

Adjustment of Parents of Children with Autism: A Multivariate Model

Authors : Ayelet Siman-Tov, Shlomo Kaniel

Abstract : Objectives: The research validates a multivariate model that predicts parental adjustment to coping successfully with an autistic child. The model comprises four elements: parental stress, parental resources, parental adjustment and the child's autism symptoms. Background and aims: The purpose of the current study is the construction and validation of a model for the adjustment of parents and a child with autism. The suggested model is based on theoretical views on stress and links personal resources, stress, perception, parental mental health and quality of marriage and child adjustment with autism. The family stress approach focuses on the family as a system made up of a dynamic interaction between its members, who constitute interdependent parts of the system, and thus, a change in one family member brings about changes in the processes of the entire family system. From this perspective, a rise of new demands in the family and stress in the role of one family member affects the family system as a whole. Materials and methods: 176 parents of children aged between 6 to 16 diagnosed with ASD answered several questionnaires measuring parental stress, personal resources (sense of coherence, locus of control, social support), adjustment (mental health and marriage quality) and the child's autism symptoms. Results: Path analysis showed that a sense of coherence, internal locus of control, social support and quality of marriage increase the ability to cope with the stress of parenting an autistic child. Directions for further research are suggested.

Keywords : stress, adjustment, resources, Autism, parents, coherence

Conference Title : ICA 2023 : International Conference on Autism

Conference Location : Lisbon, Portugal

Conference Dates : September 18-19, 2023