

## Caregivers Burden: Risk and Related Psychological Factors in Caregivers of Patients with Parkinson's Disease

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**Abstract :** Introduction: Parkinson's disease (PD) is characterized by a progressive loss of autonomy which undoubtedly has a significant impact on the quality of life of caregivers, and parents are the main informal caregivers. Caring for a person with PD is associated with an increased risk of psychiatric morbidity and persistent anxiety-depressive distress. The aim of the study is to investigate the burden on caregivers of patients with PD, through the use of multidimensional scales and to identify their personological and environmental determinants. Methods: The study has been approved by the Ethic Committee of the University of Salerno and informed consent for participation to the study was obtained from patients and their caregivers. The study was conducted at the Neurology Department of the A.O.U. "San Giovanni di Dio and Ruggi D'Aragona" of Salerno between September 2020 and May 2021. Materials: The questionnaires used were: a) Caregiver Burden Inventory - CBI a questionnaire of 24 items that allow identifying five sub-categories of burden (objective, psychological, physical, social, emotional); b) Depression Anxiety Stress Scales Short Version - DASS-21 questionnaire consisting of 21 items and valid in examining three distinct but interrelated areas (depression, anxiety and stress); c) Family Strain Questionnaire Short Form - FSQ-SF is a questionnaire of 30 items grouped in areas of increasing psychological risk (OK, R, SR, U); d) Zarit Caregiver Burden Inventory - ZBI, consisting of 22 items based on the analysis of two main factors: personal stress and pressure related to his role; e) Life Satisfaction, a single item that aims to evaluate the degree of life satisfaction in a global way using a 0-100 Likert scale. Findings: N ° 29 caregivers (M age = 55.14, SD = 9.859; 69% F) participated in the study. 20.6% of the sample had severe and severe burden (CBI score = M = 26.31; SD = 22.43) and 13.8% of participants had moderate to severe burden (ZBI). The FSQ-SF highlighted a minority of caregivers who need psychological support, in some cases urgent (Area SR and Area U). The DASS-21 results show a prevalence of stress-related symptoms (M = 10.90, SD = 10.712) compared to anxiety (M = 7.52, SD = 10.752) and depression (M = 8, SD = 10.876). There are significant correlations between some specific variables and mean test scores: retired caregivers report higher ZBI scores ( $p = 0.423$ ) and lower Life Satisfaction levels ( $p = -0.460$ ) than working caregivers; years of schooling show a negative linear correlation with the ZBI score ( $p = -0.491$ ). The T-Test indicates that caregivers of patients with cognitive impairment are at greater risk than those of patients without cognitive impairment. Conclusions: It knows the factors that affect the burden the most would allow for early recognition of risky situations and caregivers who would need adequate support.

**Keywords :** anxious-depressive axis, caregivers' burden, Parkinson' disease, psychological risks

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