

**SPOUSAL REJECTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AMONG
PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD):
MEDIATING ROLE OF CHILDREN BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS**



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Abstract

The current study investigated mediating role of spousal perception of behavioral difficulties of children with ASD in relationship of spousal rejection and psychological distress. For this purpose, thirty couples having at least one child with ASD were purposively drawn from Lahore and Islamabad. Path analysis revealed that data fit in the theoretically proposed model specifically for wives but not for the husbands. Findings revealed that despite of equal perception of behavioral difficulties of children with ASD, wives scored higher on depression and anxiety, and perceived their husbands' as more rejecting than did the husbands. Spousal perception of children behavioral difficulties significantly accounted for the variance in relationship of spousal rejection with depression and anxiety among wives when wives' age was statistically controlled. These findings have been discussed within cultural context.

Keywords: child behavioral difficulties autism, partner's rejection, maternal psychological distress