

A Study on Stress Level, Happiness, Challenges, and Emotional Bonds of Parents having Children with Disabilities Availing Services at NIEPMD, Chennai

Shanthini Kalpurniya¹, Dr. Rajesh Ramachandran² and Dr. Neeradha Chandramohan³

¹Social Worker (S &P), NIEPMD, Chennai, INDIA.

²Rehabilitation Officer (S & P), NIEPMD, Chennai, INDIA.

³Former Director, NIEPMD, Chennai & HOD, Department of Clinical Psychology, SRMC, Chennai, INDIA.

¹Corresponding Author: Shanthini Kalpurniya



www.ijrah.com || Vol. 3 No. 5 (2023): September Issue

Date of Submission: 15-08-2023

Date of Acceptance: 01-09-2023

Date of Publication: 11-09-2023

ABSTRACT

Being a parent is normally a joyous occasion and creating emotional bond between parents and their children is special, but in certain situations, lives of parents' are plagued with challenges and are concerned about their ability to maintain their child's physical, emotional, or economic well-being. It is very important to understand as how it is like to be a parent, because this helps to enhance the wellbeing of both parents and their children, especially if the child born is having disabilities. The study here consisting of equal distribution of male and female (N =100, Male = 50 and female = 50) coming to NIEPMD for rehabilitation services were taken as samples to find out stress level of parents of children having disabilities based on gender, based on age of the parent, based on the educational qualification of the parent, based on the diagnosis of the children having disabilities. The Parental Stress Scale (PSS) questionnaire developed by Berry & Jones (1995) is a standardized scale and was used to assess parental stress. The researchers obtained due permission to use the scale from the author. The findings of the study revealed that 63% of the parents are having high level of stress in particular female parent are experiencing high level of stress (33%). Findings based on age shows that 35% of parents aged between 31-40 are having high level of stress, based on educational qualification of the parent 27% of the parents who completed under graduation are having high level of stress and based on the diagnosis of the children 25% of the parents having children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder are having high level of stress. The result implicated that parents having children with Autism Spectrum Disorder are having high level of stress. Understanding these fundamental results and trends allows practitioners and researchers to develop customized interventions and support methods to promote positive parenting experiences and improve the well-being of parents and children.

Keywords- Parent, stress and children with disabilities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Individuals have identified that becoming a parent brings happiness and fulfilment of parenthood, this is being highlighted by various researches conducted in the past that raising children is bound to provide a sense of purpose and positive emotions to parents. On the contrary parenting also presents various challenges that can affect the well-being and satisfaction of the parents, if they have a child with disability. Multiple responsibilities, financial burden and time constraints are some of the challenges parents of children with disabilities face.

Becoming a parent requires lot of commitments and that too being a parent of an individual with disabilities is not an easy task; there are many stresses and stress reactions connected to the child's disability.

Parents are known to experience several negative effects, including sadness, depression, and other emotional reactions because to having child with a disability (Peshawaria, et.al., 1995). (Seltzer, et.al., 2001) in their study reported that educational, occupational, and marital patterns of parents with children who had major mental health issues were typical, but they also experienced higher levels of physical symptoms,

depression, and alcoholism symptoms in their middle years. Rajesh Ramachandran (2017), undertook an exploratory study on the type of information regarding needs of parents having children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) reported that parents of the children in various age groups coming to a national institute have needs related to services as they are concerned about the type of services for their child.

The overall well-being and family dynamics greatly rely on an essential emotional bond between parents and children. Nurturing and spending time with their children enables parents to establish a strong emotional connection, fostering feelings of love, closeness, and joy. Thus, children thrive and develop optimally.

The present study will employ survey data to provide light on the level of stress experiencing by the families having children with disabilities. The survey responses from a sample of parents of children having disabilities (N = 100) attending rehabilitation services at NIEPMD will provide valuable insights into the stress level of parents based on age, gender and educational qualification of the parent, and also based the diagnosis of the children. By examining these dimensions, the researchers aim to contribute to the existing knowledge on parenthood, inform policy and support initiatives, and ultimately enhance the overall well-being of families having children with disabilities. With these, the study proposes to identify the areas of intervention and plan strategies to support parents which eventually will have a better healthy family relationships and promote positive outcomes for both parents as well as their children with disabilities.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find the stress level of parents having children with disabilities.

1.2 Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to

1. To find out the stress level of the parent based on parents gender.
2. To find out the stress level of the parent based on the parents age.
3. To find out the stress level of the parent based on the parents educational qualification.
4. To find out the stress level of the parent based on the diagnosis of the children having disabilities.

1.3 Aim of the study

The research aims to:

- To evince the difficulties and potential stressors that parents encounter during parenthood.
- To develop target based interventions and programmes to reduce the stress level of parents and to create strong level of parent-child relationship.
- To enhance family well-being.

Based on the objectives, the study propose to delve into the current understanding of stress among parents having children with disabilities by offering understanding to various stakeholders and furnish a strong base for future research.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions are framed for the study

1. Is there a significant difference in the stress level among male and female parents of children having disabilities?
2. Do older parents tend to have more level of stress than the younger parents?
3. Does parents having higher education qualification experience lower level of stress than parents having lower educational qualification?
4. Which disability is associated with higher or lower level of stress among parents?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Review of existing research on parental experiences and stress

Becoming a parenting is tricky and complicated journey. Parenting includes a wide range of emotions and experiences. In order to promote well-being of both parent and child, it is necessary to recognize parental experiences and the effect of stress. The review of the literature presented here on parental experiences and stress gives an overview of the major findings and trends in the field.

Anpalagan et.al., (2021) in their study analyzed the parental stress level among parents having children with learning difficulties and also the differences in parents and stress level based on the gender of children. Study resulted that both parents are facing almost equal amount of stress and gender of the children does not differ in parental stress.

Auriemma et.al., (2021) in their study among the parents of children with learning disabilities and investigated the relationship between parental cognitions, coping styles, and stress of parents. Result revealed that significant predictors of parenting stress level are parents' perceptions of the severity of their child's learning disability and their emotion-focused coping strategies.

Crnic et al. (1983) found that parents often experience stress related to managing multiple roles and responsibilities. Moreover, the transition to parenthood and the demands of parenting can result in heightened stress levels (Leerkes et al., 2017).

Cuzzocrea et al., (2016) as cited in Bujnowska et.al., (2021) reported that a difficult psychosocial situation is faced by parents of children with developmental disabilities. Parents experience more caregiving responsibilities and report has founded in previous research.

Desmarais et.al., (2018) in their study analyzed that parents of children with autism spectrum disorder report higher levels of stress and psychological pain than parents of typically developing children and children with other disorders. Stressors are prevalent throughout a child's life and are intensified at periods of transition. However, support services may be beneficial in relieving parental stress.

Feizi et.al., (2014) conducted a study on considering the demographic details and compared the stress level of mothers of children with different disabilities to each other and the study result shows that mothers of children with sensory-motor mental and chronic physical problems are experiencing more level of stress than mothers of children with psychological disorders.

Hsiao, (2017) conducted a study on the Parental Stress in Families of Children with Disabilities. In this study, compared parents of children with disabilities with parents of children without disability and found that parents of children with disabilities are reported having higher level of stress than the parents of children without disabilities.

Jones et.al. (2013) in their study used multilevel linear modelling to find out the gender differences within the families having children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The study reported higher level of distress among mothers of children having ASD as compared to fathers.

2.2 Parental Satisfaction and Well-being:

Numerous researches are there to explore parental satisfaction and well-being. The research findings Nelson et al. (2014) shows that parents reported higher life satisfaction and happiness than the non-parents. Additionally, some studies shows that positive parent-child interactions and a strong emotional bond between the parent and the child is contributing parental satisfaction and overall well-being. (Lamborn et al., 2011; Volling et al., 2002).

