RESEARCH PAPER

Mediating Role of Social Support and Resilience in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Marital Strain in Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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ABSTRACT

The present study tends to examine the mediating role of social support and resilience in the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital strain in parents of children with ASD. Parenting a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder give out exceptional emotional and psychological challenges, often resulting in heightened stress and marital strain. Parental stress management as well as positive interpersonal relationships maintenance are greatly helped through emotional intelligence (EI). From special education centers, a purposive sample of 120 parents (61 male and 59 female) of children with ASD diagnoses were approached. The study was conducted through cross sectional research design. Emotional intelligence was measured by the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998), social support by Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet et al., 1988), resilience by Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (Mowbray, 2011) and marital strain by Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Sabourin et al., 2005). Data analysis was done with SPSS version 26using descriptive statistics, and pearson correlation and mediation analysis. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used. The predictive function of emotional intelligence and its indirect impacts on marital strain through social support and resilience were investigated using regression and mediation analysis. The findings should provide insightful information for educators, therapists, and legislators. The creation of successful interventions and community-based support initiatives to enhance parental well-being and lessen marital stress can be guided by these ideas.

| **KEYWORDS** | Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, Resilience, Marital Strain, Stress Coping Mechanisms, Psychological Well-being, Support Interventions |

Introduction

The current study intends to investigate the connection between marital strain, social support, emotional intelligence, and resilience in ASD children's parents. Consider a mother who is struggling to accept the fact that her child has just received an autism diagnosis. She attempts to balance the deteriorating strands of her marriage with every dysfunctional therapy session, emotional outburst, and financial responsibility.

The emotional toll of raising a kid with autism spectrum disorder is particularly difficult and can impact a parent's resilience, emotional health, and marital relationships. Often requiring intensive care and specialized interventions, the disease is categorized as a neurodevelopmental disorder and is characterized by limited and repetitive

behaviors and interests as well as social communication difficulties (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Parents adjustment, well-being, and family dynamics have all been impacted by the stress of raising a kid with ASD (Hayes & Watson, 2013).

Given the significant emotional, financial, and social burden—as well as elements like resilience, social support, and emotional intelligence—this information is essential to reducing marital strain between these parents. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 36 American infants suffers from autism spectrum disorder (Maenner et al.,2023).

Social support is the real or perceived experience of being valued members of supportive networks and feeling cared for. The idea incorporates the informational, instrumental, and emotional support that people receive from others. Social support is the feeling of being taken care of and appreciated as well as being a part of a network of helpful people. Emotional, informational, and instrumental help are the three support categories that family, friends, and coworkers from institutions offer. Extensive evidence supports the basic role that social support plays in both physical and mental welfare (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2021).

According to Shafique et al. (2022), students in Lahore who reported higher levels of perceived social support—particularly instrumental support—performed better academically. The research that is currently available shows that supportive connections have a good impact on students coping skills, motivation, and involvement.Using cost-benefit calculations for risk-benefit evaluations in sociological and psychological research, social exchange theory looks at how two parties interact socially. Every social member assesses their belongings in relation to what other participants value during social exchange analysis. Social exchange theory demonstrates how people do this cost-benefit analysis in a variety of situations, including romantic relationships, friendships, professional relationships, and fleeting interactions with stores. According to social exchange theory, relationships end when the benefits obtained are less than the costs incurred, suggesting an unsatisfactory exchange of relationships.

By reducing their entry into clinical diagnosis, support networks provide protection against the negative impacts of stressful or upsetting life situations. Burnout and behavioral issues do not arise in adolescents who receive continuous supportive care from their social networks because they are better equipped to handle social and academic obligations (Scardera et al., 2020).

The ability of humans to adjust while overcoming adversity and growing stronger is referred to as resilience. Over many years, researchers from a variety of disciplines have examined resilience using psychological, emotional, social, and biological frameworks. According to current research, resilience is a concept with several dimensions that are influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors (Masten, 2014).

According to Hartley et al. (2010), marital strain is the term used to describe the stress, disagreement, and discontent that arise in a marriage as a result of external factors, such as the difficulties of raising a kid who are differently abled. In comparison with parents of neurotypical children, findings demonstrate that parents of children with ASD report top levels of marital dissatisfaction, role strain, and emotional alienation from one another (Karst &Hecke, 2012). Financial strain, personal isolation, and the constant position of caregiver all increase the likelihood of marital stress and divorce. However,

there are protective characteristics including social assistance, emotional intelligence, and resilience that help couples overcome obstacles together. Enhancing social support, emotional intelligence, and resilience may result in a happier marriage and less conflict in love relationships.

