



The educational problems of children with autism: An investigation

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Abstract

Autism is one of the neurological disorders mostly affects child's ability to communicate, form relationships with others and respond appropriately to the environment. Autism is a developmental disability generally evident before age 3 that affects a child's performance. The main objective was the educational problems and parenting problems of children with autism spectrum disorder. The findings of the study revealed that children with autism need to interact with other students, because there is opportunity to the development of social interaction. Student can learn better when exposed to the general education environment under teacher assistance or with peers. And the majority of parents were not aware about the autism disorder however only few percent were exposed about the ASD.

Keywords: Autism, children and parents

Introduction

Autism has become one of the most prevalent childhood afflictions of our generation. Autism is the second most common developmental disability, next to mental retardation. Autism is a "developmental disability affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that affects a child's performance" (IDEA, USA). An estimated 1 in 88 children (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) today is born with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) against a ratio of one in 110 few years back. Autism is a lifetime neurobiological disorder and is not curable. India is home to about 10 million people with Autism. A child with Autism is adversely affected in terms of the educational performance and day-to-day adjustment in his life. Autism Spectrum Disorder is a brain disorder that typically affects a child's ability to communicate, form relationships with others and respond appropriately to the environment. Some children with autism are relatively high functioning with speech and intelligence intact. Others are mentally retarded mute or have serious language delays. Boys are mostly affected by this disorder in comparison to girls.

Significance of the Study

The increase in the number of children diagnosed with autism and the determined need for early intervention to best address the needs of these children necessitates research to address this topic. The lack of existing research addressing current practices in schools and perceived gaps in intervention services makes this study even more important, especially regarding educational implications. World Education Forum 2000 held in DAKAR, Senegal on 26 -28 April 2000, declared 2015 as the target to achieve the aim of 'Education for All'. All learners have right to education, regardless of their

individual characteristics or difficulties. Inclusive education is mainly a purposeful effort to provide educational opportunities to all those groups which in the past, have been excluded from having an access to education. "These groups include children living in Poverty, linguistic minorities, girls, children from remote areas and those with disabilities or other special educational needs." (By UNESCO, 2003.) Inclusion is about making sure that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended and valued. Inclusive school should put the value into action.

Children with autism as other children goes to ordinary schools, they also must go to normal classes. General education teachers need to be sensitive with the special needs of learners with autism. The school and classroom environment should be flexible to help learners with autism to feel secure. All these needs make research studies more important in present context.

Objectives

To study the educational problems and parenting problems of children with autism spectrum disorder.

Methodology

- **Design of The Study:** The investigator has used descriptive survey method.
- **Sample:** For conducting the research, sample of 25 teacher and parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder selected by purposive sampling technique.
- **Statistical Techniques:** The researcher has used percentile method.

Table 1: Classroom Child Behavioral Symp Tom Questionnaire

S.N.	Item No.	Items	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	01	Has to be supervised in breaks	90	10
2	02	Requires a teacher only for him/herself during class	90	10
3	05	Needs help with eating	85	15
4	06	Is not able to work independently	90	10
5	08	Is instead fixated in stereotyped patterns	80	20
6	09	Does not finish tasks	80	20
7	12	Often has changes in mood or feelings	90	10
8	13	Reacts in an unpredictable manner	80	20
9	16	Is fascinated with things that turn, with lights	90	10
10	22	Makes strange body movements in class	65	35