2.3 Parental Stress and Sources of Stress:

Parenting can be accompanied by significant stressors. Various sources of parental stress, including time constraints, financial pressures, and concerns about meeting children's needs has identified through research. A study by Crnic et al. (1983) found that parents often experience stress related to managing multiple roles and responsibilities. Moreover, the transition to parenthood and the demands of parenting can result in heightened stress levels (Leerkes et al., 2017).

2.4 Parental Coping Strategies:

To manage stress, parents employ various coping strategies. To promote parental well-being, importance of effective coping mechanisms have been highlighted by studies. For instance, problem-focused copings such as seeking social support and utilizing problem-solving skills has been found to be beneficial in reducing parental stress (Crnic et al., 2005). Emotion-focused coping, such as relaxation techniques and self-care, can also contribute to parental well-being (Deater-Deckard et al., 2011).

2.5 The Role of Social Support:

Parents of children with autism spectrum disorder report higher levels of stress and psychological pain than parents of typically developing children and children with other disorders. Stressors are prevalent throughout a child's life and are intensified at periods of

transition. However, support services may be beneficial in relieving parental stress (Desmarais et.al., 2018)

2.6 Gender Differences in Parental Experiences:

Studies have also examined gender differences in parental experiences and stress. Research by Nomaguchi and Milkie (2003) found that mothers often experience higher levels of stress compared to fathers. Differences in societal expectations and gender roles could be attributed (Cabrera et al., 2000). Additionally, studies have explored that maternal stress and enhancing overall family well-being was reduced by the impact of involved fatherhood; (McBride et al., 2005). When comparing with mothers of children who have mental health disorders with the mothers of children who have sensory-motor, mental, or persistent physical issues it is found that mothers of children who have sensory-motor, mental, or persistent physical issues are more stressed (Feizi et al., 2014).

Valuable insights on parental experiences and the impact of stress were provided by the reviewed literature. Emerging significant factors influencing parental well-being are parental satisfaction, sources of stress, coping strategies, social support, and gender differences. Understanding these dynamics is to promote positive parental experiences and overall family well-being having children with disabilities but it is crucial for developing interventions and support programs. Considering diverse populations and cultural contexts, to enhance understanding and support for parents having children with disabilities further research is needed to delve deeper into the complexities of parental experiences.

A. Previous studies on parental satisfaction, happiness, and stress levels

Understanding parental satisfaction, happiness, and stress levels is crucial for promoting parents and their children well-being. An overview of previous studies that have examined parental satisfaction, happiness, and stress levels were provided by this literature review and shed light on the factors influencing these aspects of parenting.

A.1 Parental Satisfaction:

Several studies have investigated parental satisfaction and its determinants. Nelson et al. (2014) in his research he compared the parents and non-parents and found that parents reported higher life satisfaction and happiness than non-parents. In the research of Vilaseca et.al (2019) found that parents with positive perceptions of their child with disability and expressed more feelings of happiness, family togetherness, and personal growth than those with negative perceptions. It has found by reviewing several studies which examined mothers and fathers of children with disabilities in various contexts. Increased parental understanding regarding disability, as well as the development of better coping skills and positive perspectives, resulted in an improvement in family well-being, which aided in the development of their children (Vilaseca et.al. 2019)

The sense of purpose, fulfilment from raising children, positive parent-child relationships, and social support networks are the various factors contributing to parental satisfaction (Bonnet et al., 2013; Volling et al., 2019). In addition to that, research has shown that parenting self-efficacy, marital quality, and socioeconomic status were influencing parental satisfaction (Hoffman & Moon, 2018; Junttila et al., 2017). In the research of Hasnat and Graves (2000) it is found that parents were more likely to satisfy if they received a substantial amount of information. Parental satisfaction was shown to be better when the revealing professional interacts well with the parents, understands parental concerns, and is direct in his or her approach.

A.2 Impact of Support Services:

The availability and utilization of support services play a crucial role in parental satisfaction. Access to specialized healthcare, early intervention programs, educational support, and community resources can significantly impact parents' satisfaction levels. Research has shown that parents who receive appropriate support services and have positive interactions with professionals report higher levels of satisfaction and lower stress levels (Cuzzocrea & Dominelli, 2016; Raina et al., 2009). Adequate support systems also enhance parents' ability to cope with challenges and enhance their overall well-being.

A.3 Parent-Professional Relationships:

The quality of the relationship between parents and professionals, such as healthcare providers, educators, and therapists, can greatly influence parental satisfaction. Open and collaborative communication, respectful interactions, and the provision of accurate and comprehensive information contribute to positive parent-professional relationships. Studies have indicated higher levels of satisfaction among the parents who has perceive professionals as supportive and empathy (Hastings, 2003; Quintero & McIntyre, 2010). On the other hand, decrease parental satisfaction can be because of negative experiences with professionals and a lack of involvement in decision-making processes.

A.4 Peer Support and Social Networks:

The availability of peer support and social networks has been found to be beneficial for parental satisfaction. Connecting with other parents who share similar experiences provides validation, understanding, and a sense of belonging. Peer support groups, online communities, and parent advocacy organizations offer opportunities for parents to share information, exchange experiences, and receive emotional support (Cadman et al., 2016; Kazak et al., 2015). These networks contribute to increased parental satisfaction by reducing feelings of isolation, providing practical advice, and fostering a sense of empowerment.

B. Review of relevant studies on the emotional bond between parents and children

Heiman, (2021) conducted a study on Parents' Voice: Parents' Emotional and Practical Coping with a

Child with Special Needs found that some of the parents emotional bond are unstable with their children and involving conflicts and disagreements, some of them adopted a more positive mind-set and with the challenges they were facing.

Thompson et.al, (2018) in their study the expressed emotion of parents of children with developmental disabilities: A meta-analysis examined that parents of children with developmental disabilities are facing particular challenges interacting with their children and have been shown to have higher levels of stress than parents of children without disabilities. And the meta-analysis examined the proportion of parents of children with developmental disabilities exhibiting high expressed emotions.

III. KEY THEORIES OR FRAMEWORKS RELATED TO PARENTING AND ITS IMPACT

Understanding the key theories and theoretical frameworks related to parenting are crucial for comprehending the impact of parenting on children's development and well-being. An overview of key theories and frameworks have provided by these literature that have shaped the study of parenting and its influence on child outcomes.

3.1 Attachment Theory:

John Bowlby developed Attachment theory which emphasizes the importance of the parent-child bond in shaping children's emotional and social development. According to this theory, foundation for healthy relationships and psychological well-being provided by the secure attachment between children and their caregivers. Insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant attachment, can contribute to developmental difficulties and emotional challenges (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969).

3.2 Social Learning Theory:

Social learning theory, proposed by Albert Bandura, highlights the role of observational learning and modelling in shaping children's behaviour. According to this theory, children acquire and imitate behaviours through observation of their parents or other significant individuals. Parental modelling of prosocial behaviours and effective problem-solving strategies can positively influence children's behaviour and promote their social competence (Bandura, 1977).

3.3 Ecological Systems Theory:

Ecological systems theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, considers the influence of multiple environmental systems on children's development. The theory emphasizes the interactions between the child and various systems, including the microsystem (family and immediate surroundings), mesosystem (interactions between microsystems), ecosystem (community and societal factors), and macrosystem (cultural and societal norms). Parenting practices and the quality of the parent-

child relationship are seen as important components within these systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

3.4 Parenting Styles:

Parenting styles, popularized by Diana Baumrind, categorize parental behavior into different styles based on dimensions of warmth, control, and discipline. Authoritative (high warmth, high control), authoritarian (low warmth, high control), permissive (high warmth, low control), and neglectful (low warmth, low control) are the four main parenting styles. Research has shown that warmth, responsiveness, and clear boundaries, is associated with positive child outcomes are the characteristics of authoritative parenting, whereas other styles may have varying impacts on children's development (Baumrind, 1966).

