

# Parental Adjustments to the Behaviour of Children with ASD

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## Abstract

The objective of this research was to examine how parents adapt to the behaviour of their autistic children. What steps do parents make to accommodate the conduct of their autistic children? Knowing the elements that support and impede the efforts of parents to adapt to the behaviour of children with autism is essential to the process. This study employs qualitative descriptive research methodologies. This research relies on primary data sources gathered via in-depth interviews with parents of children with autism as its data source. The study subjects are parents with autistic children. This research concludes that adapting to the behaviour of hyperactively behaving autistic children requires a great deal of patience and time since it is difficult to manage hyperactively behaving autistic youngsters. Every day, children exert pressure on their parents. To adapt to their children's behaviour, parents give treatment via behaviour therapy and behaviour modification. Behavioural treatment consists of occupational therapy, speech therapy, and socializing via the elimination of incorrect conduct. The treatment for behaviour change comprises modelling and positive reinforcement. In the process of adapting to the behaviour of autistic children, several things serve as both supports and impediments to the parents' efforts.

**Keywords:** Adjustment • Parents • Autism Child Behaviour

## Introduction

The maturation and growth process that one child goes through cannot in any way be compared to that of another child since it is unique and different for each child and takes place throughout their whole life [1-3]. The challenges that are encountered also differ from one youngster to the next. Problems may manifest themselves in a variety of ways, such as linguistic disorders, emotional disorders, sensory-motor disorders, and developmental diseases at the stage of physical development. Autism is one of the conditions that affect children that parents worry about in today's society. Autism was not widely known at first, and some people called it a mental illness, an idiot child, or just an undisciplined naughty child until he was possessed by a spirit. However, in general, people who have autism share certain symptoms, including a lack of ability to socialize or communicate with others, a lack of concern for their surroundings, a lack of laughter, and a failure to talk. alone, and completely immersed in his world [4, 5].

The process of socialization carries on throughout a person's life. Children need to have many opportunities for socializing throughout their formative years so that they may develop the skills necessary for successful

interaction with other people. Likewise, even if a kid has a physical illness as well as a mental disease, they still need to interact with other people to maintain their existence.

It is of the utmost importance for parents who have children with behavioural issues, such as children who have autism, to get their children engaged in activities that entail interaction with other people [6-8]. This is done so that the parents may have a deeper understanding of the symptoms and factors that contribute to autism. Autism is a phrase that is used to describe a sort of developmental disease that is present in children, or, to put it another way, autism is characterized by a lack of social interaction, a tendency to be alone, or a way of thinking that is controlled by personal needs or oneself, responding to the world based on one's visions and expectations, rejecting reality. Autism is a term that is used to describe a type of developmental disorder that is found in children. strong views that were fueled by his thoughts and imagination [9-11]. This strange behaviour, which is classified as a severe developmental disorder, manifests itself as an indifference to the surrounding environment and a tendency to be alone as if the individual were living in a different world. This strange behaviour is brought on by several factors, including the parents, psychogenetics, the environment, sociocultural influences, and the perinatal period [12, 13].

Toxic exposure to heavy metals during a child's development in the womb is one of the leading causes of autism. Mercury, cadmium, infantile spasm, congenital rubella, tuberous sclerosis, cerebral lipidosis, and fragile X chromosomal defects are some of the conditions that fall within this category. In addition, children who have autism have neurological issues that affect the cerebral cortex, cerebellum, midbrain, cerebellum, brainstem, pons, hypothalamus, pituitary, medulla, and the five sensory nerves, as well as the visual nerves or hearing nerves [14, 15]. Typical symptoms of autism in children include disrupted sleep patterns, digestive disorders, impaired cognitive function, lack of eye contact, one-way communication, aphasia, self-stimulation, tantrums (temper tantrums), aggressive or hyperactive actions, self-harm, and indifferent and stereotypic motor disorders. Autism

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is a developmental disorder that affects the brain [16, 17].

Field research has shown that parents who have children diagnosed with autism tend to behave in a manner that is distinct from that of other parents [18, 19]. The first few years of an autistic kid's life are often the most challenging and taxing for the parent of a child with autism since it is during this time that the child is developing their symptoms. During this time, parents often find themselves confronted with a great number of challenges. It is not simply caused by children; rather, it is a conglomeration of several different issues that may be a burden for parents, including issues that are the result of responses from the community. To cure their autistic kid, parents need to be able to transform themselves into people who are capable of making efforts that do not include giving up. Parents need to be able to keep their emotions under control in response to their children's activities, particularly those acts that put the kid in danger, such as injuring themselves. In addition, parents of autistic children often find themselves cut off from social engagement because other people do not always understand the context of the conduct of autistic children [20].

