Acculturation and Mental Health Issues for Immigrant Family Caregivers and Home Care Workers

Arlene Michaels Miller, PhD
Olga Sorokin, MPH
Louis Fogg, PhD

Rush University
Chicago, IL
Background

• US population aging

• Caregiving to elderly a critical & growing need

• Home care less expensive, culturally congruent

• Payment to family caregivers one solution

• Family caregiver stress—spouses/daughters

• Less known about non-family caregivers
Background

- 2.7M work in direct, non-professional health jobs
  - Close to half are home care workers (HCWs)
  - One of fastest growing job categories

- High turnover rates and attrition
  - Low pay, poor benefits, illness, injury, little peer support

- Many report depressed mood
  - Stressful interactions with clients and families
  - Few opportunities to share grief
  - Feel trapped and isolated in home environment

- Immigrants comprise ~¼ of home care
Background

- HCWs from former Soviet Union (FSU)
  - Unqualified for work equivalent to prior jobs
  - Language difficulties
  - Lack of familiarity with the U.S. job market
  - Use co-ethnic networks

- Burnout, chronic fatigue, and depressed mood

- Isolation and cultural alienation last many years
Interview themes

Few opportunities for acculturation

“…we live in America but we don’t really get a chance to communicate in English because all our clients are Russian-speaking… this is my main concern…”

Lack of social support

“…it’s possible that I also like it [taking care of clients] because I have no family here.…”

“…all my friends are [working] in different fields….so I don’t really have any connections with people from my work….…”
Interview themes

Resilience

“I had two [educational] degrees in the Soviet Union…but in America I have to do this not very clean job…It’s not that there is something negative in this job, it’s just …on the level which you are not supposed to be on.”

Discrimination

“We had to work as waiters, one half of it would served by me, and the other half by this American woman…I also had to work for her when she would not come to work…then [they said], “why should we pay you [extra]? We felt there as if we were slaves.”

Alienation

“I came to a world that I not only do not know, but feel like I am on another planet. And this complete loss of independence—this is a very difficult feeling at this age. It’s a state of being stifled, and not being a participant in this life…”
Purpose

This study explores correlates of depressed mood among Russian-speaking immigrant family caregivers and home care workers.
Procedures

- Large home care agency in Chicago
- Biannual training sessions
  - Conducted in Russian language
  - Two ½ day sessions; ~175 HCWs
- Surveys self-administered during break
- Available in Russian and English
- Anonymous
Sample characteristics

- 134 Russian-speaking caregivers
- Reside in Chicago area
- Provide home care for elderly
- Both family and non-family caregivers
- Receive pay for their services
Sample characteristics

- 96% immigrated from FSU, 4% other
- 78% female
- 83% married
- 61% college degree or higher
- 58% non-family HCWs
Years in the US

Range=1-40  Mean=11.05  SD=7.55
Measures

• **CES-D** (Radloff, 1977) 10-items, 1-4, cutoff for depression = 8

• **LIB Acculturation Scale** (Birman & Trickett, 2001)
  - English Language use – 9 items, 1-4
  - American Behavioral Acculturation – 15 items, 1-4

• **Duke Social Support** (Broadhead et al., 1988) 8 items, 1-5

• **Resilience Scale** (Wagnild & Young, 1993) 12 items, 1-6

• **Experiences of discrimination** (Krieger, 2005) 9 items, 1-3

• **Alienation Scale** (Nicassio, 1983) 10 items, 1-4
## Family vs. non-family caregivers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (F)</strong></td>
<td>24-69</td>
<td>47.61 (12.37)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (NF)</strong></td>
<td>24-70</td>
<td>45.59 (10.97)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years in US (F)</strong></td>
<td>2-40</td>
<td>16.71 (8.09)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years in US (NF)</strong></td>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>7.30 (4.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years as HCW (F)</strong></td>
<td>&lt;1-15</td>
<td>5.66 (3.91)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years as HCW (NF)</strong></td>
<td>&lt;1-15</td>
<td>5.51 (3.24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours/week (F)</strong></td>
<td>4-70</td>
<td>23.16 (12.80)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours/week (NF)</strong></td>
<td>4-50</td>
<td>33.23 (8.96)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Family vs. non-family caregivers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression (F)</td>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>9.52 (5.68)</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression (NF)</td>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>12.16 (5.25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amer Beh (F)</td>
<td>1.50-4</td>
<td>2.94 (.75)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amer Beh (NF)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2.37 (.64)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (F)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2.40 (.85)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (NF)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>1.88 (.86)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support (F)</td>
<td>1-4.75</td>
<td>2.24 (1.09)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support (NF)</td>
<td>1.29-5</td>
<td>2.32 (.86)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience (F)</td>
<td>1.42-6.00</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>(.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience (NF)</td>
<td>3.00-6.00</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>(.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination (F)</td>
<td>0-7.00</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>(1.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination (NF)</td>
<td>0-9.00</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>(1.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation (F)</td>
<td>1.00-3.70</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>(.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation (NF)</td>
<td>1.00-3.67</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>(.51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CES-D</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Yrs.</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Res</th>
<th>Disc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yrs/US</strong></td>
<td>-.22*</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English (EL)</strong></td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amer Behavior</strong></td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soc Support</strong></td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resilience</strong></td>
<td>-.42**</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discrimination</strong></td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alienation</strong></td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>-.46*</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>-.46**</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < .05; ** = p < .01
## Predictors of depressed mood: Initial model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>23.365</td>
<td>4.866</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>4.801</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.406</td>
<td>.685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in US</td>
<td>-.140</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>-.209</td>
<td>-2.399</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>1.446</td>
<td>.951</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>1.521</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>-.2048</td>
<td>.563</td>
<td>-.316</td>
<td>-3.636</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>-1.488</td>
<td>.511</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>2.914</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>-.171</td>
<td>2.120</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dependent Variable:** Depression score - sum of 10 items

