

## Determination of Parents' Resilience with Autistic child in Baghdad City

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### Summary:

**Background:** Many parents of autistic child do well despite their child's disability, they have the ability to withstand hardship and rebound from adversity, and becoming more strengthened, parents have managed to overcome the constant challenge by using their resilience to adapt well in the face of adversity.

**Objectives:** The study aimed to assesses the level of parents' resilience with autistic child and to find out the relationship between parents' resilience and some child characteristics such as child gender, child age, child age at diagnosis, type and place of treatment; also to the parents characteristics such as parents' gender, age, mother age at child birth, educational level, marital status, occupation, income, number of children in the family, and number of autistic children in the family.

**Patients and Methods:** A Descriptive analytical study was carried out from May 25, 2009 to June 20, 2010 in order to determine parents' resilience in dealing with the impact of raising a child with autism. A purposive (non-probability) sample of (100) parents raising a child with autism who was attending the out patient psychiatric clinic at Child's Central Teaching Hospital in Baghdad City. Data was collected by filling the questionnaire. The questionnaire form consist from two parts; the first part is concerned with the demographic characteristics of the child and demographic characteristics of the parents; the second part consists of six domains of resilience and contains 34 items that describe the parents' resilience.

**Results:** Results of the study indicate that parents of autistic child experience moderate level of resilience level of resilience; also there were significant differences between parents' resilience and types and place of treatment, mothers' age at child's birth, level of education, and income.

**Conclusions:** The study concludes that parents have to face burden to provide necessary care for their child; despite the many difficulties associated with autism; they can maintain a solid familial life style.

**Key words:** Parents' Resilience, Autistic child.

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### Introduction:

Autism is a complex brain development disorder characterized by impaired social interaction and communication and it affects all of mental development[1]. Autism is considered to be a severe disability because of the intense lifelong effects it has on the individual and his or her family[2]. Children with autism have often been considered strains on family life, but recent studies demonstrate the resiliency of families who have a child with autism. Parents face a world of challenges with everything from keeping themselves healthy and happy[3]. Having a child with autism also influences family functioning and life changes, parents are more likely to use coping strategies that may have negative impact on the family relationship. Many families make a remarkable adjustment to this situation, but still suffer from their autistic child[4]. Harris and Glasberg (2003) explain that several families of children with autism demonstrate an impressive sense of resilience and strength in their experience, learning to balance hard demands with grace and humor[5]. Resilient parents of a child with autism invariably seek to develop the necessary skills to deal with their

child's atypical behaviors. To succeed or to surpass the risk associated with adversity parents must draw upon all of their resources: biological, psychological, and environmental[6]. Therefore, the researcher highlights the family role to find themselves dealing with additional challenges to cope and accept modification, and minimizing the impact of autism on parents by helping them to adjust their expectation to their child.

### Patients and Methods:

A Descriptive analytical study was carried out from May 25, 2009 to June 20, 2010 in order to identify the parents' resilience in dealing with the impact of raising a child with autism. A purposive (non-probability) sample of (100) parents raising a child with autism who were attending the out patient psychiatric clinic at Child's Central Teaching Hospital in Baghdad City. Prior to actual collection of data, formal approval was obtained to conduct the study from Ibn- Rushud Psychiatric Hospital and Child's Central Teaching Hospital. Data were collected through the use of the questionnaire was designed and constructed after reviewing related literatures, clinical background, previous studies and based on Family Resilience Scale (FRS) by (Sixbey, 2005) [7]. Family Adaptation and

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