



The Invisible Burden: A Thematic Review on Stress and Support for Women Caregivers of Individuals with Disabilities"

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ABSTRACT

Background:

Caregiving for individuals with disabilities is a crucial but frequently disregarded component of healthcare. Globally, women account majority of informal caregivers, frequently assuming the role without adequate recognition or support. This gendered division of caregiving responsibilities results in considerable physical, emotional, and psychological stress for female caregivers. Although these women play a vital role, their experiences and needs are frequently overlooked, leading to an 'invisible burden' that negatively impacts their health and well-being. This study highlights underpinning issues related to women caregivers for individuals with disabilities.

Project details:

We conducted a literature search to determine from 2010 till 2023 the relevance of topics related to psychological illness, women caregivers, and disability patients using ATLAS ti.8 23. A keyword search, followed by a filter using inclusion criteria from Web of Science, SCOPUS, and PUBMED databases identified 17 peer-reviewed articles. However, after the inclusion and exclusion process, only 6 articles were used as the final articles to be reviewed.

Outcomes:

A thematic review of this article identified 35 unique codes that grouped into 5 themes or clusters; women factors, recipient's factors, health condition, societal role, and socioeconomic and social supports. All reviewed papers cover women caregivers of various populations which are adult stroke, Alzheimer's, children with neurodevelopmental disease, autism spectrum disorders, and adults with physical disabilities.

Conclusion:

The results and findings will serve as a foundation for further exploration in the field of women's caregiving. Additionally, it will inspire innovation and generate better solutions to address the challenges surrounding this issue.

Keywords: Women caregivers ; Psychological distress ; Disability; Caregiving



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Biodata:

Dr. Nor Faridah Ahmad Roslan is a senior lecturer and rehabilitation medicine specialist in the Faculty of Medicine, UiTM. She specializes in treating patients with disabilities who require comprehensive rehabilitation support. Her research interests focus on enhancing the quality of life for individuals with disabilities, advancing neurorehabilitation techniques, and exploring innovative rehabilitation technologies.

Dr. Nasibah Azmee is a medical physiology lecturer with a PhD in Medicine and a Master's in Medical Education. Her research interests span social science and medical education, focusing on humanistic approaches, student well-being, and educational challenges, such as addressing students' stress and academic performance.

Dr. Anie Farhana Ngimron is a medical lecturer and clinical specialist in Rehabilitation Medicine. Her expertise includes managing individuals with various forms of disabilities. She is actively involved in voluntary work focusing on community welfare, education, and advocacy through non-governmental organizations.

Dr Wan Najwa is a rehabilitation medicine physician who actively treats patients with various physical impairments and disabilities. She is also a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Medicine UiTM who provides postgraduate teaching and training related to clinical rehabilitation. She has an immense interest in spinal cord injury rehabilitation, and she has just completed a fellowship training in this area at University of Toronto, Canada.