

Valparaiso University ValpoScholar

Symposium on Undergraduate Research and
Creative Expression (SOURCE)

Office of Sponsored and Undergraduate Research

Spring 5-3-2019

A Qualitative Study: Caregiver Experience of Dementia

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Recommended Citation

Kamp, Emma; Ortiz, Guadalupe; Brookshire-Green, Maddissen; Smith, Olivia; Willett, Kayleigh; Maris, Keegan; Portugal, Isabella; and Ling, Madison, "A Qualitative Study: Caregiver Experience of Dementia" (2019). *Symposium on Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression (SOURCE)*. 803.

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A Qualitative Study: Caregiver Experience of Dementia

Purpose and Background/Significance: Dementia affects an estimated 5.5 million Americans (Czekanski, 2017) and has ramifications for those affected with the disease as well as their caregivers. More than 15 million Americans currently care for individuals with dementia without pay, most provided by their loved ones (Czekanski, 2017). Caring for a loved one with dementia is associated with emotional, physical, and financial repercussions (Warchol-Biedermann et al., 2014). The objectives of this qualitative study were to assess effects of being a caregiver for someone with dementia and the impact of using an adult day service.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework: Caregiver resilience is the successful use of coping strategies that emphasize the perspective of resilience rather than burden (Roberts & Struckmeyer, 2018). Fitting with the conceptualization of resilience, caregivers experience subtle but long-term role changes, both physical and emotional (Roberts & Struckmeyer).

Method: The sample consisted of caregivers of people attending an adult day center. Undergraduate nursing research assistants conducted two focus groups of 6-8 participants each to assess the caregivers' experiences with their loved one. Data was collected through a series of structured, open-ended questions. Each session was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. All recordings and transcripts were destroyed after dissemination of the data.

Conclusion: Results demonstrated that caregivers experience role overload, role strain, and variable levels of burden depending on their resiliency to manage the care that is needed. Using an adult day service assists with role strain and provide respite for the caregiver.

