

Review Form 1.7

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| Journal Name: | Asian Research Journal of Gynaecology and Obstetrics |
| Manuscript Number: | Ms_ARJGO_116084 |
| Title of the Manuscript: | CAREGIVER BURDEN AMONG CARERS OF WOMEN WITH GYNAECOLOGICAL CANCERS |
| Type of the Article | Original Research Article |

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PART 1: Review Comments

| | Reviewer's comment | Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here) |
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| <p>Compulsory REVISION comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Is the manuscript important for scientific community? (Please write few sentences on this manuscript) Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title) Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate? Do you think the manuscript is scientifically correct? Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestion of additional references, please mention in the review form. <p><u>(Apart from above mentioned 6 points, reviewers are free to provide additional suggestions/comments)</u></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the manuscript important for scientific community? <p>I want to commend your team for undertaking such valuable research on caregiver burden in gynecological cancer patients in Nigeria. As clinicians, we often overlook the importance of including caregiver burden in our management approach, as we tend to focus primarily on individual patient care and treatment modalities such as chemotherapy. Your research sheds light on an aspect of patient care that is often neglected, especially in advanced stages of the disease.</p> Is the title of the article suitable? <p>However, I have a suggestion regarding the title of your paper. I believe it would be beneficial to change it from " CAREGIVER BURDEN AMONG CARERS OF WOMEN WITH GYNAECOLOGICAL CANCERS " to something like " Caregiver Burden Among Patients with Gynecological Cancer at a Tertiary Hospital in Port Harcourt, Nigeria." This adjustment is important for several reasons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firstly, specifying the location of the research in the title provides clarity about the setting where the study was conducted. This helps readers understand the context and potential implications of the findings within the local healthcare system. Secondly, mentioning the specific type of hospital (tertiary hospital) gives insight into the level of care and resources available, which can be relevant when interpreting the results and considering the generalizability of the findings to similar healthcare settings. Lastly, incorporating the term "patients" instead of "women" in the title acknowledges that while gynecological cancers primarily affect women, caregivers may also be providing support to male/ trans patients with such cancers. This inclusive language ensures that all relevant populations are represented and considered in the study. Furthermore, considering the cross-cultural factors and the importance of country-specific context, explicitly mentioning Nigeria in the title can enhance the relevance and visibility of your research within the global healthcare community. Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? <p>I commend the effort put into crafting an informative and descriptive abstract for your paper, which provides a clear glimpse into the study's content. However, to enhance its effectiveness and adherence to journal requirements, some modifications are necessary. Notably, abstract length is crucial; for example, The Lancet limits abstracts to 300 words, while the American Journal of American Medical Association allows 350 words. Your abstract currently exceeds these limits, so I recommend a more concise presentation. Ideally, the background should be summarized in one to two sentences, the methodology in three, the results in three to four, and the conclusion in a single, impactful sentence. Regarding the specifics in the materials and methods section, clarity and conciseness are key. For instance, the description of the pretest and questionnaire process could be streamlined for better understanding. A revised sentence could be: 'A pre-test using a semi-structured interview questionnaire, assessing demographic and caregiving factors, was conducted at the Hospital of River State University Teaching Hospital, where the study was based, to ensure its validity and reliability.' In the results section, specificity can enhance clarity. For example, instead of vaguely mentioning 'most caregivers,' it would be more informative to say</p> | <p>Thank you for your very detailed and expository appraisal of our manuscript. It is indeed a learning curve for us as we have learnt so much from your critique and suggestions.</p> <p>Thank you for painstakingly going through pour manuscript. We would use the knowledge we have acquired to write our future research papers.</p> <p>We have effected all the corrections in line with your comments and journal guidelines.</p> |

