

Degree of Psychological Stress in Parents of Autistic Children and Its Relationship with Some Demographic Variables

YAHIAOUI Abdelkarim

University of Algiers 2 (ALGERIA), abdelkarim.yahiaoui@univ-alger2.dz

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Abstract:

This study aimed to identify the degree of psychological stress in parents of autistic children and its relationship with some demographic variables. The researcher adopted a descriptive approach as the most appropriate approach for this type of study, using a tool represented in the Parental Stress Questionnaire (P.S.Q) developed by Feinstein et al. (1993) to measure the index of perceived stress. The study sample consisted of 60 fathers and mothers of autistic children who were present in the psychological and educational centers of the states of Setif, Bordj Bou Arreridj, and Constantine. The results of the study showed that there is a difference in the level of psychological stress in parents of autistic children.

Keywords: Stress; Psychological Stress; Parents of Autistic Children; Demographic Variables.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is one of the phenomena that appear in different life situations in human life and has become part of daily life. Therefore, it is necessary to identify its causes, manage it, and reduce it. Since autism has a deep and long background, this has prompted scientists and researchers to focus their attention and research on phenomena and problems. It does not only affect the person alone, but it also harms the individual and his family, especially the parents of children with autism, as its problem is essentially a communication problem, which requires very close attention to the affected child. It is a problem that requires parents to surround the victim with the necessary care more than anyone else, as the responsibility placed on them is a heavy responsibility that requires great patience and endurance. To address this phenomenon, the researcher conducted a field study that included 60 fathers and mothers of autistic children who are present in the psychological and educational centers of the states of (Setif, Bordj Bou Arreridj, Constantine) by applying the P.S.Q scale of perceived stress for parents of autistic children, prepared by Levenstein et al. The problem of this study revolves around the following general question: Is there a difference in the level of psychological stress for parents of autistic children due to some demographic variables? The results of the study showed that there is a difference in the level of psychological stress for parents of autistic children due to some demographic variables, such as sex, income level and educational level.

2. The Problem

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is one of the most difficult developmental disorders for a child, and a mystery to many scientists in different fields. It affects many aspects of a child's growth, and leads to withdrawal, isolation, and weakening of the child's connection to their surroundings. It also makes the child prefer to deal with unnatural things more than dealing with people around them. (Elfarahty, 2015, p. 06)

Some psychiatrists, influenced by Freud's psychoanalytic theory, have interpreted autism as a product of wrong parenting during the first stages of a child's life, which leads to many mental disorders. The psychologist Bruno Bettelheim interpreted autism as a result of a parenting disorder from the parents, and he placed the blame primarily on the mother, who was previously called the "ice mother" (Ghazal, 2008, p. 25) They also lead to the child's preoccupation with repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, and their resistance to environmental change or change in daily

routine. Some of the signs that autistic children suffer from are social interaction disorders, which include the following signs: a great weakness in using non-verbal communication, a lack of eye and face contact, a lack of differentiation or hatred of emotions, a lack of growth and development of friendship relationships, a weak response to them and an interest in them.

(Al-Jalabi, 2015, p. 12)

The child may be automatically associated with a specific person, and sometimes the attachment of some children to their parents is strange, and a weak response to the social and emotional behavior of others. The birth of an abnormal child in a family has a major impact and a fundamental change in the family on the psychological, social, economic, and even behavioral level of the parents. The family does not want to have an abnormal child in any way. This is because the first responsibility of care falls on her. This family develops a sense of pressure, frustration, anxiety, disappointment, and guilt. This child also needs a lot of care than a normal child, in addition to the costs of treatment and care. These material burdens weigh on families with medium and low incomes. Parents may also need family guidance on how to care for this autistic child, and an additional responsibility in the process of education and socialization, especially if the educational level of these families is low, which increases the psychological pressure on parents. They may also pay the price in the form of physiological symptoms, which form pressures that have negative effects on the health and psychology of parents.

In light of the above, the problem of this study revolves around the following general question:

- Is there a difference in the level of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to some demographic variables?

The following sub-questions are included under this general question:

- Is there a difference in the level of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to gender (father-mother)?
- Is there a difference in the level of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to income level (low, high)?
- Is there a difference in the level of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to educational level (no level, primary, secondary, high school, university)?

