

**S2 Supplementary File** contains additional material pertaining to Findings, i.e., more detailed description of characteristics of studies included in the meta-ethnography (p. 2).

## Detailed characteristics of included studies

A total sample of 833 caregivers participated in the included studies with one study focusing additionally on the analysis of documents underpinning the nation-specific social policy on informal caregiving [1]. Most participants were of Asian ethnic origins (N=574; 68%), followed by Caucasian ethnicity (N=90; 11%), non-Caucasian American ethnicity (N=80; 10%); Black African ethnicity (N=71; 9%) and Arab ethnicity as the smallest ethnic group within the studies synthesised (N=18; 2%). Many of the studies (N=33, 89%) included mixed caregiver-care recipient relationship types but generally the most common relationship types included adult children (including daughters-in-law) and spouses.

The study setting, i.e. where data was collected, was not reported in 7 of the studies, in one it was inapplicable (documentary study). In the remainder, various settings were described: caregivers' homes, hospital clinics and wards, the researcher's university office, support group centres, senior centres, community centres, churches, informant-owned workplaces, cafés and nursing homes.

In terms of methods of analysis, nine studies used grounded theory [2–10]; four applied varying methods of ethnographic analysis [11–14]. Twelve studies were descriptive in their approach using thematic or content analysis [15–26], one used a qualitative interpretive approach [27], one employed a case study design with 'values and emotions coding' stated as a method of analysis [28], one describes a 'cross-cultural analysis' [29], one involved qualitative documentary research where thematic analysis was mixed with a chronological narrative [1]; one applied a narrative analysis [30]. Three studies reported using phenomenological and/or hermeneutical methods of analysis [31–33]. Finally, the methodology and method of analysis of 3 qualitative studies were not specified [34–36]. Most studies used semi-structured interviews to collect data, except for one that used unstructured interviews [13] and two that combined both unstructured and semi-structured interviews [33,37].

Only four studies [3,19,21,28] applied longitudinal design. The authors of one study did not specify the research design [36], i.e. data collection was not described.

Amongst the included studies, 21 (57%) had no or very minor methodological concerns, whereas 16 (43%) were judged to be of moderate quality.