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| | <p>'more than half of the caregivers.' Also, providing details about the caregivers' living arrangements can add valuable context, such as distinguishing between in-house caregivers and those living separately from the patients. Lastly, I noticed a lack of clarity regarding how menopause in caregivers was assessed. It would be beneficial to specify whether this was a physician-diagnosed condition or determined through subjective reporting. For the conclusion, succinctly emphasize the significance of investigating the burden on caregivers, especially for those managing the care of gynecological cancer patients, highlighting the importance of this study's findings in one summarizing sentence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate? I commend the research team for their significant contribution to understanding the burden placed on caregivers, particularly those assisting patients with gynecological cancers. Your manuscript presents vital insights and successfully gathers comprehensive data to support your findings. However, I believe that certain areas require minor revisions to enhance clarity and coherence in the narrative, ensuring that the content is easily understandable and effectively communicated to the readers. Additionally, the organization and presentation of visuals and figures should be optimized to make efficient use of space upon publication. Herein, I will outline my suggestions, ranging from the introduction to the methodology, to refine the manuscript further.<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. In the introduction, I have noticed some typographical errors, including superscript issues, specifically with the numbers four and five. These need correction to ensure the document adheres to standard publishing guidelines. Additionally, the content of the introduction could benefit from a clearer exposition of the themes. I suggest enhancing the narrative concerning the burden of gynecological cancers, particularly in contexts like Nigeria where the disease is often diagnosed at a late stage, and specialized healthcare staff are scarce. This scenario underlines the crucial need for increased support for patients, especially those navigating their survival journey with such challenging diagnoses. Highlighting this as part of your rationale can profoundly impact the understanding of caregiving dynamics and the overall quality of life for cancer patients. To clarify and strengthen your introduction, consider reorganizing your thoughts to follow a logical flow from the general burden of the disease to specific challenges faced in under-resourced settings. This will not only make the introduction more compelling but also set a solid foundation for the arguments that follow in your manuscript.ii. In the methodology section of this manuscript, the study site is described with commendable detail. However, to enhance clarity and context for an international readership, I would suggest that the description be expanded to explicitly introduce the geographic and healthcare significance of the location. This introduction could start as follows: 'The study was conducted at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, a tertiary hospital with a capacity of 988 beds, located in the Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. This facility plays a crucial role as a referral center for various healthcare levels, catering not only to the local population but also to the broader regions of Bori, Ahoada, and beyond.' This upfront introduction sets the stage for readers worldwide, providing them with a clear understanding of the hospital's geographic and strategic importance in the Nigerian healthcare system. Continuing from this introduction, the specifics of the study settings within the hospital can then be detailed succinctly: 'Research activities were specifically conducted within the Gynecology Ward, Gynecological Oncology, and the Clinical Oncology Outpatient Clinic, highlighting the focused areas of investigation pertinent to the study's objectives.' By organizing the information in this manner, the methodology section will offer a clear, logical progression from | |
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| | <p>the general context to specific details, ensuring a coherent and informative presentation for all readers.</p> <p>iii. In the methodology section, clarity and structure could be enhanced to better guide the reader through the study's processes. I suggest opening with a straightforward statement about the nature of the study to set the context: 'This is a descriptive, cross-sectional study.' Following this, it would be helpful to introduce the ethical considerations upfront: 'The study received ethical approval from the Ethics and Research Committee of the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital.' Next, define the inclusion and exclusion criteria succinctly, avoiding unnecessary detail that might confuse the reader: 'Participants included primary caregivers of patients, with exclusion criteria limited to those who refused consent or were under any form of duress to participate.' It's important to confirm that all participants provided informed consent, which can be summarized efficiently: 'Consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.' Then, describe the data collection method in a clear and concise manner: 'The researchers administered structured interviews using a validated caregiver burden interview tool. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes.' These revisions will help ensure that the methodology section is not only comprehensible but also succinctly conveys the essential details of the study protocol, reinforcing the rigor and ethical standards of the research.</p> <p>iv. In the study instrument subsection on data collection, you mentioned a pretest conducted for validity at the River State University Teaching Hospital, a tertiary healthcare institution. <i>I assume that this is also a tertiary healthcare institution as I am not familiar to the hospitals in your area.</i> To ensure clarity and alignment with the local context, explicitly stating that the River State University Teaching Hospital is also a tertiary hospital would strengthen the description. This clarification can enhance the understanding that the institution chosen for the pretest aligns with the study's scope and objectives.</p> <p>v. In the manuscript, it might be beneficial to gently clarify that the Zack Burden Interview Questionnaire is a globally recognized tool utilized by researchers worldwide. This clarification can prevent any potential misunderstanding among readers regarding the origin of the burden interview questionnaire since you have been mentioning that a pretest was conducted on the questionnaire for your study. Therefore, specify in your instrument what particular interview schedule was pretested.</p> <p>vi. In the ethical consideration section, may I kindly suggest including a sentence emphasizing the importance of ensuring that human subjects have the right to truthfulness and transparency at any stage of the study. This addition would underscore the commitment to respecting the rights and well-being of the participants.</p> <p>vii. <u>In reviewing the methodology section of your manuscript, I've observed a need for more detailed explanation concerning the collection of patient data. This includes specifics on obstetric, technological, clinical, medical history, and social and family history. Clarification on whether this information was obtained through chart reviews, direct interviews, or other methods is critical. Given the sensitive nature of this data, and the stringent HIPAA guidelines, a thorough outline of data collection methods is essential for the research's integrity and to ensure ethical compliance. Although I understand that your study has received ethical approval from your Ethics Committee, it is particularly important to detail how data</u></p> | |
