

Coping Mechanisms for Families in Raising a Child with Disability in Bangladesh: Family Members' Perspectives

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Abstract : Introduction: Raising a child with a disability can affect family members in different ways. However, this can be determined by the way in which a family member copes with the situation. There is little research that explores how families develop coping strategies to overcome barriers in raising CWDs. Objective: This study explored family members' coping mechanism in raising a child with disability in Bangladesh. Method: A qualitative approach that involved 20 interviews with family members of CWDs. A purposive sampling procedure was used in selecting the study participants. A digital recorder was used to record all the interviews. Transcriptions were done in Bengali, translated into English, and then imported to NVivo software 12 for analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Results: The study revealed that family members adopted different coping strategies for their CWDs, including seeking support from formal (e.g., service providers) and informal sources (family members and friends); relying on religious beliefs; accepting the situation. Additionally, to cope with extra cost in raising CWDs, family members strategies included relying on overtime work; borrowing money from financial institutions; selling or mortgaging assets; and replying on donations from community members. Finally, some families had to reduce spending on food and buying toys for their CWDs. Conclusion: This qualitative study highlighted a range of coping mechanism adopted by family members in Bangladesh. The information provided in this study is potentially important to policy makers and service providers as it presents evidence on the coping mechanism of families in raising their CWDs. This underscores the need for policy design and service delivery in government support system in Bangladesh and potentially in other low- and middle-income contexts.

Keywords : Bangladesh, children with disabilities, coping mechanism, family members

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