



FAMILY BURDEN AMONG CAREGIVERS OF PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

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ABSTRACT

Family members of patients with schizophrenia have enormous roles in the care of their patients, which could negatively impact their well being. Development of interventions targeted at alleviating the burden of informal care giving is hinged on the recognition of the factors associated with the various dimensions of burden. This study was carried out with the aim to assess the caregiver burden among caregivers of patients with schizophrenia. The present study was conducted at the Mercy psychiatry hospital, Trichy. The present study was a cross sectional hospital based study. The sample comprised of 56 Caregivers patients with schizophrenia. The following tools were used: Socio-demographic data sheet and family burden interview schedule developed by Pai & R.L.Kapur (1981). The result showed that Majority (32.8 %) of the of the caregivers belong to age group of 51-60 years, (56.9 %) of the caregivers were female sex, (87.9 %) of the caregivers are married , 70.7 % of the caregivers belongs to Hindu religion, 53.4 % of the caregivers were studied up to Higher secondary , 65.5 % of caregivers belongs to Rural background. This study findings indicates that caregivers of patients with schizophrenia experiencing enormous burden and they need to be given proper attention and psychosocial intervention to reduce their burden and increase their quality of life.

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INTRODUCTION

Schizophrenia is perhaps the most dramatic and tragic manifestation of mental illness known to mankind. The consequences of the illness for the individual affected, his or her family, and society in general are devastating (Lewis, 2009). This illness places a huge burden not only on the individuals afflicted, but also the people closest to them, termed caregivers, who live with the individuals, interact with them regularly and lend a helping hand in their day to day activities. Caregivers may experience considerable amount of distress themselves and may have a poor quality of life (QOL) if they are unable to cope with the stress associated with the process of caregiving. Family caregivers play a major role in providing care giving assistance to ill persons and their families. The effect of stressors on family members caring for an ill person in the family has been referred to as caregiver's burden. Chronic diseases place a considerable burden on family caregivers who take the sole responsibility for caring for chronically ill patients. Caregiver burden in mental illness can either be objective or subjective. A caregiver has been defined as a family member who has been living with the patient, and has been closely involved in his/her activities of daily living, health care, and social interaction for more than a year Department of Health and Human Services (2005).

Burden may be defined as the presence of problems, difficulties or adverse effects which affect the lives of psychiatric patients' caregivers (Thara, 1998).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted at the Mercy psychiatry hospital, Trichy. It was a cross sectional hospital based study. The sample comprised of 56 Caregivers patients with schizophrenia. The following tools were used for the current study: Socio-demographic data sheet and family burden interview schedule developed by Pai & R.L.Kapur (1981).

RESULTS

The result shows that majority (42%) of the of caregiver between the age group of 51-60 years, 29.3% between 41-50 years, 15.5% 60 and above years, 12.1% between 31-40 years and similarly 6.9% of caregivers of patients with schizophrenia 20-30 years. In terms of gender, the study revealed that 56.9% of the caregivers were female and 39.7% were male caregivers.

Table-1 Socio demographic variables of caregivers of patients with schizophrenia

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Caregiver age classification		
20-30	4	6.9 %
31-40	7	12.1 %
41-50	17	29.3 %
51-60	19	32.8 %
61 and above	9	15.5 %
Gender		
Male	23	39.7 %
Female	33	56.9 %
Relationship		
Parents	28	48.3 %
Siblings	1	1.7 %
Spouse	16	27.6 %
Others	11	19.0 %
Marital status		
Married	51	87.9
Unmarried	5	8.6
Religion		
Hindu	41	70.7 %
Christian	10	17.2 %
Muslim	5	8.6 %
Domicile		
Rural	38	65.5 %
Urban	18	31 %
Educational Qualification		
High school	31	53.4 %
Under Graduate	13	22.4 %
Post Graduate	8	13.8 %
Other	14	6.9 %
Occupation		
Government	2	3.4 %
Private	12	20.7 %
other	42	72.4 %

