CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The problem taken up for the study by the researcher is “Assessment of Stress and Coping Behaviour of Parents of Disabled Children”. The aims and objectives of the present study are as follows:

➢ To explore whether mothers and fathers differ on different subscales of Parental Stress Index and Family Coping Scale.

➢ To explore which subscale of Parental Stress Index is a source of stress for the major differences in mothers and fathers groups.

➢ To explore whether demographic factors, namely; urban-rural status of parents, income of the parents, working status of the mothers, age and gender of disabled children could be accounted for the stress level and coping among the parents of disabled children.

➢ To know what is the regression equation of the prediction of family coping on the subscales of parental stress.

Based on purposive sampling technique the sample of 200 parents (100 fathers, 100 mothers) was drawn from six different institutions in Hyderabad. To assess the stress level of parents, PSI developed by R. Abidin (1995) was used and Family Coping Scale developed by M. Anhapurna (1999) was used to assess coping behaviour of the parents of disabled children. Five demographic variables namely urban-rural status, income of the parents, working status of the mothers, age and gender of disabled children were studied through a socio-demographic sheet.
The data analysis revealed that the parents of children with disabilities experienced increased level of stress and all the dimensions of Parental Stress Index are similar source of stress for both the parents. However, mothers showed higher score on total stress as compared to fathers. In fact having multiple disabled children produce more difficulty for them in adjusting to personal aspect of parenting. Finally, demographic variables like parent characteristics and child characteristics also influence the amount of stress experienced and coping by parents of disabled children.

**IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings from this study suggest that although all the dimensions of parental stress are similar source of stress for parents but mother’s higher scores on total stress indicated that they perceived their child’s disability as more threatening and uncontrollable. Thus the perceptual differences of fathers and mothers about the stressful effects having disabled children may assist interventionists and planning social support programmes for such mothers. The findings of the study also suggest the importance of counselling focussed specifically towards developing healthy parental attitudes which would in turn result in acceptance of the child’s disability and facilitate therapeutic progress. Since having multiple disabled children produce more difficulty for mothers than fathers, a consulted effort must be made to prepare and trained mothers of children with multiple disabilities in handling the needs of their children and this effort should start from the stage of identification of the disabilities of children. In addition the mother’s higher scores on total stress as compared to fathers indicate that mothers are the primary caregiver and additional and unusual care giving demands increased their parenting stress level. So the provision of domestic help would reduce the burden of house work and can significantly reduce their level of stress. This research also highlights the tendency of "urbancentrism" to attend to problems in urban and suburban areas rather than those within rural
communities' results in community stereotyping and perpetuates health care challenges for rural people. Thus, there is a need on the part of governmental and non-governmental agencies come forward and help the parents of such children living in rural areas.

LIMITATIONS

➢ 'Size of the sample was small and thus appropriate generalization could not be made.

➢ Further research may be carried out on a larger sample size including parents of severe and profound mentally retarded children.

➢ Interview techniques may also be added by the researcher that asked the parents to further state what were the factors associated in experiencing stress having a disabled child and also what was most helpful in coping with their child's disability.