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OPEN PEER REVIEW

The Mediating Role of Maternal Stress and Family Quality of Life in the Association Between Parenting Styles and Behavioral Challenges in Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Negar Anaraki-Kordi, Masoume Pourmohamadreza-Tajrishi, Neda Ali Beigi, Razieh Bidhendi-Yarandi

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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

More about open peer review: brieflands.com/knowledgebase/opr

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1 Original submission

3 comments · 5 May 2025 – 1 Jun 2025

Referee 1 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 5 May 2025

1. You can't talk about the impact in cross-sectional studies.
2. Revise "descriptive-analytical study" in the abstract.
3. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.
4. Please revise "correlate with increased".
5. Remove "medium effect size (Cohen's d = 0.21)" and report the main parameters based on a reference.
6. For which variables was the sample size estimated?
7. The time of the study is not clear.
8. How about the sampling method and process?
9. How about the inclusion/exclusion criteria?
10. Report the CVI and CVR of the Persian version for each tool with a reference.
11. Display the conceptual model in the methods section.
12. Using Spearman correlation shows that the main variables are not normally distributed. So, use the median (IQR) instead of the mean and SD.
13. Report the exact P-values in Tables 1, 2 and 3.
14. Display the final model in a figure.

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 31 May 2025

I. Scientific Review
1. 1. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review:
- The literature review is relatively well-structured but relies heavily on local (Iranian) sources. Incorporating more international references (particularly post-2020) is recommended to enhance the global relevance.
- The relationship between the mediating variables (parental stress and quality of life) and parenting styles needs to be clarified further in the theoretical framework.
2. 2. Methodology:
- The descriptive-analytical design is appropriate; however, it is unclear whether path analysis was conducted using SPSS or a more advanced tool like AMOS or SEM. Clarification or justification is necessary.
- The choice of a 'medium effect size' (Cohen's d = 0.21) is relatively small and should be justified.
3. 3. Instruments:
- The instruments are generally valid and reliable, though citations for the Persian versions need more precise referencing.
- The Rutter Behavior Scale is intended for 7-year-olds, while the sample consists of 10–14-year-olds. This discrepancy should be addressed or justified.
4. 4. Statistical Analysis:
- The tables are comprehensive, but some coefficients and confidence intervals seem misaligned or statistically implausible.
- It is not clear whether normality tests were conducted, which is essential before applying Spearman correlations or path analysis.
II. Language & Style Review
5. 1. English Language:
- The manuscript is mostly well-written; however, some sentences are excessively long and complex,

particularly in the Discussion section.
- Vocabulary is often repetitive, especially terms like 'mediates', 'correlates', and 'influences'. Synonym variety is advised.
6. 2. Structure:
- The overall IMRAD structure is followed appropriately.
- Subheadings should be consistently formatted. Some are labeled with numbers (e.g., 3.3), while others are not.
7. 3. Abstract:
- The abstract is informative but includes dense academic language. Simplifying the language for broader accessibility is recommended.
III. Recommendations for Improvement
8. 1. Scientific Enhancements:
- Consider examining gender, maternal education, or other demographic variables as potential moderators.
9. 2. Language Improvements:
- Revise long sentences into clearer, shorter ones.
10. 3. Structural Suggestions:
- Add a dedicated 'Strengths and Limitations' section at the end of the Discussion.

Editor-in-Chief MAJOR REVISION 1 Jun 2025

Major Revision

2

Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Sir/Madam,

With respect and gratitude for the valuable feedback from the esteemed reviewers, we would like to inform you that all comments marked in red and green have been addressed and edited in both the current file and the original version of the manuscript.

Thank you once again for your constructive insights.

Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer 1:

1. You can't talk about the impact in the cross-sectional studies.

Answer: In abstract section, Page 1; Line 1. The title was revised.

2. Revise "descriptive-analytical study" in the abstract.

Answer: It was revised.

3. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.

Answer: Page 1; Line 18. They were reported in abstract subtitle (Results).

