

Life Satisfaction in family caregivers taking care of someone with dementia: A comparison to nonfamilial caregivers and non-caregivers



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ABSTRACT

There are an estimated 30 million individuals with dementia and that number is likely to double every twenty years. Individuals with dementia typically need additional support, which comes from caregivers. It is important to look at the life satisfaction of caregivers, both family and nonfamilial, compared to non-caregivers (Brodaty & Donkin, 2009). Caregivers experience higher rates of depression, stress, health complications, and lower rates of life satisfaction (Borg & Hallberg, 2006). This has clinical implications as it can demonstrate how therapists can provide resources and tools for caregivers to reduce depression, stress, and burden. This study aims to explore the differences between life satisfaction for caregivers while taking care of someone with dementia and non-caregivers life satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

- There is an estimated 30 million people with dementia worldwide and this is likely to double every 20 years. Being a caregiver of people with dementia may mean a difference in life satisfaction, especially if it is a family member versus non-caregiver.
- Caregivers experience an increased risk for burden, stress, depression, lower life satisfaction, and a variety of other health complications especially compared to other caregivers and non-caregivers (Brodaty & Donkin, 2009).
- In general, family caregivers have been associated with lower life satisfaction because of not being employed, low social resources, not refreshed after a night's sleep, and overall poor health. While paid caregivers and non-caregivers were associated with having higher life satisfaction due to higher rates of social resources and higher rates of health (Borg & Hallberg, 2006).
- Research indicated that better perceived relationship quality, between the caregiver and individual with dementia, may serve as a protective factor as it was linked to greater life satisfaction and well-being (Rippon, et al., 2020).

PRIMARY AIM AND HYPOTHESES

- The purpose of this study is to examine the differences of life satisfaction for caregivers (family and nonfamilial) compared to non-caregivers when taking care of older adults with dementia.
- Is there a difference between the levels of life satisfaction between caregivers (family and nonfamilial) and non-caregivers when taking care of older adults with dementia?
- I hypothesize that there will be lower rates of life satisfaction for family caregivers compared to nonfamilial and non-caregivers, when taking care of someone who has dementia.

METHODS

Participants

- Family and nonfamilial caregivers (ages 40 – 65) taking care of someone with dementia, for at least one year. Also, non-caregivers (ages 40-65) not taking care of someone with dementia.
- 200 participants for each group, for a 600 total sample size.
- Participants will be recruited through senior centers, nursing homes, and physical advertisements.

Procedures

- Participants will fill out a survey via online assessing life satisfaction.

MEASURES

Life Satisfaction

- Life Satisfaction will be measured with the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Responses from this inventory will be summed to create the final score for participant's self-reported satisfaction with life.
- The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) includes five worded statements rated on a seven-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." An example of a statement is 'in most ways my life is close to my ideal'. Possible scores ranged from 5 to 35, with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction with life.

RESULTS

- Hypothesis: Family caregivers will have lower levels of life satisfaction compared to nonfamilial caregivers and non-caregivers, when taking care of an individual with dementia.
- Summed scores from participant's responses will be analyzed to determine if there is a statistically significant for the levels of life satisfaction between family and informal caregivers, and non-caregivers.
- An ANOVA test will be used to analyze the data.

Discussion

- Current research indicated that family caregivers, taking care of an individual with dementia, have lower levels of life satisfaction than nonfamilial and non-caregivers (Sadowska, Wyczalkowska-Tomasik, Zegarow, & Czarkowska-Paczek, 2021).
- Familial caregivers experience more burnout, lack of social support, and decline in physical health compared to other caregivers or non-caregivers, due to it, not being a role, they wanted (Brodaty & Donkin, 2009).
- The clinical implications of understanding the levels of life satisfaction in caregivers who are taking care of someone with dementia can allow clinicians to use interventions to address burnout and lack of social support. Such as behavioral management therapy and systemic individualized trainings to help caregivers address burnout and lack of social support (Brodaty & Donkin, 2009).
- Future research should explore the relationship dyad between caregiver and the individual with dementia and how that impacts both of their life satisfaction.