

Factors Affecting the Caregiving Experience of Children with Parental Mental Illnesses: A Systematic Review

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Abstract : Worldwide, the prevalence of mental illnesses is increasing. The issues of persons with mental illness and their caregivers have been well documented in the literature. However, data regarding the factors affecting the caregiving experience of children with parental mental illnesses is sparse. This systematic review aimed to examine the existing literature of the factors affecting the caregiving experience of children of parents with mental illnesses. A comprehensive search of databases such as PubMed, EBSCO, JSTOR, ProQuest Central, Taylor and Francis Online, and Google Scholar were performed to identify peer-reviewed papers examining the factors associated with caregiving experiences of children with parental mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and major depression, for the 10-year period ending November 2019. Two researchers screened studies for eligibility. One researcher extracted data from eligible studies while a second performed verification of results for accuracy and completeness. Quality appraisal was conducted by both reviewers. Data describing major factors associated with caregiving experiences of children with parental mental illnesses were synthesized and reported in narrative form. Five studies were considered eligible and included in this review. Findings are organized under major themes such as the impact of parental mental illness on children's daily life, how children provide care to their mentally ill parents as primary carers, social and relationship factors associated with their caregiving, positive and negative experiences in caregiving and how children cope with their experiences with parental mental illnesses. Literature relating to the caregiving experiences of children with parental mental illnesses is sparse. More research is required to better understand the children's caregiving experiences related to parental mental illnesses so as to better inform management for enhancing their mental health, wellbeing, and caregiving practice.

Keywords : caregiving experience, children, parental mental illnesses, wellbeing

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