

ABSTRACT

YOUNG FAMILY CAREGIVERS: AN INVISIBLE POPULATION

This study explored young family caregivers between the ages of 18-35 who were caring for a family relative as a result of an illness, physical or mental disability, or due to advanced age. This study implemented an online survey and utilized online recruitment efforts with a snowball sampling to generate respondents. Twenty two participants completed the survey anonymously; questions were quantitative with some qualitative aspects. Findings revealed that daily life is affected mostly in the areas of personal and social relationships; educational goals were impacted and became more difficult with the challenges of caregiving. In addition, many of the participants experienced emotional disturbances marked by stress, anxiety, and depressive feelings and felt confusion about their lives. In contrast to the older caregiver, younger caregivers could benefit from more responsive family caregiver services and programs with regard to their developmental differences.

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