3.5 Transactional Model of Parenting:

The transactional model of parenting suggests that parenting is an ongoing, bidirectional process involving interactions between parents and children. It recognizes that child characteristics and behaviours can influence parental behaviour, and vice versa. This dynamic process highlights the reciprocal nature of parent-child relationships and the importance of considering both parent and child factors in understanding child outcomes (Sameroff, 2009).

The theories and frameworks reviewed in this literature review provide valuable perspectives on parenting and its impact on child development. Attachment theory underscores the significance of the parent-child bond, social learning theory highlights the role of modelling and observational learning, and ecological systems theory emphasizes the influence of multiple environmental systems. Parenting styles offer insights into different parenting approaches, while the transactional model emphasizes the bidirectional nature of parent-child interactions. Foundation for examining the complex dynamics of parenting and their implications for child outcomes were provided by understanding these theories and frameworks. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the intricate processes and effects of parenting on children's development and well-being further research should continue to integrate these theories and frameworks.

IV. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Description of the sample and data collection methods

The study included a sample of 100 parents who participated in the research.

Table 1

Age (years)	No of Respondents
22	1
24	2
25	2
26	2

27	2
28	5
29	5
30	4
31	3
32	9
33	5
34	4
35	7
36	3
37	2
38	13
39	6
40	3
41	3
42	8
44	2
45	3
46	2
47	1
49	1
51	1
52	1
Total	100

4.2 Sample Description:

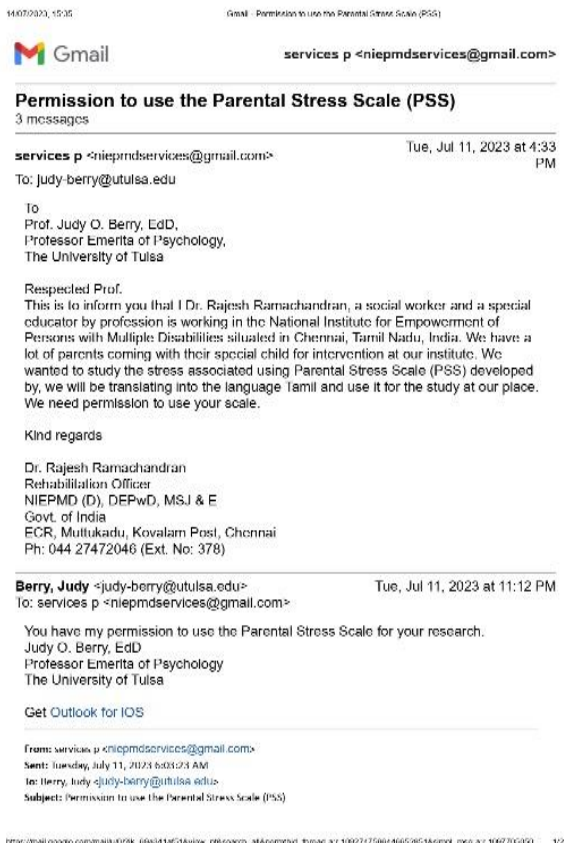
The study consisted of a sample of 100 parents. The age distribution of the respondents varied, with parents ranging from 22 to 52 years old. The largest number of respondents (13) fell into the age group of 38 years, followed by 9 respondents in the age group of 32 years. There were multiple respondents in each age group, except for ages 22, 47, 49, 51, and 52, which had only one respondent each.

Table 2

Male	Female
50	50

4.3 Data Collection Methods:

The data collection for this study involved the administration of the Parental Stress Scale (PSS) Berry & Jones (1995) questionnaire to the participating parents. The PSS consists of 18 items questionnaire which assesses the feelings of parents with regard to their role. Positive aspects and negative aspects of parenting are also explored through PSS. The questionnaire PSS was employed to parents and they were asked to respond to these questions based on their own experiences and perceptions. The second author took permission from the author of Parental Stress Scale (PSS) Judy O. Berry for using the scale.



4.4 Explanation of the survey instrument used to gather responses

The survey instrument used to gather responses in this study was the Parental Stress Scale (PSS) Berry & Jones (1995). The PSS is a widely recognized and validated questionnaire designed to assess parental stress levels and related factors. In this regard the second author took permission from the author of Parental Stress Scale (PSS) Judy O. Berry for using the scale. It consists of a series of 18 statements or items that participants are asked to respond based on their own experiences and perceptions of parenting.

The PSS typically includes items that cover various domains related to parental stress, such as parental role restriction, demands of parenting, and feelings of being overwhelmed. The PSS questionnaire is based on Likert scale, where the parents participating in the study have to respond to the statements by indicating either strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree. Here the researchers first explained about the usage of PSS to 2nd year Master of Social Work students and a demo was carried out to make them understand on how to use the PSS with parents who are the participants of the study. The students then employed the PSS to the participants selected for the study were asked to respond to each item according to their own experiences and feelings as parents. The responses were then collected and analyzed to gain insights into the levels of parental stress within the sample.

The PSS questionnaire is an important tool which can be completed within 10 minutes, here the parents respond to the statements about their relationship with the child. The PSS can be used to assess the parental stress of both mother and father of children having no clinical issue also.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

The parents of children with disabilities who are the participants of this study were provided with the information about the study undertaken and were explained about the potential risks, benefits and their rights as participants. The parents were informed about the privacy of the data, the parents were informed that to maintain participant privacy, all identifying information has been kept separate from the acquired data, and data has been anonymised or pseudonymized. The parents were also given choice of whether to participate in the study without having any negative consequence.

The study obtained approval from the institute’s research committee, the researchers while training the students have complied with usage of appropriate and sensitive language while employing the statements of the PSS

4.6 Data Analysis Procedures:

The data analysis procedure comprised of cleaning and preparation of the obtained data included checking for mistakes, deleting incomplete or duplicate responses, and organizing the data for analysis. To summarize the data and provide an overview of the responses, descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages have been employed. The data analysis results were interpreted based on research questions and objectives and the findings have highlighted the implications, limits, and suggestions.

V. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Parental Stress Scale – Analysis Stress Level of the Parent of children with disabilities based on the gender of the parent.

Gender of the parent * Stress level of parent Cross tabulation				
		Stress level of parent		Total
		Low	High	
Gender of the parent	Male	20	30	50
	Female	17	33	50
Total		37	63	100

The majority of the responses shows that 63% of the parents are having high level of stress in that female is having high level of stress (33%) when comparing with male parent (30%). Whereas 37% of the parents facing low level of stress in that 20% are male and 17% are female.

i. Stress Level of the Parent of children with disabilities based on the age of the parent.

Age of the parent * Stress level of parent Cross tabulation				
		Stress level of parent		Total
		Low	High	
Age of the parent	21-30	3	11	14
	31-40	23	35	58
	41-50	8	13	21
	51-60	3	4	7
Total		37	63	100

The majority of the responses shows that 35% of parents aged between 31-40, 13% of parents aged between 41-50, 11% of the parent aged between 21-30 and 4% of the parent aged between 51-60 are having high level of stress. Whereas, 23% of parents aged between 31-40, 8% of parents aged between 41-50, 3% of parents aged between 21-30 and 3% of parents aged between 51 to 60 are having low level of stress.

ii. Stress Level of the Parent of children with disabilities based on the age of the parent.