According to the paradigm, each person has dispositional vulnerabilities that are influenced by personality, psychological, or genetic factors. The ability of each person to cope with external stressors, such as illness, work-related stress, parenting challenges, or financial hardships, varies. Compared to someone with pre-existing emotional difficulties, insecure attachment, maladaptive coping skills, or fewer evolutionary adaptations as coping mechanisms, a person with greater resilience, emotional regulation abilityand access to supports is likely to handle marital stressors better (Ingram & Luxton, 2005). Social support lowers conflict, increases emotional availability, and improves marriage quality. Social support can be especially helpful in the context of caring for someone with ASD. It can ease the strain on roles and promote cooperative parenting, which in turn can ease the strain on the marriage.

Emotional intelligence (EI) and social support systems work collectively to lessen the psychological effects of caregiving. The notion of social support encompasses not just instrumental and informational support but also emotional support, and it comes from friends, family, professionals, and community organizations. According to research, social support helps people learn healthy coping mechanisms for stressful situations, which acts as a buffer against harm brought on by stress. Support groups help parents of children with ASD by offering vital tools that lessen their emotions and enhance their capacity to provide care, in conjunction with professional therapy and community networks. Research shows that parents of children with ASD who perceive more social support report less parental stress and more marital satisfaction (Pisula & Kossakowska, 2010).

Parents of children with autism spectrum disorder presents a number of psychological, emotional, and familial challenges that put their parents mental health at serious risk and affect their marriages. In comparison to normal child-rearing circumstances, parents raising children diagnosed with ASD undergo higher intensity levels and experience more stressful events. Marital strain results from these families chronic stress and reducing their life satisfaction and simultaneously causing worry and despair.

The study shows how resilience together with social support as well as emotional intelligence protect parents from all of the negative consequences at the time when they raise a child with ASD. EI reduces psychological impacts from giving care. Strong social support systems also work in order to reduce all these effects by a collaborative manner. When parents of children who have ASD perceive that there is more social support, they then report that they have less parenting stress. By adding these sources they feel more content in their marriages. Emotional intelligence, social support, and resilience are methods to battle marital stress and encourage better family life. Future research on this topic is important to help parents of children with ASD develop facts-based interventions and reassuring policies.

Literature Review

Raising a child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder entails challenges of several dimensions (i.e., emotional, psychological, social), and typically contributes to the

parent experiencing elevated stress, emotional fatigue, and stress on the marital relationship (Estes et al., 2009). These children have unique and atypical behavior, communication, and developmental needs that add to the caregiving demands of parents. Given the increased demands on parents, the psychological assets of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Social Support, and Resilience, are more salient. These variables can affect parenting, coping, and relationships with others, especially the marital relationship.Individuals with strong emotional competencies are more likely to engage positively in social relationships and report higher levels of perceived social support (Azpiazu et al., 2018). Emotional intelligence is associated with a more favorable self-appraisal of social competence and is a key contributor to effective social behavior. Emotions play a critical role in social interactions by facilitating communication and conveying individuals' attitudes and intentions, thus aiding in the regulation of interpersonal relationships (Keltner & Haidt, 2001).

Several studies have demonstrated a positive association between EI and resilience. Higher levels of emotional intelligence appear to assist individuals in regulating their emotions, sustaining a positive outlook, and developing successful adaptations to stress (Armstrong et al., 2011). Such functions promote a greater level of psychological flexibility, which is one of the key components of resilience. Concerning emotional self-awareness and self-regulation as elements of emotional intelligence, they substantiate the capacity to manage negative emotions and promote resilience in adversity (Schutte & Malouff, 2011).Research suggests that EI is positively correlated with effective communication and reduced emotional reactivity during conflicts (Fitness, 2001). Parents who can identify and manage emotions are more likely to engage in disagreements without escalation. This emotional regulation contributes not only to marital satisfaction but also to effective joint caregiving.

Hypotheses

H1. Higher emotional intelligence is associated with lower marital strain in parents of children with ASD.

H2. Social support mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital strain, such as higher emotional intelligence leads to higher social support, which in turn reduces marital strain.

Material and Methods

Research Design

The study is a cross-sectional research design that assess the mediation effects of social support and resilience in the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital strain in parents of children with ASD.

