

## **Analysis of Parents' Needs for Guidelines in Training Communication Skills for Autist Children at Home**

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### **Abstract**

The background of this research is that parents of autistic children have difficulty in handling and continuing the communication learning program from school. Many parents feel they do not have special guidelines in practicing communicating with autistic children at home. This study aims to determine the needs of parents for a guide to practice communicating at home. The research approach uses a quantitative-qualitative approach. The subjects in this study were 93 parents of autistic children in several special schools in Central Java. The data collection technique used a questionnaire instrument totaling 15 statement items. The questionnaire in this study used a Likert scale with 4 alternative answers, namely very need, need, need less, and don't need. The data analysis technique in this study used a descriptive analysis approach through SPSS 26 software. After the data was analyzed, the data were interpreted descriptively. Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that the level of parental need for guidelines to train autistic children's communication at home is in the very high category.

**Keywords:** autism; communication; parents; guide

### **Abstrak**

Latar belakang penelitian ini adalah orangtua anak autis mengalami kesulitan dalam menangani dan melanjutkan program pembelajaran komunikasi dari sekolah. Banyak orang tua merasa tidak memiliki panduan khusus dalam melatih berkomunikasi pada anak autis di rumah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kebutuhan orang tua terhadap panduan untuk melatih berkomunikasi di rumah. Pendekatan penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif-kualitatif. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah 93 orang tua anak autis di beberapa SLB Jawa tengah. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan instrumen angket berjumlah 15 butir pernyataan. Angket dalam penelitian ini menggunakan skala likert dengan 4 alternatif jawaban yaitu sangat membutuhkan, membutuhkan, kurang membutuhkan, dan tidak membutuhkan. Teknik analisis data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan analisis deskriptif melalui software SPSS 26. Setelah data dianalisis kemudian data diinterpretasikan secara deskriptif. Berdasarkan hasil analisis data dapat disimpulkan bahwa tingkat kebutuhan orangtua terhadap panduan untuk melatih komunikasi anak autis di rumah dalam kategori sangat tinggi.

**Kata kunci:** autis; , komunikasi; orangtua; panduan

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a broad spectrum developmental disorder characterized by several characteristics, namely disruption of social interaction, communication, and repetitive behavior as well as a variety of other symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Hallahan & Kaufman (2011) defines autism as a developmental disorder that significantly affects social interaction and verbal and non-verbal communication, usually appearing before the age of three, which has an effect on

children's educational abilities. These signs can be seen from the age of six months to three years. Symptoms that stand out and are clearly visible in autistic children are: (1) barriers to communication, (2) inability to make eye contact with the other person, and (3) low concentration power (Supartini, 2010). Children with autism have difficulty understanding and using language in communicating with others (Yuwono, 2016). Kosasih (2012) describes that autistic disorders in children are characterized by three main characteristics, namely: social interaction disorders, communication disorders, and behavioral disorders.

Communication barriers in children with autism according to DSM V are deficiencies in verbal and non-verbal communication behavior, lack of eye contact, body language and lack of understanding and body gestures. Autistic students fail to use language appropriately as a manifestation of their desire, due to a lack of understanding of language, not interested in language because they do not know its meaning and refuse to listen, mutism or do not want to function their speech tools, talk repeatedly (echolalia). ), difficulty using the words "yes" and "no", unable to distinguish and use the word "yes" for agreeing and "no" for disagreeing, experiencing confusion in using personal pronouns such as you, he, and I, even often lasts into old age (Sunardi & Sunaryo, 2007). Budhiman (2001) and Tilton (2004) say that the characteristics of communication barriers in children with autism include speech delays, no effort to communicate, non-verbal communication with body language, raving in incomprehensible language, parrots (echolalia) and unable to understand speech. others. So, children with autism have obstacles in understanding language as a means of communication, and using sign language/gestures as a substitute communication tool. Barriers to communication in autistic students affect the ability to interact socially with others, and understand the world around them.

The factors that affect the communication skills of autistic students include internal and external factors. The internal factor of autistic students' communication skills is the ability factor inherent in the students themselves. External factors that affect the communication skills of autistic students are supporting factors that come from outside of autistic students, namely teachers, therapists, families, and the surrounding environment.

