



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Psychiatry**

**BURDEN AND COPING STRATEGIES OF CAREGIVERS OF SCHIZOPHRENIC PATIENTS**

**KEY WORDS:** care burden, coping strategies, care givers, schizophrenia

**Ms. Jain Babu**

Lecturer, P.D. Hinduja College of Nursing, Balaji garden, 4/502, New Ayre Road, Dombivli East, Thane District, Maharashtra

**ABSTRACT**

Schizophrenia is a one of the major mental disorders characterized by abnormalities in the perception or expression of reality. Even with available treatments most people with Schizophrenia continue to experience symptoms throughout their lives. This will create profound burden in the lives of their family members. The aim of the study was to assess the care burden and coping among significant care givers of patients with schizophrenia. The subjects of study consist of 100 caregivers of schizophrenic patients. Purposive sampling method was used. The burden among care givers were assessed using Burden Assessment Schedule (BAS) and coping strategies using validated checklist for coping strategies. Majority of care givers experiencing moderate level (51%) of burden in caring the patient. Coping strategies used by caregivers emphasizing activities related to religion, emotionally focused, acceptance as mostly used coping strategies by caregivers. There is a significant association ( p value -.02483) between the care giver burden and their age.

**INTRODUCTION**

Mental illnesses are among the most common conditions affecting health today. Schizophrenia is a one of the major mental disorders characterized by abnormalities in the perception or expression of reality. Living with and caring for an individual with a psychiatric disorder seems inherently stressful. Caregivers of schizophrenic patients report a wide range of reactions to their situation. On the whole, these care givers endorse significantly higher level of psychological distress than the general population. To deal with the same, they develop different coping strategies to deal with this burden. Numerous studies have demonstrated that family caregivers looking after those with severe mental illness suffer from significant stresses, experience moderately high levels of burden, and often receive inadequate assistance from mental health professionals. In order to cope with these stressors, family members adapt various types of coping strategies. Kumari S. et al, investigated the study to assess and compare patterns of subjective burden on spouses of schizophrenia patients. The findings suggested that both the groups, viz., male and female spouses of schizophrenia patients, showed moderate level of subjective burden, i.e., 13 (52%) and 15 (60%) male and female spouses, respectively, which was statistically found to be insignificant. No significant difference was found between male and female spouses of schizophrenia patients with regard to the level of subjective burden.

**AIM**

The present study was conducted to assess the care burden and coping among significant care givers of patients with schizophrenia.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To assess the care burden among significant care givers of patient with schizophrenia.
2. To assess coping strategies used by significant care givers of patient with schizophrenia
3. To find the association between care giver burden with selected demographic variables

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The subjects of study consist of 100 caregivers of schizophrenic patients attending outpatient and inpatient department. Purposive sampling method was used. A structured interview schedule to obtain demographic variable. The burden among care givers were assessed using Burden Assessment Schedule (BAS) developed by thara etal and to assess the coping among family members using validated coping checklist (CCL) developed by Rao etal.

**RESULTS AND ANALYSIS:**

**ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES:**

Among 100 subjects majority (37%) belongs to the age group of 40-50. 62% were female subjects. 84% were married, 33% were having higher secondary level education. Majority of subjects were

manual laborers and unskilled workers and earning more than Rs.5000 in a month. In the sample there were 36% were spouses and 82% were had no previous experience in caring mentally ill client.

**ANALYSIS OF LEVEL OF BURDEN IN CARE GIVERS**

Majority of care givers experiencing moderate level (51%) of burden in caring the patient.

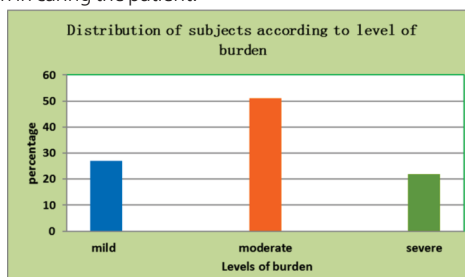


Figure :1 LEVEL OF BURDEN

**COPING STRATEGIES USED BY CARE GIVERS**

Table :1 Coping strategies used by caregiver

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (N =100)	PERCENTAGE (N =100)
Religion	64	64%
Emotionally focused	45	45%
Acceptance	41	41%
Social support	39	39%
Positive distraction	32	32%
Problem solving	24	24%
Negative distraction	14	14%
Denial	12	12%

Coping strategies used by caregivers shown in Table no.1 emphasizing activities related to religion, emotionally focused, acceptance as mostly used coping strategies by caregivers whereas social support, activities related to positive distraction, negative distraction problem solving denial as least used strategies.

**Association of care giver burden with selected demographic variables**

There is a significant association ( p value -.02483) between the care giver burden and their age.

**CONCLUSION:**

Providing care to a family member with a long standing mental illness such as schizophrenia causes significant disruption in family life. Family intervention programs for persons with schizophrenia, therefore must be sensitive to the needs of individual patients as well as care givers.

**REFERENCES:**

1. Srinivastav S.( 2005).Perception of burden by caregivers of patient with schizophrenia. Indian Journal of Psychiatry;47:148-52.
2. Kumari S, Singh AR Verma A N., Chaudhury (2009) Indian Psychiatry Journal 2009 Jul-Dec; 18(2):
3. Saunders JC.(2003) Families Living with Severe Mental Illness: A Literature Review. Issues Ment Health Nurse Mar; 24(2):175-98. Retrieved from URL:[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12554427](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12554427)