Sampling

In the present research study, the purposive sampling strategy was used to select the sample. 120 ASD children parents (61 male and 59 female) were recruited as participants from special educational centers in Faisalabad and Sargodha. Demographic variables of parents were consisting of age, gender, education, socioeconomic status, years of marriage, no of kids, spouse age and job. Demographic variables of children were age, birth order,primary diagnosis and tenure of disorder.

Inclusion Criteria: Participants must be biological or primary caretakers of children with diagnosed ASD and currently residing with their child. Those who have children enrolled in a special education center, the education level of participants was determined, only graduated and those who can understand English were included in the sample.

Exclusion Criteria: Single parent and divorced parents were excluded and the parents having severe mental health disorders were also excluded from the study. Also the children having severe comorbidity like ADHD, Speech delay and medical conditions were excluded from the study.

Instruments

Demographic Data Sheets

Age, gender, socioeconomic situation, education level, spouse age, employment, number of children, birth order, primary diagnosis, and duration of disorder in parents and children were all intended to be gathered using this form.

Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998)

Originally created by Schutte et al. (1998), the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale is a popular self-report emotional intelligence assessment tool. This scale consist of 33 items, measuring someone's competencies in emotion perception, understanding, and regulation. It rests on the four branches of emotional intelligence: emotional perception, emotion-expressive control, emotion-repressive control, and everyday emotion management. The respondent answers SEIS items through a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 'strongly disagree' to 5 'strongly agree.' It maintains high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha ≈ 0.80–0.87).

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet et al., 1988)

According to this scale, social support is divided into three circles, the respondent identifying themselves, friends and family, and significant others who provide support to them. 12-item measures captured by Zimet et al. (1988), and scored in the Likert 7 system which is 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The more support one compare themselves to have, the stronger these scores. It has high internal consistency ranges from 0.81 to 0.98.

Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (Mowbray, 2011)

An efficient, short self-report measure of a person's psychological resilience, defined as the ability to adapt and recover from stress, adversity, or trauma, is the Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (RAQ -8). The RAQ-8 consists of eight items that assess important dimensions of resilience, such as emotion regulation and problem solving, optimism, and management of change. Responses are measured on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from "never" to "yes always." Higher scores reflect greater resilience. It has Cronbachrealibility between 0.78 and 0.85.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Sabourin et al., 2005)

The original Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) served as the basis for the short version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-6), which was used to evaluate the

quality of relationships or marital satisfaction. Widely used in clinical and research contexts, this abbreviated version was validated by Sabourin et al. (2005). The six items that make up the DAS-6 assess important facets of a relationship, including general satisfaction, conflict resolution, affectional expression, and agreement on significant issues. A Likert-type scale was used to record responses, and higher scores indicated higher levels of marital adjustment. Items 3 and 5 were among those that had their scores reversed. Cronbach's alpha values for the DAS-6 range from 0.80 to 0.92, showing good internal consistency and strong psychometric qualities.

Procedure

The Government College University Faisalabad's Psychology Department sent an official letter for data collecting. All participants gave their informed consent after being guaranteed the privacy and confidentiality of their data. Participants can end their agreement at any moment without incurring any penalty, the researcher made this clear. Survey forms were used to gather data, and the sample size was 120. Participants completed the scales in about twenty-five to thirty minutes. The cooperation and assistance of the participants in the study were appreciated.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the whole data collection procedure, ethical issues were closely adhered to. Permission to use scale was taken from original authors through emails. Prior to data collection, authorization was also obtained from the appropriate institutional authorities. Once more, the individuals and the relevant institutions gave their informed consent. Participants received guarantees that the information they provided would be kept private and used exclusively for study. They were told of their privilege to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were then carried out in compliance with the goals of the study. To evaluate the relationships between emotional intelligence, social support, resilience, and marital strain, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used. The predictive function of emotional intelligence and its indirect impacts on marital strain through social support and resilience were investigated using regression and mediation analyses.

Resultsand Discussion

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Parents (N = 120)

Variables	n	%
Age		
21-30 Years	36	30
31-40 Years	67	55.8
41-50 Years	17	14.2
Gender		
Male	61	50.8
Female	59	49.2
Education		
Bachelor	12	10
Master	81	67.5
MBBS	27	22.5
Socioeconomic status		
Middle Class	51	42.5

Upper Class	69	57.5
Years of marriage		
3-10 Years	95	79.2
11-20 Years	18	15
More than 20years	7	5.8
No of kids		
1-2 Children	34	28.3
3-4 Children	62	51.7
More than 4	24	20
Spouse Age		
20-30 years	49	40.8
31-40 years	63	52.5
41-50 years	8	6.7
Job		
Doctor/ Businessman/ Engineer	38	31.7
Teacher/ Manager / Banker	59	49.2
Housewife/ Other profession	23	19.2

Note. n = no of frequencies, % = percentages.

