these societies are not prepared to encounter the ageing phenomenon, and its social, economic and medical consequences (F.Mohammadi 2006)[1]. Population of senior citizen is increasing in both developed and developing countries .It is estimated that world over about 2 billion people would be senior citizens by 2050. It is projected that in the 21st century the majority of the world's senior citizen will be living in Asia (Kalyani.K Mehta 2006)[5]. India's older population is projected to quadruple by mid-century, while that of the world is expected to triple, the US Census Bureau (2016)[6,2].

Caregiver burden refers to a high level of stress that may be experienced by people who are caring for another person with some kind of illness. Caregivers are 'hidden patients' and their role is stressful. The early identification of the level of caregiver burden will give the opportunity for the nurses to help primary caregivers to meet the challenges of the caregiver role[3,4].The role of the primary caregiver is stressful.The primary caregivers of senior citizen who experience care giving – related stress have a 63% higher mortality rate non caregivers of the same age. The characteristics of caregiver skills are directly related to caregiver burden .It depends upon their coping skills and management strategies. (Schulz R 2008)[7]. The consequences of a high level of caregiver burden may have negative effect on their jobs (lateness, absenteeism), over helming difficulty in balance paid work and home responsibilities and negligence in their self care(Richard Schulz2017)[8].Multiple studies have shown morbidity, and depression among caregivers are high, ranging from 18-47%, and the care givers who were depressed, experienced higher degrees of burden, revealed anxiety was present in 17.5% of caregivers, compared with 10.9% of subjects in a matched control group[9,10].Hence it is a paramount responsibility of the nurses to assess the degree of caregiver burden among primary care givers of senior citizen and to desire coping strategies, to reduce their level of care giver burden.

## OBJECTIVES

Assess the level of caregiver burden among primary caregivers of senior citizen.

Associate the demographic variables with level of caregiver burden.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Non experimental research approach of descriptive design was adopted.This study was conducted at selected rural community in Bangalore.The primary caregivers (100) of senior citizen were recruited for this study by purposive sampling technique. The tool comprised of demographic variables (19 items) and self administered Zarit's Caregiver Burden five point likert Scale (ZCBS) (22 items). The total scores were categorized as 0-20 points (little (or) no burden), 21-40 points (minimal to moderate burden), 41-60 points (moderate to severe burden), 61-80 – points (severe burden).The reliability co-efficient was found to be 0.88.After obtaining the informed consent the response were collected and coded for the statistical analysis.

