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Stress experiences of mothers of children with ADHD: Significant coping strategies that safeguard their mental health

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Abstract

Introduction: Being a mother is a challenging task that comes with its occasional stress. This is especially true when taking care of a child with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). It is important to understand the association between the stress experienced by the mothers with their mental health and the type of coping strategies that could be a buffer for them. This study examined the relationship between parental stress, coping strategies, and depressive symptoms among mothers of children with ADHD in which a significant interaction between these variables were hypothesized. **Materials and Methods:** A total of 94 Malay mothers with a mean age of 39.67 participated in a workshop related to ADHD in which a questionnaire was provided to them that consists of Parental Stress Inventory-Short Form (PSI-SF), Brief-COPE, and Centre of Epidemiological Study-Depression (CES-D) scales. Multiple regression was then used to analyse the interaction between the variables. **Results:** Stress from parental sacrifices ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$), stress from behavioural expression ($\beta = -0.57$, $p < 0.05$), problem-focused coping ($\beta = -0.72$, $p < 0.001$), and coping through social support ($\beta = -0.82$, $p < 0.001$) was found to be a significant predictor to depressive symptoms. Problem-focused coping was found to significantly moderate the relationship between parental sacrifice and depressive symptoms ($\beta = -0.053$, $p < 0.01$). **Conclusion:** Mothers who are experiencing parental stress are at risk of increase in depressive symptoms but can be mitigated with problem-focused coping strategies. © 2021 UPM Press. All rights reserved.

Author Keywords

ADHD; Coping; Mental health; Mothers

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