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Systematic review of positive psychology outcome measures for family carers of people with dementia

Jacki Stansfeld

University College London, UK

Introduction: The importance of positive psychology in understanding the wellbeing and experiences of family carers of people with dementia is increasingly being recognised. Despite this, outcome measures used in research with family carers of those with dementia are often centered on concepts such as burden and depression. There is a scarcity of positive psychology measures developed for or validated in this population

Aim: By employing standardised criteria, this review aimed to assess the quality of positive psychology measures developed for or already in use with family carers of people with dementia and to determine their potential utility in future interventional studies.

Methods: We performed a systematic review of positive psychology measures for family carers of people with dementia. The databases searched were PsychINFO, CINHALL, MEDLINE, EMBASE and PubMed. Two reviewers independently assessed full-texts for inclusion and performed a quality assessment of each of the scale development studies identified to examine the psychometric properties reported.

Results: This review identified 10 positive psychology outcome measures (and 6 validation papers of these scales) within the constructs of self-efficacy, spirituality, resilience, gain, and meaning.

Conclusion: Several outcome measures were identified that may have potential utility for future interventional studies, but it is clear that there is still work to be done to develop and refine more positive psychology measures for this population. A lack of reporting of the psychometric properties by development authors limited the conclusions that could be drawn. It is recommended that authors aim to report this in the future.

Biography

Jacki Stansfeld is currently completing her PhD at University College London in the Division of Psychiatry. She works as a Research Assistant on the Valuing Active Life in Dementia (VALID) research programme.

j.rutherford@ucl.ac.uk

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