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## The Hidden Cost of Caring: Caregiver Role and the Risk of Workplace Burnout

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### Abstract

Family caregiving has been associated with a wide range of positive and negative outcomes, influencing physical and mental health, social relationships, and notably work performance and labour market opportunities. This study investigates how subjective experiences of the caregiving role relate to workplace burnout among employees who simultaneously provide care for an older family member. The analysis draws on data from a 2022 Hungarian online survey of caregivers who, at the time of data collection, were employed either full-time or part-time while caring for an elderly relative. Caregiving perception was assessed using the three dimensions of the Carers of Older People in Europe (COPE) Index—negative impact, positive value, and quality of support—while burnout was measured with the two dimensions of the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI): exhaustion and disengagement. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to explore the relationships among these constructs. Findings indicate that the caregiving situation not only affects work performance, labour market participation, and carers' mental health generally, but that a more negative subjective experience of the caregiving role is linked to higher levels of burnout. These results highlight the importance of workplace policies and support mechanisms tailored to employees with caregiving responsibilities.

**Keywords:** Burnout; Caregiving; Family Carers; Labour Market; Work–life Balance