The Knowledge of Autistic Children's Mothers Regarding Autism in Basra City

Abdulkareem Salman Khudhair[*], Saja Kareem Jassim

Department of fundamentals of Nursing, College of Nursing, University of Basra, Basra, Iraq
*Corresponding author: Abdulkareem.salman@uobasrah.edu.iq

Abstract To evaluate the knowledge quantitively of mothers with autistic children regarding autism. Identify relationship between mother's knowledge with their age, level of education and Job. A cross sectional study carried out at the Emam Hussein Training Institute and Donia Al-Amal center in Al-Basra city from November- 9th – 2016 through February -1st-2017. Random sample of 50 mothers was collected, who was having children with autism. The data collected by obtaining formal approval from the directors of the two centers. Who in turn to distribute questionnaires to mothers of autistic children through personal interview between the director of the centers and mothers of children and has answered all the questions in front of them, because the law of the centers doesn't allow other peoples to know anything about the family of the affected children due to social reasons. The relationship between mothers knowledge and education is significant (at <0.05) and all other variables are not significant relations with mother's knowledge. Mothers in two centers have sufficient knowledge about autism in children, Level of education play important role in improvement mother's information. Frequent sessions should be organized for mothers about autism, and its management to improve their information, and to dealing with their children in appropriate way. Frequent research studies are recommended to evaluate the improvement of mothers information take into account the importance of level of education for mothers.

Keywords: *autistic children's, mothers regarding, autism*

1. Introduction

Autism is neurodevelopment disorder characterized by impairments in social interactions, communication and Restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior that typically emerge in the first few years of life [1]. Typically, autism is manifest by the time a child is three years of age and is life-long [2,3]. There is variability in the pattern and severity of symptoms and in the timing of diagnosis [4]. Even if the parents often notice that something is wrong during infancy it is very difficult to diagnose autism before the age of 3 years, this is because the behavioral symptoms used to establish the diagnosis have not clearly emerged developmentally until that age [5,6]. Significantly more boys than girls are affected with autism by a ratio of approximately 4:1 [7,8]. Children with autism are found in all cultures and social and economic groups [9]. Several lines of evidence indicate that genetic, environmental, and immunological factors may play a role in its pathogenesis [10]. Some investigators expand the nature of autism to that of a multisystem metabolic disease, not just a brain disorder [11]. The term autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) or pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) represents a group of disorders which includes five diagnostic subtypes including autism, PDD- not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), Rett's Syndrome, child disintegrative disorder, Asperser's disorder [13,14]. Two features distinguish autism from other PDD: early age of onset before age 36 months] and severe disturbance in social interaction. [14] As of 2010 the rate of autism is estimated at about 1-2 per 1,000 people worldwide [13,14,15].

In Iraq the autism prevalence not studied, no previous studies considering and not well known.

Autism is become increasing and there is no enough knowledge about it in our society in Basra. And there is no other studies that focusing to evaluate mothers knowledge about autism, Because of the important role of the mother in early attention to abnormal behavior of the child which is the main factor that contributes to the improvement of the child state through early intervention, therefore, to shed a light on such issue for the first time in Basra city.

2. Methods

Descriptive, cross sectional study was carried out at Emam Hussein training institute and Donia Al-Amal center in Al-Basra city from November- 9th – 2016 through February -1st-2017. Random sample of 50 mothers were collected, who were having children with autism. The instrument of this study was questionnaire consist of two Parts;

The 1st part consist of 6 variables include (mother age, education, job, child Gender, spending time of the child

with family or alone, and child order), to identify relationship of certain demographic data with mothers knowledge. The second part of a questionnaire composed of 20 questions about autism in children, to evaluate mother's knowledge about autism. Three degree for each question to be sum of 60 degree for each.

The data collected by obtaining formal approval from the directors of the two centers. Who in turn to distribute questionnaires to mothers of autistic children through personal interview between the director of the centers and mothers of children and has answered all the questions in front of them, that is because the law of the centers not allows other peoples to know anything about the family of the affected children due to social reasons.

The data where analyze by admitted to the (SPSS) Program, version 16 for interpretation of result. Through the application of the descriptive data analysis Frequency and percentage, T- Test.

