



▼ UNDERGRADUATE ABSTRACTS

UG -11 : THE COPING STRATEGIES USED BY THE PARENTS OF A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN PUDUCHERRY

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Background: Raising special child gives unique set of challenges to their parents. These parents needs to adopt coping strategies that help to eliminate, modify, or manage a stressful event or crisis situation. Hence the current study was conducted among the parents of the child with special needs - to determine the various problems faced and the coping strategies adopted by them.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study with quantitative and qualitative components was conducted in the selected special schools of Puducherry. The study duration was May 2017 to June 2017. The sample size was calculated to be 187. Quantitative component included interviews among the parents of special child using pre-tested semi structured and self-reported F-COPES (Family Crisis Oriented Personal Evaluation Scale) questionnaire after obtaining the informed consent. Qualitative data regarding their problems and use of different coping strategies was collected in the form of focus group discussions (FGDs). Data was entered in EpiData 3.1 and analyzed using EpiData 2.2.2.182 software.

Results: Among 187 participants, 70.6% were mothers and 29.4% were fathers. Majority of them reported problems like depression (69%) followed by economical issues (26.7%) and emotional disturbances (23.5%). Coping strategies used by the parents were having the strength within the family to solve problems (80.2%), accepting that difficulties occur unexpectedly (78.6%), having faith in God (77%), believing we can handle our own problems (75.4%), and accepting stressful events as a fact of life (74.9%).

Conclusion: The present study concluded that, feeling depression was one of the major problems faced by them. Reframing and spiritual support are the coping strategies used the most by them. More counseling sessions by psychologist and motivational speech for the parents can boost the moral.

Keywords: Coping strategies, Parents, Children, Special needs, Family Crisis Oriented Personal Evaluation Scale (F-COPES).