



RESEARCH PAPER

Parenting stress: Area wise comparison of mothers and fathers of disabled children in Haryana

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Abstract : Parenting is a challenging process. The crucial role of parents and family in caring, nurturing, protecting and socializing young children is well established across the cultures. Parenting stress may undermine the quality of parent-child interactions as well as the quality of relationships between parents; it also has been linked to behaviour problems in young children. The present study was conducted in Haryana state. Two districts were selected from Haryana state *i.e.* Hisar and Sirsa. The location was selected purposively due to availability of sample. 200 parents (mothers and father) were selected randomly from both the location for the sample. Parenting Stress Index-short form (PSI-SF) developed by Abidin in 1995 was used to assess the parenting stress among parents. Result revealed that highly significant difference was observed between Sirsa district and Hisar district on the aspect of parenting stress. The mean score showed that parents of Sirsa district have higher level of parenting stress than parents of Hisar district.

Key Words : Parenting stress, Disabled children, Behavior problems, Health condition, Non-communicable diseases

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INTRODUCTION

All parents experience stress with regard to parenting practices. The migrant population also encounters the stress mainly with regard to nurture their children away from their home and in most circumstances without supports. The challenges facing parents today were vast and complex. Every day schedule has become fast-paced and often, parents find it hard to balance the demand on their time with the need of their children. The concern about children's academics, social and health problems are increasing.

Parenting stress is the distress you experience when you feel you just can't cope as a parent (Holly *et al.*, 2019). Parenting is a challenging process. The crucial role of parents and family in caring, nurturing, protecting and socializing young children is well established across the cultures. Webster-Stratton (2020) reported that parenting stress is created when there is a mismatch between the demands or stresses of parenting and the parent's resources (e.g., psychological wellbeing, social support, cognitive appraisal of a stressor) to meet those demands. Chovatiya *et al.* (2015) revealed that 70 %

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mothers of disabled children were suffering with mild to moderate level of parenting stress. Behavioural problems of children and the parenting stress felt by parents are interrelated (Puff and Renk, 2014). A longitudinal study conducted by Neece and Baker (2008) found that children's behavioural problems are an effective predictor of parenting stress.

According to WHO (2022) Disability is part of being human. Almost everyone will temporarily or permanently experience disability at some point in their life. Over 1 billion people – about 15% of the global population – currently experience disability and this number is increasing due in part to population ageing and an increase in the prevalence of non-communicable diseases. Disability results from the interaction between individuals with a health condition, such as cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and depression, with personal and environmental factors including negative attitudes, inaccessible transportation and public buildings and limited social support. A person's environment has a huge effect on the experience and extent of disability. Inaccessible environments create barriers that often hinder the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis with others. Progress on improving social participation can be made by addressing these barriers and facilitating persons with disabilities in their day to day lives.

Parents of children with disability exhibit a great amount of stress which may include stress related to the child's characteristics, particularly behavioural problems, inadequate support and long term care. Additional sources of stress may include parental conflict associated with caring for their child with disability, lack of financial and social support and alteration in family's lifestyle and leisure activities due to care giving responsibilities (Hock *et al.*, 2012). Parenting stress reflects unique challenges of parents of speech and hearing impaired children. Both language delays and child behaviour problems were associated with increased parenting stress Quittner *et al.* (2010). Mothers face more stress as compared to fathers because mothers bear uneven share of responsibilities in raising their disabled child. Rodrigue

et al., 2010, reported that mothers of disabled children experience greater parenting stress and lower parenting competency.

The impact of the disability and problem associated with it are not restricted to the child but extend far beyond the child and affects a number of areas of family functioning as well as individual adjustment. They may consider mentally handicapped child as a threat to their self esteem and view themselves as a source of disability. They struggle to cope with the financial costs; parents also are confronted with new and unexpected experiences. Parents with disabled child may have higher levels of stress and lower levels of well being than with the normal children. In order to have better understanding of the factors that influence parenting stress which plays a crucial role in development of child both normal and challenged, the present study was undertaken with the objective to compare the level of stress among parents between normal and mentally challenged children (Rangaswamy and Bhavani, 2008).

Objectives:

– To compare the stress among parents of disabled children according to their area.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Haryana state. Two districts were selected from Haryana state *i.e.* Hisar and Sirsa. The location was selected purposively due to availability of sample. 200 parents (mothers and father) of disabled children were selected randomly from both the location for the sample. Parenting Stress Index-short form (PSI-SF) developed by Abidin in 1995 was used to assess the parenting stress among parents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed that highly significant difference was observed between Sirsa district and Hisar district on the aspect of parenting stress. The mean score showed that parents of Sirsa district have higher level of parenting stress than parents of Hisar district.

Table 1 : Area wise comparison of parenting stress among parents of disabled children

Parenting stress (disabled)	Mothers	Fathers	Z-value
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
Parenting stress (Hisar)	123.28±27.57	114.88±26.15	2.72**
Parenting stress (Sirsa)	145.36±21.76	131.52±20.93	9.15**

** indicate significance of value at P=0.01

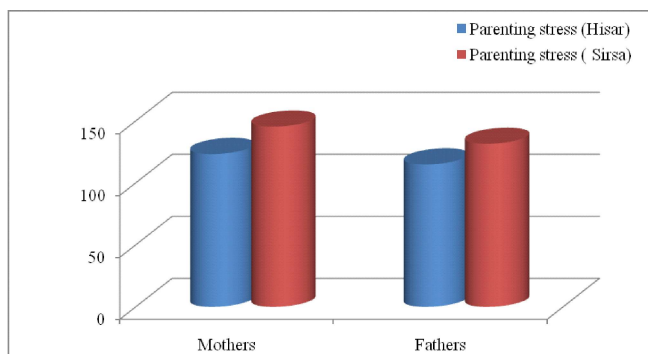


Fig. 1 : Area wise comparison of parenting stress among parents of disabled children

Conclusion:

It was found that highly significant difference was observed between Sirsa district and Hisar district on the aspect of parenting stress. The mean score showed that parents of Sirsa district have higher level of parenting stress than parents of Hisar district. Walsh *et al.* (2013) showed that an overprotective parenting style moderated the relationship between pain and parent stress. Olsson and Hwang (2011) found that the prevalence of parental depression was closely related to the differences in child characteristics. Rural parents go through slightly more stress in comparison to the urban parents. It is because people in the urban areas have easy access to the special education institutions and they also have easy access to the medical facilities, in the event of emergencies. Easy conveyance in the cities could also contribute to the lesser stress of the parents in the urban domiciles in comparison to those in the rural areas. However, it is not statistically significant. Hence, it is concluded that due to poverty and ignorance, majority of parents of Sirsa district have higher level of parenting stress than parents of Hisar district.

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