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#### **Determinants of Quality of Life of Family Caregivers of Children with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism**

**Background:** Providing the high level of care necessary to a child with long-term functional limitations causes much stress on the caregiver which in turn affects the quality of life (QoL) of the family caregivers, especially parents. The present research was designed to study the QoL of family caregivers of children with intellectual disability (ID) and autism. Further, dimensions of parenting stress and types of coping were studied as the possible determinants of the QoL. **Method:** A four group study was done. The sample was purposive and consisted of 200 caregivers i.e 50 mothers and 50 fathers having children with ID (n = 100) and autism (n = 100) in the age range of 5-12 years. The caregivers' age range was between 30 to 45 years and minimum education level was 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The children were diagnosed as per ICD-10 DCR criteria. In addition, the diagnostic assessment was also based on Seguin Form Board Test, Vineland Social Maturity Scale and Childhood Autism Rating Scale. The parenting stress, types of coping and QoL were assessed using Parenting Stress Index, Ways of Coping Questionnaire and WHOQoL-BREF Scale. Obtained data were analysed using SPSS (version 17.0) using t-test and Multiple Regression Analysis (Enter method).

**Results:** Mothers of children with ID have lower physical and psychological QoL as compared to fathers of children with ID. Mothers of children with autism have lower levels of QoL on all the as compared to the fathers of children with autism. Fathers of children with ID and autism engaged significantly more in self-control, accepting responsibility, planful problem solving and positive reappraisal as compared to the mothers of children in these two groups. On the other hand, mothers of children with ID and autism exhibited more confrontative coping and escape avoidance as compared to their counter parts. Beta values for various predictors showed that seeking social support was the most significant predictor of all the domains of QoL (variance ranged between 40% to 86%) except for psychological domain of mothers and the physical domain of QoL of fathers. The most significant predictor for psychological domain of QoL of mothers was the parent dimension of parenting stress (contributing 61% variance) whereas the physical domain of QoL of fathers was most significantly determined by planful problem solving (contributing 60% variance). **Conclusion:** QoL of mothers is significantly lower than that of fathers having children with ID and autism. Parenting stress and types of coping are significant determinants of domains of QoL of family caregivers of children with ID and autism.

**Key Words:** Intellectual Disability, Autism, Family Caregivers,  
Quality of Life, Parenting Stress, Coping