The burden of spousal caregiving: A preliminary psychometric evaluation of the German version of the Zarit Burden Interview

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Abstract

Objectives: Despite a rapid increase in studies dealing with dementia caregivers in Europe, a valid German version of the most widely used measurement of caregiver burden (Zarit Burden Interview) has not yet been published. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the psychometric properties of the German Zarit Burden Interview (G-ZBI).

Method: Twenty-eight community-dwelling older couples with the husband suffering from dementia and the wife being the primary caregiver participated in this study. The G-ZBI and related constructs were assessed in order to test for reliability and construct validity.

Results: The G-ZBI revealed psychometric properties comparable with those of the original instrument and empirically validated translations. Results demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's agr 0.92) and good validity due to strong correlations with caregiver life satisfaction and depression, as well as patients' dependency, neuropsychiatric symptoms, and dementia severity.

Conclusion: The psychometric qualities of the G-ZBI indicate that it is both a reliable and valid instrument to assess caregiver burden and to detect highly stressed individuals. Keywords: burden; dementia caregiving; psychometric evaluation; Zarit Burden Interview; validity