There were both male and female participants in the sample, although there were somewhat more men (n = 61, 50.8%) than women (n = 59, 49.2%). The majority of the parents were between the ages of 31 and 40 (n = 67, 55.8%), followed by those between the ages of 21 and 30 (n = 36, 30%) and 41 and 50 (n = 17, 14.2%). The proportion of participants with a master's degree was larger (n = 81, 67.5%) than those with an MBBS (n = 27, 22.5%) or bachelor's degree (n = 12, 10%).

Additionally, the data indicates that the majority were from the upper socioeconomic class (n = 69, 57.5%), as opposed to the middle class (n = 51, 42.5%). Additionally, it shows that the majority of the parents had been married for 3–10 years (n = 95, 79.2%), 11–20 years (n = 18, 15%), and longer than 20 years (n = 7, 5.8%). The largest percentage of participants had three or four children (n = 62, 51.7%), followed by those with one or two children (n = 34, 28.3%) and those with more than four children (n = 24, 20%).

The majority of wives were between the ages of 31 and 40 (n = 63, 52.5%), followed by those between the ages of 20 and 30 (n = 49, 40.8%) and 41 and 50 (n = 8, 6.7%). Finally, the participants' occupational status reveals that the largest percentage were bankers, teachers, or managers (n = 59, 49.2%), followed by engineers, doctors, or business people (n = 38, 31.7%), and housewives or others (n = 23, 19.2%; Table 1). Table 2 shows that most of the children were between the ages of 1 and 5 (n = 81, 67.5%), with the remaining children (n = 39, 32.5%) being between the ages of 6 and 10. The majority of children (n = 77, 64.2%) were born first, followed by middle children (n = 31, 25.8%) and lastborn children (n = 12, 10%). Every child (n = 120, 100%) had an autism diagnosis.

Table 2
Demographic Characteristics of Children (N = 120)

Variables	*n*	%
Age		
1-5 Years	81	67.5
6-10 Years	39	32.5
Birth Order		
First Born	77	64.2
Middle Child	31	25.8
Last Born	12	10
Primary Diagnosis		
Autism	120	100

Tenure of disorder		
1-3 years	50	41.7
4-6 years	70	58.3

Note. n = no of frequencies, % = percentages.

Table 3
Psychometric Properties of Scales (N = 120)

Scales	M	SD	Range	α
Emotional Intelligence scale	121.6	10.88	100-150	.85
MSPSS	59.70	10.70	36-84	.91
RAQ	27.38	5.08	12-38	.83
Dydic Adjustment Scale	20.45	4.57	11-27	.64

*Note. M = m*ean, *SD= s*tandard deviation, *MSPSS= m*ultidimensional scale of perceived social support, *RAQ*= resilience assessment questionnaire

　　　　The study tools psychometric characteristics, such as the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients, and real score ranges, are shown in Table 3. The Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (α =.85), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (α =.91), Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (α =.83), and Dyadic Adjustment Scale (α =.64) all showed excellent internal consistency, according to the reliability study.

Table 4
Pearson Product Moment Correlation among all Study Variables (N = 120)

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. SEIS	-			
2. MSPSS	.57**	-		
3. RAQ	.50**	.47**	-	
4. DAS	-.58**	-.58**	.42**	-

*p<.05, ***p*< .01.

　　　　The Pearson relationships between emotional intelligence, social support, resilience and marital strain are shown in Table 4. Social support (r =.57, p <.01), resilience (r =.50, p <.01), and marital strain (r = -.58, p <.01) were all positively connected with emotional intelligence. Likewise, social support had a negative correlation with marital strain (r = -.58, p <.01) and a positive correlation with resilience (r =.47, p <.01). Additionally, there was a noteworthy inverse relationship between resilience and marital stress (r = -.42, p <.01).

Table 5
Linear Regression Showing the Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Marital Strain

Variables	*B*	β	*SE*
Constant	-9.034		4.751
EI	.242	-.576***	0.39
R^2	.33		

Note. *p*< .001. EI = emotional intelligence

　　　　The impact of emotional intelligence on marital stress among parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is shown in Table 5. With a statistically significant model (F (1, 78) = 38.82, p <.001), the coefficient of determination (R^2 =.33) shows that emotional intelligence explains 33% of the variance in marital strain. The findings also show that marital strain is significantly predicted negatively by emotional intelligence

(β = -.576, p <.001), indicating that a lower level of marital strain is linked to higher emotional intelligence.

