

1. Burden of care and quality of life of caregivers of persons with schizophrenia in a Nigerian tertiary hospital: A cross-sectional study.

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Objective: This study assessed the relationship between the burden of care and the quality of life in carers of individuals with schizophrenia.

Methodology: This was a cross-sectional study involving two hundred and forty-six adult participants (outpatients with schizophrenia and their caregivers in ratio 1:1) in a psychiatric hospital. Patients between the age of 18 - 65 years, and their caregiver who were greater or equal to 18 years were recruited via consecutive random sampling. The Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI-6), Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) and demographic questionnaire were used to confirm the diagnosis of schizophrenia, obtain the severity of psychopathology and demographic data of the patients respectively. The Zarit Burden Interview (ZBI) and WHO Quality of Life-Bref scale (WHOQOL-BREF) were deployed to obtain information on caregivers' care burden and their subjective quality of life respectively.

Results: One in five of the caregivers' experiences moderate-severe burden of care. Caring for unemployed patients ($p= 0.03$) and patients with severe psychopathology ($p= 0.01$), older age of caregiver ($p = 0.033$) and being a parent ($p= 0.01$) were significantly associated with high burden of care. The caregiver burden was found to be significantly negatively correlated with their quality of life.

Conclusion: The quality of life of carers of individuals with schizophrenia significantly, positively correlated with high level of care burden. We recommend that clinicians should endeavor to address some modifiable correlates, such as reducing the patients' illness severity and liaising with occupational therapists to empower patients with employable job skills.

Key words: Caregiver burden; Quality of life; Schizophrenia, Illness severity, Nigeria.

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