Educational Qualification * Stress level of parent Cross tabulation				
		Stress level of parent		Total
		Low	High	
Educational Qualification of the parent	Middle School	3	7	10
	High School	6	8	14
	Higher Secondary	1	4	5
	Diploma	3	4	7
	Under Graduate	17	27	44
	Post Graduate	5	12	17
	Doctorate	2	1	3
Total		37	63	100

The majority of the respondents shows that 27% of the parents completed Under Graduation, 12% of the parents completed Post Graduation, 8% of the parents completed High School, 7% of the parents completed Middle School, 4% of the parents completed High School and another 4% of the parents completed Diploma and 1% of the parents completed Doctorate are having high level of stress. Whereas 17% of the parents completed Under Graduation, 6% of the parents completed High School, 5% of the parents completed Post Graduation, 3% of the parents completed Middle School, another 3% of the

parents completed Diploma and 2% of the parents completed Doctorate are having low level of stress.

iii. Stress Level of the Parent of children with disabilities based on the diagnosis of the children.

Diagnosis * Stress level of parent Cross tabulation				
		Stress level of parent		Total
		Low	High	
Diagnosis	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	11	25	36
	Intellectual Disability (ID)	7	11	18
	Cerebral Palsy (CP)	4	4	8
	ASD+ID	8	12	20
	CP+ID	2	7	9
	Speech & Language Disability	1	2	3
	Chronic Neurological Condition	1	1	2
	Muscular Dystrophy	0	1	1
	ID+LD	1	0	1
	Locomotor Disability (LD)	1	0	1
	Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	1	0	1
Total		37	63	100

The majority of the responses shows that 25% of the parents having children diagnosed with ASD, 12% of the parents having children diagnosed with ASD+ID, 11% of the parents having children diagnosed with ID, 7% of the parents having children diagnosed with CP+ID, 4% of the parents having children diagnosed with CP, 2% of the parents having children diagnosed with Speech & Language Disability, 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with Chronic Neurological Condition and another 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy are having High level of Stress. Whereas, 11% of the parents having children diagnosed with ASD, 8% of the parents having children diagnosed with ASD+ID, 7% of the parents having children diagnosed with ID, 4% of the parents having children diagnosed with CP, 2% of the parents having children diagnosed with CP+ID, 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with Speech & Language Disability, 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with Chronic Neurological Condition, 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with ID+LD, 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with LD and 1% of the parents having children diagnosed with SLD are having Low level of stress.

VI. FINDINGS BASED ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Is there a significant difference in the stress level among male and female parents of children having disabilities?

0.206 is the calculated chi-square test is less than the critical value of 3.841 is. Hence, we can say that there is no significant difference between the gender of the parents and the stress level among the parents of children with disabilities. So here we can reject the research question which states that there a significant difference in the stress level among male and female parents of children having disabilities.

Do older parents tend to have more level of stress than the younger parents?

Based on the analysis the younger parents are tend to have higher level of stress than the older parents. So here we can reject the research question which states that older parents tend to have more level of stress than the younger parents.

Does parents having higher education qualification experience lower level of stress than parents having lower educational qualification?

As per the analysis it states that parents having higher level of education are experiencing higher level of stress and parents having lower level of education are having low level of stress. So here we can reject the research question which states that parents having higher education qualification experience lower level of stress than parents having lower educational qualification.

Which disability is associated with higher or lower level of stress among parents?

The analysis here shows that parents having children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is associated with higher level of stress.

a. Presentation and analysis of the responses to each statement/question

Q1. I am happy in my role as a parent

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	4	4.0
Disagree	21	21.0
Undecided	4	4.0
Agree	22	22.0
strongly agree	49	49.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 4% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 21% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 4% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 22% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 49% of respondents chose this option.

Overall, the majority of respondents (71%) expressed positive sentiments about their role as a parent, with 22% strongly agreeing and 49% agreeing. However, there is a considerable portion of respondents (25%) who

either disagreed or were undecided about their happiness in their parental role.

Q2. There is little or nothing I wouldn't do for my child(ren) if it was necessary

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	15	15.0
Disagree	63	63.0
Undecided	2	2.0
Agree	19	19.0
strongly agree	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 15% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 63% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 2% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 19% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 1% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (78%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they would not go to great lengths for their child if it was necessary. Only 20% of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement with the statement.

Q3. Caring for my child(ren) sometimes takes more time and energy than I have to give.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	3	3.0
Disagree	25	25.0
Agree	46	46.0
strongly agree	26	26.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 3% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 25% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 46% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 26% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (72%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, indicating that they feel that caring for their child(ren) sometimes requires more time and energy than they have to give. On the other hand, 28% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q4. I sometimes worry whether I am doing enough for my child(ren).

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	1	1.0
Disagree	17	17.0
undecided	3	3.0
Agree	57	57.0
strongly agree	22	22.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 1% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 17% of respondents chose this option.

Undecided: 3% of respondents chose this option.

Agree: 57% of respondents chose this option.

Strongly agree: 22% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a majority of respondents (79%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, indicating that they sometimes worry whether they are doing enough for their child(ren). On the other hand, only a small percentage of respondents (18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q5. I feel close to my child(ren).

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	2	2.0
Disagree	3	3.0
Agree	23	23.0
strongly agree	72	72.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 2% of respondents chose this option.

Disagree: 3% of respondents chose this option.

Agree: 23% of respondents chose this option.

Strongly agree: 72% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (72%) strongly agreed that they feel close to their child(ren), indicating a strong emotional connection. Additionally, 23% of respondents agreed with the statement. Only a small percentage of respondents (5%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with feeling close to their child(ren).

Q6. I enjoy spending time with my child(ren).

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	4	4.0
Disagree	9	9.0
Agree	38	38.0
strongly agree	49	49.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 4% of respondents chose this option.

Disagree: 9% of respondents chose this option.

Agree: 38% of respondents chose this option.

Strongly agree: 49% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (49%) strongly agreed that they enjoy spending time with their child(ren), indicating a high level of enjoyment in their interactions. Additionally, 38% of respondents agreed with the statement. Only a small percentage of respondents (13%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with enjoying spending time with their child(ren).

Q7. My child(ren) is an important source of affection for me.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	3	3.0
Disagree	8	8.0
undecided	1	1.0
Agree	45	45.0
strongly agree	43	43.0

Total	100	100.0
--------------	------------	--------------

Strongly disagree: 3% of respondents chose this option.

Disagree: 8% of respondents chose this option.

Undecided: 1% of respondents chose this option.

Agree: 45% of respondents chose this option.

Strongly agree: 43% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a significant portion of respondents (88%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, indicating that their child(ren) is an important source of affection for them. On the other hand, only a small percentage of respondents (11%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and 1% remained undecided.

Q8. Having child(ren) gives me a more certain and optimistic view for the future.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	6	6.0
Disagree	34	34.0
undecided	12	12.0
Agree	35	35.0
strongly agree	13	13.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 6% of respondents chose this option.

Disagree: 34% of respondents chose this option.

Undecided: 12% of respondents chose this option.

Agree: 35% of respondents chose this option.

Strongly agree: 13% of respondents chose this option.

The data indicates that a significant portion of respondents (48%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that having child(ren) does not give them a more certain and optimistic view for the future. On the other hand, 48% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, indicating that having child(ren) does provide them with a more certain and optimistic view for the future. A small portion of respondents (12%) remained undecided.

Q9. The major source of stress in my life is my child(ren).

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	10	10.0
Disagree	23	23.0
Agree	35	35.0
strongly agree	32	32.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 10% of respondents chose this option.

Disagree: 23% of respondents chose this option.

Agree: 35% of respondents chose this option.

Strongly agree: 32% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a significant portion of respondents (67%) either agreed or strongly agreed that their child(ren) is a major source of stress in their life. On the other hand, 33% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. It's also worth considering that while children can bring joy and

fulfilment, they can also introduce various challenges and stressors into parents' lives.

