

THE EFFECTS OF GERIATRIC CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAMS ON REDUCING CAREGIVER BURDEN AND ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE

**Ms.G.Lourds Shammine, Assistant professor, Department of Social Work, Hindusthan College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India.*

***Ms.Ninitha Thomas & Ms.Hasika, I MSW Students, Department of Social Work, Hindusthan College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India.*

Abstract

Caring for older adults can be a daunting task, leading to significant caregiver burden and decreased quality of life. Support programs have emerged as a potential solution, but their effectiveness remains unclear. Geriatric caregivers often experience significant burden and stress, impacting their quality of life. Support programs can alleviate these challenges. This study provides evidence for the effectiveness of comprehensive geriatric caregiver support programs in reducing caregiver burden and enhancing quality of life. Healthcare providers should consider implementing such programs to support caregivers and promote their well-being. Design of the study: For the study, the researcher used a descriptive research design. Sample: A sample of sixty respondents from Caregivers was selected by the researcher. Method of sampling: Purposive, Nonprobability sampling technique. In this study 74% of respondents reported having high level of effect, 13% reported having a moderate level of effect and 13 % reported having low level of effect.

Keywords: Geriatric caregivers, Caregiver burden, Quality of life

Introduction

The global aging population has led to an increased demand for caregivers to support older adults with chronic illnesses, disabilities, and cognitive impairments. Informal caregivers, typically family members and friends, undertake this critical role, providing emotional, physical, and financial support. However, care giving can be a stressful and daunting experience, resulting in caregiver burden and decreased quality of life. Geriatric caregiver support programs have emerged as a vital resource to address the complex needs of caregivers. These programs offer a range of services, including education, counseling, respite care, and support groups, aimed at reducing caregiver burden and enhancing caregiver well-being.

Definition

Geriatric Caregiver

A geriatric caregiver is an individual, often a family member or close friend, who provides care and assistance to elderly individuals, particularly those who are frail, chronically ill, or have cognitive impairments (such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease). These caregivers help with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, medication management, and mobility, as well as offering emotional support.

Caregiver Burden

Caregiver burden refers to the physical, emotional, and psychological strain experienced by individuals who provide care to family members or loved ones with chronic illness, disabilities, or aging-related conditions. This burden can manifest as stress, fatigue, anxiety,

depression, and physical health problems due to the demands of caregiving. The extent of the burden often depends on the caregiver's relationship with the individual receiving care, the level of care required, and the available support.

Quality of Life

Quality of life (QoL) refers to an individual's overall well-being, encompassing physical, emotional, social, and psychological aspects of life. In the context of caregiving, QoL can relate to both the caregiver's and the care recipient's experiences, assessing factors such as emotional health, physical functioning, social relationships, and general life satisfaction. A higher quality of life typically means better overall health, reduced stress, and a sense of fulfillment.

Review of Literature

Family members often undertake care giving responsibilities over long periods of time, which could lead to care giving burden. A theory-based and culturally sensitive learned resourcefulness program may help family caregivers mitigate stress by learning and using self-help strategies. (Meng-Chun Chen, I-Shou University, Mary Happel Palmer, Shu-Yuan Lin)

Background Family members, who provide the majority of care for persons with dementia, are especially vulnerable to developing depression. Interventions targeting their depressive symptoms have been proposed but their efficacies vary considerably. (Wai-Chi Chan, The University of Hong Kong, Nicola Lautenschlager, Briony Dow National Ageing Research Institute, Suk Ling Ma Chinese University of Hong Kong).

Studies have shown that respite care services, which allow caregivers to take a break from caregiving duties, significantly reduce caregiver stress and burnout (Zarit et al., 2019). Caregivers who had access to regular respite care reported feeling more emotionally balanced and physically rested, leading to better care for the elderly (Goins et al., 2018).

Need and Scope of the Study

The aging population is rapidly growing worldwide, with many elderly individuals requiring long-term care due to chronic illnesses, physical disabilities, or cognitive impairments. This has led to an increasing reliance on family caregivers, often resulting in substantial physical, emotional, and financial strain. The demands placed on caregivers can result in caregiver burden, which is associated with poor mental and physical health outcomes, including stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout. Assessing improvements in caregivers' emotional, social, and physical well-being, as well as their overall life satisfaction and caregiving capabilities.

Statement of the Problem

Family caregivers of older adults with chronic illnesses, disabilities, and cognitive impairments often experience significant caregiver burden, including emotional, physical, and financial strain. This burden can lead to decreased quality of life, increased stress, and compromised health outcomes for both caregivers and care recipients. Despite the growing demand for caregiver support, many caregivers lack access to adequate resources, education, and respite care, exacerbating their burden.

