PREDICTING FACTORS OF DEPRESSION AMONG CAREGIVERS OF PERSONS WITH DEMENTIA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors predicting depression in caregivers of persons with dementia. The predicting factors include behavioral problems, activities of daily living dependency, caregiver burden, and coping. The model guiding this study was based on Pearlin’s Stress Process Model. Stratified random sampling was used to obtain a sample of 226 caregivers of persons with dementia at the three memory clinics in metropolitan Bangkok. Data were collected by seven self-reporting questionnaires, including demographic questionnaires administered to caregivers and persons with dementia, the Revised Memory and Behavioral Problems Checklist, the Modified Barthel Activities of Daily Living (ADL) Index, the Zarit Burden Interview, the Jalowiec Coping Scale, and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and path analysis.

The results indicated that the modified model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 0.990$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.443$, RMSEA < 0.001, GFI = 0.998, and AGFI = 0.974) and could explain 51.4% of the variation in caregiver depression. Behavioral problems had a significant indirect effect on caregiver depression through caregiver burden ($\beta = .66$, $p < .001$, $\gamma = .34$, $p < .001$, respectively). ADL dependency had a significant indirect effect on caregiver depression through caregiver burden ($\beta = -.73$, $p < .001$, $\gamma = .34$, $p < .001$, respectively). Behavioral problems and ADL dependency had a significant direct effect on caregiver burden ($\beta = .66$, $p < .001$, $\gamma = -.73$, $p < .001$, respectively). Caregiver burden had a positive direct effect on caregiver depression ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$).

The findings revealed that caregiver burden is an important factor on depression among caregivers of persons with dementia. Nurses should assess this burden in caregivers and develop nursing intervention procedures to reduce caregiver burden by providing knowledge regarding behavioral problems in persons with dementia, as well as enhancing the ability to perform activities of daily living of persons with dementia. The findings can be used to develop an effective intervention program for promoting good mental health and preventing depression in this population.

KEY WORDS: DEMENTIA / DEPRESSION / CAREGIVER

143 pages