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Learning problems regarding children with autism spectrum disorders

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Abstract---Background: Autism spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a constellation of early- appearing social communication deficits and repetitive sensory-motor behaviours associated with a strong hereditary component as well as other causes. Material and Method: A descriptive study was conducted in Care Centers in Holy Karbala from 1 May 2021 until 2 July 2021 to assessment of learning problems of Children at Autism. A Non-Probability of (Purposive Sample) of (69) Autistic children was selected to be a sample of this study, under the following criteria. Data analysis approaches is used in order to analyze the data of the study under investigation of the statistical package (SPSS) ver. (20) Results: The results showed that highest percentage of the study sample was represented (46%) whit in age group of (7-10) years, (64%) were made , (49.3%) were diagnosed with autism at (1-2) years , the level of education of the father a bachelor's degree was (32.2%) , while the education level of the mothers was (37.3%) also a bachelor's degree , more half (53.7%) were father job is an employee , and (44.8%) the mother job is also an employee and ,ore half (68.7%) of the study sample were the monthly income is enough. Conclusion: The study concluded that the low level of autistic behavior disorder of child with autism among the study sample. There is a significant impact of learning problems upon behavior of child with autism and Autistic behavior of child with autism is affected by the child age, level of education and type of living.

Keywords---learning, children, autism spectrum disorders.

Introduction

Autism spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a constellation of early-appearing social communication deficits and repetitive sensory-motor behaviours associated with a strong hereditary component as well as other causes ^(1,2). In 1943, Leo Kanner published the first systematic description of early infantile autism. He concluded that this was a neurodevelopmental disorder and that 'these children have come into the world with an innate inability to form the usual, biologically provided contact with people, Kanner assure that no matter how well developed our criteria each child must be treated as a unique person^(3,4,5). Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are among the most enigmatic and restricting disorders, given that affected individuals demonstrate alterations in three basic areas of development: reciprocal social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, and flexibility in their selection of interests and behaviors. The peculiar characteristics that define ASD cause major disturbances in the family dynamics and generate needs in all areas and contexts of development ^(6,7,8).

Autism is one of a spectrum of behaviorally defined "pervasive developmental disorders, which are commonly referred to as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The deficits in social communication and presence of restricted interests and repetitive behaviors result in lifelong impairments and disability. ASD has been reported to affect as many as 1 in 88 children in the US. Reported prevalence rates have risen dramatically in the last two decades, though little is understood about the increase. Epidemiologic surveys of adult populations suggest that the apparent rise in numbers of affected children may not represent a true increase in prevalence rates. Nevertheless, there is speculation that broadened definitions, growing awareness, and diagnostic substitution may be contributing to the apparent rise. Regardless of the cause, the current prevalence estimates suggest that there are more than 2 million individuals in the US with ASD. To date, no preventive strategies have demonstrated consistent benefits and no treatments have proven widely efficacious in treating the core symptoms of ASD. Consequently, ASD causes lifelong disabilities for affected individuals and significant burdens on their families, schools, and society^(9,10,11).

Material and Method

A descriptive study was conducted in Care Centers in Holy Karbala from 1 May 2021 until 2 July 2021 to assessment of Learning problems of Children at Autism. An official permission has been granted from The ethical committee of the college of Nursing /University of Kerbela. The holy Husseinian threshold/Educational Coordination and Rehabilitation Department. The Setting of the Study has been conducted at Autism care centers in holy Karbala. This study was conducted in care centers in Holy Karbala and the researcher chose these autism care centers as they receive all patients with autism. A Non-Probability of (Purposive Sample) of (69) Autistic children was selected to be a sample of this study, under the following criteria. Inclusion criteria for sample selection; Child in Autism care centers in holy Karbala only and Parents of child who agreed to participate in the research. Instrument of the study To assess the learning problems of children on the autism spectrum, the researcher built a

