



***Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
in Parents of Children with Autism***

اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لأهالي الأطفال المشخصين بالتوحد

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**This Thesis was Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Master's Degree in Nursing- Clinical Nursing**

at

Applied Science Private University

Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies

January, 2019

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may develop when facing an extreme stressful situation. Risk of PTSD was noticed in caregivers for patients with critical illness as well as psychological illnesses. PTSD could negatively affect parents ability in continuing their caring role.

PURPOSE: The purposes of this study were to explore risk of PTSD among parents of child with autism and differences in the risk of PTSD in their socio-demographics data.

METHODS: Quantitative cross-sectional descriptive – correlation design was applied to collect data using structural interview questionnaire from 142 parents of children with autism. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for Diagnostic Statistical Manual 5 (PCL-5) and socio-demographics checklist were used in this study.

RESULT: A total of 142 parents participated in the study, their age ranged from 23 to 55 years. Around 89.4% of the parents were married and 44.4% of the participants were fathers. About 81.7% of the parents had diploma or higher level of education. Almost

38.0 % of the parents are unemployed and almost 57.7% of them reported an average financial status while 29.6% described their financial status as bad. Around 77.5% of parents had negative financial effect of having a child diagnosed with autism and reported an increase in their expenses. Approximately 64.1% of parent treated their child on their own expenses without any financial support. The mean score of PCL-5 was 42.08 indicating risk of PTSD among parents of child with autism.

CONCLUSION: Parents of children with autism are at high risk of PTSD. The study emphasizes the high level of stress among parents related to caregiving process this lead to recommendation that health care professional should direct an educational and interventional programs for the parents to decrease the risk of PTSD.

KEY WORDS: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Autism, parent, Jordan.

