

# Autism Children: Performance and Intervention

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## Abstract:

People's understanding of children with ASD is constantly expanding, causing more attention from the society and moving to a more promising direction. Now, more and more experimental research is actively involved in helping children with autism. Through collecting and analyzing the data of children with autism in eastern and western countries, this paper explores and discusses the situation and intervention of children with autism. The factors that influence autistic children are discussed in this paper, including social factors, family factors and school factors. Some intervention studies are discussed in this article, including Cognitive Behavior Therapy, sports activities such as dancing. The results signify that children with autism are still in a situation where more people need to understand and help. While there are effective strategies that can be applied to help children with ASD, research must uncover more potent therapies to support the development of independence in autistic children.

**Keywords:** Autism; children; interventions

## 1. Introduction

For many years people who have limited access to autistic people think that they are deliberately closed off and refuse to talk to the outside world. Under the portrayal and shaping of many movies and TV dramas, more perceptions about autistic people are genius in certain domains. Asperger, the first to use the word "autistic" to describe the unusual behaviors observed in children, assisting with the differentiation of another term schizophrenic withdrawal [1]. Asperger, acts like a pioneer, delves into autism, which is also called autistic spectrum disorder. According to Kanner's "infantile autism", symptoms of autism can be detected in infancy, indicating neurodevelopmental conditions that are present from birth [2]. Although much research has been done, the exact cause of autism remains undiscovered. In recent years, scientists continue to study and make some progress. Studies have shown a positive correlation between fetal androgen secretion and autism [3]. The growing discussion and public push for autism has led to greater understanding and exposure to autism in the community. Such scientific insights, together with increased public awareness, provide a solid foundation for a deeper understanding of autism. These advances are critical and form the fundamentals for the development and implementation of productive intervention programs. This paper is going to focus on analyzing the current situation of children with autism based on this emerging awareness. By looking at the challenges they

encounter and the opportunities they are afforded, we expect to more fully assess the breadth and effectiveness of different intervention programs. The article aims to determine how these interventions might be enhanced to fulfill the developmental requirements of autistic children and assist them in realizing their full potential in a society that is becoming more and more accepting of difference.

## 2. Relationship Description

Within the autism community, there is an immense amount of worry about the prevalence of behavioral issues and mental health issues in children and adults with autism. Considering that such challenges can greatly affect the well-being of both the person involved and their relatives, this understanding emphasizes the need for more focused study and intervention techniques to support this population [4]. What society cannot neglect at stage is still the mental health issues and behavior problems of autistic children. Labeling cannot be avoided, leading to more complicated mental health problems of them. The attitude of the society and families play a vital role in influencing the autistic children. Hence, conditions of children with autism, such as negative emotional and behavioral problems, were found to be prioritized by exploring the impact of social, family and school treatment.

### 2.1 Social Factor

Culture, policies, and other influences have changed the way autism is treated in different countries. Specifically,

mental health issues are treated differently in Eastern and Western countries. Western countries, such as the United States, are more open to discussing mental health issues faced by children. As a result, Western societies treat autistic children with a more positive mindset to help them. However, it needs to be emphasized that the help and services provided by society, both in the West and in the East, are not enough. Concerns of parents are demonstrated by pointing out the lack of support and attention of the society [4]. Parents of children with autism seek private providers due to treatment delays caused by limited access to formal mental health services. [4]. When treatment is delayed, the challenges faced by children with autism become even more severe. This not only means that society does not pay enough attention to the causes of autism in children with autism, but it also has a negative impact on the future learning, socialization, life and mental health of children with autism. In terms of eastern countries, social challenges make more autistic children overwhelmed.

The lack of advanced social welfare and support systems in China has compelled parents to take on the role of educators for their children with autism [5]. In addition, the lesser publicity and promotion of autism knowledge in the society has led to a lack of public awareness of autism, leaving the whole social environment lacking in tolerance and understanding. Indeed, more people in eastern areas regard “difference” as deficits. Autistic children have to endure more challenges and burden because of lack of social inclusion and understanding, and social attention. Therefore, the cascading effect of social factor cannot be underestimated.

### **2.2 Family Factor**

Family factors have also become an indispensable factor affecting autistic children. Under the reflection of society, the influence of family on autistic children is also different. First, bereavement and separation expose children with autism to more risks [4]. Based on narrations of parents, they report that both bereavement and divorce can result in alterations in the daily lives of children diagnosed with autism [4]. In more detail, children with autism also experience emotional and behavioral changes. In DSM5, the diagnostic criteria clarify three deficits of autistic people [6]. Children with autism have persistent difficulties forming, maintaining, and developing relationships. Hence, the disruption of caregivers and attachment relationships takes a huge toll on children with autism. Moreover, restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities are listed to show the diagnosis of autism. Changing environment suddenly can cause mental health issues of autistic children. There is high possibility that autistic children can develop anxiety and restlessness due

to changes in family structure. Because Chinese parents stand the risk of losing reputation if they have a child with ASD, they appear to be more sensitive to a disability diagnosis than Western parents [5]. The traditional concept that family honor is important to everything brought about by the pressure of public opinion undoubtedly affects the process of treatment for autistic children. Chinese parents tend to avoid discussing their child’s autism, even delaying seeking help, bringing negative emotions and behaviors of children. Apart from family impact, social difficulties, avoidance of emotions and other problems are worsening.

