Reviewer’s report

Title: An Organizing Framework for Informal Caregiver Interventions: Detailing Caregiving Activities and Caregiver and Care Recipient Outcomes to Optimize Evaluation Efforts

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Reviewer: Anneke Francke

Reviewer’s report:

A strong point of the manuscript is that it provides a framework which can be used in future evaluation studies on informal caregiver interventions. This is important since so far most evaluation studies in this area have no comparable conceptual framework, which hinders the comparability and interpretation of results.

Other strong points are that the aim of the paper is well defined, the findings are well described and that the authors have a clear writing style.

However, a rather weak point is that the literature review is only based on literature from the US. The reason that they restricted the search to US studies was ‘because other countries would have much generous support systems for informal caregivers of the elderly’. This reason is not very convincing for me. Nevertheless the US literature included has given a lot of information on which the authors could base their framework.

Another relatively weak point is that we get very few information about the essence and content of ‘informal caregiver interventions’. What specific kinds of interventions are falling under the broad category ‘informal caregiver interventions’?

Moreover, I do not completely agree with the conclusion that ‘all intervention studies should assess quality and quantity of caregiving activities to help understand to what extent and how well the intervention worked’ (see abstract and discussion section). I do not agree with this recommendation since what one measures should always be related to the objective of an intervention: only when the objective of an intervention is to improve both quality and quantity of caregiving activities, the effects on quality as well as on quantity have to be assessed. When the aim of an intervention is to influence only the quality of informal care, it is not necessary to also evaluate effects on quantity of caregiving activities.

In addition, whether also economic status and health care use have to be assessed (see recommendations in abstract and discussion section), should also depend on the nature and the aim of an intervention.
- Major Compulsory Revisions:
  I would like to see more reflections on the principle that evaluation outcomes
  always must be directly related to the objectives of an intervention (see my
  comments above).

- Minor Essential Revisions:
  - None

- Discretionary Revisions
  - None

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a
statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests' below.