

Abstract

Cognitive-behavioral treatment group program based on Western samples of dementia caregivers have presented evidence for a reduction in psychological distress. A body of research also attempted to identify the coping styles implementing by the dementia caregivers. However, both the cognitive-behavioral group program and coping studies of dementia caregivers are lacking in the Chinese populations. The devise of suitable intervention strategies tailored for the psychological well-being of dementia caregivers in this ethnic group was underdeveloped. In view of the deficiency in the dementia caregivers' literature, the present study explored the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral group treatment program in Hong Kong Chinese.

An exclusive female sample of 20 cognitive-behavioral group carers and 17 waiting-list control careers aged between 29 and 85 years was recruited. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), and Chinese Way of Coping (CWCQ) were administered to assess caregiver's depressive symptomatology, anxiety state, perceived stress level, and coping styles.

Findings from this study indicated that the cognitive-behavioral program group showed a reduction in depressive symptoms after treatment, while the use of two

coping strategies of rational problem solving and resigned distancing had increased significantly. Active behavioral coping was found to be more frequently deployed in cognitive-behavioral program group while the avoidance coping was found to be less frequently deployed.

Results confirmed with previous Western studies that the interventions were effective in reducing depressive symptoms, and demonstrated that the group treatments could also applied to the Chinese populations. The improvement of depressive symptoms among cognitive-behavioral program group in this study could be a good start for future studies in Chinese populations. On the other hand, our results provide little evidence that the intervention was effective in alleviating anxiety and stress. More studies adopting a larger Chinese sample size were needed to elucidate this relationship.