Mediation Model

Outcome Model on Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, Resilience and Marital Strain in Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Mediator 1

Social Support

β =.389***   β = -.332***

I   **DV**

Emotional   Intelligence   **Marital Strain**

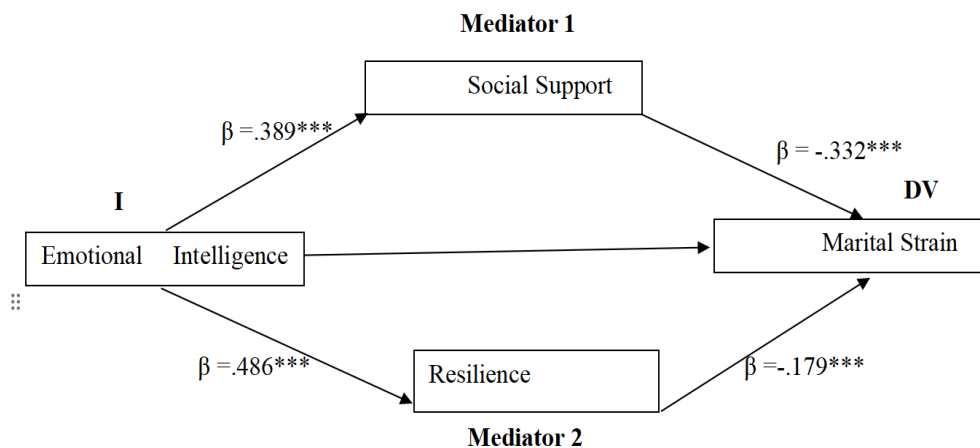β =.486***   β =-.179***

Resilience

Mediator 2

Figure 1. Outcome model of mediation analysis

Through two mediators, social support and resilience, the model shows that emotional intelligence (EI) considerably lowers marital strain both directly and indirectly. In particular, social support is favorably predicted by EI (β =.389, p <.001), while social support is negatively predicted by Marital Strain (β = –.332, p <.001). This suggests that people with higher EI have more social support, which protects them from marital stress. Emotionally intelligent people are more resilient and hence better equipped to handle marital difficulties, as evidenced by the positive correlation between EI and Resilience (β =.486, p <.001) and the negative correlation between Resilience and Marital Strain (β = –.179, p <.001). These results demonstrate that emotional intelligence (EI) not only directly but also indirectly lessens marital stress by fostering more social support and resilience.

Table 6
Regression Analysis for Mediation of Social Support Between Emotional Intelligence and Marital Strain

Variable	B	95%CI	SE B	β	R²	ΔR²
Step1					.33	.33***
Constant	-9.03	[-18.49, .425]	4.751			
EI	.24	[.165, .320]	.039	-.576***		
Step 2					.41	.08***
Constant	-7.92	[-16.922, 1.075]	4.519			
EI	.164	[.075, .253]	.045	-.389***		
SS	.142	[.051, .232]	.045	-.332***		

Note. ***p< .001. EI = emotional intelligence, SS = social support, CI = confidence interval.

The hierarchical regression analysis that looks at how social support and emotional intelligence affect marital stress in parents of children with ASD is shown in Table 6. In Step 1, marital strain variance was explained by emotional intelligence alone in 33% of variance (R2 =.33, F (1,78) = 38.82, p <.001). The findings showed a strong

negative correlation between marriage strain and emotional intelligence (β = -.576, p <.001), indicating that those with higher emotional intelligence also reported lower marital strain levels. When social support was incorporated into the model in Step 2, the explained variance rose to 41%, R2 =.41, F (2,77) = 26.46, p <.001. Marital strain was strongly and negatively predicted by social support (β = -.332, p <.001) and emotional intelligence (β = -.389, p <.001). By explaining an extra 8% of the variation, the inclusion of social support greatly enhanced the model, as evidenced by the change in R² (ΔR² =.08), with ΔF (2,77) = 9.76, p <.001.