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| | <p>collection was managed, especially when involving vulnerable populations and for an international readership. These patients have rights that must be stringently protected in any research context. I recommend enhancing the methodology section by clearly stating the data collection processes and the safeguards in place to protect patient information. Moreover, it would be beneficial to address these considerations in the ethical considerations section of your manuscript explicitly. This ensures that all research protocols rigorously follow the highest ethical standards for handling patient data.</p> <p>viii. In the Results section, to minimize distractions for readers, I suggest avoiding the use of specific numerical values when describing the findings. For example, instead of stating the exact percentages, you could describe the trends as follows: "In Table 1, it was observed that the majority of respondents were between the ages of 41 to 50 years, with a high proportion being married (52.9%). Additionally, a significant percentage attained tertiary level of education (51.0%), and a considerable number were retired (58.8%)." This approach allows readers to grasp the key findings without being overwhelmed by numerical details, as the specific percentages are already provided in the accompanying table. Please rewrite your results section according to the sample I provided if applicable.</p> <p>ix. As a reviewer, I appreciate the thoroughness of your results and the inclusion of tables and figures. However, considering the space constraints of publication journals, it might be beneficial to include only the most pertinent tables. I suggest focusing on tables summarizing the social demographic profile, clinic characteristics of patients, caregiver burden, and relevant relational tables. This approach ensures that key information is effectively highlighted while optimizing space in the manuscript.</p> <p>x. In the discussion section, you've presented a comprehensive review of the literature alongside your research findings—well done on both accounts. However, I'd like to seek clarification on a particular argument you've made. You suggest that in your study, sisters are primarily the caregivers for gynecologic cancer patients, contrasting with the findings of two cited studies where parents and other relatives are the main caregivers. You attribute this difference to factors such as family structure, cultural background, and the availability of family members. Could you please elaborate on these factors? Additionally, it would be helpful to understand whether the cultural contexts in the cited studies align with the Nigerian context. If they do not align, using these studies to support your argument might not be entirely appropriate. Instead of positioning your findings in opposition to the existing literature, consider framing them as an extension of the current knowledge. You could argue that while parents and other relatives often serve as primary caregivers, your study contributes new insights by identifying sisters as potential primary caregivers in specific cultural or familial contexts. This approach would enrich the existing discourse rather than contradicting it.</p> <p>xi. Another point in your discussion, you noted that caregiver perceptions indicated a moderate degree of patient dependence. However, this was not directly measured during your study, thus it reflects the caregivers' perspectives rather than objective findings. This distinction is crucial to avoid misrepresenting the patients' actual level of dependence. To strengthen this argument, it would be beneficial to consider additional studies that explore the burden experienced by caregivers. These studies should ideally focus on caregivers who perceive a moderate caregiving burden, corroborating the findings from the referenced authors. Such</p> | |
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| | <p>research would add depth to your understanding of the caregivers' experiences without making unsupported claims about the patients' dependence levels. Moreover, there's no need to critique your work as the authors for not reporting the patients' dependence on their caregivers, as this was outside the scope of your study. Instead, you can highlight the gap in the literature and suggest areas for future research that address this aspect, ensuring a comprehensive view of caregiver and patient dynamics.</p> <p>xii. In the concluding paragraph of your study, it might be beneficial to clarify the correlations observed among the caregiver's burden, their menopausal status, and proximity to the patient's home. Additionally, considering the impact of job interruptions due to caregiving could enrich the discussion. Perhaps phrasing it as follows could enhance clarity: 'Our findings indicate significant correlations between the caregiver's burden and several key factors: the caregiver's menopausal status, their proximity to the patient, and their employment disruptions due to caregiving responsibilities. These results suggest that both logistical and personal aspects play a critical role in shaping the caregiver's experience.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you think the manuscript is scientifically correct? The manuscript tells us something important, something we know deep in our hearts but sometimes forget in the rush of our days—especially now, when machines and computers seem to be in charge. Even as a psychiatrist, it reminds me to slow down, to remember that behind every chart and number, there's a person with a story. It's like when we sit down with family and friends, sharing stories under the shade of an old tree. We don't rush; we listen, we understand, and we give comfort. This study, it's about that kind of care. It shows us how the people who look after women with cancer carry a heavy load. They need our support, our time, and our ears to listen. This paper adds to our practice, telling us to slow down, to care, and to remember the art of healing. It's the kind of medicine that listens, understands, and gives space for feelings and healing that can't be rushed.• Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestion of additional references, please mention in the review form. I already made some suggestions above. | |
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| Minor REVISION comments | | |
| 1. Is language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications? | YES, with minor revision | |
| Optional/General comments | Thank you for the opportunity to review your manuscript. It has been both enlightening and enriching to engage with your work. Your research contributes significantly to the field, and the thoroughness of your approach is commendable. As you refine your manuscript, there are a few areas where additional clarity and precision could enhance the presentation and impact of your findings. While I recognize that much of the detail is inherently known to you, the constraints of journal writing require us to be both precise and concise. I am confident that these minor revisions will further illuminate your valuable insights. I truly appreciate the effort and expertise evident in your work and am grateful for the learning opportunity it provided me. I hope you find these suggestions helpful and energizing as you continue your revisions. Good luck with your ongoing professional endeavors. It would be a pleasure to cross paths again in the future. | |

PART 2:

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| | Reviewer's comment | Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here) |
| Are there ethical issues in this manuscript? | (If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details) | |