

# The communication in autism psychology essay



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Human development is essential in ensuring that a person develops required systems and abilities to cope with life. This research paper gives detailed information about autism, including its definition, causes, manifestation, how it affects communication development in children, and possible ways of dealing with the disorder.

What is Autism?

Autism is a term, which is generally used to refer to a combination of complex disorders, which mainly affect proper development of the brain. Oftentimes, the disorders usually have varying degrees in terms of their impact and how they affect social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviors in children among other ways (Zander 1). Examples of these disorders are Persuasive Development Disorder, Autistic Disorder, Asperger Syndrome, and Childhood Disintegrative Syndrome. It is worth noting that Autisms Spectrum Disorder, ASD, may lead to intellectual impairment, poor motor coordination, and a wide range of physical health complications like sleep deprivation and gastrointestinal problems. In some cases, children with ASD may excel in certain areas like art, music, and mathematics.

Unlike other developmental problems, which occur in later stages of development, autism is believed to start during early stages of brain development. While this is the case, autism signs and symptoms can easily be noticed between the age of two and three years, when children are expected to exhibit certain abilities in communication, social interactions, and behaviors. Children who are not treated once early signs are discovered usually develop impaired communication and social skills. Additionally,

research indicates that it is not easy for a child to recover from autism without proper intervention (Zander 1). Whilst this is the case, a wide-range of treatment options exists, and this can be helpful in saving a child from future complications. Importantly, the effectiveness of these methods widely varies as others may lead to complete recovery while others may have minimal or negligible impact. In other words, there is no known intervention, which helps every child affected.

### Prevalence

Due to various factors, the occurrence of autism cases varies from one country to another. Therefore, it is not possible to give a general view, regarding the prevalence of this disorder. According to the U. S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, one out of eighty eight American children is likely to develop Autism Spectrum Disorder, which denotes an increase in autism cases as compared to previous years. This is based on improved methods of diagnosis, which have been changing throughout history. Additionally, autism is five times more prevalent in boys than in girls. This is based on research findings, even though there are no factors, which contribute to this variation. In the year 2011, the prevalence of autism was approximately 2. 6% in South Korea.

### Signs and Symptoms of Autism

In understanding the symptoms of autism, it is important to appreciate the fact that every child has a unique pace of development. Nevertheless, doctors agree that there are developmental milestones, which have to be achieved by every child at a given age of development. In cases where these

recommended developmental milestones are not attained, it is necessary for parents to seek medical attention in order to help the child as early as possible.

Even though autism is manifested through various ways, doctors affirm that difficulties in social interactions are the commonest indicators of the disorder among children. As a result, infants may experience challenges in using facial expressions, intonation, eye contact, and gestures when they interact with other people around them (Zander 2). Most children suffering from autism may not show emotional or social response, and do not share their happiness instantly with parents nor seek comfort from them. Additionally, these children lack interest in their age mates and friendships, which are developed, do not last long because of social barriers.

Another indicator of autism is impaired communication skills. In most cases, children with autism experience delayed development or lack of language, which is never replaced with the use of nonverbal communication approaches. In general, almost half of the children who are affected by autism do not develop speech. However, significant variations occur among those who end up developing the ability to use speech. In some cases, children may use the same words repeatedly or repeat what others have said, regardless of the context and meaning (Zander 2). Very few children suffering from autism have a well-developed language. They also find it hard to initiate and maintain conversations as a result of an impaired communications system. Interpretation of language is usually a problem especially in cases where deep vocabularies are used.

On the other hand, children with autism are likely to engage in a limited scope of behaviors and activities with stereotypic feelings. These activities are also repetitive, with most of the games being spontaneous. Furthermore, children get fixed on different objects and complicated behaviors, which are repeated infinitely. Instant disconnection from these activities may affect them emotionally. This implies that it might not be easy for a child with autism to accept change of routine. Children with autism also wave hands and prefer tiptoeing while walking. Apart from these distinctive features, which are common among children with autism, it is worth noting that they are also hypersensitive to the environment and experience sleeping and eating disorders.

### Causes of Autism

Even though most doctors argue that autism is mainly caused by neurological abnormalities, there is no known cause of these problems, which affect the nervous system. It has been found that genetic, environmental, and metabolic factors largely contribute to the occurrence of autism in children.

While experts have linked autism to the genetic make-up of an individual, there is no known gene, which is responsible for this abnormality. It is therefore suspected that autism occurs when certain genes combine during early stages of development. Based on probability, families with a child suffering from this disorder have a likelihood of giving birth to a child with the same problem, approximated to be between 3 and 8 children (Baron-Cohen and Bolton 10). On the other hand, monozygotic twin have a thirty

percent likelihood of being affected if one of the babies is affected.

Additionally, first-degree relatives of people who suffer from this disorder are likely to be affected as compared to other degrees of relatives. This denotes how the disease is significantly affected by human genes.

Besides genetics, autism is also caused by some medical conditions. These include congenital infections, metabolic disorders, abnormalities in brain development, and other neurological disorders that a child acquires at birth. While this is the case, it is worth noting that autism is not caused by these disorders independently (Baron-Cohen and Bolton 10). Research indicates that there are children with these disorders but free from autism. This indicates that the disorders lead to autism in the presence of other factors.

Some research findings have also linked autism with certain environmental factors, even though there are no specific factors that have been agreed upon. This is based on the fact that autism is likely to be caused by an array of factors. For instance, childhood vaccinations have been linked to this disorder. Proponents of this analogy argue that children are exposed to several vaccines, which are likely to affect their immune systems, leaving them vulnerable to infections (Doyle and Iland 378). There have been cases of children who developed autism after being vaccinated. MMR vaccines equally play a role with regard to how autism affects children. Of great significance is the fact that cases of autism among children rose in 1978 in the UK and 1988 in America after the introduction of MMR technology.

Speech and Language Development

Under normal circumstances, a child goes through various stages of language and speech development. Children start learning language at the time of birth, making them conscious of their environment. They also listen to people who are within their environment and may cry when there are instant changes of sound in the environment. Between the age of zero and three months, the child is able to smile, especially when a person comes into view, and cries differently, sending unique meaning to the person around for action to be taken (Baron-Cohen and Bolton 16). At the age of six months, the baby is able to respond to his name, and to different human voices. In other words, he is able to identify angry and happy tones. At the age of twelve months, the baby understands simple instructions, recognizes the value of speech in social life and may use one or more words.

On the other hand, children with autism experience difficulties during various stages of language and speech development. Since their brain develops differently, these children are usually unable relate with the world effectively and visualize other people's thoughts. As a result, they fail to respond to eye-contact, and may fail to understand body language (Doyle and Iland 35). Moreover, these children fail to appreciate the importance of communication, leading to frustrations, since their needs might not be met because of communication barriers.

### Helping Autistic Children

While autistic children may have impaired language and communication ability, they can be helped to appreciate speech. For instance, the use of sign language is highly recommended. It is the role of parents to master

signs and use them to communicate with the affected child (Doyle and Iland 378). This approach increases the likelihood a child to develop spoken language. The use of the Picture Exchange Communication System allows a child to interpret pictures, which are displayed on a board. An understanding of these pictures helps the child to appreciate speech. It is vital to note that there is no cure for autism. However, early diagnosis and assessment is necessary in order to provide parents with accurate information, necessary in helping the child to cope with the situation (Adams 2).

### Conclusion

Autism remains a major language disorder in America and around the world. This disorder affects children during their early stages of development. As a result, autistic children develop impaired communication ability. Assistance by parents and other close people is necessary to help affected children to cope with the situation since there is permanent cure known.