

Abstract

A Systematic Review: The Effect of Social Support on Emotional Burden of Alzheimer's Caregivers

Background: Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative form of dementia that affects not only patients but also their caregivers. Various social support interventions have been shown to benefit caregivers by decreasing stress, depression, anxiety, and other physical and psychological issues.

Objective: The purpose of the systematic review was to determine the effect of social support on emotional burden for caregivers of patients with Alzheimer's disease.

Methods: Research was conducted using the databases PubMed and CINAHL to identify eligible studies. Specific inclusion and exclusion criteria were used when screening studies. After evaluation and assessment of the studies, a total of eight articles (randomized control trials, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, and mixed method studies) were included in the final systematic review.

Results: Social support and emotional burden were measured using various social support mechanisms (CBI, CCSM, IADCQ, PAC, REACH, SSRS) and anxiety and depression scales (CES-D, SAS, SDS). Results demonstrated that the majority of studies demonstrated a significant decrease in caregiver depression and burden after implementation of various social support interventions, such as social support groups and customized educational sessions.

Conclusion: Overall, this systematic review demonstrated that social support interventions may decrease depression and emotional burden for caregivers of patients with Alzheimer's disease.

Keywords: Alzheimer's disease, caregiver burden, social support