questionnaire to conduct interviews, which consists of two parts: administering a questionnaire that inquires about the social and demographic characteristics of autistic children and their parents and Managing a questionnaire related to the learning problems of autism spectrum children: Part one: A self-questionnaire related to the demographic characteristics of children and parents: This part is concerned with collecting basic socio-demographic data obtained from children and parents from the interview questionnaire paper such as (age, gender, Residence place, Date of autism diagnosis, level of education to the father, level of education to the mother, Monthly income, Parents social status, Fathers job, Mothers job).Part two: - Learning difficulties scale The second part of the questionnaire consists of (3) parts as follows: First aspects:- Academic difficulties . The second part of the questionnaire consists of (25) parts as follows: (Lacks ability to continue working , Requires constant observation from others, Unable to focus, Finds difficulty in following instructions, Finds difficulty in general reading, Finds difficulty in performing mathematical calculations, Finds difficulty in righting words correctly, The handwriting is unreadable , The handwriting is unreadable, .Fluctuation in performance from one day to another or an hour to another., Slow in finishing any work, Unable to follow given instructions , Vocabulary is very limited , The ability to understand is very low , Unable to tell a story in a clear and understandable way. Has difficulty in arranging ideas in a logical sequence, Finds difficulty in correctly introducing themselves verbally, The ability to organize work is low, Unable to follow classroom discussions, Does not copy what they see correctly whether it's from the board or a book, The question is limited to a one word answer. Incapable of answering in full sentences. Finds difficulty in practicing what is learned, Requires long amount of time to arrange thoughts before answering, Inverts words and numbers when reading and writing, Uses incomplete sentences full of grammatical errors , Is constantly late in handing in school homework, Needs longer time in learning new tasks in comparison with fellow classmates). Second aspects: - behavioral characteristics (Focus is easily distracted , impulsive , known for being foolish , The behavior is hard to predict , Unable to control themselves (talks without permission, jumps from their seat etc.) , Stubborn , Always rude with other people , Always moving and unable to rest , Is easily consulted by other children , Behavior does not fit the situation most of the time , Easily agitated and loses temper, Moody).Third aspects: movement cognitive difficulties (Unable to remember the printed word , .Finds difficulty in identifying words and numbers , Lacks ability in distinguishing sizes , Lacks ability in distinguishing (left, right, up, down) , Ability to balance is very weak ,Has weakness in hearing memory , Finds difficulty in distinguishing noise stimulators , The general movement consistency is very weak , Has weakness in visual memory , The ability to use hands is very weak ,generally lacks ability in movement skills , Able to hear but cannot understand what is heard , Has deficiency in remembering simple geometric shapes).Data analysis approaches is used in order to analyze the data of the study under investigation of the statistical package (SPSS) ver. (20)

Results

Table 1
Distribution of socio demographic Characteristics for Autism children

Social Demographic Characteristics	Rating	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent	Mean
Age	1-3	4	5.8	6.0	2.93
	4-6	19	27.5	34.3	
	7-10	22	31.9	67.2	
	11-13	22	31.9	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
Gender	Male	44	63.8	64.2	1.34
	Female	23	33.3	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
Place	Urban	62	89.9	92.5	1.07
	Rural	5	7.2	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
Data of diagnosis	1-2	32	46.4	47.8	1.94
	3-4	16	23.2	71.6	
	5-6	10	14.5	86.6	
	7-More	9	13.0	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
Parents social status	Married	62	89.9	92.5	1.07
	Divorced	5	7.2	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
level of education to the father	primary	16	23.2	23.9	3.93
	High school	10	14.5	38.8	
	diploma	10	14.5	53.7	
	bachelor	25	36.2	91.0	
	master	6	8.7	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
level of education to the mother	Uneducation	3	4.3	4.5	3.73
	primary	18	26.1	31.3	
	High School	7	10.1	41.8	
	Diploid	9	13.0	55.2	
	Bachelor	26	37.7	94.0	
	Master	4	5.8	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
Father job	employee	44	63.8	65.7	1.37
	free work	22	31.9	98.5	
	no work	1	1.4	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		
Mother job	employee	35	50.7	52.2	2.43
	No work	32	46.4	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		

	Total	67	100.0		
Monthly income	Enough	55	79.7	82.1	1.27
	Hardly enough	6	8.7	91.0	
	not enough	6	8.7	100.0	
	Total	67	97.1		

Table (1) show that highest percentage of the study sample was represented (46%) whit in age group of (7-10) years, (64%) were made , (49.3%) were diagnosed with autism at (1-2) years , the level of education of the father a bachelor's degree was (32.2%) , while the education level of the mothers was (37.3%) also a bachelors degree , more half (53.7%) were father job is an employee , and (44.8%) the mother job is also an employee and ,ore half (68.7%) of the study sample were the monthly income is enough.