2. Hypotheses

- There are statistically significant differences in the responses of

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individuals in the sample in the degree of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to gender (father-mother)?

- There are statistically significant differences in the responses of individuals in the sample in the degree of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to income level (low, high)?
- There are statistically significant differences in the responses of individuals in the sample in the degree of psychological stress in parents of autistic children due to educational level (no level, primary, secondary, high school, university)?

3. The Importance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it deals with one of the most important and widespread problems for the families of these children, which is the problem of psychological pressure that threatens the entire family entity, and which can stand in the way of these children reaching the highest level that their abilities and capabilities allow them to reach. The study will also help to provide stakeholders and experts with an accurate picture to understand the nature of this pressure, take effective and effective measures, and build special programs to reduce the impact of psychological pressure on the parents of this category.

4. The Objectives of the Study

The current study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify the degree of psychological pressure among parents of autistic children.
- To identify the services provided to parents of autistic children to reduce the level of psychological pressure.
- To identify the differences between the average scores of the study sample members in the degree of psychological pressure among parents of children with autism spectrum disorder, according to the variable of the parents' educational level, income level and **gender**.

5. The Study Terms

- **Stress:** A term used to denote a wide range of human conditions that arise in response to different and very powerful influences. Stress occurs as a result of external factors such as the abundance of information that leads to emotional stress. Stress appears as a result of threat and danger, and stress leads to changes in mental processes,

emotional transformations, and a transformed motivational intention for activity, and a deficient verbal and motor behavior. (Osman, 2001, p. 18)

- **Psychological pressure:** Selye defines psychological pressure as a set of symptoms that coincide with exposure to a stressful situation, and it is an unspecific response of the body to environmental requirements, such as a change in the family, losing a job, or leaving, which puts the individual under psychological pressure. (Obaid, 2008, p. 20)
- **The operational definition of psychological pressure:** The researcher defines psychological pressure according to the study tool used as: The disorders that parents of autistic children suffer from according to the variables of gender, income level, and educational level.
- **Rutter's definition of autism:** Autism is a spectrum of disorders that vary in severity, symptoms, and age at onset, and its relationship to other disorders (mental disability, specific language delay and epilepsy). The symptoms of autism vary between children and within the child himself over time. There is no permanent individual behavior for autism, and there is no behavior that automatically excludes the child from the diagnosis of autism, even with strong similarities, especially in social defects. (Al-Shami, 2004, p. 56)
- **The operational definition of demographic variables:** In this study, it refers to both (gender, income level, and educational level).

6. Previous studies

A study by Aadi Osfour (2010) entitled "Psychological pressure on mothers of autistic adolescents", the sample of the study consisted of (41) mothers of autistic adolescents who were randomly selected and the researcher developed a scale of psychological pressure for mothers of autistic adolescents from (60) paragraphs distributed on six dimensions After conducting the appropriate statistical analyzes, where the (T) test and the single-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used, the results of the study showed that the level of psychological pressure for mothers of autistic adolescents in all areas of the scale was within the average, as it showed the absence of statistically significant differences for the variables of gender, educational level of the mother and the economic level of the family in the degree of psychological pressure among mothers of autistic adolescents, while it showed the existence of statistically significant differences for the

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field of concern for the future of the child and the field of family and social problems for the family.

A study by Faizah Yahyaoui (2020-2021) entitled "Psychological pressure among mothers of children with autism", where the study was conducted in the town of Ain Bousif in the state of Medea, and (5) cases (mothers) were used in this study using the clinical method based on the case study and the pressure scale was applied to reveal the pressure present among mothers of children with autism, and the study concluded that mothers of children with autism suffer from psychological pressure, as well as the partial hypothesis was achieved First, which states that mothers of children with autism suffer from high psychological pressure through: crying, anxiety, stress, and fear. And the second partial hypothesis was achieved, which states that mothers of children with autism suffer from medium psychological pressure through the sound of the voice with optimism.

