



Like one of the Family?

Relationships Between Migrant Live-in Carers and Older Care Recipients in Israel

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Host institution: Herczeg Institute on Aging at Tel Aviv University, Israel

Mentor - Professor Jiska Cohen-Mansfield

Project - Relationships between frail older people and their migrant live-in care workers.

Investigators: Jiska Cohen-Mansfield, Esther Iecovich, Hava Golander

Interviews with: 116 interviews migrant in-home caregivers, 73 older people who were receiving this kind of care.

What I did:

Observed interviews with older people.

Conducted interviews in English with migrant live in carers

Analysed quantitative and qualitative data

Wrote a journal article

Project Background

Trends

- Care provided by migrant live-in carers increasing in Western countries
- Global societal trends - declining birthrates & changing family dynamics

Relationships between migrant live-in carers and frail older people

- Quality of carer-care recipient relationships has implications for quality of care
- Studies have been conducted in UK, Canada, Israel and Taiwan
- Relationships range from **close and meaningful** to **distrustful and problematic**.
- Quality of relationships affected by cultural differences and communication difficulties.

Home care services in Israel

- Two-thirds provided by live-out Israeli home care workers
- One-third provided by live-in migrant carers
- The most impaired people are eligible for subsidized live-in home care

Issues

- Most migrant live-in carers come to Israel without formal training
- Existing training programs for these workers are very limited

About the study

Research questions:

How do migrant live-in carers and older people:

- rate their interpersonal relationships?
- describe their relationships with each other?

Quantitative data

Older persons' and carers' ratings of:

- Feeling close to each other, getting along well with each other, understanding each other, and quality of the relationship

Qualitative data

What are the good things in the relationship?

How could your relationship be improved?

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, Spearman correlation coefficients

Qualitative content analysis and peer review to check credibility

Question 1: Rating of interpersonal relationships?

Quantitative data revealed:

- Both groups perceived very good interpersonal relationships with each other.
 - 64.3% of carers and 50.0% of older people perceived the quality of the relationship to be 'very good' or 'excellent'.
 - Most participants reported 'getting on well with each other' and 'feeling close to the other person' to a 'great' or 'very great' extent
- Congruency of perceptions of the relationship between the 55 dyads was moderately high.
- 'Understanding each other' was positively associated with perceptions of the quality of the relationship.

Qualitative analysis: Describing care relationships

Three fundamental similarities in the two groups:

- Caring about each other
- Having a good connection
- Providing good care
 - Meeting the older person's care needs (Carers)
 - Meeting my care needs (Older people)

Theme 1: Caring about each other

Described by both groups as feelings of:

- Being cared about
- Being looked after
- Emotional closeness

The study findings raised issues around the:

- Pull towards informality in co-resident client-carer relationships
- Blurring of role boundaries
- Potential conflict in relationships being simultaneously 'quasi-familial and contractual in nature'

Theme 2: Having a good connection

Similar perceptions:

- Understanding each other as 'people'
- Being treated with respect
- Good communication

Divergent perspective on social interaction:

- Older people – look for carers to provide good company through intelligent and interesting conversation.
- Carers – describe social interaction as part of their caring role.

Theme 3: Providing good care

Carers described:

- Meeting the care recipient's basic care needs
- Keeping frail older people active and alert.

Older people spoke of:

- Tasks being done in accordance with their particular needs and preferences.

Summary of findings

Quantitative data: Both groups perceived very good interpersonal relationships with each other.

Qualitative data:

- Carers focused on providing good care
- Older people focused on carer competency
- Both groups - personal relationships and good communication important
- Issues relating to asymmetry in the relationship and blurring of role boundaries were identified

Implications for practice

Strategies for achieving better outcomes:

- Shifting the focus of care from a **task-oriented** to a **relationship-centred** approach

Thank you