

Applicant

Dr. Marie Savundranayagam, Western University

E-mail Address

msavund@uwo.ca

Project Title

Social Support, Social Participation, and Depression among Caregivers and Non-Caregivers in Canada: A Population Health Perspective

Project Summary

Family caregivers are invaluable to the healthcare system as the unpaid assistance they provide enables seniors to remain at home. However, caregivers experience negative health outcomes, such as high depression rates. Caregiver depression is important because it predicts poor physical health. Poor caregiver health results in an inability to provide care, affecting the care of the care receiver, increasing the risk of institutionalization. Poor social support and social participation have been found to be significant mediators of depressive symptoms in caregivers. Caregivers with less social participation reported higher depression scores than non-caregivers. However, sample sizes in previous studies were small. Little information exists on the impact of social support and social participation on caregiver depression in Canada. The objective of this study is to use population-level data from the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging to investigate the relationship between social variables and depression among caregivers and non-caregivers.

Keywords

Family caregiving, social support, social participation, depression