

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of coping on psychological distress experienced by parents having children with Mental Retardation. In addition, effects of indigenous Chinese concepts of *Face*, *Face-losing* Appraisal and *Face Acts* on psychological distress were also explored. Results confirmed the positive predictive value of Avoidance Coping on psychological distress. However, when the *Face* trait and the immediate *Face Acts* in response to *face-losing* situations were taken into consideration, they were found to be more affecting participants' psychological distress. *Face* trait predicted psychological distress and general ways of coping positively. *Face Acts* had negative predictive effect on psychological distress. *Face-losing* Appraisal was found to greatly affect the choice of *Face Acts*. Although participants' *Face* trait was found to be important in predicting the general coping ways and the resulting psychological distress, *Face Acts*, the immediate reactions to *face-losing* situations which affected by their *face-losing* appraisal were also significant. No major difference on the variables was found between mothers and fathers within the same family. Cultural significance of the present study, implications on intervention and direction for future research were discussed.