Self-adjustment is a response to a process that includes mental and behavioural responses that individuals strive to successfully deal with internal needs, tensions, frustrations, and conflicts and to produce quality harmony between demands from within the individual and the demands of the outside world or environment. Self-adjustment is a response to a process that includes mental and behavioural responses that individuals strive to successfully deal with internal needs, tensions, frustrations, and conflicts [13]. Adjustment disorders manifest themselves when a person is unable to effectively manage the challenges they are now facing, which leads to inefficient answers and behaviours, unmanageable emotional situations like rage, and circumstances that are not to their liking. People who have adjustment disorders suffer from high levels of anxiety, a heightened sensitivity to disappointment, a dependency on the support of others, and difficulty exercising self-control while interacting with others. Aspects of a person's environment and elements of the person's personality may both have an impact on how well a person adapts to new circumstances [21-23].

Other adjustment disorders, such as helplessness and a weak ability to self-regulate, are also associated with the external control centre. Because these things can also cause a variety of reactions, including depression, people who are classified as external are also more likely to experience depression. On the other hand, research done on internal groups paints a more optimistic picture, revealing that active individuals are more self-confident, work harder to learn new things, and make constant efforts to advance themselves. Self-adjustment may be inferred from the presence of few barriers to adjustment; conversely, a person's degree of adjustment is inversely proportional to the difficulty of the challenges they must overcome [24, 25].

## Methods

In light of the challenges presented by this investigation, the method of research that is most suitable is a descriptive qualitative approach. The methods of data gathering that were used included the following three processes: interviews, observations made in the field (field observations), and documentation.

A kind of sampling known as purposive sampling was used in the conduct of this investigation. A sample or selection process is carried out with the help of this objective sampling approach. When we say that the sample is chosen based on particular factors that are based on the study goals, what we mean is that this is what is intended here. This deliberate sample has features such as the inability to predict the sample design in advance, sequential sample selection, and the use of the snowball sampling approach, which is beneficial in this particular scenario. Beginning with the number one, then as time goes on there will be an increasing number of them, continual adjustment of the sample, also known as the sample being picked through time. If there is a pattern of recurrence, the foundation for the study focus and the selection will be abandoned.

A descriptive qualitative data analysis model was used to carry out the data analysis procedure for this particular research project. For the researcher to first explain the circumstance or phenomena that was acquired and then examine it using various word forms to arrive at findings. The method of analysing the data consisted of the following 4 stages: collecting the data, reducing the amount of data, presenting the data, and drawing conclusions from the data.

## Results and Discussion

### Parental adjustment process to the behaviour of children with autism

According to the findings of the interviews that the researchers conducted, they discovered that the initial response that was expressed by parents when they first found out that their kid had been diagnosed with autism was a sensation of surprise or astonishment. So that throughout the process of parents adjusting to the condition of their children, many emotional responses are felt by the parents, and this is because many emotional reactions are felt by the children.

Because sustaining the emotional responses of parents who have children with autism must be the first step in the process of adjustment, modifications must first be made by the parents of children with autism themselves before being able to adapt to other individuals. For parents of children with autism to eventually be able to accept their kid's condition, the parents must keep their emotions in check and do so on a step-by-step basis. This will allow the parents to accept the child's condition while they are working with the child.

Environmental conditions are one of the supporting factors in the process of adjusting to parents. Having a conducive environment, such as a family environment in which members can respect and respect each other and can accept the situation, or a safe society in which residents live together in harmony, will enable everything to run smoothly and not be constrained in the process of adjusting to parents.

A person has successfully adjusted when they can properly cope with the challenges they face and the expectations that their environment places on them in an attempt to enhance their quality of life. The parents, with time, come to terms with the circumstances surrounding their kid and conclude that their child is just like any other typical youngster. The last step in the process of adjusting parents to the behaviours of autistic children is to provide pleasure, which occurs when parents can accept their child's condition.

*"Yes, now my family and I have been able to accept my child's condition. I have been able to accept it from the age of one, because he is also my child and I want to or not have to love him because children who are less normal need more love, especially from their parents. Sometimes I am sad, madam, and think about why God gave a child who is not normal, but on the other hand, I am also aware that everything must have a lesson." (Interview Result 2022)*

The strain of caring for a kid with autism may be overwhelming for some parents, and if it is not effectively managed, it can have detrimental effects on the family as a whole. Enhancing the spiritual significance or knowledge that may be drawn from one's life is one strategy that can be used to help parents improve their resilience and capacity for patience.

