

Conclusions: Our findings suggest that Taiwanese children may express less stigmatized attitudes toward people with dementia and yet they report less understanding of concepts of personhood of people with dementia. Therefore, dementia education is necessary to increase dementia knowledge among school age children in Taiwan.

426 - Character Strengths association with Personal Growth in Grandparents providing Regular Care

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Introduction

The number of grandparents providing regular care for their grandchildren has increased substantially. Data drawn from the SHARE survey shows regular caregivers care for more than 30 hours per week in Europe. This means that many regular caregivers are performing tasks that are part of parents' responsibilities. Some research has shown lower perceived health and role strain. However, it can also offer opportunities to grow. Rapid social changes have led to grandparents not perceiving their predecessors as role models, making them having to update themselves to relate with their grandchildren. Character strengths are the natural ability by which thoughts, feelings and behaviours allow to achieve goals. They could help grandparents increase their perceptions of personal growth. However, the role played by character strengths in personal growth has not been studied yet.

Method

This study aimed to analyze what character strengths predict extended babysitters' personal growth. This study included 107 grandparents providing regular care (more than 15 hours per week) to at least one grandchild from Spain. The average age was 69.46 (SD=7.02), 63.6% were women, 76% were maternal grandparents and the average daily hours of care provided was 5.07 (DT=14.61). To analyze data, we conducted stepwise multiple regressions.

Results:

In step one, the total score of character strengths explained 21.1% of the variance in personal growth ($F(1, 105) = 28.14; p \leq .001$). The total score of character strengths and emotional intelligence accounted for 25.6% of the variance in step two ($F(1, 104) = 17.91; p \leq .001$). In the final step, total character strengths, emotional intelligence and creativity explained 28.6% of the variance ($F(1, 103) = 13.79; p \leq .05$). The higher scores in character strengths, emotional intelligence and creativity, the more personal growth grandparents showed.

Conclusion:

These results reflect the importance of considering character strengths as factors associated with grandparents' personal growth. Future interventions focused on extended babysitters could consider character strengths. Especially, creativity and emotional intelligence, strengths that may help grandparents to connect and dialogue with their own emotions and those of their grandchildren as well as experience the difficulties associated with caregiving as opportunities for growth and development.

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