In terms of relationship, the study revealed that 48.3% of the caregivers were parents and 27.6% were spouse, 19% were others and 1.7% were siblings. In terms of marital status, 87.9% of the caregivers were married and 8.6% were unmarried caregivers. In terms of religion the study sample shows that 70.7% of the caregivers were belonging to Hindu religion, 17.2% were belonging to Christian and 8.6% were Muslim. The result suggests that the majority of caregivers 65.5% were from rural background and 31% of the caregivers from urban background. The result also shows that majority 53.4% were studied up to high school, graduation were 22.4%, post graduation 13.8 %. And others were 6.9%. Regarding occupation the result shows that majority 72.4% of caregivers were others, 20.7% were private job, and 3.4% were Govt servants.

Table-2 Family burden among caregivers of patients with schizophrenia

Family burden interview schedule	Schizophrenia n=56
	Mean±S.D.
Financial burden	9.39±1.24
Disruption of routine family activities	8.69±1.09
Disruption of family leisure	6.48±.99
Disruption of family interaction	6.35±1.82
Effect on physical health of others	3.46±.73
Effect on mental health of others	3.57±.49
Family burden Total	37.87±2.19

The table (10) shows that the caregivers of patients with schizophrenia were having high burden in financial burden (9.39±1.24), Disruption of routine family activities (8.69±1.09), Disruption of family leisure (6.48±.99), Disruption of family interaction (6.35±1.82), Effect on

physical health of others (3.46±.73), Effect on mental health of others (3.57±.49), and Family burden Total (37.87±2.19).

DISCUSSION

The present study consisted of 56 caregivers of patients with schizophrenia. The similar kinds of studies were done by Kali (2014) and Reena (2015) respectively. In the present study caregivers of patients with schizophrenia 53.4 % of respondents studied up to higher secondary and 32.8 %. Caregivers of patients with schizophrenia were between the age group of 51-60 years. 56.9 % of the respondent belongs to female sex, 87.9 % of the respondents are married, 70.7 % of the respondents belongs to Hindu, 53.4 % of respondents studied up to High school, 72.4 % of the respondents belong to others. 65.5 % of caregivers belongs to rural background, 48.3 % of caregiver's parents in relation. Almost same kinds of findings regarding socio-demographic data were found in two aforesaid studies. In contrast to our finding, Sunil (2005) found in his study that the majority of caregivers of schizophrenia age less than 30 years. Many studies shows that the burden is largely modulated by the age and sex of caregivers (Ibukun,2016; Ruchi, 2012; Anupma, 2002) but present study result found that male caregivers experience more burden than female caregivers and this finding contrast to the previous study done by Kali (2014) female caregivers experience high burden comparative to male caregivers. It reveals that the male caregivers of Schizophrenia patient had scored high Disruption of family leisure and female caregivers had scored high on effect on mental health of others in Family burden scale ($p < .05$). The significant differences were found in i.e caregivers from rural background had scored high on Disruption of routine family activities, Disruption of family interaction and Effect on physical health of others. This finding are consistent with the finding of Kumari, (2009) who reported moderate level of subjective burden present in the spouse which was statistically insignificant similarly the significant burden was higher among male, and urban areas caregivers.

This finding revealed that caregivers of patients with schizophrenia experienced high burden in almost all the domains. This finding is consistent with the finding of Abdul (2009) who reported high level of burden was found in 61(47.3%) caregivers and Shu-Ying (2008) who found moderate level of burden score 21.4% (25.9±10.7) among schizophrenic caregivers in Taiwan and also this finding result matched with previous study done by Kali (2014) found moderate burden in 69(46.9%) respondents while 54(36.7%) were found to be mild burden.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study indicates that caregivers of patients with schizophrenia experiencing enormous burden and they need to be given proper attention and psychosocial intervention to reduce their burden and increase their quality of life. The findings of this study urges the mental health care professionals to actively work with the caregivers of patients with schizophrenia to decide suitable psychosocial intervention strategies to address their burden associated with illness, to improve their quality of life and enhance their coping skills which will in turn provide quality of care to their ill patients, communicate effectively with their patients and improve the psychosocial functioning of the caregivers of persons with schizophrenia.

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