



FAMILY CAREGIVING IN THE SOMALI-AMERICAN COMMUNITY DURING COVID-19

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BACKGROUND

- Family and friends provide the majority of caregiving for aging and disabled relatives
- Caregiving is seen as a cultural responsibility in the Somali community
- COVID-19 has introduced significant new challenges to caregiving
- Research Question: what *particular* caregiving challenges have been faced by Somali caregivers during COVID-19

METHODS

- n = 10
 - 5 female caregivers, 5 male caregivers
 - 7 caring for parents, 3 caring for relatives with disabilities
- Semi-structured interviews exploring caregiving responsibilities, challenges, and changes to caregiving after COVID-19
- Translation and transcription completed by third party translator and a research assistant
- Open coding utilized for thematic analysis through NVIVO

FINDINGS

Visitation

Somali culture is centered around extended family connections

Isolation places particular strain on older Somali caregivers and PWDs

Hospital Accompaniment

Family members = advocates, translators, and guides during hospital visits

Restricting accompaniment due to COVID-19 causes stress, and poorer care

Self-Sacrifice

Facility placement is a last resort

Caregivers sacrifice time, comfort, and opportunities to care for family

Coping = radical acceptance, and God-consciousness

QUOTES

- “Before when we were with him, we were able to communicate with the doctors about his situation. The doctor would also find out that this person has a family and kids, and he’s an elder who they love him so much, even the doctor develops love for the person, and it makes him take better care of him. But now, the situation is that when the person comes in alone, he becomes just like the other people the doctor sees on a daily basis.”
- “When someone, especially a mother, is taking care of her own child, they don’t see it as difficult. Even if it is, they don’t see it that way.”

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