Professor Sandra Steingard, MD
Editor-in-chief
Community Mental Health Journal

Dear Professor Steingard,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a revised version of my manuscript entitled,“Immigrant Caregivers: The Double Burden Experience of Immigrants Caring for a Family Member with Severe Mental Illness.”I have uploaded the revised manuscript to the specified website. I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive and helpful suggestions. I believe that the article has benefited greatly from the changes made. Below, please find a detailed outline of the changes and my responses to the reviewers’ comments.

Kind regards,

Evgeny Knaifel, Ph.D.

**Responses to reviewer 1**

**Reviewer #1:** it is an original work

*I thank the reviewer for the helpful remarks.*

My suggestions:
\*       double burden concept can be explained in the introduction

*Response: As recommended, I added the explanation of the double burden concept to the introduction (page 3, paragraph 2).*

\*       the dates of the research should be stated

*Response: The dates of the research were added (page 6, paragraph 1).*

\*       repetitive data in the discussion can be minimized

*Response: As recommended, some repetitive information in the discussion section was minimized. For example, I cut down the sentences describing housing problems and language difficulties, which were already presented in the findings section (page 14, paragraphs 3-4). Instead, I discussed these issues on a more theoretical level and compared the findings with prior literature.*

**Responses to reviewer 2**
**Reviewer #2**: Immigrant caregiver stress (and experiences) is an important topic, and overall the project appears to have elicited rich qualitative narratives.

My concerns are primarily with methods (or at least the way methods are explained) which in turn detracts from the presentation of findings.  Details are as follows:

(1) My big, overarching concern with this paper in its current form is what I'd describe as a bit of a "mish mash" of methods that ultimately make it hard to grasp what the authors set out to do and have done.  To break this down, the authors describe their overall approach as grounded theory (GT).  Even on the reference front, however, both Charmaz (constructivist GT) and Strausserian GT are referenced without clarity as to what these different approaches mean to the authors or how they informed analysis and approach.  Further, many of the "hallmarks" of GT (cutting across divergent GT-family approaches) are not followed--there is no discussion of constant comparison, theoretical sampling or theoretical saturation, just for example.  (Instead the authors seem to have used a **convenience sample**, without any degree of iterative sampling based on emergent themes.). Corbin and Strauss are most clearly referenced in the coding section, and yet the authors make no mention of axial
coding, nor follow the Corbin and Strauss axial schematic in either its older or more recent iterations (ie identification of a core phenomena, causal and interacting conditions, consequences).  Finally, by the time we get to the findings section, the reader is thus not terribly clear what is actually going on (is the goal \*really\* iterative theory generation?  Or instead more of a descriptive or thematic analysis? If so, why is GT referenced?).  Indeed the analyses themselves seem much closer to Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis (or some other former of more descriptive qualitative analysis).  This could all be resolved if the authors would clearly articulate (1) the approach they actually followed, or if they set out to do GT but omitted arguably "fundamental" components of GT why; and (2) a clear description of what the steps they took were at each step, referencing specific qualitative methods papers only when they actually fit what is being described.  In my mind,
it's perfectly fine if the methods/sampling and analytic steps followed do not neatly map onto a single approach.  Realistically this is probably true of most qualitative papers.  What I would like is for the authors to be clear and up-front about this, and justify what they did in the context of their project. (Ie if **purposive or theoretical sampling** was infeasible, fine--say this and explain why.  If the authors chose not to engage in purposive or theoretical sampling for other reasons but still consider their analyses GT, explain how and why etc.)

*Response: Thank you for raising this very important concern. I agree with the reviewer that the data analysis section was somewhat confusing and that the use of the grounded theory method is not entirely relevant to this study. As recommended by the reviewer, I revised the data analysis section and renamed the analysis process to reflect the content analysis approach (pages 6-7). Indeed, there many similarities between content analysis and GT (especially in the first stages of analysis) and perhaps my confusion was related to this (as well as to the theoretical model that was based on the findings). But, as the reviewer noted, my analysis approach was closer to a content/thematic analysis.*

*Study participants comprised a hard-to-reach group, which limited the ability to achieve desirable theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation (for example, it limited my ability to recruit more fathers, spouses, and siblings). This limitation was added to the discussion section (page 16, paragraph 3).*

*In addition, the references to grounded theory were removed and replaced with references to content analysis (see page 6). As recommended by the reviewer, I also added a detailed description of the sampling selection (pages 5-6).*

(2) Turning to the analysis itself, again I actually found this closer to a thematic (or even) content analysis that GT--although perhaps the authors would say that it's GT that simply hasn't crystallized to the extent of so-called "full fledged" grounded theory.  Either way, the primary focus seems to be describing both the structural and psychological challenges faced by Russian caregivers.  Again, the data is very rich and this is certainly a real contribution.  Clarity about methods aside, I had a much harder time making the transition from the findings to the summary claims at the beginning of the discussion.   Clearly there was evidence of a double burden in the sense of Russian immigrants facing both ethnic discrimination (among other things) AND challenges and hardship due to their loved one's struggles.   What seems less compellingly conveyed is how the burdens of caregiving directly disrupted acculturation (I noted that only one or two quotes in the findings
section actually articulate this link).  Had the authors engaged (been able to engage) in theoretical sampling, one imagines they would have at some point started to ask the participants, explicitly, to explain how they felt that caregiving had disrupted their acculturation and then, presumably, there would have been many rich quotes and "theory building" work unpacking this relationship.  As it is, it seems more hinted at, not really clearly expressed or documented??

In revisions, I'd also like to see the authors hewing much more closely to the actual findings--readers should not have to make "leaps" in order to connect the presentation of data to the final interpretation of the authors.

*Response: I thank the reviewer for pointing out the need to better explain the relationship between caregiver burden and acculturation difficulties. Indeed, one of the study questions was to examine participants’ feelings about the ways in which caregiving has disrupted their immigration experiences.*

*There were some quotes that already described this association in different contexts: the impact of caregiving experiences on occupational difficulties (Eva’s quote on page 8), linguistic difficulties (Nina’s quote on page 10), emotional difficulties (Alina’s quote on page 11) and social difficulties (Natalia’s quote on page 12). However, as the reviewer recommended, I added another 2 participant quotes to more heavily stress this important point (Natalia’s quote on page 11 and Darya’s quote on page 13). These changes helped me to present the data more clearly and to avoid the “leaps” that the reviewer noted.*

The above concerns addressed, I do otherwise want to reiterate that this is an important project, includes much rich data and with revisions should make a significant contribution to the literature on caregiver experiences.

*I thank the reviewer for this assessment, for the positive feedback on the article and for the helpful suggestions.*