Q10. Having child(ren) leaves little time and flexibility in my life.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	5	5.0
Disagree	26	26.0
Undecided	4	4.0
Agree	53	53.0
strongly agree	12	12.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 5% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 26% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 4% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 53% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 12% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (65%) either agreed or strongly agreed that having child(ren) leaves little time and flexibility in their life. On the other hand, 31% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. A small percentage of respondents (4%) remained undecided. Having children can indeed require significant time and flexibility adjustments, and individual experiences may vary.

Q11. Having child(ren) has been a financial burden.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	12	12.0
disagree	30	30.0
Agree	28	28.0
strongly agree	30	30.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 12% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 30% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 28% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 30% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a significant portion of respondents (58%) either agreed or strongly agreed that having child(ren) has been a financial burden. On the other hand, 42% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Having children can indeed bring additional financial responsibilities and challenges, but individual financial situations and perspectives may vary.

Q12. It is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of my child(ren).

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	10	10.0
Disagree	25	25.0
undecided	1	1.0
Agree	40	40.0
strongly agree	24	24.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 10% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 25% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 1% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 40% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 24% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a significant portion of respondents (64%) either agreed or strongly agreed that it is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of their child(ren). On the other hand, 35% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Only a small percentage of respondents (1%) remained undecided. Balancing responsibilities can indeed be challenging for parents, especially when considering the needs and demands of their child(ren) alongside other obligations.

Q13. The behaviour of my child(ren) is often embarrassing or stressful to me.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	15	15.0
disagree	55	55.0
undecided	2	2.0
Agree	26	26.0
strongly agree	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 15% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 55% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 2% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 26% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 2% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (70%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the behavior of their child(ren) is often embarrassing or stressful to them. On the other hand, 28% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. A small percentage of respondents (2%) remained undecided. Parenting experiences can vary greatly, and while some parents may find their child's behavior embarrassing or stressful at times, others may not share the same sentiment.

Q14. If I had it to do over again, I might decide not to have child(ren).

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	13	13.0
Disagree	54	54.0
undecided	4	4.0
Agree	26	26.0
strongly agree	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 13% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 54% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 4% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 26% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 3% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a majority of respondents (67%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they

might decide not to have child(ren) if they had it to do over again. On the other hand, 29% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. A small percentage of respondents (4%) remained undecided. People's feelings about parenthood can vary, and individual experiences and perspectives can greatly influence their responses to this statement.

Q15. I feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a parent.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	17	17.0
Disagree	69	69.0
Undecided	6	6.0
Agree	8	8.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 17% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 69% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 6% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 8% of respondents chose this option.

The majority of respondents (86%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a parent. Only a small percentage of respondents (8%) agreed with the statement, indicating that they do feel overwhelmed. Additionally, 6% of respondents remained undecided. Parenting experiences can vary greatly, and while some individuals may feel overwhelmed, others may not share the same sentiment.

Q16. Having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life.

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	2	2.0
Disagree	21	21.0
Undecided	8	8.0
Agree	51	51.0
strongly agree	18	18.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 2% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 21% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 8% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 51% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 18% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a majority of respondents (69%) either agreed or strongly agreed that having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over their life. On the other hand, 23% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. A small percentage of respondents (8%) remained undecided. Parenting can indeed bring changes to one's choices and level of control, and individual experiences and perspectives can greatly influence their responses to this statement.

Q17. I am satisfied as a parent

	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	6	6.0
Disagree	15	15.0
undecided	5	5.0
Agree	22	22.0
strongly agree	52	52.0
Total	100	100.0

Strongly disagree: 6% of respondents chose this option.
 Disagree: 15% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 5% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 22% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 52% of respondents chose this option.

The data suggests that a majority of respondents (74%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they are satisfied as a parent. On the other hand, 21% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. A small percentage of respondents (5%) remained undecided. Parenting experiences can vary greatly, and individual satisfaction as a parent can be influenced by various factors.

Q18. I find my child(ren) enjoyable

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	7	7.0
undecided	4	4.0
Agree	56	56.0
strongly agree	33	33.0
Total	100	100.0

Disagree: 7% of respondents chose this option.
 Undecided: 4% of respondents chose this option.
 Agree: 56% of respondents chose this option.
 Strongly agree: 33% of respondents chose this option.

The data indicates that a majority of respondents (89%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they find their child(ren) enjoyable. Only a small percentage of respondents (11%) either disagreed or were undecided about finding their child(ren) enjoyable. Parenting experiences and perceptions can vary, and while the majority of respondents find their child(ren) enjoyable, individual experiences may differ.

VII. DISCUSSION OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS AND PATTERNS OBSERVED

Analysis of the data revealed the major findings and also the relation to parental stress, satisfaction, and happiness. Findings and shed light on the dynamics of parenting provided valuable insights about the experience of the participants. The major findings and patterns observed are as follows:

7.1 Parental Happiness and Satisfaction: The majority of respondents (71%) by agreeing or strongly agreeing expressed positive sentiments about their role as a parent

that they were happy in their role as parents, and 74% of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied as parents. Significant number of parents in the study experience a sense of happiness and fulfilment in their parental role are the suggestions of these findings.

7.2 Emotional Connection with Children: Majority of respondents (72%) strongly agreed that they felt close to their child(ren), which indicates a strong emotional connection. Additionally, 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their children are the important source of affection. The significant emotional bond between parents and their children was highlighted by the findings and the positive aspects of the parent-child relationship was emphasized.

7.3 Enjoyment and Quality Time: Majority of respondents (87%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed spending time with their child(ren). This findings indicates that in this study, most of the parents are finding joy and satisfaction in the interactions and activities they share with their children. In addition to that, 89% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their child(ren) were enjoyable. Positive experiences and fulfilment that parents derive from the time spent with their child(ren) are the reflection from the findings.

7.4 Parental Stress and Concerns: Stress were identified in some area of concern though the overall findings indicate a positive parental outlook. Majority of the respondents (79%) agreed or strongly agreed that sometimes they worry whether they are doing enough for their child(ren) or not and additionally 67% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the major source of stress in their life is their children. Challenges and pressures that parent's face were highlighted by the findings and underscored the need for support systems to address parental stress and concerns.

7.5 Impact on Life and Flexibility: Majority of the respondents (64%) agreed or strongly agreed that because of their children they leaves little time and flexibility in their life. Additionally, 69% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over their life. Impact of parenting on various aspects of parents' lives, including time availability, personal choices, and flexibility are highlighted by these findings. It suggests that individuals' autonomy and decision-making can have implications because of parenting responsibilities.

Overall suggestions of the finding is though many parents experience happiness, satisfaction, and a strong emotional connection with their child(ren), they also face stress, worries, and challenges associated with parenting. To help parents navigate the joys and difficulties of raising children, multidimensional nature of parenting experiences and the importance of providing support systems have to be created is highlighted by the results. To promote positive parenting experiences and enhance the well-being of parents and children, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers can develop targeted interventions and support strategies by understanding these major findings and patterns.

7.6 Interpretation of the data in relation to existing literature

Valuable insights into the findings of the study can be provided by interpreting the data in relation to existing literature based on the data presented, some of the general interpretations can be made are:

7.6.1 Parental Happiness and Satisfaction: By Agreeing or strongly agreeing, a majority of respondents expressed positive sentiments about their role as a parent that they are happy and satisfied as parents. The positive aspects of parenting, such as the joy and fulfilment it brings is aligned with previous research highlights.

7.6.2 Parental Stress and Overwhelm: A substantial number of respondents acknowledged experiencing stress and feeling overwhelmed in their role as parents is revealed by the data. The challenges and responsibilities associated with parenting, which can lead to stress and feelings of overwhelm is recognized and also aligned with existing literature.