## RESULTS :

**TABLE 1-Distribution of demographic variables among the caregivers of senior citizens**

N=100

| S.NO | Demographic variables | n | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Age of the senior citizen(yrs)** | | |
| | 61-70 | 73 | 73.0 |
| | 71-80 | 17 | 17.0 |
| | above 80 | 10 | 10.0 |
| 2 | **Age of the caregiver** | | |
| | 25-30 | 32 | 32.0 |
| | 31-35 | 45 | 45.0 |
| | 36-40 | 14 | 14.0 |
| | above 40 | 9 | 9.0 |
| 3 | **Sex of senior citizen** | | |
| | Male | 43 | 43.0 |
| | Female | 57 | 57.0 |
| 4 | Sex of the caregiver | | |
| | Male | 63 | 63.0 |
| | Female | 37 | 37.0 |
| 5 | **Marital statussenior citizen** | | |
| | Single | 3 | 3.0 |
| | Married | 68 | 68.0 |
| | Widow | 27 | 27.0 |
| | widower | 2 | 2.0 |
| 6 | **Marital status of the caregiver** | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Single | 9 | 9.0 |
| | Married | 86 | 86.0 |
| | Widow | 5 | 5.0 |
| 7 | **Religion** | | |
| | Hindu | 45 | 45.0 |
| | Christian | 3 | 3.0 |
| | Muslim | 52 | 52.0 |
| 8 | **Occupational status of senior citizen** | | |
| | Unemployed | 81 | 81.0 |
| | Labour | 10 | 10.0 |
| | Private employ | 7 | 7.0 |
| | Business | 2 | 2.0 |
| 9 | **Occupational status of caregiver** | | |
| | Unemployed | 21 | 21 |
| | Labour | 14 | 14 |
| | Private employ | 42 | 42 |
| | Govt employee | 4 | 4 |
| | Business | 19 | 19 |
| 10 | **Co morbid illness** | | |
| | Hypertension | 62 | 62 |
| | Diabetes mellitus | 22 | 22 |
| | Arthritis | 2 | 2 |
| | Hemiplegia | 2 | 2 |
| | Cataract | 7 | 7 |
| | Bronchial asthma | 3 | 3 |
| | Coronary artery disease | 2 | 2 |
| 11 | **Duration of illness** | | |
| | 1month-1 year | 10 | 10 |
| | More than1year -3years | 60 | 60 |
| | More than 3 years-6years | 30 | 30 |
| 12 | **Duration of care giving** | | |
| | 1month-1 year | 8 | 8 |
| | more than1year -3years | 64 | 64 |
| | more than 3 years-6years | 28 | 28 |
| 13 | **Educational status of senior citizen** | | |
| | Illiterate | 74 | 74 |
| | Primary education | 17 | 17 |
| | High school | 8 | 8 |
| | Higher secondary | 1 | 1 |
| 14 | **Educational status of caregiver** | | |
| | Illiterate | 20 | 20 |
| | Primary education | 11 | 11 |
| | High school | 33 | 33 |
| | Higher secondary | 20 | 20 |
| | Graduate | 16 | 16 |
| 15 | **Income of care giver** | | |
| | nil | 8 | 8 |
| | less than 1000 | 5 | 5 |
| | 1001-2000 | 3 | 3 |
| | 2001-3000 | 35 | 35 |
| | 3001-4000 | 30 | 30 |
| | 4001-5000 | 11 | 11 |
| | 5001 and above | 8 | 8 |
| 16 | **Income of senior citizen** | | |
| | nil | 79 | 79 |
| | less than 1000 | 2 | 2 |
| | 1001-2000 | 9 | 9 |
| | 2001-3000 | 2 | 2 |
| | 3001-4000 | 6 | 6 |
| | 4001-5000 | 2 | 2 |
| 17 | **Type of family** | | |
| | Joint family | 68 | 68 |
| | Nuclear | 32 | 32 |
| 18 | **Size of family** | | |
| | 3members | 39 | 39 |
| | 4 members | 42 | 42 |
| | 5members | 19 | 19 |
| 19 | **Relationship to senior citizen** | | |
| | Daughter | 21 | 21 |
| | Son | 54 | 54 |
| | Wife | 7 | 7 |
| | Husband | 1 | 1 |
| | Daughter in law | 9 | 9 |
| | Son in law | 6 | 6 |
| | Others | 2 | 2 |

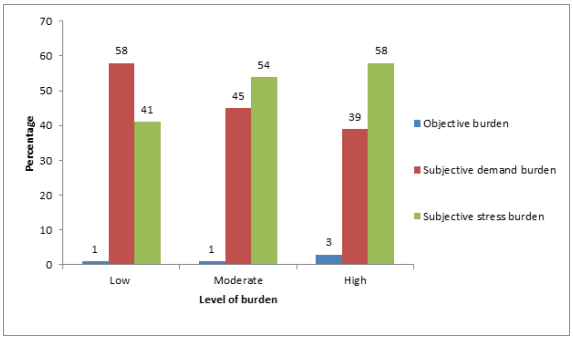


**FIG 1 Distribution of level of care giver burden among the caregivers of senior citizens**

There was a significant association of age, occupation of caregiver with the objective burden at p<.001.There was a significant association of age of the caregiver at p<.01 and marital status at p<.001. A statistical significant association of education, size of family at p<.05 respectively with subjective demand burden. There was a significant association of marital status of the caregiver with subjective stress burden at p<.001 and occupation p<.05.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study has been discussed with reference to the objectives.The over all caregiver burden is moderate to severe among 92 % of the primarycaregivers.It shows that active coping skills and management strategies are inadequate among the primary caregiver's of senior citizens. A study conducted by Schulz et al (l999) revealed caregivers with more active coping strategies perceive lower levels of burden.This finding alarms the nurses to derive problem focused coping strategies for the caregivers. Majority of the 58 %, 54 % , 58 % of the primary caregivers perceived moderate subjective burden, high level subjective demand burden,and subjective stress burden respectively.

There was a significant association of age of the caregiver with the caregiver burden with subjective demand burden and occupation with objective burdenat a p<.001, respectively. There was a significant association age with subjective demand burden at p<.01. There was a significant association occupation with subjective stress burden and education, size of family with subjective demand burden at p<.05 respectively. There was a significant association of marital status of the caregiver with subjective stress burden at p<.001.

## CONCLUSION

With an increasing life expectancy many senior citizen will require health and instrumental care during later life stages. Most of the senior citizen co-resides with family members, highlighting the importance of community support for family caregiver.Since senior citizen population is on rise, health care sector is facing challenges in meeting the health care demands and issues of those populations. Thereby assessing the degree of caregiver burden among primary care givers of senior citizen and to desire coping strategies, to reduce their level of care giver burden is an essential part for the health care providers.

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