
Grace Peterson Nursing Research Colloquium

Aug 23rd, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Caregiver Burden in Caregivers of Patients with Alzheimer's: Interventions and Influence of Relationship Roles and Gender

Stephanie Rutila
stephanierutila@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/nursing-colloquium>

 Part of the [Nursing Commons](#)

Rutila, Stephanie, "Caregiver Burden in Caregivers of Patients with Alzheimer's: Interventions and Influence of Relationship Roles and Gender" (2019). *Grace Peterson Nursing Research Colloquium*. 3.
<https://via.library.depaul.edu/nursing-colloquium/2019/summer/3>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Nursing at Via Sapientiae. It has been accepted for inclusion in Grace Peterson Nursing Research Colloquium by an authorized administrator of Via Sapientiae. For more information, please contact wsulliv6@depaul.edu, c.mcclure@depaul.edu.

Caregiver Burden in Caregivers of Patients with Alzheimer's: Interventions and Influence of Relationship Roles and Gender

Introduction

Alzheimer's Disease Defined: "A chronic brain disease that gradually erodes an individual's memory, intellectual abilities and personality" (American Psychological Association, 2018, para 1).

What is caregiver burden? Caregiver burden is "The extent to which caregivers perceive that caregiving has had an adverse effect on their emotional, social, financial, physical and spiritual functioning" (Adelman, Tmanova, Delgado, Dion, & Lachs, 2014, p. 1054).

Effects of caregiver burden on informal caregivers:

- Depression and anxiety
- Frequent use of psychotropic medications
- Lack of health protective behaviors
- Increased risk of medical illness and mortality (Gallagher et al., 2011)

Problem Statement

Problem Statement: Caregiver burden in caregivers of patients with Alzheimer's disease (AD) can cause negative emotional, social, and physical effects on caregivers impacting their quality of life.

Purpose and Research Questions

Purposes:

- 1) To determine which interventions are most effective in alleviating caregiver burden
- 2) To determine how the degree of caregiver burden differs between gender (male vs. female) and family roles (adult-child vs. spouse)

Research Questions:

- 1) What interventions in the current literature are most effective in alleviating caregiver burden in informal caregivers of patients with AD?
- 2) Which gender (male vs. female) and family role (adult-child vs. spouse) experiences the greatest degree of caregiver burden? How might this affect interventions?

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework: Meleis's theoretical framework for role transition

- **2 parts of transitions theory:**
 1. An intervention model which identifies the person's present experiences and prepares them for future experiences
 2. An understanding of the transition experience
- **How it applies to the literature review:**
 - Effective interventions in this study are defined as those that help individuals prepare for their role as caregiver, cope with changes involved in their transition, and prevent or alleviate caregiver burden