4. Please revise "correlate with increased".

Answer: It was revised.

5. Remove "medium effect size (Cohen's d = 0.21)" and report the main parameters based on a reference.

Answer: Page 3; Line 2. It was done.

6. The sample size was estimated for which variables?

Answer: Page 2; Line 30. It was mentioned.

7. Time of the study is not clear.

Answer: Page 7; Line 3. It was clarified.

8. How about the sampling method and process?

Answer: In Study Procedure, it was clarified.

9. How about the inclusion/exclusion criteria?

Answer: Page 3; Line 11; and Page 6; Line 25. It was clarified.

10. Report the CVI and CVR of the Persian version for each tool with reference.

Answer: Page 5; Line 1; and Page 6; Line 15. It was reported after each instrument.

11. Display the conceptual model in the methods section.

Answer: It was shown.

12. Using Spearman correlation shows that the main variables are not normally distributed. So, use the median (IQR) instead of mean and SD.

Answer: It was done and reported.

13. Report the exact P-values in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Answer: It was inserted.

14. Display the final model in a figure.

Answer: Page 3; Line 29. It was Displayed.

Associate Editor's Comments:

Associate Editor 1:

I. Scientific Review

1. 1. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review:

- The literature review is relatively well-structured but relies heavily on local (Iranian) sources. Incorporating more international references (particularly post-2020) is recommended to enhance the global relevance.

Answer: It was revised and added newer references especially in the background section.

- The relationship between the mediating variables (parental stress and quality of life) and parenting styles needs to be clarified further in the theoretical framework.

Answer: Page 2; Line 7. It was clarified.

2. 2. Methodology:

- The descriptive-analytical design is appropriate; however, it is unclear whether path analysis was conducted using SPSS or a more advanced tool like AMOS or SEM. Clarification or justification is necessary.

Answer: thanks for your comment, we applied Process dialogue in SPSS. The PROCESS custom dialog in SPSS, developed by Andrew F. Hayes, is a powerful tool for conducting mediation, moderation, and conditional process (path) analysis using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. In the context of mediation analysis, PROCESS allows researchers to examine how an independent variable (X) influences a dependent variable (Y) through a mediator (M), providing both direct and indirect effect estimates along with bootstrapped confidence intervals. For path analysis, the tool can handle more complex models involving multiple mediators (serial or parallel), moderators, or interactions, enabling users to explore the mechanisms and pathways linking variables. The user-friendly interface integrates seamlessly with SPSS, requiring no advanced syntax knowledge, and supports both simple and advanced models (e.g., Model 4 for simple mediation, Model 6 for serial mediation). Overall, PROCESS greatly enhances SPSS's capabilities for applied researchers seeking to test theoretical models involving indirect effects and causal pathways.

- The choice of a 'medium effect size' (Cohen's d = 0.21) is relatively small and should be justified.

Answer: Page 3; Line 1. It was mentioned and justified.

3. 3. Instruments:

- The instruments are generally valid and reliable, though citations for the Persian versions need more precise referencing.

Answer: Page 4. Lines 7 and 27; Page 5; Line 24. Page 6; Line 15. It was added.

- The Rutter Behavior Scale is intended for 7-year-olds, while the sample consists of 10–14-year-olds. This discrepancy should be addressed or justified.

Answer: Page 5; Line 31. It was corrected. In fact, the test is suitable for 7-year-old children and older.

4. 4. Statistical Analysis:

- The tables are comprehensive, but some coefficients and confidence intervals seem misaligned or statistically implausible.

Answer: Table 4 (Page 9; Line 16) and Table 5 (Page 11; Line 9): Thanks for your careful comment, we revised the inconsistencies.

- It is not clear whether normality tests were conducted, which is essential before applying Spearman correlations or path analysis.

Answer: Thank you for your careful comment. We have tested the normality assumption of the main variables with Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Most of them were not normally distributed; however, checking the distribution of the variables showed no severe violations based on the Skewness and Kurtosis.

