



## FATHER'S INVOLVEMENT AND STRESS AMONG MOTHERS' OF CHILDREN WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

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### ABSTRACT

A disability is any continuing condition that restricts everyday activities. Multiple disability is a combination of various disabilities that may include: speech, physical mobility, learning, mental retardation, visual, hearing, brain injury and possibly others. Children with multiple disabilities will typically share deficits in five distinct areas of development: intellectual functioning, adaptive skills, motor skills, sensory functioning, and communication skills. Stress is inevitable among parents of children with any disability for that matter, parents of children with multiple disabilities are more vulnerable to stress especially mothers who are primary care takers. The aim of the study is to find out the level of stress and the relationship between father's involvement and stress among mothers of children with multiple disabilities. Sample size of 63 mothers of children with multiple disabilities were chosen by using convenient sampling method. The tools employed to collect data were the Parental Stress Scale and personal Data Sheet. Descriptive and Correlational analysis showed that 54% of the sample have medium level of stress, 43% have low level of stress and 3% have high level stress. There is no significant relationship between the stress levels of mothers with regards to father's involvement.

**KEYWORDS :** Multiple Disabilities, Stress

### DISABILITY

Disability is an umbrella term covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. (WHO, 2018).

### MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

According to the PWD Act 1995 (Section 2) disability means: (A) Blindness (B) Low Vision (C) Leprosy Cured (D) Hearing impairment (E) Loco motor disability (F) Mental Retardation and (G) Mental Illness.

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004, multiple disabilities refer to concomitant [simultaneous] impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

### STATISTICS

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment facilitates empowerment of the persons with disabilities, who as per Census 2011 are 2.68 crore and are 2.21 percent of the total population of the Country. These include persons with Seeing, Hearing, Speech, Movement, Mental Retardation, Mental Illness, Multiple Disability and any other disabilities.

### Stress

According to American Psychological Association stress is any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes.

### Review of Literature

Feizi et al (2014) conducted a study on parenting stress among mothers of children with different physical, mental, and psychological problems with two hundred and eighty five mothers of six to twelve years old children with chronic physical disease, psychological disorder, and sensory-motor and mental problems. Data was obtained by Abedin's parenting stress questionnaire was analyzed. The results showed that the mothers of children with sensory-motor mental and chronic physical problems experience more stress than mothers of children with psychological disorders. There was a significant difference between the score of mothers of children with chronic physical problems and mothers of children with psychological disorders regarding parent-child dysfunctional interaction; a

significant difference was observed in terms of stress among mothers of children with sensory-motor mental problems with different number of children; mothers of children with chronic physical problems in different levels of education have experienced different levels of parenting stress.

### Research question

Whether there is relationship between father's involvement and stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities?

### AIM

To find out the relationship between father's involvement and stress among mothers of children with multiple disabilities.

### OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the level of stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities.
2. To find out the relationship between father's involvement and the level of stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities.

### HYPOTHESIS

1. There will be stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities.
2. There will be significant relationship between father's involvement and level of stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities

### Sampling

A sample of 63 mothers of children with multiple disabilities was chosen using convenient sampling method for the present study.

### INCLUSION CRITERIA

Mothers who have child / children with multiple disabilities  
Mothers who have completed at least X standard

### EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Mothers who have qualification below X standard are not considered for the study

Mothers of children who are above 18 years of age are not chosen as sample

Mothers of children with unique disabilities are excluded

### TOOLS

Data sheet incorporating the level of father's involvement in taking care of children with multiple disabilities.

Parental Stress Scale developed by Berry and Jones (1995) provides a

measure that considers positive aspects of parenting as well as the negative, 'stressful' aspects traditionally focused on. The Parental Stress Scale demonstrated satisfactory levels of internal consistency reliability (.83).

**METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

The survey method was used to collect the needed data for the present study.

After getting consent from the authorities of the institution, the investigator directly met mothers individually in the institution and in their home. The required data were collected after getting the consent from the mothers. After creating a rapport the data sheets were given and instructions were read out. Each and every item was explained to the respondents and the responses were noted down by the investigator. A total of seventy 78 data were collected of which 63 were valid and 15 invalid due to incomplete response. Hence a total of 63 data were taken for the study.

**Research Design**

Correlational research design has been used to study the relationship between father's involvement and stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities.

**STATISTIC ALANALYSIS**

The data was subjected to descriptive, correlation and regression analysis using SPSS

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

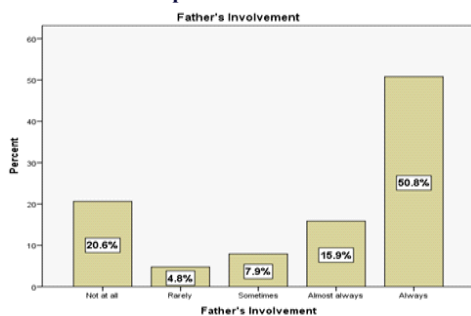
To find out the level of stress among mothers' of children with multiple disabilities, a sample of 63 mothers of children with multiple disabilities were chosen using convenient sampling method. Correlational research design was adopted for this study. Survey method was used to collect the needed data with personal data sheet and parental stress scale. The data was subjected to descriptive, correlation analysis that yielded following results.

**Table 1 shows level of stress of mothers' of children with multiple disabilities.**

Level of Stress	No of Respondents
Low	27
Medium	34
High	2

The above table shows majority of the respondents (54%) have medium level of stress, more than one third of the respondents (43%) have low level of stress and only 2 respondents (3%) have high level stress.

**2: Bar Diagram shows Father's involvement in taking care of child/ children with multiple disabilities**



As much as 67% of the fathers (N=42) are offering their involvement and support to the care and protection of the child with disability which is a positive sign. This by itself will reduce the burden of the mothers whereas 26% of the fathers (N=16) rarely or never support their disabled children. There is a firm need for counselling for these fathers so as to help in better rehabilitation of their children and nurture and harmony in the family.

**Table 2 shows relationship between father's involvement and stress of mothers' of children with multiple disabilities.**

Measures	Father's Involvement
Mothers' Stress	-0.034

The correlation co-efficient ( $r = -0.03$ ) is not significant which means that there is no significant relationship between the stress levels of mothers and the involvement given by the fathers. Irrespective of father's support in the rearing of disabled children, mothers are experiencing significant amount of stress. Thus, the hypothesis stating that 'there will be significant relationship between father's involvement and level of stress among mothers of children with multiple disabilities' is rejected.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Among the sample 54% have medium level of stress, 43% have low level of stress and 3% have high level stress.
2. There is no significant relationship between father's involvement and stress among mothers of children with multiple disabilities.

**Limitations of this study**

1. Study was done using convenient sampling method.
2. Sample size is small.

**Recommendations for further research**

1. Stress level among the fathers and mothers of children could be compared.
2. Variation in level of stress with respect to the level of disability and gender of the child could be subject of exploration.
3. Type of family and its impact on parent's stress could be included in future studies.

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