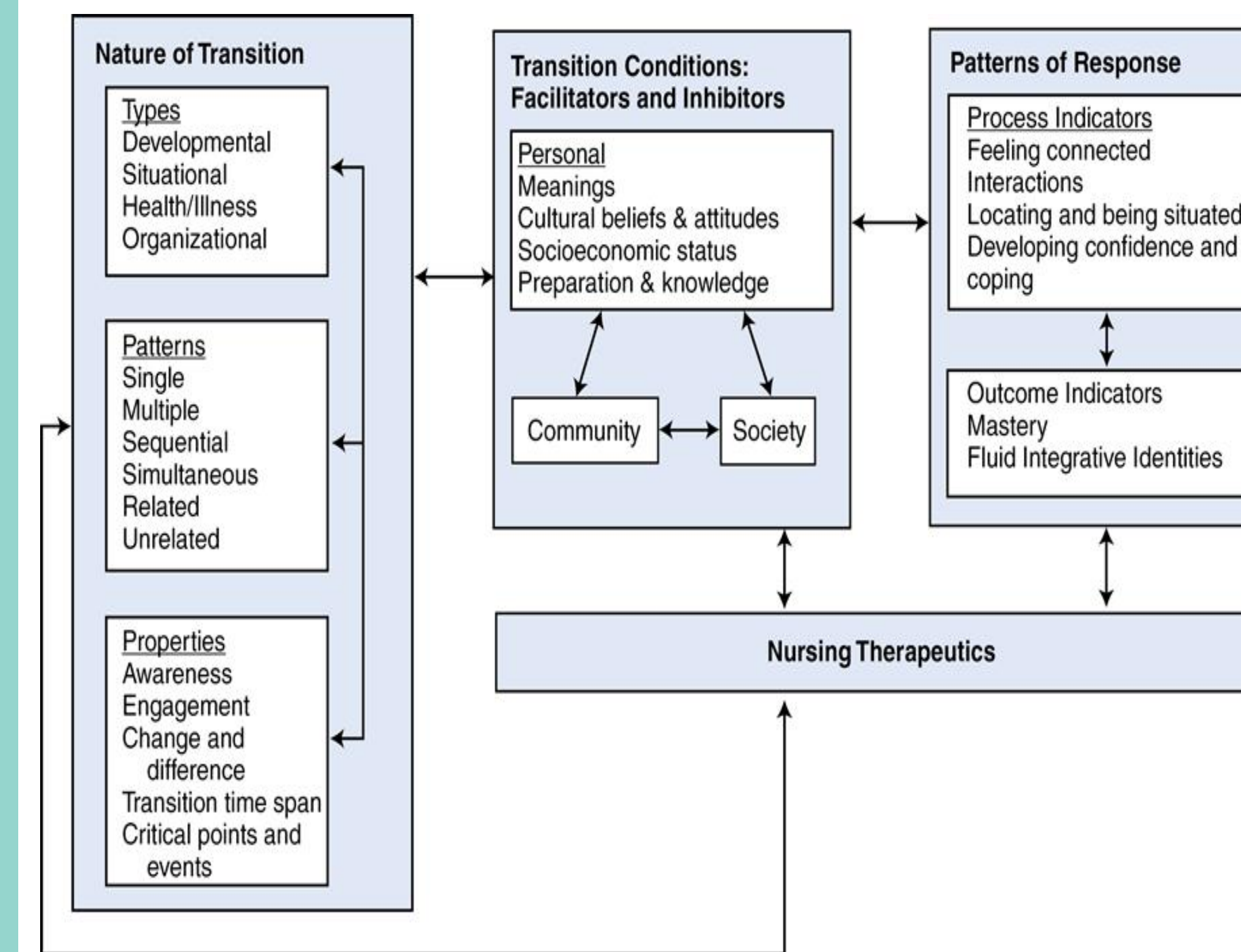


Figure 1. Meleis's Transition Theory. Reprinted from "Experiencing transitions: An emerging middle range theory"

Methodology & Search Criteria

Methods: integrative literature review

Databases searched: PubMed, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), and PsychInfo

Search Terms: caregiver, Alzheimer's, burden, coping, strategies, interventions, dementia, gender, family role, spouse, adult-child

Search Criteria:

- Full-text peer reviewed articles published in the years 2008-2019
- Accessible through DePaul University's database