A study by Amana Lakhal and Halima Ben Issa (2020-2021) entitled "Psychological pressure among mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder and its relationship with self-care skills among their children from the mother's perspective", where the study aimed to identify the relationship between psychological pressure among mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder and self-care skills among their children, where the study relied on the descriptive correlational approach and that using the stress perception scale of Feinstein (1939) and the scale of self-care skills among children with autism spectrum disorder from the perspective of their mothers by Qasem and Ben Zaghmous (2017) on a sample of (40) mothers of mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder and their children are located at the psychological and pedagogical center in the city of University and the psychological and pedagogical center in the city of M'Ghair and the Happiness Association in Shatt Al-Wadi and Taj kindergarten in the town of Qamar and Basma Baraa Association in the town of Qamar. After collecting the data and sorting it and processing it using the Pearson correlation coefficient, using the (SPSS) program, the results of the study showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the levels of psychological pressure among mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder and the levels of self-care skills among their children.

A study by Wa'am Masoudi and Susan Arywa (2020-2021) entitled "Psychological pressure among mothers of autistic children", where this study aims to identify the degree of pressure on them and draw attention to the seriousness of the phenomenon and reveal the psychological state of these mothers. The field study was conducted in the specialized hospital for mental

health in the town of Ould Mansoor - Msila -, using the clinical method (case study), as well as a set of methodological tools were applied, represented in observation, semi-guided interview and Feinstein's pressure questionnaire for all individuals of the sample, whose number was five cases. The results of the study showed that the level of psychological pressure among mothers of autistic children is high in four cases, except in one case that is low.

Study by Salwa Roshdy and Ahmed Saleh (2022) entitled "Psychological pressure among parents of children with autism spectrum disorder and its relationship to services", where the study aimed to reveal the level of psychological pressure and the quality of services provided as perceived by parents of children with autism spectrum disorder during the Corona pandemic, and to identify the correlational relationship between the level of pressure and the level of quality of services provided to individuals of the study sample. The study sample consisted of (294) parents of children with autism spectrum disorder. The study tools were a questionnaire on psychological pressure and a questionnaire on the quality of services provided during the pandemic for parents of children with autism spectrum disorder prepared by the researcher. The results showed an increase in the level of psychological pressure for parents during the pandemic, and the existence of a fairly high level of service quality in all educational, health, and recreational services, and an average level in the guidance services. The results also indicated that there is no relationship between psychological pressure and the quality of services provided during the pandemic for parents. The study results also showed that there are no differences in the level of psychological pressure due to the variable of the educational level of the parents, while there were differences in the level of pressure due to the variable of the educational alternative that provides services to the child in favor of integration schools, while the results showed that there are differences in the level of services provided due to the variable of the educational level of the parents in favor of the educational qualification of secondary and below, and in the educational alternative that provides services to the child in favor of day care centers. The study concluded with a number of recommendations, including providing professional remote counseling services to families of children with autism spectrum disorder to reduce the severity of their psychological pressure provided to them during the Corona pandemic.

A study by Rafik Boucheraï and Fatiha Dahech Tahir (2017) aimed to identify the differences between psychological pressure and its relationship with family adjustment, as well as to identify the differences between

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psychological pressure and family adjustment according to some demographic variables (gender, age, educational level, and number of family members). The sample of the study consisted of 120 fathers and mothers of autistic children (60 fathers and 60 mothers). They responded to the psychological pressure scale for parents of disabled people and the family adjustment scale. The results of the study indicated that there is no relationship between psychological pressure and family adjustment for parents of autistic children, while the study showed that there are differences in the level of psychological pressure between fathers and mothers in favor of mothers, as well as the absence of any differences in psychological pressure and family adjustment according to demographic variables (parent's age, educational level, and number of family members).

7. Method and procedures

7.1 Method : The researcher in this study relied on the descriptive approach as the appropriate approach for such studies.

7.2 Study limitations :

- The subject limit: The subject of the study was limited to determining the level of psychological pressure as perceived by parents of children with autism spectrum disorder and its relationship to some demographic variables (gender, income level, and educational level).
- The human limit: The sample of the study consisted of (60) fathers and mothers of autistic children.
- The spatial limit: The psychological and educational centers of the states of Setif, Bordj Bou Arreridj, and Constantine
- The temporal limit: The study was conducted during the academic year (2022/2023).
- The study community: The study community consisted of all fathers and mothers of autistic children who are present in the psychological and educational centers of the states of Setif, Bordj Bou Arreridj, and Constantine, and numbered (60) fathers and mothers.

Study sample: The sample of the study consisted of 60 fathers and mothers of autistic children, divided into (30) fathers and (30) mothers.

