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Modeling Psychological Distress of Mothers of Children with Autism Based on Family Cohesion and Adaptation with the Mediation of Perceived Social Support




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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction mentions the increasing prevalence of ASD and the stress it causes to parents. However, the novelty of your study is not clearly delineated. Consider explicitly discussing how this study fills a gap in current literature regarding family cohesion and adaptability.

The mediation role of perceived social support is a key finding. However, the explanation of the mediation model can be improved. Consider adding a figure or clearer discussion of the mediation process to make the statistical paths more transparent.

The reliability of your scales is mentioned but the psychometric properties (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) of each instrument for the current sample should be clearly stated. Were there any deviations from expected reliabilities?

The tables present valuable data, but the labeling of the rows and columns could be more precise. For example, in Table 2, specify whether the correlations presented are zero-order correlations or partial correlations controlling for other variables.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

You introduce key terms such as "psychological distress," "family cohesion," and "family adaptability" without providing specific operational definitions. A clearer distinction of these terms in the context of your study will help readers follow your argument better.

The inclusion criteria state that participants should have a high school diploma or higher. Consider explaining how educational level might influence the responses and overall generalizability of the findings.

Your research focuses on a population in Tehran. It would be beneficial to include a discussion of how cultural norms in Iran may influence family cohesion and social support, as family dynamics can vary significantly across cultures.

You used established scales like the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale. However, the justification for choosing this scale, over potentially more domain-specific instruments, is not provided. It would help to clarify why this was the most appropriate scale for your study.

In your literature review, several important studies on the psychological distress of parents of children with ASD, particularly those in non-Western contexts, are missing. Including these will strengthen the positioning of your work.

The discussion of the direct and indirect effects of social support is interesting, but lacks depth. Expand on potential mechanisms that explain why social support mediates the relationship between family cohesion and psychological distress.

The limitations section could be strengthened by discussing specific challenges associated with using convenience sampling, especially regarding potential biases that may have influenced the results.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.