7.6.3 Emotional Connection and Enjoyment: Feeling close to their child(ren) and enjoying spending time with them is reported by the majority of respondents. This reflects the importance of emotional connection and the enjoyment parents derive which is consistent with the literature emphasizing the positive emotional bonds in parent-child relationships.

7.6.4 Financial Burden: Majority of respondents indicated that having child(ren) has been a financial burden. This finding that acknowledges the financial implications of raising children, including the costs of childcare, education, and other expenses associated with parenting and it is in line with previous research.

7.6.5 Balancing Responsibilities: The findings shows that a considerable number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that balancing different responsibilities due to their child(ren) can be challenging. The difficulties parents face in managing multiple roles and responsibilities, including work-life balance and attending to their child(ren) needs is highlighted that aligns with existing literature.

It is important to note that a thorough review of relevant studies, theories, and frameworks in the field of parental experiences and stress is required for the comprehensive interpretation of the data in relation to existing literature requires. Researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the consistency, divergence, or extension of existing knowledge on parental satisfaction, happiness, stress levels, and related factors by comparing the findings of the current study with previous research.

VIII. DISCUSSION

8.1 Comparison of the findings with previous research and theoretical frameworks

Parental Happiness and Satisfaction: When comparing this study with the previous study by Nelson et al. (2014), both the findings reported that parents have higher life satisfaction and happiness in their parenting

role. Importance of the parent-child bond, supports the idea that a strong emotional connection with children contributes to parental happiness and satisfaction is emphasized by Attachment theory.

8.1.1 Parental Stress and Overwhelm: In the study of Crnic et al. (1983), they found that parents often experience stress related to managing multiple roles and responsibilities. Similarly in this study, due to the challenges of parenting majority of the respondents experience stress and feelings of overwhelm. The influence of various environmental systems, can help explain the sources of stress and overwhelm that parents face is considered by the ecological systems theory.

Emotional Connection and Enjoyment: The current study's findings reported that a significant proportion of the respondents feel emotionally close and enjoy spending time with their children. In consistent with the attachment theory and social learning theory, this emphasizes the importance of positive emotional bonds in parent-child relationships.

8.1.2 Financial Burden: The research highlights that many parents consider raising children to be a financial burden. This finding aligns with the existing literature, which acknowledges the financial implications of parenting, as mentioned by previous research. The financial aspect of parenting can be related to the social learning theory, which considers the role of modelling and observation in shaping children's behavior, including financial behaviors.

8.1.3 Balancing Responsibilities: A considerable number of respondents in the study reported challenges in balancing different responsibilities due to their children. This aligns with previous research by Crnic et al. (1983), which found that parents often experience stress related to managing multiple roles and responsibilities. The concept of balancing responsibilities is related to the transactional model of parenting, which suggests that parenting is an ongoing, bidirectional process involving interactions between parents and children. It recognizes that child characteristics and behaviors can influence parental behavior, and vice versa.

Overall, the findings of the research align with and provide further insights into existing literature and theoretical frameworks related to parenting experiences, happiness, satisfaction, and stress. The study contributes to the understanding of the complexities of parenting children with disabilities and underscores the need for support systems and interventions to enhance parental well-being and family outcomes.

8.2 Examination of the implications and significance of the results

The significance and implications of the above study of the results are multi-faceted. In the field of child and family services, it can have important implications and family services for various stakeholders, including parents, policymakers, and practitioners.

8.2.1 Parental Well-being and Satisfaction: With The majority of expressing happiness, satisfaction, and

enjoyment in their parental role, the overall positive sentiment among parents is highlighted by the findings of the study. It suggests that most parents derive fulfilment and positive emotions from their role as caregivers and this has significant implications for parental well-being. The overall family dynamics, parent-child relationships, and children's development can be Recognized and promote parental well-being and it can have far-reaching effects.

8.2.2 Parental Stress and Concerns: Though majority of the respondents are happy and satisfied as a parent, a substantial number of parents reported experiencing stress, concerns about meeting their child's needs, and difficulties in balancing responsibilities which indicated that that parenting is not without challenges. The need for comprehensive support systems and interventions to address parental stress, provide coping mechanisms, and promote resilience were underscored by the findings. Specific stressors can contribute to enhancing parental well-being and ultimately improve child outcomes by identifying and addressing it.

8.2.3 Parent-Child Relationship: As evident in the study, the strong emotional connection and affection are crucial for healthy child development between parents and children. Findings emphasized the significance of nurturing positive parent-child relationships, as they serve as a foundation for children's socio-emotional development, attachment security, and overall well-being. Targeted interventions and support can positively impact child outcomes and promote healthier family dynamics to strengthening parent-child bonds.

8.2.4 Policy and Programme Development: To cater the diverse needs of parents of children with special needs the study results can inform the development of evidence-based policies and programs. Policymakers can design family-friendly policies by recognizing the factors that contribute to parental satisfaction, well-being, and stress to provide resources, support services, and flexible work arrangements. Strategies to navigate the challenges of parenting and to address specific areas of concern and to provide necessary tools can be developed by the practitioners in the field of child and family services.

8.2.5 Future Research Directions: Potential areas for further research is highlighted by the study, such as contributing to parental happiness and satisfaction by exploring specific contributing factor, understanding the stress levels on differencing parenting styles and its impacts, investigating child outcomes by the longitudinal effects of parental and examining the contextual factors in shaping parental experiences and the role of cultural. Complex dynamics of parenting can understand by the further research inform the development of targeted interventions and support systems.

Overall, the implications and significance of this study results lies in their potential to promote positive parent-child relationships, improve parental well-being, and inform policy and program development aimed at supporting parents in their caregiving role. Stakeholders

can contribute to creating a nurturing and supportive environment for both parents and children by addressing challenges and concerns identified in the study.

8.3 Identification of limitations and potential areas for further research

For further research, identifying the limitations and potential areas is crucial for understanding the scope and generalizability of the current study and for guiding future investigations. The following limitations and areas for further research can be identified based on the information provided.

8.3.1 Sample Size and Representativeness: The sample size of 100 parents of the study may limit the generalizability of the findings to a larger population. Future research could benefit from a larger and more diverse sample to ensure broader representation of parental experiences and to capture a wider range of perspectives.

8.3.2 Self-Report Bias: The data collection relied on self-reported responses, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or memory recall. Future research could employ additional methods, such as observational measures or qualitative interviews, to complement self-report data and provide a more comprehensive understanding of parental experiences.

8.3.3 Cross-Cultural Considerations: The current study's findings may be influenced by specific cultural or contextual factors. By exploring parental satisfaction, happiness, and stress levels valuable insights into the role of culture in shaping parenting experiences can be provided across different cultural backgrounds and contexts.

8.3.4 Longitudinal Studies: Current study provides the snapshot of parental experiences at a particular point in time. Longitudinal research offers deeper understanding of the dynamic nature of parenting experiences which would allow for the examination of changes and patterns in parental satisfaction, happiness, and stress levels over time.

8.3.5 Inclusion of Objective Measures: Future research could incorporate the objective measures, such as physiological indicators of stress or well-being, to supplement self-report data. This would provide a more comprehensive assessment of parental experiences and help validate the subjective reports.

8.3.6 Comparative Studies: Comparing parental experiences and stress levels across different groups, such as parents of children with disabilities, single parents, or parents from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, would offer insights into the unique challenges and strengths experienced by these groups. This could inform targeted interventions and support strategies.

8.3.7 Intervention Studies: Effectiveness of specific support programs can be evaluated by conducting intervention or interventions aimed at reducing parental stress and enhancing satisfaction would contribute to evidence-based practices. Impact of these interventions on parental well-being and child outcomes can be

assessed and would be valuable for developing effective support systems.

