

Parenting stress in Hong Kong parents of children with autism spectrum disorder: a preliminary analysis of baseline data from an ongoing trial.

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Introduction

- Parenting a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is challenging
- Parents reported higher parenting stress than other parents of children without ASD
 - Stressors: child behavioural and communication difficulties, child sleep problems, stigma
- An ongoing local trial is examining how laughter yoga can reduce parenting stress for parents of children with ASD

Objectives

- This poster reported the preliminary results of a laughter yoga study which has investigated the latest parenting stress level.

Methods

- Recruitment Method: Via social media posts used to recruit participants.
 - inclusion: 1) mother or father of children with autism spectrum disorder, 2) children aged 8-12, 3) able to read Chinese
 - exclusion: 1) children without formal ASD diagnosis, 2) parents with mental or mood disorders
- Participants: **46** parents of children with ASD aged 8-12 years.
- Measurement: Chinese version of the Parenting Stress Index in short form – fourth edition (PSI-4-SF).
 - Domains: 1) **Parental distress**, 2) **Parent-child dysfunctional interaction** and 3) **Difficult child behavior**
 - Scoring Indication: a higher score indicates a higher level of stress: normal stress, **borderline stress** or **clinically significant stress**
- Data Analysis: Descriptive statistic reported demographic data and PSI scores
 - Mann-Whitney U test is used to compare mothers and fathers' parenting stress level.

Results

Demographic data	n (%)
Gender	
Female	37 (80.4%)
Male	9 (19.5%)
Age	
40-54	30(65.2%)
25-39	16 (34.8%)
Spouse Support	
Married	39 (84.4%)
Divorce	7 (15.2%)

PSI-4-SF	Sample (n=46) Mean (SD)	Father (n=9) Mean (SD)	Mother (n=37) Mean (SD)	z (p value)
Parenting Distress (Possible range: 12 to ≥52)	38.53 (8.33) Normal stress	37.56 (3.78) Normal stress	38.76 (1.24) Normal stress	-0.122 (0.90)
Parent-child Dysfunctional interaction (Possible range: 12 to ≥ 49)	36.27 (7.01) Normal stress	37.44 (2.76) borderline stress	36.00 (1.10) Normal stress	-0.34 (0.74) (* P<0.05 **P<0.01)
Difficult Children (Possible range: 12 to ≥ 49)	40.30 (7.29) clinically significant stress	36.89 (2.86) Normal stress	41.11 (1.11) clinically significant stress	-1.64 (0.10)
Total Parenting Stress (Possible range: ≤38 ≥144)	115.11(19.51) borderline stress	111.89 (8.98) borderline stress	115.87(2.87) borderline stress	-0.39(0.70)

Conclusion

- Parents of children with ASD experienced **high parenting-stress**.
- The subscale ('**difficult child**') indicated parents experiencing excessive stress on managing their child's behaviours
 - compare mothers and fathers, mothers experienced higher stress level in managing children's behaviour
 - often related to the child's temperament, challenging, complicated or demanding behaviours
- **Recommendation**: Effective parenting strategies to handle autistic children's behaviour problems are needed.

References:

Tam, K. K., Chan, Y. C., & Wong, C. K. M. (1994). Validation of the parenting stress index among Chinese mothers in Hong Kong. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 22(3), 211-223.