Study tools: In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher relied on a tool represented in the Feinstein psychological pressure scale (P.S.Q) directed to parents of autistic children (Appendix No. 01).

Description of the scale: The scale was developed by Feinstein et al. (1993) to measure the stress perception index. The scale consists of 30

items, with four response options: "almost never", "sometimes", "often", and "usually". The scores range from 1 to 4, and these scores change depending on the type of item, which can be classified as direct or indirect.

- **Direct items:** There are 28 direct items, which are items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 30, 28, 27, 26, 24, 23, 22, 20, 19, and 18. These items indicate that there are high levels of stress when the subject answers them with acceptance towards the situation, and a low level of stress perception when the subject answers them with rejection.
- **Indirect items:** There are 8 indirect items, which are items 1, 7, 10, 17, 13, 21, 25, and 29. These items indicate a high level of stress perception when the subject answers them with rejection, and a low level of stress perception when the subject answers them with acceptance.
- **Psychometric properties of the study tool:**

8. Validity

- **Differential validity:** The scores of a pilot sample of 30 individuals were used. This method is used to calculate the validity of the test through its ability to distinguish between the two extremes of the test, that is, between the lower and upper groups. This method is used to calculate the formative validity and content validity. We ranked the sample scores in descending order and took 27% of the distribution ($27 \times 30 / 100 = 8.10$, which is approximately equal to 20 individuals) and calculated the difference using the "t" test between the means of the two groups as shown in the following table:

Table N⁰(01) :Shows the differential validity of the test

Scale	Indicator	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Degrees of freedom	T-test value	Significance level
	Upper	20	108.09	10.78	38	74.67	0,0001
	Lower	20	178.46	11.51			

Source: (SPSS)

The validity of the scale: The validity of the scale was calculated using a sample of 40 individuals. The results of the t-test showed that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the lower and upper groups. The mean score of the upper group is significantly lower than the mean score of the lower group. This indicates that the upper group is under more stress than the lower group.

The reliability of the scale: The reliability of the scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the split-half method. The results showed

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that the scale has a high level of reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .87 and split-half reliability coefficient of .91. This indicates that the scale is a reliable measure of stress.

Table (2): Cronbach's alpha coefficient and split-half reliability coefficient for the dimensions of the Feinstein stress scale:

Scale	Correlation coefficient	Spearman's formula	Guttman's formula
	0,981	0,990	0,984

Source: (SPSS)

Stability:

The stability of the test was calculated using the split-half method. The results showed that the test has a high level of stability, with a correlation coefficient of 0.981 before length adjustment and correction, and a correlation coefficient of 0.990 after length adjustment using the Spearman-Brown formula, and a correlation coefficient of 0.984 using the Guttman formula. This confirms that the test has a high level of stability, which reassures the researcher to apply it to the basic study sample.

Internal consistency: The researcher calculated the internal consistency of the test items by calculating the value of the correlation coefficient between the score of each item and the total score of the test for the scale items. Table (3) shows the results of the internal consistency of the test:

Table (3): Internal consistency coefficients of the test:

Item number	Correlation coefficient	Item number	Correlation coefficient
1	**. 495	16	. 483
2	**. 432	17	. 358
3	**. 474	18	**. 484
4	**. 421	19	**. 454
5	**. 397	20	**. 376
6	**. 327	21	**. 458
7	**. 531	22	**. 430
8	**. 371	23	**. 366
9	**. 495	24	**. 337
10	**. 495	25	**. 421
11	**. 432	26	**. 401
12	**. 442	27	**. 351
13	. 367	28	**. 244

14	.316	29	** .337
15	.546	30	** .458

Significant at the 0.01 level

Source: (SPSS)

The results of the table (03) show that the correlation coefficient of all test items is significant at the level of 0.01. Therefore, the results of the current study have led to a set of evidence that supports the validity and stability of the 80D test, which makes the test have good psychometric properties in the Algerian environment.

Statistical processing: for statistical processing, the following were used: arithmetic means, standard deviation, single-sample t-test, ANOVA test.

The study variables were: gender, income level, educational level.

Results of the study

Hypothesis 1: The hypothesis states that there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological stress due to the nature of gender among parents of children with autism.

To test this hypothesis, the t-test for significant differences between two independent samples was used to reveal the significance of the differences between fathers and mothers. Table (04) shows the results of the t-test for significant differences in psychological stress due to the nature of gender among parents of children with autism.