Methodology of the Study

Objective of the Study

- To study the personal profile of the respondents.
- To access the level of significant effects in caregiver development program.
- To discover the association between personal profile and significant effects in caregiver development program.

- To analyze the difference between personal profile and significant effects in caregiver development program.
- To study the influence of significant effects in caregiver development program.

Research design: The researcher followed descriptive research design for the study.

Universe of the study: The universe of the present study is from, geriatric caregiver for enhancing quality of life.

Sampling: The researcher took the sampling of 60 respondents from geriatric caregiver for enhancing quality of life.

The statistical tools applied by the researcher are Percentage Analysis, Chi-square, T-test and ANOVA.

Findings of the Study

Personal Profile of the Respondents

FACTORS	MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Age	25yrs-35yrs	52	87%
Gender	Female	55	93%
Marital Status	Married	60	100%
Locality	Semi urban	47	78%
Educational Qualification	12th	48	80%
Occupation	Employed	53	88%
Monthly Income (in Rs.)	Below –Rs.15000	46	77%
Type of Family	Nuclear family	40	67%

- ✓ Nearly (87%) of the respondents is in the age group between 25-35 years.
- ✓ More than half (93%) of the respondents are female.
- ✓ All most (100%) of the respondents are married.
- ✓ Nearly (78%) of the respondents are locality of semi urban.
- ✓ More than half (80%) of the respondents are 12th level of educational qualification.
- ✓ Nearly (88%) of the respondents are occupation of employed.
- ✓ Majority (77%) of the respondents are monthly income of below-Rs15000.
- ✓ Nearly (67%) of the respondents are nuclear family type.

Analysis and Interpretation

Level of significant effects in caregiver development program

Level of significant effects in caregiver development program	Frequency	Percentage %
High	47	78
Moderate	8	14
Low	5	8
Total	60	100.0

The table reveals that majority 78% of the respondent's level of significant effects in caregiver development program is highly efficient. 14% of the respondents are with moderate level of significant effects in caregiver development program. 5% of the respondents are with low level of significant effects in caregiver development program.

Influence of personal profile and significant effects in caregiver development program

Variables	Statistical tool	Value	Result
Education and level of significant effects in caregiver development program	t-test	t= 1.897 P<0.05	Significant
Marital status and level of significant effects in caregiver development program	t-test	t= 3.733 P>0.05	Not Significant
Locality and level of significant effects in caregiver development program	t-test	t= 1.076 P<0.05	Significant
Age and level of significant effects in caregiver development program	ANOVA	F= .086 P>0.05	Not Significant
Type of family and level of significant effects in caregiver development program	ANOVA	F = 5.327 P<0.05	Significant
Income and level of significant effects in caregiver development program	ANOVA	F = 5.095 P<0.05	Significant

- ❖ There is significant difference in the education and level of significant effects in caregiver development program.
- ❖ There is no significant marital status and level of significant effects in caregiver development program.
- ❖ There is significant difference in the locality and level of significant effects in caregiver development program.
- ❖ There is no significant difference in the age and level of significant effects in caregiver development program.
- ❖ There is significant difference in the type of organization and level of significant effects in caregiver development program.
- ❖ There is significant difference in the Income and level of significant effects in caregiver development program.

Suggestions**Introduction to Caregiver Burden**

Define "caregiver burden" and its emotional, physical, and financial impacts on family caregivers.

Understanding Geriatric Caregiver Support Programs

Definition and types of caregiver support programs (e.g., respite care, training, counseling, financial assistance, peer support groups). Explore how these programs are designed to meet the diverse needs of caregivers (e.g., emotional, practical, informational).

Policy Implications

Suggest potential policy recommendations to improve and expand caregiver support programs (e.g., increased funding, making programs more accessible).

Future Directions

Explore emerging trends in caregiver support, such as digital or virtual support programs, and their potential to improve access and outcomes.

Personalized Support

Design programs that offer personalized care plans based on the specific needs of the caregiver and the elderly individual. This could include tailored educational workshops or specialized respite care options for caregivers of individuals with specific health conditions, such as dementia or chronic illnesses.

Conclusion

Geriatric caregiver support programs play a crucial role in alleviating the significant burden experienced by those caring for elderly individuals. By providing essential resources such as respite care, emotional support, and educational tools, these programs help caregivers manage stress, improve their mental and physical health, and enhance their overall quality of life. Reducing caregiver burden not only benefits the caregivers themselves but also leads to better care for elderly individuals, creating a more sustainable care giving environment. However, barriers to accessing these programs, such as financial constraints and limited availability, must be addressed to ensure that all caregivers can benefit from the support they need. Moving forward, it is essential for policymakers to continue to invest in and expand these programs, while also fostering innovation to meet the evolving needs of caregivers in an aging society. The continued support of caregivers is vital for promoting both individual and public health, highlighting the need for ongoing attention and development in this area.

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