Practical insights for interventions and support services would provide understanding the specific strategies used by parents to navigate challenges and promote well-being.

Further research can deepen our understanding of parental experiences, enhance support systems for parents, and contribute to the well-being of families by addressing these limitations and exploring these potential areas.

IX. CONCLUSION

9.1 Summary of the major findings and their implications

9.1.1 Parental Happiness and Satisfaction: A significant proportion of the respondents states that they find fulfilment and contentment in their parental role by strongly agreeing and also indicated that they express happiness and satisfaction in their parenting role.

9.1.2 Implication: Promoting parental happiness and satisfaction can have positive effects on overall well-being, parent-child relationships, and child development. Providing support and resources to enhance parental well-being can contribute to healthier family dynamics and improved child outcomes.

9.1.3 Parental Stress and Concerns: A significant proportion of respondent's states that they experiencing stress and worry about meeting their child's needs and also concerned whether they were doing enough for their child.

9.1.4 Implication: Recognizing and addressing parental stress is crucial to support parents in their caregiving role. By implementing interventions to help parents manage stress, provide reassurance, and build resilience can achieve positive effects on parental well-being and the quality of parent-child interactions.

9.1.5 Parent-Child Relationships: Majority of respondents strongly agree that felt close d and enjoy spending time with their children which is revealed by this study. They also considered the important source of their affection is their children.

9.1.6 Implication: Nurturing positive parent-child relationships is essential for healthy child development. By supporting parents in building strong emotional connections and providing opportunities for meaningful interactions with their children they can contribute child's socio-emotional well-being and overall development.

9.1.7 Challenges of Parenting: The respondents acknowledged that time and energy demands of caring for their child(ren) and also they impact flexibility and choices in life. Some respondents indicated that the behavior of their child(ren) could be embarrassing or stressful.

9.1.8 Implication: Recognizing the challenges of parenting and providing resources and support to address them can help parents navigate these difficulties more

effectively. By offering strategies for time management, flexibility, and behavior management can reduce parental stress.

The findings highlighted the importance of promoting well-being of parents, supporting positive parent-child relationships, and addressing the challenges faced by parents. To benefit the overall development and well-being of children stakeholders can provide support to create a nurturing and supportive environment for families by recognizing and addressing these aspects.

9.2 Discussion of the practical implications for parents, caregivers, and policymakers

For parents, caregivers, and policymakers the practical implications of this study are as follows:

9.2.1 Support Programmes for Parents: Enhancing the well-being and reducing stress of the parents is the importance of providing support programs which is highlighted by the findings. Workshops, counselling services, and support groups can be provided to navigate the challenges of parenting effectively and to equip parents with the necessary skills and knowledge parenting.

9.2.2 Accessible Resources: Whether parents have access to resources such as parenting guides, online platforms, and helplines which offer practical advice and support should be ensured by the policymakers. Parents can access information and guidance when they need it most by making these resources readily available.

9.2.3 Parental Leave Policies: Implementing family-friendly policies, such as extended parental leave, flexible work arrangements, and affordable childcare options are the crucial role can be played by the policymakers. The time and flexibility constraints parents face can be alleviated by these policies, allow them to balance their work and family responsibilities more effectively.

9.2.4 Early Intervention Services: For children with disabilities or special needs early intervention services can be prioritized by the caregivers and policymakers. Necessary support and guidance to navigate the unique challenges associated with raising a child with disabilities can be provided for parents with timely access to specialized services.

9.2.5 School-Based Support: To help parents feel more supported in their role and enhance their involvement in their child's academic and social development school based programmes can be conducted. For engaging parents actively in their child's education, schools can implement programs that foster positive parent-school partnerships, offering resources and opportunities.

9.2.6 Mental Health Support: Need for mental health support services for parents is emphasized by the findings of this study. Policymakers should ensure whether mental health services are accessible, affordable, and destigmatized and when parents experience emotional distress or mental health challenges they have to enable parents to seek help and support.

9.2.7 Parenting Education: Stress management techniques, and problem-solving skills evidence-based

parenting education programs can be provided to equip parents with effective parenting strategies. Confidence and competence in parenting role can be enhanced by these programs and also promote positive parent-child relationships.

Overall, the importance of providing support, resources, and services that enhance parental well-being, address parental stress, and strengthen parent-child relationships is underscored by the practical implications of this study. To promote positive parenting experiences, optimal child development and family well-being positive environment can be created by the parents, caregivers, and policymakers by implementing these strategies.

9.3 Suggestions for future research directions

Based on the basics of for future research directions, several suggestions can be made based on the findings of the present study:

9.3.1 Child's Well-being and Parenting: By investigating the association between parental stress, satisfaction, and child well-being Valuable insights into the reciprocal relationship would be provided between parent and child outcomes. Interventions that promote positive outcomes for both parents and children can be guided by understanding how parental well-being impacts child development and vice versa.

9.3.2 Cultural and Contextual Factors: Valuable insights will be provided by exploring the influence of cultural and contextual factors on parental stress, satisfaction, and experiences. Unique challenges and protective factors that influence parental well-being can be identified by comparing these factors across different cultural backgrounds and socio-economic contexts.

9.3.3 Interventions for parents: Studies can be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of parenting interventions and support programs to reduce parental stress and enhancing satisfaction would be beneficial. Evidence-based guidelines for implementing effective support strategies would provide by examining the long-term impacts of these interventions on both parental and child outcomes.

9.3.4 Longitudinal Studies: Deeper understanding about the evolution of parental stress and satisfaction would be done by conducting longitudinal studies. Researchers can identify trends, patterns, and potential factors by examining these factors at multiple time points that contribute to changes in parental well-being.

9.3.5 Impact of Technology: The role of technology in parenting experiences can be investigated including its impact on parental stress and satisfaction and it would be worthwhile. Exploring how technology use, such as social media, online parenting resources, and digital support networks, influences parenting practices and emotions can help inform the development of targeted interventions and support systems.

9.3.6 Experiences of Fathers: Fathers' experiences of stress, satisfaction, and parenting challenges should by further researches. More comprehensive understanding of parental well-being can be explored the unique aspects of

fatherhood and the specific stressors they face and can develop gender-sensitive support programs.

9.3.7 Intersectionality: Diverse experiences of parents would enrich by considering the intersectionality of factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and parenting experiences. Examining how these intersecting identities influence parental stress and satisfaction can inform more inclusive and tailored support services.

We can deepen our understanding of parental stress, satisfaction, and the factors that influence them by pursuing the future research directions. To promote positive parenting experiences and to enhance the well-being of both parents and children this knowledge can inform the development of targeted interventions, policies, and support systems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like express gratitude to the Director of National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. The authors would also express gratitude to the parents of children with disabilities who participated in the study.

Sponsorship: The authors would like to mention that no sponsorship what so ever received for the study.