Table (04): Results of the t-test for significant differences in the level of psychological stress due to the nature of gender among parents of children with autism.

Dimensions	Individual category	Number of individuals	Mean	Standard deviation	T-value	Degrees of freedom	P-value	degrees
sex	Fathers	30	16,26	3,49	19,355	58	0,000	High
	mothers	30	4,40	2,10				Medium
	total	60	19,21	6,64				

***The difference is significant at the 0.01 level.**

Source: (SPSS)

Hypothesis II: There are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological stress attributed to income level among parents of children with autism.

To test this hypothesis, a t-test for independent samples was used to detect the significance of the differences according to the income level variable.

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Table (05) shows the results of the t-test for the significance of the differences in psychological stress attributed to income level among parents of children with autism.

Dimensions	Individual category	Number individuals	Mean	Standard deviation	T-value	Degrees freedom	P-value	Degrees
Income level	High-income	19	16,26	2,56	19,355	17	0,000	Medium
	Low-income	41	17,52	3,97	36,382	39	0,000	High
Overall degrees		60	69,68	7,93	42,285	58	0,000	

***The difference is significant at the 0.01 level.**

Source: (SPSS)

From Table (05), we can see that the mean score for parents of children with autism with low income is estimated to be (17.52), which is higher than the mean score for parents of children with autism with high income, which is estimated to be (16.26). The standard deviation for parents of children with autism with low income is estimated to be (3.97), which is higher than the standard deviation for parents of children with autism with high income, which is estimated to be (2.56). This suggests that the psychological stress of parents with low income is higher than that of parents with high income. The researcher attributes this to the additional costs and expenses that parents bear for the care of their children, such as the costs of daily transportation to psychological and educational centers, and the costs of health care. These costs form a financial burden on these parents in the context of declining purchasing power. Additionally, the parents' fear for their child may drive them to stay with him and care for him all the time in an excessive and costly manner.

Hypothesis III: The hypothesis that there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological stress among parents of children with autism according to educational level.

To test this hypothesis, the one-way ANOVA test was used to detect the significance of differences between different educational levels (no level, primary, secondary, high school, and university) in psychological stress.

Table (06): Descriptive statistics of psychological stress in the sample individuals according to educational levels.

Educational levels	Number of individuals	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
No level	08	12,00	23,00	18,55	3,62
Primary	12	13,00	68,00	22,47	13,52
Secondary	18	11,00	75,00	35,33	25,36
High school	10	12,00	79,00	51,89	25,05

University	12	13,00	76,00	60,43	22,04
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Source: (SPSS)

Table (06) shows that there are variations between the mean scores and standard deviations of some educational levels. For example, the mean score for the no level category (18.55) is close to the mean score for the primary level category (22.47), with standard deviations of 3.62 and 13.52, respectively. However, these two mean scores are distant from the mean scores for the secondary level category (35.33), high school level category (51.89), and university level category (60.43), with standard deviations of 25.36, 25.05, and 22.04, respectively. It is worth noting that the mean score for the university level category is much higher than the mean scores for the other educational levels.

Table (07): Results of the F-test for the significance of differences in the level of psychological stress among parents of children with autism according to educational level.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-value	P-value
Between groups	44518,931	4	11129,733	28,915	0,000
Within groups	55812,402	54	384,913		
Total	100331,333	58			

Source: (SPSS)

Table (07) shows that the F-value (28.915) at degrees of freedom (4, 145) is statistically significant at the 0.01 level between the educational levels in stress among the sample individuals. This means that there are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) differences in the semantic memory of the elderly between the educational levels (no level, primary, secondary, high school, and university).

The results of Table (07) confirm the descriptive statistics of the stress scores among the sample individuals according to the educational levels, which are different. For example, the mean score for the elderly with a university level (60.43) and the secondary level (51.89) is higher than the other educational levels; the mean (35.33), primary (22.47), and no level (18.55), with also different standard deviations. The standard deviation for no level (3.62) and the primary level (13.52) is smaller than the mean scores for the secondary educational level (25.36), high school (25.05), and university level (22.04). This led to the existence of statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level in stress among the sample individuals according to the educational level (no level, primary, secondary, high school, and university).