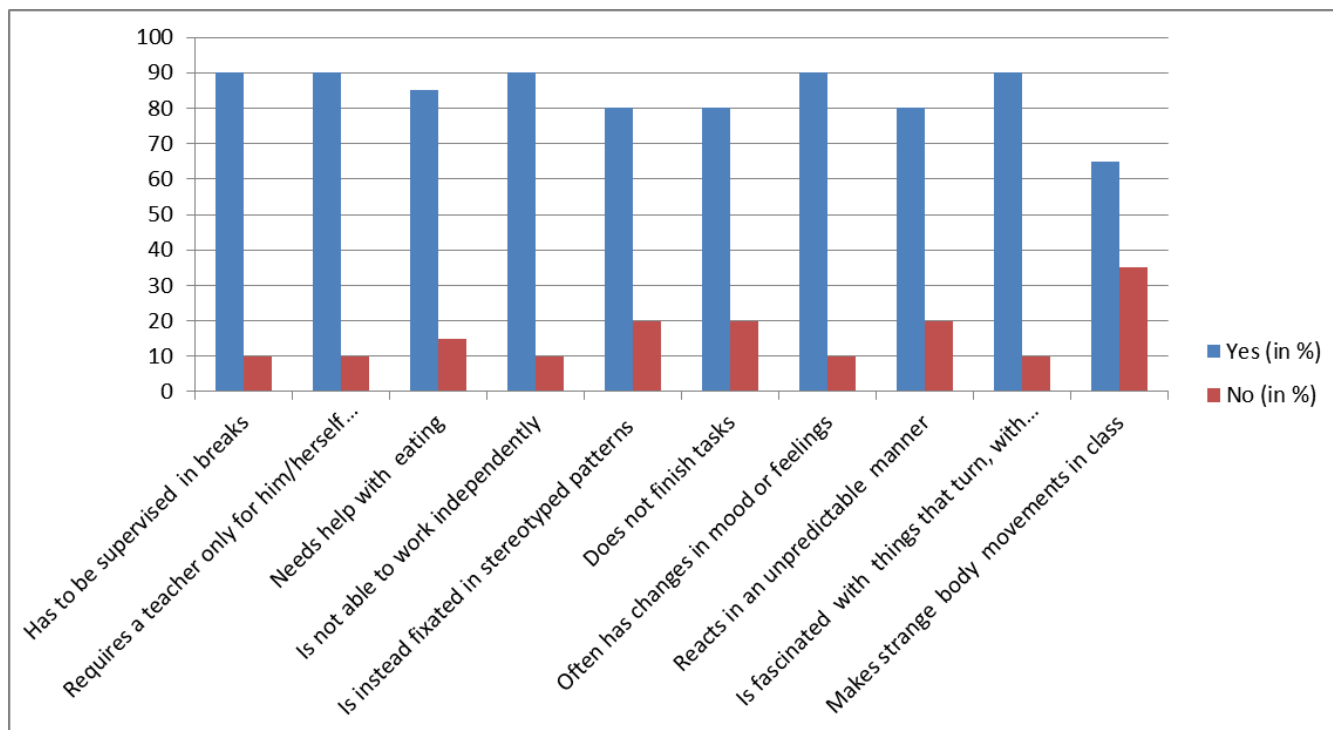


Fig 1: Bar Graph show classroom behavioral symptom of Children with Autism

Table 2: Problems Faced By Parents of Children with Autism

Variables	Number of Parents	Percentage
Social stigma	5	20%
Financial	15	60%
Lack of Awareness	5	20%
Any other	00	0%

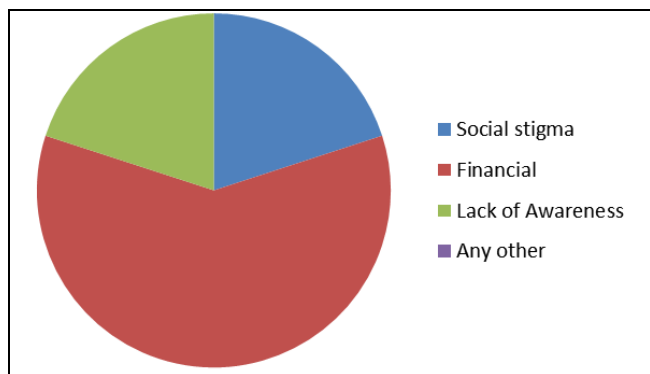
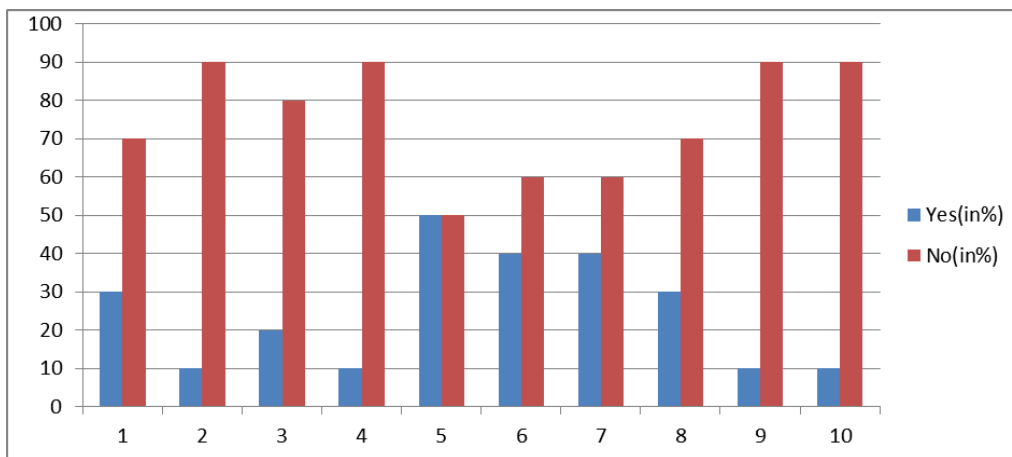


Table 3: Response of Parents

S.N.	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Does your child take interest in other children	30	70
2	Does your child ever use index finger to point, to ask for something	10	90
3	Does your child look you in the eye for more than a second or two	20	80
4	Does your child imitate you	10	90
5	Does your child respond to his or her name when you call	50	50
6	Does your child get upset by everyday noise	40	60
7	Does your child like movement activities	40	60
8	Does your child understand when you tell him to do something	30	70
9	Does your child enjoy playing hide & seek	10	90
10	Does your child enjoy playing swung, bounced on your knee, etc	10	90



Findings

Children with Autism: Children with autism need to interact with other students, because there is opportunity to the development of social interaction. Student can learn better when exposed to the general education environment under teacher assistance or with peers. Here we see the importance of inclusion for the development of social interaction. School and educational system should consider the inclusion education for the equality and development of all learners with special needs.

Teaching Methods: The finding shows that teachers are the important influential factor for the development of learners with Autism. Teacher has positive effects on social skills as well as in academic and behavior development of the student. Teaching children with autism need patience since they needs much time and a lot of repetition to learn.

The study revealed that the education for children with autism is still not full practiced and the children were not included in different social interaction activities. Because this education is still in the established stage most of the teachers do not have enough knowledge.

And also due to the low budget in education sector the schools fail to enroll enough teachers, to buy enough teaching and learning materials but also to create the environment which is supportive to learners with special need.

Parental Awareness

Result also bring out that majority of parents were not aware about the autism disorder however only few percent were exposed about the ASD. Keeping in view the above findings there is a dire need to spread awareness among local masses especially parents to get sensitized about the alarming disorder so to come forward and have exposure of different remedial measures which helps to bring holistic changes in children with ASD.

Educational implications of the study

The research findings will be used to improve and encourage the practices and it will help teachers to evaluate their practice in influencing development of social interaction for learners with Autism. Furthermore the study will provide the information for further research about social skills for learners with Autism. Also Information to other stake holder and Government about the improvement of the special need education also Improvement and planning education for children with autism.

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