I would like to cite the following point from the book: Hayes AF. Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach. Guilford publications; 2017 Oct 30.

“The assumption of normality states that the errors in estimation of consequent variable Y, conditioned on ˆY, are normally distributed. This assumption is one of the least important in linear regression analysis. Simulation research suggests that only the most severe violations of the normality assumption substantially affect the validity of statistical inferences from a regression analysis unless the sample size is quite small (e.g., Duncan & Layard, 1973; Edgell & Noon, 1984; Havlicek & Peterson, 1977; Hayes,1996). However, non-normality can influence sampling variance in some circumstances in such a way that power of hypothesis tests is reduced.

The power of a hypothesis test is the probability of it rejecting a false null hypothesis. This assumption is rarely met in practice, primarily because of the measurement procedures researchers typically use. Often, measurement scales are bounded by zero, such as when a variable is a count of things (e.g., how many good friends a person has, how many phone calls a person made today). Measurement scales also sometimes produce discrete data, meaning only a few unique values are observed on the measurement scale. An example would be the use of a 7-point scale asking

someone to evaluate how much he or she likes a television program, or how shy he or she is. Technically speaking, the normal distribution is continuous, so no model of such a variable using OLS regression would generate normally distributed errors in estimation. Finally, many if not most things that researcher's study and measure are not normally distributed, in spite of claims made in many statistics books about the ubiquity of the normal distribution (cf. Micceri, 1989). When modeling non-normal consequent variables using OLS regression, the errors in estimation also tend not to be normal."

II. Language & Style Review

5. 1. English Language:

- The manuscript is mostly well-written; however, some sentences are excessively long and complex, particularly in the Discussion section.

- Vocabulary is often repetitive, especially terms like 'mediates', 'correlates', and 'influences'. Synonym variety is advised.

Answer: All the above-mentioned were revised throughout the manuscript.

6. 2. Structure:

- The overall IMRAD structure is followed appropriately.

- Subheadings should be consistently formatted. Some are labeled with numbers (e.g., 3.3), while others are not.

Answer: The subheadings belong to method section and discussion section, and both of them revised.

7. 3. Abstract:

- The abstract is informative but includes dense academic language. Simplifying the language for broader accessibility is recommended.

Answer: The abstract was simplified.

III. Recommendations for Improvement

8. 1. Scientific Enhancements:

- Consider examining gender, maternal education, or other demographic variables as potential moderators.

Answer: Page 17; Line 14. It was considered.

9. 2. Language Improvements:

- Revise long sentences into clearer, shorter ones.

Answer: All sentences were clarified and shortened.

10. 3. Structural Suggestions:

- Add a dedicated 'Strengths and Limitations' section at the end of the Discussion.

Answer: Page 17; Line 3. It was added at the end of Discussion section.

2 Revision 1

3 comments · 1 Jul 2025 – 28 Jul 2025

Referee 1 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 1 Jul 2025

Comments:
1. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.
2. Please revise “relationship”.
3. Revise “meaningful”.
4. The time of the study is not clear.
5. How about the sampling method and process?
6. How about the inclusion/exclusion criteria?
7. Report the CVI and CVR of the Persian version for each tool with a reference.
8. Using Spearman correlation shows that the main variables are not normally distributed. So, use the median (IQR) instead of the mean and SD.
9. Revise “meaningful impact”.
10. Report the exact P-values in Table 4.

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 28 Jul 2025

Accept

Editor-in-Chief

MAJOR REVISION 28 Jul 2025

Major Revision

3

Revision 2

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Sir / Madam

Hello and respectful greetings. All comments have been addressed in accordance with the esteemed reviewer's suggestions, and have been incorporated into this file as well as the original manuscript, highlighted in turquoise.

Best Regards,

Corresponding Author

Reviewers' Comments:

1. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.

Answer: Page 1; Line 23. It was addressed.
2. Please revise “relationship”.

Answer: All instances of the word “relationships” have been revised to suit the context appropriately.
3. Revise “meaningful”.