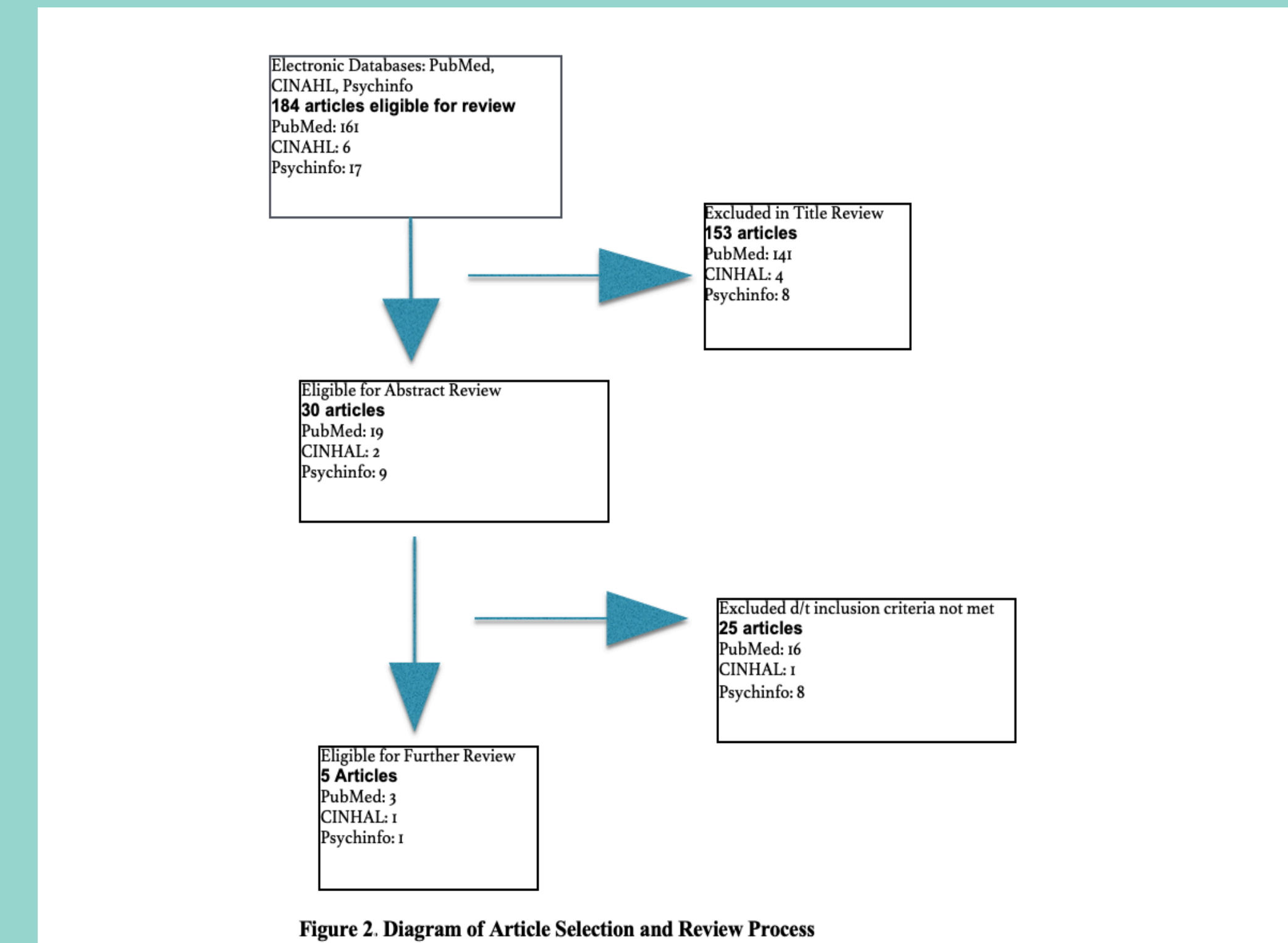


Figure 2. Diagram of Article Selection and Review Process

Results

- Five articles were selected based on search criteria – three intervention studies and two addressing the influences of gender and family roles on caregiver burden

Intervention Programs

1. Series of 5 interventions in which problem-solving skills, knowledge of dementia, social resources, and emotional support were taught every 2 weeks to caregivers (Chen et al., 2015)
 2. Six-month motor intervention program for Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers (Canonicic et al., 2012)
 3. Photojournalism class for caregivers (Wharton et al., 2018)
- Common elements studied in each intervention:
 - Social resources
 - Emotional support
 - Increased problem solving skills
 - Each intervention contained 2 statistically significant elements to reduce caregiver burden
 - All three intervention studies were found to be equally effective

Gender and Family Roles on Caregiver Burden

- Females experienced greater burden than males
- Adult-children caregivers experienced greater burden compared to spouses
- Contributing factors to differences in degrees of burden:
 - Degree of social burden
 - Degree of identity shift

Discussion

- Social resources, emotional support, and increased problem solving skills are important elements to decrease caregiver burden
- Females experienced higher burden
 - d/t time dependence, developmental, physical, and social burdens
 - Unexpected identity shift
- Adult caregivers experienced greater burden compared to spouses
 - Duty vs. lifestyle change
- Results of the study can be used to guide future research

Limitations:

- Lack of research studies on quality interventions
- Varying degree of Alzheimer's severity among studies

Nursing Implications

- Educate patients on strategies to prevent caregiver burden
- Provide social resources, emotional support, and aid in increasing problem-solving skills
- Teach caregivers about the signs and symptoms of caregiver burden
- Encourage caregivers to seek help
- Encourage nurses and other healthcare professionals to research interventions for caregiver burden and to raise awareness on the topic

Conclusion

- All three intervention studies – educational program, six-month exercise program, and photojournalism class– were equally effective
- Female adult-child caregivers are at the highest risk for caregiver burden
- Future studies can be aimed at reducing caregiver burden in this population
- Further research is necessary for a more comprehensive understanding on this topic