Since the F-value is statistically significant between the educational levels in stress among the sample individuals, it is necessary to conduct one of the multiple comparison tests. After verifying the homogeneity of the groups, the

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Tuckey multiple comparison test was used to determine the significance of the differences between each pair of groups.

Table (08): Tuckey multiple comparisons between the educational levels in the stress score among the sample individuals

Educational levels		Mean difference	Standard error	P-value
No level	Primary	-3,93	5,26	0,945
No level	Secondary	-16,79	6,24	0,060
No level	High school	-33,35**	5,59	0,000
No level	University	-41,89**	5,12	0,000
Primary	Secondary	-12,86	5,61	0,154
Primary	High school	-29,42**	4,89	0,000
Primary	University	-37,96**	4,35	0,000
Secondary	High school	-16,56*	5,93	0,046
Secondary	University	-25,10**	5,49	0,000
High school	University	-8,54	4,74	0,377

***The difference is significant at the 0.01 level.**

*****The difference is significant at 0.05level.**

Source: (SPSS)

Table (8) shows that there are statistically significant differences in stress levels between the sample individuals with no level of education and the secondary level (0.000; $p < 0.01$) with a mean difference of (-33.35) in favor of the secondary level, and there are statistically significant differences between the elderly with no level of education and the university level (0.000; $p < 0.01$) with a mean difference of (-41.89) in favor of the university level. There are statistically significant differences in stress levels between the sample individuals with primary level and secondary level (0.000; $p < 0.01$) with a mean difference of (-29.42) in favor of the secondary level, and between primary level and university level (0.000; $p < 0.01$) with a mean difference of (-37.96) in favor of the university level.

There are also statistically significant differences in stress levels between the sample individuals with intermediate level and secondary level (0.000; $p < 0.05$)) in favor of the university level with a mean difference of (-16.56), and there are differences between the intermediate level and the university level (0.000; $p < 0.01$) in favor of the university level with a mean difference of (-25.10).

While there are no statistically significant differences in semantic memory between those with no level and primary level (0.945; $p > 0.05$) with a mean difference of (-3.93), and between those with no level and intermediate level (0.06; $p > 0.05$) with a mean difference of (-16.79). In addition to the absence of differences between the primary level and the intermediate level (0.154; p

> 0.05) with a mean difference of (-12.86), and between the secondary level and the university level (0.377; $p > 0.05$) with a mean difference estimated at (-8.54).

Therefore, there are statistically significant differences in stress levels between the sample individuals at 0.05 and 0.01 among the sample individuals between those with no level and both secondary and university levels, between the primary level and both secondary and university levels, and between the intermediate level and both secondary and university levels. While there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the sample individuals with no level and both primary and intermediate levels, between the primary level and the intermediate level, and between the secondary level and the university level.

Through the presentation of the aforementioned data, we find that the lower the educational level, the greater the stress on the parents of autistic children, and the researcher attributes this to the fact that parents who are without an educational level or have a low educational level do not have any strategy to cope with stress and do not know how to search for information and how to rely on the advice of experts and experienced people in the field, unlike parents with an intermediate or high level of education.

9. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, stress is one of the most prominent problems or characteristics that parents of autistic children (fathers and mothers) can face in the current societies, with varying degrees, due to the special care and continuous care required by autistic children. It is considered one of the most complex and difficult disorders due to its characteristics of isolation, behavioral patterns, fatigue, and exhaustion resulting from trying to adapt to the situation of their children. This makes their parents under a series of psychological pressures in order to care for them and meet their needs, in addition to the absence of material and moral support, which leads to a state of mental, emotional and physical exhaustion that afflicts parents of autistic children

10. Recommendations

- Build training programs that work to reduce the severity of anxiety for parents of autistic children.
- Intensify family counseling sessions for parents of autistic children.
- Provide the material (educational, health, financial, etc.) and moral requirements for families of autistic children to enable them to care for their children.

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- Train parents of autistic children to use positive thinking in order to reduce psychological stress.
- Train parents of autistic children to accept their autistic children and deal with them better and adapt to their situation.
- Provide guidance programs and services for families of autistic children that train and teach them how to deal with their children and understand their behavioral and psychological problems.
- Conduct other similar studies in other parts of Algeria in order to optimally detect the phenomenon of psychological stress for families of autistic children at the national level.

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