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### **Can domestic helpers moderate distress of offspring caregivers of cognitively impaired older adults?**

**Introduction:** There is an increasing trend for families in some developed countries, such as Hong Kong, to employ domestic helpers or nannies from developing countries to assist in caregiving of older people with cognitive impairment. This study examined the moderating effect of domestic helpers on reducing distress of offspring taking care of parents with cognitive impairments.

**Material & Methods:** A secondary analysis of data involving 5,086 Hong Kong Chinese adults aged 60 or older applying for public long-term care services from 2010–2012 was used. All variables were measured using the Hong Kong version of the Minimum Data Set-Home Care 2.0, which has been translated and validated in many different societies, including Hong Kong.

**Results:** 10.7% of offspring primary caregivers were assisted by domestic helpers and 44.45% reported distress. Assistance from domestic helpers was found to reduce offspring caregiver distress if the offspring provided psychological support to parents ( $-0.4289$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and were not living with parents ( $0.1632$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

**Conclusion:** Domestic helpers appeared to moderate the effects of some stressors on offspring caregiving distress. Their influence was positive if offspring caregivers did not live with their parents with dementia, possibly because caregiving is usually less stressful for informal caregivers not residing with care recipients. On the other hand, having a domestic helper could add to caregiving distress if offspring caregivers live with their parents, most likely because offspring may witness difficulties that domestic helpers face in providing dementia care, which requires special training and much support. The findings also suggest the importance of meeting the psychological needs of older adults with dementia.

### **Biography**

Alice Ming Lin Chong is the Professor and Associate Head at the Department of Applied Social Sciences, City University of Hong Kong. Currently, her work concentration is on teaching courses in social work and counselling. She has been the Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences from 2005 to 2010. She has very rich working experiences in social work and welfare management. Her research areas include social gerontology, end of life issues, teaching and learning, as well as human service management. She has published more than 80 academic articles and presented more than 60 papers in international and regional conferences. She has been rewarded with many awards and honours for her long and distinguished community and public services, such as the 60th Anniversary Distinguished Alumni Award by the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong in 2010.

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