**R squared=41.8%**
Depression by years in the US
Depression by Resilience
Depression by Discrimination
Depression risk indicators

- Years in US: >20 years (protective)
- Low resilience: <4
- Low social support: <2.25
- High discrimination: >3.00
Depression risk categories

- Protected (lived in US >20 years)
- No cutoff risk factors
- One cutoff risk factor
- Two or more cutoff risk factors
Depression-prediction scale

-1 = protective only
0 = no protective or risk factors
+1 = one of the 3 risk factors
+2 = two of the 3 risk factors
Depression prediction profiles

• Family caregivers more likely to have better scores on the depression-prediction scale than non-family caregivers ($x^2=13.96; \text{df}=3; p<.003$)

• Depression scores differed significantly for 4 profiles ($F=9.47; \text{df } 3, 98; p<.001$)
Depression by Depression Risk Categories

- Protective Factor
- No Cutoff Risks
- One Cutoff Risk
- Two or More Cutoff Risks
American Behavior by Depression Risk Categories

- Protective Factor
- No Cutoff Risks
- One Cutoff Risk
- Two or More Cutoff Risks

RUSH UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
www.rush.edu
Alienation by Depression Risk Categories

- Protective Factor
- No Cutoff Risks
- One Cutoff Risk
- Two or More Cutoff Risks

Alienation Score

Alienation scores are higher for individuals with more cutoff risks, indicating a greater level of alienation.
Final Model: No risk factors

Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.825</td>
<td>2.256</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.809</td>
<td>.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>2.712</td>
<td>.783</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>3.463</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>2.947</td>
<td>1.116</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>2.640</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent variable: Depression score - sum of 10 items

R squared = 20.2%
Summary

- Non-Family HCWs:
  - Fewer years in US
  - More hours/week in caregiving
  - Lower American Behavior & English Language scores
  - Higher depression, discrimination, alienation

- Both groups had higher depression scores than norm

- No difference: age, work years, social support, resilience
Summary

• Several discrete depression cutoff scores
  – Living in US >20 years
  – Discrimination >3
  – Resilience < 4
  – Lack of social support > 3.5

• 4 depression risk categories
  – Protective factor: living in US >20 years
  – No cutoff risk factors
  – One cutoff risk factor
  – Two or more cutoff risk factors
Discussion

• Although both groups report depressed mood, different challenges and benefits

• Non-family HCWs at higher risk for depression despite similar resilience & social support
  ▪ Misunderstood, not accepted, and vulnerable to discrimination
  ▪ Trapped, isolated, limited access to mainstream culture
Discussion

- Indicators suggest higher risk for depression
  - may be additive
  - need to be targeted for interventions

- Working with Russian-speaking clients and long hours may postpone cultural familiarity and integration
  - Fewer opportunities for acculturation
  - Prolonged period of vulnerability
Limitations

• Cross sectional: can’t identify causal relationships
  – Acculturation & job choice
  – Vulnerability to perceived discrimination if depressed

• Data collection threats
  – Proprietary agency
  – Followed presentation on stress management

• No contextual data
  – Job, home, patient factors
  – Can’t separate job, immigration, other stressors
Implications for interventions

Immigrant caregivers face unique challenges

- **Proactively** build resilience and support networks
- **Prioritize interventions**: address critical risk factors
- **Target** most vulnerable to depression
- **Tailor** to differences
- **Consider** similarities to maximize resources