### Efforts that have been taken by parents to be able to adjust to the behaviour of children with autism

For everything to remain in a state of equilibrium, the parents must make an effort to accommodate their child's situation. According to the findings of interviews with the informants that were carried out, several different efforts were made by them to adapt to the behaviour of the children. The act of gathering knowledge, having an open mind to be able to adjust to the child's situation, and consistently thinking logically are some of the others. Positive

efforts that can be done by parents can provide positive benefits for the child. Examples of such positive efforts include giving instructions on how to behave well toward others, how to be polite, and also how to tell what is right and what is wrong. In addition to this, parents send their children to specialized schools.

Positive actions taken by parents, including but not limited to:

*"Our efforts consist of sending our kid to special schools and attempting to offer various treatments, including behavioural therapy, speech therapy, and pharmacological therapy, in the hopes that the community would learn to accept our child's conduct." (Interview Result, 2022)*

It is of the utmost importance that parents comprehend the need of beginning treatment as soon as is humanly feasible and well before the age of 5 years. Between the ages of two and three years, the human brain has its most rapid period of growth. The availability of various treatments will be of tremendous assistance in the recovery of autistic youngsters.

It is impossible to separate the process of adjusting from the efforts that need to be made by parents who have children with autistic problems who behave violently or hyperactively. This is because the two go hand in hand. For the conduct of the kid to reach a stage when it is reasonable and may be accepted by society. Behavioural therapy (occupational therapy, speech therapy), medical therapy/drugs, special school therapy, music therapy, and behaviour modification therapy are the forms of treatment that the parents are attempting to provide for their child.

### Supporting factor

There are several supportive variables that, when combined, may help the process of adjustment that parents go through while dealing with children who have autism. Because parents are friends who are seen as being the closest to the kid, their role in leading autistic children is extremely significant. Because of this, the role that parents play in guiding autistic children is highly important. Because children are a gift from God that we are obligated to take care of, parents whose children with autism spectrum disorders have a responsibility to understand their children better and to continue to show them, love. Social environmental factors in which the role of the environment plays a significant part in assisting parents in adjusting to children who have autism so that the challenges faced by the parents will feel light and will not be too great of a burden, and so that parents who have children with autism will not feel inferior when engaging in activities with other people when such conditions are present. How society and the economy are structured has a significant impact on how autistic children are cared for.

*"When it comes to the way we raise our children, socioeconomic variables are, without a doubt, among the most important considerations. We give thanks to God that the economic components have been adequate thus far, even though finding them has been a challenge. We do it as a family because our children are the centre of our lives and we want the best for them. Additionally, we hope that our youngster will get well and act correctly" (Interview Result, 2022)*

Therefore, it is evident that parents who have children with autism tend to have an adequate economy, which allows them to manage their children well. This is because autism is a costly condition.

### Obstacle factor

In addition to the elements that helped ease the transition into coping with the child's illness. The parents also revealed the circumstances that were hindering the child. The state of the kid is the issue that is impeding progress. This indicates that even though the kid's parents have engaged in a variety of activities in the interest of the child's development, the youngster is not making forward progress in his or her growth. The youngster demonstrates an increasing amount of undesirable conduct. In this particular instance, the expectations of the parents and the reality do not correspond with one another. Children that exhibit hyperactivity are notoriously difficult to treat.

*"The state of youngsters who are disobedient, act in a way that might do them harm, behave in a manner that is not normal, and enjoy hurting their friends." (Interview Result, 2022)*

Parents of autistic children are making significant contributions to the development of effective treatments for their children, particularly in the field of behavioural therapy, which includes occupational therapy and speech therapy. Children with autism who exhibit hyperactive activity need behavioural treatment or behaviour modification, specifically for the creation of attitudes that will ensure the child's conduct does not stray from the norm and that the community will accept the child's behaviour.

## Conclusion

The adjustment of parents to the behaviour of a child with autism is a process that can take quite a long time and requires a sufficient amount of patience. During this adjustment process, parents are required to try their best to accept their child's condition honestly from the moment the child is diagnosed with autism. Managing a hyperactive autistic kid is much more difficult than managing a typical child since autism is a severe condition that needs the child to get intensive therapy. to allow the kid to act naturally and to meet the standards set by society.

The following are some elements that may either help or hinder an individual's ability to adapt to the behaviours of children who have autism: When looked at from the perspective of supporting variables, economic circumstances are particularly helpful in the process of dealing with children with autism. As a result, parents prefer to manage their children effectively when economic reasons are supportive. Additionally, the family components of autistic children all assist in the healing of children's behaviour and always give support to both the parents of autistic children and the autistic children themselves. This is true whether the kid has autism or not. Seen from the perspective of environmental causes, people tend to tolerate the child's conduct in its current form. Even though a special tumpeng is held for children with autism once per year, this remains a public issue for children with autism. and about the component that is hindering, one example of this would be a kid that is difficult to manage, to the point where the parents get overwhelmed while dealing with the child.

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