Table 7
Regression Analysis for Mediation of Resilience Between Emotional Intelligence and Marital Strain

Variable	B	95%CI	SE B	β	R²	ΔR²
Step1					.33	.33***
Constant	-9.03	[-18.49, .425]	4.751			
EI	.24	[.165, .320]	.039	-.576***		
Step 2					.35	.02***
Constant	-8.81	[-18.164, .546]	4.698			
EI	.204	[.115, .293]	.045	-.486***		
RES	.161	[.029, .351]	.095	-.179*		

Note. ***p< .001.EI = emotional intelligence, RES = resilience, CI = confidence interval.

The effect of resilience and emotional intelligence on marital stress is displayed in Table 7. According to Step 1's R2 value of.33, emotional intelligence accounted for 33% of the variation in marital stress (F (1,78) = 38.82, p <.001). The results showed that marital tension was adversely predicted by emotional intelligence (β = -.576, p <.001). Step 2's R2 value of.35 showed that resilience and emotional intelligence combined accounted for 35% of the variation in marital stress (F (2,77) = 21.288, p <.001). The findings demonstrated that resilience (β = -.179, p <.01) and emotional intelligence (β = -.486, p <.001) were both significant negative predictors of marital tension.

With ΔF (1,78) = 2.844, p <.01, the ΔR2 value of.02 showed a 2% increase in explained variation from Model 1 to Model 2. Partial mediation was shown by the regression coefficient for emotional intelligence, which dropped from -.576 in Model 1 to -.486 in Model 2. More precisely, marital stress was impacted by emotional intelligence in both direct and indirect ways. The results also imply that resilience and less marital stress are linked to higher emotional intelligence.

Discussion

This study investigated the relationship between marital stress and emotional intelligence, social support, and resilience in parents of children with autism spectrum disorder . Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and mediation analyses were used in the quantitative data analysis process to look at both direct and indirect associations between the variables. The results of this study substantiate prior research demonstrating that emotional intelligence helps parents manage difficult situation better, particularly during stressful times, such as during the raising of a child with ASD. Further mediation analyses explained how emotional intelligence operates with other psychological resources. Resilience and social support, in particular, were shown to be partial intervening variables, offering insights into how these factors reduce marital strain. These findings support the importance of emotional intelligence as both a protective factor and as the core element in protective caregiving's broader coping and relational defense system.

The bridge between emotional intelligence and marital strain was also believed to be mediated by social support and social resilience. Results were supportive of this theory. Parents with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to be able to form and sustain support networks which alleviates stress in marriages. This is reported by Schutte et al. (2001) who found emotional intelligence to be a predictor of perceived social support. It is clear that, using Cohen and Wills stress-buffering model, the social support received by parents alleviates the burden of caregiving. Furthermore, research suggests that a higher level of emotional adjustment and stronger marital relations are associated with perceived support in families with a child diagnosed with ASD (Hartley et al., 2011; Karademas, 2006).

A similar mediating role of social support as well as resilience was additionally assumed for the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital strain. Results supported this theory. The research revealed that emotional intelligence increases the probability that parents will form attachments with other adults, especially other married adults with children, which may in turn reduce the stress on marriages. Schutte et al. (2001) who found that emotional intelligence predicts perceived social support. Previous studies also indicate that better emotional adjustment and more positive marital dynamics are associated with perceived support in families with an ASD kid (Hartley et al., 2011; Karademas, 2006).

Conclusion

In this study, parents with children with autism spectrum disorder explored the relationships among emotional intelligence, perceived social support, and marital tension. They revealed that when marital strain was lower, emotional intelligence was higher. They also specified the influence of demographic characteristics. Mothers, individuals in longer marriages, and those with lower or specific socioeconomic and educational status were more likely to experience higher levels of marital strain. These results are consistent with previous research that similarly shows family dynamics, gender role ideas, and care burdens significantly inform the stress that parents experience when caring for children with ASD. In summary, this study contributes to the body of literature by showing how psychological traits like emotional intelligence and resilience, in conjunction with social environments that are supportive, lead to better marital relationships and emotional stability in families with children who have developmental disabilities.

Practical Implications

By improving emotional awareness, regulation, and communication, parent-focused emotional intelligence training may lessen marital conflict. Parental loneliness and emotional exhaustion can be lessened by organized social support networks, such as support groups and family networking programs. Support programs that are demographically responsive ought to be customized based on factors including gender, family size, SES, and educational attainment. Stress levels and assistance need vary throughout households. In order to integrate caregiver wellness into national disability and healthcare frameworks, policy measures should support mental health resources for caregivers of people with ASD. Marital satisfaction and family cohesion can be improved by systemic family interventions that focus on shared caregiving, emotional support, and spousal communication.

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