Table 1. Distribution of the study population according to certain sociodemographic characteristics (N=50)

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent%
Mother's age		
25 years or less	14	28.0
From 26 to 30 years	22	44.0
More than 30 years	14	28.0
Mother's education		
Primary	4	8.0
Secondary	18	36.0
Institute	11	22.0
College	17	34.0
Mother's job		
Housewife	34	68.0
Employed	16	32.0

As Shown in Table 1:

The majority of the mother age range from 26-30 years is (44%).Mother's education (8%) had primary school followed by (36%) had secondary school, (22%) had institute, and college is about (34%). Regarding mother job, (68%) were house wife, and (32%) were employed.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of mother's knowledge scores about autism

	Mother's knowledge scores
N	50
Mean	33.42
Std. Deviation	8.762
Minimum out of 60 degree	6
Maximum out of 60 degree	51

As shown in Table 2;

Mothers score range between 6 -51 out of (60) degree. Mean of score is (33.42); standard deviation is (8.762).

Table 3. Show the frequency of children with autism according to their gender

Child Gender	Frequency	Percent%
Male	**45**	**90.0**
Female	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

As shown in Table 3, 45(90%) were male, 5 (10%) were female.

Table 4. Show the frequency of children order with autism.

Child order	Frequency	Percent%
First	11	22.0
Second	19	38.0
Third	12	24.0
Fourth or more	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0

As shown in Table 4, the risk of child order to have autism in the first child is (22%), second child is about (38%), Third child (24 %) and fourth or more is about (16%).

Table 5. Differences of mothers' knowledge scores according to the studies sociodemographic characteristics

Characteristic	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	P-value
Mother's job				
Housewife	34	32.21	8.779	0.153
Employed	16	36.00	8.414	
Mothers' age				
25 years or less	14	33.64	8.500	
From 26 to 30 years	22	32.05	9.945	0.549
More than 30 years	14	35.36	7.078	
Mother's education				
Primary	4	21.00	11.747	
Secondary	18	33.50	7.649	
Institute	11	31.91	7.739	0.006
College	17	37.24	7.353	
Total	50	33.42	8.762	

As shown in Table 5:

The relationship between mothers knowledge and education is significant (at <0.05) and all other variables are not significant relations with mothers knowledge.

3. Discussion

According to Table 1. Throughout the data collection and analysis it is noted that high percentage of mothers (44%) were with age ranging from 26-30 years , which is the age of the mothers at the birth of autistic child, but Researchers found that the risk of having a child with autism was significantly higher when the mother was older, regardless of the father's age, except when the mother was younger, the risk was also higher if the father were older [16]. The two studies join a pool of research linking parental age to the risk of autism and other psychiatric disorders in children. The fact that sperm accumulates mutations with age may explain the source of the risk for older fathers. But it is less clear how a woman's age might raise autism risk [16].

Regarding mothers education, majority of the mothers (36%) had secondary school and (37%) had college which is reflecting the high percentage of knowledge.

Mothers job, (68%) were housewife, also all them were educated that make their interest in seeking information is higher.

The gender of children with autism, (45%) were male which is considered other confirm for all previous

researches which is indicate that boys more frequent to have autism than girls [17]. The child age (64%) were more than five years. Due to difficult to diagnosis autism before the 3 years most of the time autism can be diagnosis when child inter the school where the interaction without side occur, and intelligence is reflect abnormal behaviors [17].

Child order, (38 %) were the second child while (8%) were the forth or more order of child between his / her siblings. As other studies shown the second-born child has about 50 percent higher odds of having childhood autism than the firstborn, the study found. It's possible that pregnant women who already have one child may catch infections from their firstborns, resulting in inflammation. Increased inflammation early in pregnancy is associated with autism risk. However, this theory does not explain why later-born children are not at increased risk of childhood autism [18].

2-Mothers scores

The results of our study showed that mothers of autistic children in the two centers (Imam Hussein institute and Al-Amal center) have sufficient knowledge about autism. These result may be because we limited our study in 50 mothers because of the nature of study and the directors of centers not allow more than mothers to include in our study, also we don't have mothers level of education less than primary school , and most of them education range between secondary school and college.

