

NICHE Research Grant

Dissemination Report

1. General information of the study

✧ Title

Effects of electronic bibliotherapy on improving the well-being of informal caregivers of people with dementia: a pilot randomized controlled trial

✧ Authors

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2. Summary of the study

✧ Introduction

Being an informal caregiver of people with dementia is detrimental to their mental health and health-related quality of life. However, limited resources are available for caregivers in community settings. Our previous pilot study demonstrated the feasibility of a self-help intervention, bibliotherapy, among informal caregivers of people with dementia, yet, an electronic mode is proposed by participants to facilitate their easy use of the intervention.

✧ Aims of the study

(1) To determine the feasibility of electronic bibliotherapy among informal caregivers of people with dementia.

(2) To preliminarily explore the efficacy of electronic bibliotherapy on improving the well-being of informal caregivers of people with dementia.

✧ Methods

Sixty informal caregivers of people with dementia were recruited, and randomly

allocated to the electronic bibliotherapy group or the usual care group. For the electronic bibliotherapy group, caregivers received eight weekly sessions of electronic bibliotherapy, including reading one chapter, watching a mini, and finishing the corresponding weekly assignment. The usual care was provided by community services, such as respite services and counseling. Data were collected at baseline and immediately post-intervention. Descriptive statistics, and generalized estimating equations were used for analysis.

✧ Results

Data demonstrated that electronic bibliotherapy was feasible for informal caregivers, with WhatsApp being the most preferred medium for intervention delivery. The recruitment rate (75.95%), retention rate (95%), and completion rate of weekly tasks all met satisfactory levels. Caregivers found the intervention useful and flexible while experiencing changes in their perceptions of caregiving responsibilities. The preliminary efficacy on mental health ($p=.003$) and all the subscales of stress ($p=.040$), anxiety ($p=.006$), and depression ($p=.003$) were statistically significant. The preliminary efficacy on caregiving appraisal was only significant on the perceived caregiving burden subscale ($p=.026$). The efficacy on the mental component scale of health-related quality of life approached significance ($p=.057$). However, the efficacy on psychological well-being remains insignificant.

✧ Conclusions and Implication

The utilization of electronic bibliotherapy was well received among informal caregivers of individuals with dementia, demonstrating potential positive effects on their mental health within this specific cohort. This project provided an easy-to-use self-help intervention for informal caregivers of people with dementia, which has the potential to improve their mental well-being and health-related quality of life. This study will lead to a larger-scale trial, and the intervention has the potential to be used by social workers to support informal caregivers of people with dementia after further modification based on participants' suggestions and testing in a larger sample.

3. Acknowledgements

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