Conflict of Interest: There are no conflict of interests

REFERENCES

- [1] Ainsworth, M. D., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the Strange Situation. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [2] Aldosari, M.S., & Pufpaff, L.A., (2014). Sources of stress among parents of children with Intellectual Disabilities: A Preliminary Investigation in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship*, volume 3 no.1. ISSN: 2167-3454
- [3] Anpalagan, S. a/p, Yusop, Y. M., Zainudin, Z. N., Othman, W. N. W., Kari, D. N. F. M., & Surat, S. (2021). Parental Stress among Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(12), 63–77.
- [4] Auriemma, D.L., Ding, Y., Zhang, C., Rabinowitz, M., Shen, Y., Galatas, K.L., (2021). Parenting Stress in Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities: Effects of Cognitions and Coping Styles. *The Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children*, 37(1), 51-63.
- [5] Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- [6] Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behaviour. *Child Development*, 37(4), 887-907.
- [7] Berry, JD, & Jones, W,H, (1995) The Parental Stress Scale : initial psychometric evidence. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 12, 463 – 472
- [8] Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Attachment (Vol. 1)*. Basic Books.
- [9] Bujnowska, A. M., Rodríguez, C., García, T., Areces, D., & Marsh, N. V. (2021). Coping with stress in parents of children with developmental disabilities. *International journal of clinical and health psychology : IJCHP*, 21(3), 100254.
- [10] Cabrera, N. J., Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Bradley, R. H., Hofferth, S., & Lamb, M. E. (2000). Fatherhood in the twenty-first century. *Child Development*, 71(1), 127-136.
- [11] Caprara GV, Barbaranelli C, Pastorelli C, Bandura A, Zimbardo PG. Prosocial foundations of children’s academic achievement. *Psychological Science*. 2000;11(4):302–306.
- [12] Crnic, K. A., Gaze, C., & Hoffman, C. (2005). Cumulative parenting stress across the preschool period: Relations to maternal parenting and child behaviour at age 5. *Infant and Child Development*, 14(2), 117-132.
- [13] Crnic, K. A., Greenberg, M. T., Ragozin, A. S., Robinson, N. M., & Basham, R. B. (1983). Effects of stress and social support on mothers and premature and full-term infants. *Child Development*, 54(1), 209-217.
- [14] Deater-Deckard, K., Wang, Z., Chen, N., & Bell, M. A. (2012). Maternal executive function, harsh parenting, and child conduct problems. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 53(10), 1084-1091.
- [15] Desmarais, K., Barker, E. & Gouin, J P. Service Access to Reduce Parenting Stress in Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Curr Dev Disord Rep* 5, 116–123 (2018).
- [16] Feizi, A., Najmi, B., Salesi, A., Chorami, M., & Hoveidafar, R. (2014). Parenting stress among mothers of children with different physical, mental, and psychological problems. *Journal of research in medical sciences : the official journal of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences*, 19(2), 145–152.
- [17] Gerstein ED, Crnic KA, Blacher J, Baker BL. Resilience and the course of daily parenting stress in families of young children with intellectual disabilities. *J Intellect Disabil Res*. 2009 Dec;53(12):981-97. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2788.2009.01220.x. PMID: 19874449; PMCID: PMC2796238.
- [18] Hasnat MJ, Graves P. Disclosure of developmental disability: a study of parent satisfaction and the determinants of satisfaction. *J Paediatr Child Health*. 2000 Feb;36(1):32-5. doi: 10.1046/j.1440-1754.2000.00463.x. PMID: 10723688.
- [19] Hsiao, Y.-J. (2017). *Parental Stress in Families of Children With Disabilities. Intervention in School and Clinic*, 53(4), 201–205. doi:10.1177/1053451217712956
- [20] https://education.umd.edu/sites/default/files/upload/s/inline-files/Cabrera%20et%20al%20fathers_in_caregiving%20Cambridge%20Handbook%20of%20Parenting%20%281%29_0.pdf
- [21] <https://ffcws.princeton.edu/sites/g/files/toruqf4356/files/documents/wp13-04-ff.pdf>

- [22] <https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/68232/1/Bujnowska%20et%20al.%20%282021%29.pdf>
- [23] <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00872/full>
- [24] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4085672/>
- [25] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226364600_Kindergarten_Transition_Preparation_A_Comparison_of_Teacher_and_Parent_Practices_for_Children_with_Autism_and_Other_Developmental_Disabilities
- [26] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232592479_The_transactional_model_of_development_How_children_and_contexts_shape_each_other
- [27] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258501686_Parents_Are_Slightly_Happier_Than_Nonparents_but_Causality_Still_Cannot_Be_Inferred_A_Reply_to_Bhargava_Kassam_and_Loewenstein_2014
- [28] [https://www.scirp.org/\(S\(czeh2tfqyw2orz553k1w0r45\)\)/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=1613570](https://www.scirp.org/(S(czeh2tfqyw2orz553k1w0r45))/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=1613570)
- [29] <https://www.scirp.org/journal/papercitationdetails.aspx?paperid=109128&JournalID=148>
- [30] Jones L, Totsika V, Hastings RP, Petalas MA. Gender differences when parenting children with autism spectrum disorders: a multilevel modeling approach. *J Autism Dev Disord.* 2013 Sep;43(9):2090-8. doi: 10.1007/s10803-012-1756-9. PMID: 23307420.
- [31] Kuppens S, Ceulemans E. Parenting Styles: A Closer Look at a Well-Known Concept. *J Child Fam Stud.* 2019;28(1):168-181. doi: 10.1007/s10826-018-1242-x. Epub 2018 Sep 18. PMID: 30679898; PMCID: PMC6323136.
- [32] Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 62*(5), 1049-1065.
- [33] Leerkes, E. M., Weaver, J. M., & Calkins, S. D. (2017). Maternal physiological dysregulation while parenting poses risk for infant attachment disorganization and behaviour problems. *Development and psychopathology, 29*(1), 245–257.
- [34] Marsha Mailick Seltzer, Jan S. Greenberg, Frank J. Floyd, Yvette Pettee, Jinkuk Hong (2001). Life Course Impacts of Parenting a Child with a Disability. *Am J Ment Retard 1 May 2001; 106* (3): 265–286.
- [35] McBride, B. A., Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., & Ho, M. H. R. (2005). The mediating role of fathers' school involvement on student achievement. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 26*(2), 201-216.
- [36] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2016). *Parenting Matters: Supporting Parents of Children Ages 0-8*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press
- [37] Nelson, S. K., Kushlev, K., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2014). The pains and pleasures of parenting: When, why, and how is parenthood associated with more or less well-being? *Psychological Bulletin, 140*(3), 846-895
- [38] Nomaguchi, K. M., & Milkie, M. A. (2003). Costs and rewards of children: The effects of becoming a parent on adults' lives. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 65*(2), 356-374.
- [39] Peshawaria, R. et al (1995). *Understanding Indian Families, Having persons with Mental Retardation*. NIMH India, Secunderabad
- [40] Rajesh Ramachandran (2017). An exploratory study on the type of information regarding needs of parents having children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), *Indian Journal of Applied Research: Volume 7, issue 4, April-2017*
- [41] Sameroff, A. (Ed.). (2009). *The transactional model of development: How children and contexts shape each other*. American Psychological Association.
- [42] Seltzer MM, Greenberg JS, Floyd FJ, Pettee Y, Hong J. Life course impacts of parenting a child with a disability. *Am J Ment Retard.* 2001 May;106(3):265-86. doi: 10.1352/0895-8017(2001)106<0265:LCIOPA>2.0.CO;2. PMID: 11389667.
- [43] Thompson T, Coleman J, Olmos A. The expressed emotion of parents of children with developmental disabilities: A meta-analysis. *Life Span Disabil.* 2018 Jul-Dec;21(2):177-189. PMID: 35392246; PMCID: PMC8986135.
- [44] Vilaseca R, Rivero M, Bersabé R M, Cantero M-J, Navarro-Pardo E, Valls-Vidal C and Ferrer F (2019) Demographic and Parental Factors Associated With Developmental Outcomes in Children With Intellectual Disabilities. *Front. Psychol.* 10:872.
- [45] Volling, B. L., McElwain, N. L., Notaro, P. C., & Herrera, C. (2002). Parents' emotional availability and infant emotional competence: predictors of parent-infant attachment and emerging self-regulation. *Journal of Family Psychology: JFP : Journal of the Division of Family Psychology of the American Psychological Association (Division 43), 16*(4), 447–465.