No other researches study the knowledge of autistic child mothers

3-Association of mothers' knowledge scores and their education, and job studied sociodemographic characteristics show significant association between mother's scores and their knowledge. That is because of the mother's education range between secondary and College is high, and the nature of their children with autism makes the mother to seek more information about autism such as professionals, media, and website. All other relationship among variables are insignificant (>0.05).

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Mothers in two centers have sufficient knowledge about autism in children

1. Level of education play important role in improvement mothers information.
2. Autism more frequent in boys than girls.
3. Autism more frequent in the second child.
4. Frequent sessions should be organized for mothers about autism, and its management to improve their information. And to dealing with their children in appropriate way because the parents play important part in child rehabilitation.
5. Frequent research studies are recommended to evaluate improvement of mothers information
6. Take into account the importance of level of education for mothers.
7. Shed alight in other research about autism due to the importance of such issue which is need further interest and followed.

Conflict of Interest

References

[1] American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic And Statistical Manual Of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IVTR). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing; 2000.

[2] *Volkmar FR, Paul R, Klin A, Cohen D (Editors).* Handbook of Autism And Pervasive Developmental Disorders, Vol. 1: Diagnosis, Development, Neurobiology, And Behavior (3rd Ed.). Hoboken NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc; 2005.

[3] *Levy S, Giarelli E, Lee L, Schieve L, Kirby R, Et Al.* Autism Spectrum Disorders And Co-Occurring Developmental, Psychiatric, And Medical Conditions Among Children In Multiple Populations Of The United States. J Dev Behav Pediatr.2010; 31: 267-75.

[4] Centers for Disease Control And Prevention. Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders - Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 14sites, United States, 2008. MMWR Surveill Summ. 2012; 61: 1-19.

[5] CDC. Prevalence Of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children Aged 8 Years—Autism And Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 11 Sites, United States, 2010. MMWR 2014; 63 (No. SS 2): 1-21.

[6] *Tammi Reynolds, BA & Mark Dombeck, Ph.D.* Autism And Related Pervasive Developmental Disorders, AMHC (207) 498-6431.

[7] Mary M., Karen A., Ellen U., Anderia T. Knowledge Is Power: Empowering The Autism Community Through Parent–Professional Training. The School Community Journal. (2011), Vol. 21, No.

[8] Michael L., Sara M., Johnny L. Parent Training: A Review Of Methods For Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders. Research In Autism Spectrum Disorders 3 (2009) 868-875.

[9] Philipp M., The Use Of Technology In The Study, Diagnosis And Treatment Of Autism. January 2004.

[10] Eric V. Larsson, Is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI). An Effective Treatment for Autism. The Lovas Institute for Early Intervention. 2013, 612. 925. 8366.

[11] Johnj. Mceachln, T. Istram Smjth, and Olvar Lovaas, Long-Term Outcome For Children With Autism Who Received Early Intensive Behavioral Treatment. Amarecan Journal for Mental Retardation. 1993, Vol 97, No 359, 372.

[12] James B. Adams, Summary Of Dietary, Nutritional, And Medical Treatments For Autism – Based On Over 150 Published Research Studies. Ari Publication. 2013, 40 –Version.

[13] Morton Ann Gernsbacher. Is One Style of Early Behavioral Treatment for Autism 'Scientifically proven. Journal of Developmental and Learning Disorders. (2003) 7.19-25.

[14] Ellen Notbohm .Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew, 2ed edition (2012), Future Horizons.

[15] Kelli C. Dominick , Naomi Ornstein Davis, Janet Lainhart Helen, Tager-Flusberg, Susan Folstein , Atypical Behaviors In Children with Autism and Children with a history of language impairment . Research in Developmental Disabilities 28 (2007) 145-162.

[16] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Prevalence of - Autism Spectrum Disorders - Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, six sites, United States, 2000. MMWR SS 2007;56(SS-1)(1)

[17] Professor Sir George Radda Chief Executive, review of autism research, epidemiology and causes, 2001, 39 -Paul R. Benson, Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders 4 (2010) 217-228.

[18] Philip J. Landrigan, What causes autism? Exploring the environmental contribution. Current Opinion in Pediatrics 2010, 22: 219-225