### **2.3 School Factor**

In addition to society and family, the school environment is also discussed as an important factor in the analysis. It has been repeatedly shown that elements of the school environment, such as the school’s ethos, policies, and practices, have the power to dramatically influence mental health outcomes in either a favorable or bad way [4]. Apart from the family, school is the main place where children live during their childhood. A favorable school environment, such as the help of special teachers and the friendliness of classmates, can positively help autistic children to practice and learn social skills, and also produce a better state of mind. Adverse impacts can also emerge. Exclusion and lack of special education resources can also lead to many negative effects. Low self-esteem, feelings of isolation and defiance can develop. This explains the importance of the school environment.

### **3. Internalizing Problems, Externalizing Problems and Comorbidity**

To describe the situation of children with autism, internalizing problems, externalizing problems and comorbidity should be taken seriously. Children with autism are more prone to negative emotional problems due to core defects such as social communication and cognitive rigid. Drawing from Shoaib’s study, ADHD is the most common comorbidity of autism, followed by mood disorders [7]. Moreover, if the symptoms of anxiety in children with autism are not alleviated, some inappropriate externalizing behavior can easily occur. Self-injurious behavior, verbal aggression, and physical aggression are some representative harmful behaviors that occur in autistic children. According to the research paper Mental health aspects of autistic spectrum disorders in children, in a group of 67 children with ASD, almost half of the syndromes (anxiety/depression, withdrawal/depression, social problems, attention problems) reached the clinical meaningful range [8]. Negative emotions and behavioral problems not only aggravate the suffering of the autistic child himself, but

also burden the family. Therefore, discussing strategies for regulating the emotions of children with autism is needed.

### **4. Emotion Regulation Strategies**

Taking a deeper exploration of children with autism, interventions to help them and discussing effectiveness need to be presented. By discussing the effectiveness of interventions in depth and constantly reviewing the findings, it can contribute to meeting the special needs of children with autism.

First comes with the discussion of emotion regulation, which is also called ER. The regularity of which ER-related problems arise in children with ASD [9]. The authors specify the importance of Gross's model, offering an insightful strategy to help with ER. Following Gross's model of emotion regulation process, the following five main strategies are needed for emotion management and intervention for children with autism: situational regulation, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation [9]. First, in terms of situational regulation, pointing to the necessity of teaching children with autism to recognize and avoid specific situations that may cause their negative emotions or behaviors. Then comes with the situation modification, meaning the actions of changing environment to minimize the environmental impact on children with autism. Third, attentional deployment is an effective idea that can help prevent children with autism from paying constant attention to emotional triggers. For example, by counting stars, playing games, etc., the autistic child's attention can be successfully diverted from thoughts of stimulation. In addition of attentional deployment, the fourth process called cognitive change plays a prominent role too. Children with autism are stereotyped and hard to change. The cognitive reconstructive therapy technique is a beneficial method to guide them to re-perceive and see the situation in a more positive light. The last process is response modulation, which refers to solutions that children with autism can take after negative emotions have already been created. Like deep breathing, inappropriate behavior can be better prevented. Furthermore, one of the best ways to help with this is to teach autistic children how to communicate their unpleasant emotions.

### **5. Psychological Interventions for Autism and Their Effectiveness**

More than ER, there is proof that CBT, which is called Cognitive and Behavior Therapy, helps children with autism. CBT proves to be successful in enhancing social capabilities among children with autism [10]. Through a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials, social skills

are proven to be improved evidently by CBT compared with control groups [10]. It is apparent that CBT can support children with autism to adapt better to society. By learning social skills such as expressing emotions and communicating effectively, they can enhance their self-efficacy, increase their self-confidence and have a better mindset.

Besides CBT, findings suggest that engaging in intense physical activity leads to notable improvements in cognitive and behavioral adaptability, specifically executive functions, immediately (within 0 to 90 minutes) following the exercise. However, these enhancements do not persist in the long term (beyond 24 hours) in students diagnosed with ASD [11]. What is more, a practicable motor-based intervention can be implemented for children with ASD because studies have indicated that a portion of children diagnosed with autism exhibit notable impairments in their motor skills from a young age [11]. Like all people, sports can help children with autism become physically healthier. Not only that, when exercising, autistic children's executive functions can improve, which can lead to greater independence. Furthermore, improved focus enables children with autism to more effectively manage their emotions. This can be seen in their ability to practice shifting their attention away from other environments or things that cause negative emotions or even negative behaviors. Using Dance movement psychotherapy as an example, results have shown that the therapy improves emotional, cognitive, physical and social integration in people with autism [12]. As a result, physical activities can help children with autism improve in many ways. More creative therapies can be found to help children with ASD.

### **6. Conclusion**

This study found that children with autism still face difficulties in social integration and access to educational resources, and also showed that some interventions were effective in helping children with autism. This may be explained by the following facts. First, despite the increased awareness of autism in recent years, children and families with autism still lack adequate support and understanding, especially in countries and regions where stigma exists. Secondly, the funds and resources invested by various countries, governments, societies and even communities for autistic children, or special groups, are obviously insufficient to support and help all autistic children. This article brings some thought to this: More targeted interventions need to be studied, and children with autism do not mean that they are the same. Every child is unique, requiring people to notice the term "autism" cannot represent children with ASD. People need to avoid labeling,

eliminating the stigma and stigma associated with autism. Not only that, but the society also need to pay attention to care for autistic children and offer them resources. Finally, countries helping each other can accelerate the pace of research and encourage more targeted interventions to be applied to help children with autism. In societies where efforts are made to help children with autism, children with autism have more opportunities to develop their potential. In the end, an inclusive society will come closer and closer.

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