Answer: It was revised and changed to significant.
4. Time of the study is not clear.

Answer: It was added in abstract and method section.
5. How about the sampling method and process?

Answer: It was addressed.
6. How about the inclusion/exclusion criteria?

Answer: It has been mentioned.
7. Report the CVI and CVR of the Persian version for each tool with reference.

Answer: It was added.
8. Using Spearman correlation shows that the main variables are not normally distributed. So, use the median (IQR) instead of mean and SD.

Answer: Page 9; Line 9 and Line 33. It was mentioned.
9. Revise “meaningful impact”.

Answer: It was revised.
10. Report the exact P-values in Table 4.

Answer: Page 11; Line 5. It was mentioned.

3 Revision 2

2 comments · 12 Aug 2025 – 17 Aug 2025

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 12 Aug 2025

Comments:
1. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.
2. Report the exact P-values in the abstract.
3. Please revise “relationship”.
4. Revise “meaningful”.
5. Please describe the random sampling in each cluster.
6. How about the inclusion/exclusion criteria?
7. Report the CVI and CVR of the Persian version for each tool with a reference.

Editor-in-Chief

MAJOR REVISION 17 Aug 2025

Major Revision

4

Revision 3

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Sir or Madam,

With respect and courtesy, I would like to express my gratitude to the reviewer. All edits have been applied in accordance with the reviewer's comments and are shown in turquoise-blue in both the current file and the original manuscript.

Sincerely

Corresponding Author

Associate Editor 0:

Comments:

1. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.

Answer: Page 1; Line 18. The quantitative findings were reported in the result section of abstract.

2. Report the exact P-values in the abstract.

Answer: Page 1; Lines 24 & 25. The exact p-values were reported.

3. Please revise "relationship".

Answer: Page 1; Line 26. The term relationship was changed to correlation.

4. Revise "meaningful".

Answer: Page 4; Line 20. The term meaningful was changed to significant.

5. Please describe the random sampling in each cluster.

Answer: Page 4; Line 11. The cluster sampling was described.

6. How about the inclusion/exclusion criteria?

Answer: Page 4; Line 23. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were mentioned.

7. Report the CVI and CVR of the Persian version for each tool with reference.

Answer: Page 5; Line 31. Page 6; Line 17. Page 7; Line 11. and Page 8; Line 2. All CVI and CVR were reported.

4 Revision 3

2 comments · 26 Aug 2025 – 26 Aug 2025

Associate Editor

MINOR REVISION 26 Aug 2025

Comments:
1. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.
2. Report the exact P-values in the abstract.
3. Please revise “relationship”.

Editor-in-Chief

MINOR REVISION 26 Aug 2025

Minor Revision

5

Revision 4

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Sir/Madam

With due respect, all reviewer's comments marked in purple have been identified in the current file as well as in the manuscript without authors' name file.

Sincerely,

Corresponding Author

Associate Editor's Comments:

Associate Editor 0:
Comments:
1. Report the quantitative findings in the abstract. The current format is not informative.

Answer: Page 1; Line 18. The quantitative findings were reported in the abstract.

2. Report the exact P-values in the abstract.

Answer: Page 1; Lines 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, and 30. The exact p-values were reported in the abstract.

3. Please revise "relationship".

Answer: The term "relationship" has been revised throughout the manuscript wherever it appeared, and replaced with precise, mediation-focused language (e.g., "association", "direct effect", "indirect effect", mediation by", etc.) to reflect the study's analytic framework. This ensures consistency with mediation terminology and avoids ambiguity about causality in a cross-sectional design.

The list of authors' orders in the current revision differs from the previous revisions. **We don't accept any "Authorship Changes"** (including adding or deleting an author) after the initial submission, based on the journal policy.

Answer: The list of authors' orders in the last revision was updated according to the initial submission.

5 Revision 4

2 comments · 31 Aug 2025 – 31 Aug 2025

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 31 Aug 2025

Accept.

Editor-in-Chief

ACCEPT 31 Aug 2025

Accept