Table 2
Association between learning problem and Social Demographic Characteristics variable

Social Demographic Characteristics	Rating	Total	RanK		2x	df	Sig
			low	high			
Age	1-3	4	2	2	2.58	3	0.62 NS
	4-6	14	11	8			
	7-10	22	8	14			
	11-13	22	8	14			
	Total	67					
Gender	Male	43	18	25	0.99	1	0.81 NS
	Female	24	11	13			
	Total	67					
Place	Urban	62	27	35	0.02 4	1	1.0
	Rural	5	2	3			
	Total	67					
Data of diagnosis	1-2	33	21	12	13.7 1	3	0.003 HS
	3-4	12	5	7			
	5-6	4	1	3			
	7-More	18	2	16			
	Total	67					
Parents social status	Married	50	14	36	18.7 5	1	0.001 HS
	Divorced	17	15	2			
	Total	67					
level of education to the father	primary	19	8	11	2.53	4	0.002 HS
	High school	9	5	4			
	diploma	12	6	6			
	bachelor	22	7	15			
	master	5	3	2			
	Total	67					
level of education to the mother	Undulation	6	5	1	12.2 1	5	0.003 HS
	primary	19	12	7			

	High School	5	2	3			
	Diploid	9	1	8			
	Bachelor	25	8	17			
	Master	3	1	2			
	Total	67					
Father job	employee	36	9	27	12.8 1	3	0.004 HS
	free work	29	19	10			
	no work	2	1	1			
	Total	67					
Mother job	employee	30	6	24	21.9 8	2	0.001 HS
	free work	15	14	1			
	No work	22	9	13			
	Total	67					
Monthly income	Enough	46	13	33	14.0 7	2	0.001 HS
	Hardly enough	9	6	3			
	not enough	12	10	2			
	Total	67					

Table (2) indicates that is high significant Association between learning problem for children with autism and Date of diagnosis, Parents social status, father level of education, level of education to the mother, Father job, Mother job, and Monthly income while, there is no significant association between age , gender, place for children with autism.

Discussion

The samples of age groups, results indicate that high percentage of the study sample of the old were within (7-10) years was ((46%)). This result is supported by ^(12,13) .A male preponderance was observed in children with autism. Moreover to Parents social status, the majority of study sample were married, concerning the level of education to the father, the higher percentages were for those who are bachelor. And level of education to the mother the higher percentages were for those who are Bachelor. This result is supported by ⁽¹⁴⁾ 61% of the fathers had a bachelor's degree .Regarding Father job, the high percentages employee, and mother job employee. Regarding Monthly income, the high percentages Enough. This result is supported by (Lee,et al,2008) Where the financial situation of the family is good about 70% of the total participants in the study.Table (2) indicates that there is no significant association between learning problem for children with autism and age of the children. This result agrees with results done by Elia, et al. (2000) which indicated there were no significant difference between age of the children and learning problem^(15,16) .The study shows that there is no significant relationship between learning problem for children with autism and gender of the children. and This result agree with results obtained from study done by Hering, et al. (1999) which indicated that, there is no relationship between gender and learning problem for children.Analysis of the result of the study shows that there is no significant relationship between learning problem for children with autism and place. This result agrees with Richdale (1999), which showed that there is no

significant relationship between learning problem for children with autism and place. The table also indicated that there is significant association between learning problem for children with autism and educational level of the mother. These findings agree with results obtained from a study done by Wiggs, (2001) which indicated that there is significant relationship between educational levels of father and mother regarding learning problem for children with autism. Regarding the relationship between occupation of the father and mother and learning problem for children with autism the present study indicates that there is significant relationship between learning problem for children with autism and occupation of the father and mother. This result is in agreement with the study done by Acebo, et al. (2005). This study indicates significant relationship occupation of the father and mother and learning problem for children with autism. Analysis of the result of the study shows that there is significant relationship between learning problem for children with autism and monthly income of the family. This result agrees with Richdale (1999), which showed that there is significant relationship between learning problem for children with autism and monthly income of the family^(17,18).

Conclusion

The study concluded that the low level of autistic behavior disorder of child with autism among the study sample. There is a significant impact of learning problems upon behavior of child with autism and Autistic behavior of child with autism is affected by the child age, level of education and type of living.

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