Schools, teachers, and therapists are external elements that are very important in language learning and communication for autistic students. Language learning and communication for autistic children in schools is carried out by referring to the basic competencies of autistic special programs. Basic competence of student communication learning autism in the autism special program curriculum includes correct initial communication, correct 2-way communication and written communication (Directorate of PKLK Development for Basic Education, Director General of Basic Education, 2014). Language learning and communication programs in schools certainly cannot run optimally if the school (teachers) does not cooperate with parents. Parents play a major role in learning communication for autistic students, because parents are the first educational institution for their children. The role of

parents is very important to be able to stimulate children to speak quickly, help children learn to speak, because children already listen to sounds even before they are born (Madyawati, 2016).

The implementation of learning special programs for autistic students' communication conducted by teachers in schools should be known and understood by parents so that the program can be continued at home directly by parents. Parents must be able to establish good cooperation and communication with schools and teachers, so that there are no misunderstandings in educating children, especially in terms of training communication in autistic children Yogaswara (2021).

In fact, many parents of autistic students have difficulty managing and continuing the program from school. Many parents feel they do not have specific guidelines in dealing with autistic children at home. Although there are some parents who directly handle autistic children at home, they do not have clear guidelines in carrying out treatment programs including communication exercises so that the programs carried out depend on programs implemented at school and parents only continue as is. parents who hand over child care at home to baby sitters and bring in therapists such as teachers to provide private therapy at home (Sicillya E. Boham, 2013)

From the description above, it can be seen that the need for parents to guide is one aspect that must be pursued in training communication for children with autism. The researcher examines this further by conducting a study entitled "Analysis of Parental Needs for Guidelines in Training Autistic Children's Language and Communication at Home". The purpose of this study was to determine the needs of parents for guidelines for practicing communication at home.

## **METHOD**

This research uses quantitative qualitative research. The research sample was 6 special schools in Central Java. This research was carried out in November 2021. The respondents in this study were 93 parents of autistic children to obtain data and then describe the results of the study as a sign of achieving the research objectives. Data collection techniques using a questionnaire instrument amounted to 15 statement items. The questionnaire in this study used a Likert scale with 4 alternative answers, namely very need, need, need less, and don't need. The instrument grid for parents' needs for guidelines for training autistic children's communication is based on 4 indicators, namely communication teaching programs, program targets in training communication, quality of content technical quality of guide content, and effectiveness and efficiency of use (Sadiman, 2010). The data analysis technique used SPSS 26. After the data was analyzed then the data were interpreted descriptively.

Tabel 2:  
*Frequency table*

	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11	X12	X13	X14	X15
N	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
Valid	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.66	3.72	3.76	3.71	3.65	3.67	3.65	3.61	3.72	3.76	3.57	3.67	3.67	3.74	3.71
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Variance	.228	.204	.183	.208	.231	.225	.275	.262	.204	.204	.313	.225	.225	.194	.208
Range	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
Minimum	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Maximum	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Sum	340	346	350	345	339	341	339	336	346	350	332	341	341	348	345

From the frequency table, the researcher looks for the mean score per indicator, and the following data are obtained:

Table 3: The Average Results of Parental Needs Assessment Scores for Guidelines in Practicing Communication for Autistic Children

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
X1	93	3	4	3.66	.478
X2	93	3	4	3.72	.451
X3	93	3	4	3.76	.427
X4	93	3	4	3.71	.456
X5	93	3	4	3.65	.481
X6	93	3	4	3.67	.474
X7	93	2	4	3.65	.524
X8	93	2	4	3.61	.511
X9	93	3	4	3.72	.451
X10	93	2	4	3.76	.452
X11	93	2	4	3.57	.559
X12	93	3	4	3.67	.474
X13	93	3	4	3.67	.474
X14	93	3	4	3.74	.440
X15	93	3	4	3.71	.456
Valid N (listwise)	93				

Based on the results of the data analysis above, the researcher categorizes the average score on the respondents' assessment using the following intervals:

Table 3: Guidelines for the Categorization of Average Respondents' Assessment Scores

<b>Interval</b>	<b>Category</b>
1,00 - 1,75	Very Low
1,76 - 2,50	Low
2,56 - 3,25	High
3,26 - 4,00	Very High

Based on the average score above, the results of this study can be described as follows:

1. The highest average score is on the 3rd and 10th items with an average score of 3.76. Item 3 shows an indicator of the needs of parents for communication teaching programs included in the very high category, meaning that parents really need media that explain the steps to practice 2-way communication in autistic children. The 10th item refers to the technical quality indicator of media content included in the very high category, meaning that parents really need guidance that is economical and affordable for parents.
2. The average score on the 14th item with indicators of the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of guides is 3.74 which is included in the very high category, meaning that parents really need a guide that is able to generate motivation and confidence in training autistic children's communication.
3. The next average score is 3.72 on the 2nd and 9th items. The second item shows the parents' need for communication teaching programs in the very high category. That is, parents really need a guide that explains the steps to train communication in autistic children. The 9th item shows the parents' need for the quality of the guide content technique in the very high category. Parents desperately need a guide that is flexible and easily accessible.
4. The next average score is 3.71 on the 4th and 15th items. Item 4 shows indicators of parents' needs for program targets in training communication which are in the very high category. That is, parents really need a guide that can improve the communication skills of autistic children. The 15th item refers to indicators of parents' needs for the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of guidelines in the very high category. That is, parents really need a guide in training the communication of autistic students.
5. The next average score is 3.67 on the 6th, 12th and 13th items. The 6th item shows an indicator of the needs of parents in the program target in training communication which is in the very high category. That is, parents really need a useful guide to meet the communication needs of children with autism. Items 12 and 13 refer to indicators of the parents' need for the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of the guide in the very high category, meaning that parents really need an interesting guide, delivered briefly, concisely and clearly.

6. The average score of 3.66 is found in item 1 with the indicator of parents' needs for communication teaching programs included in the very high category. Parents really need a guide that informs about language and communication materials for autistic children.
7. The average score is 3.65, there are 5th and 7th items. The 5th item shows indicators of the need for program objectives in training communication in the very high category. Parents really need media that are in accordance with the teaching methods of teachers in schools. The 7th item shows indicators of parents' needs for the technical quality of the content of the guide, which is in the very high category. Parents really need media that is delivered using good and correct Indonesian
8. The average score of 3.61 is on the 8th item. The 8th item shows an indicator of the parents' need for the technical quality of the content of the guide, which is in the very high category. Parents really need a guide that conveys the steps of learning communication in a coherent and systematic way
9. The smallest average score is 3.57 on the 11th item with the indicator of parents' needs for the quality of technical content on media included in the very high category. Parents really need a guide that presents material that is in accordance with scientific truth.

The description above shows that parents really hope for the communication development of autistic children. Communication disorders in autistic children cause no direct feedback with other people. The reason for this is that the development of language skills in autistic children is very slow or non-existent (Laksmi et al., 2019). Autistic children have difficulty conveying messages and receiving messages from other people, causing autistic children to experience disturbances in interpersonal communication (Soetjningsih, 2014). The family, in this case the parents, is the environment where the child spends his time during periods of growth. Therefore, we need to arrange for the family to become an environment that supports optimal child development (Sicillya E. Boham, 2013). Parents are the first to teach children to speak by teaching children to say other words. Parents are the first to teach children to socialize with the surrounding environment. This is what is called the child's initial capital in communicating. To teach communication to children with autism, parents need instructions in the form of guidelines so that they can guide and provide communication skills to children at home, so that communication skills in children can be carried out routinely and programmed (Rohman et al., 2021).

The guide in question is a guide in the form of an application made to make it easier for parents to teach language and communication to autistic children at home. The manual describes procedures for teaching language and communication, the media required and evaluation of implementation. Communication learning guide for autistic children is one type of instructional Media. Special communication program guidelines for parents of autistic children as a communication medium for autistic children must have several requirements as described by Sadiman (2000), namely: (1) the teaching program to be delivered must be in accordance with the curriculum of the field of study being taught, both in content as well as depth. (2) program targets are factors that need to be considered in

choosing teaching media, namely parents and students who will receive information through these media, (3) the quality of the teaching media techniques to be used needs to be considered, whether they meet the requirements, both from audio recordings or clarity of pictures. Sounds or images that are not clear are not only unattractive, but can also interfere with the teaching and learning process, (4) effectiveness and efficiency of use. Effectiveness is related to the results achieved, while efficiency is related to the process of achieving these results. Effectiveness in using media includes whether by using the media teaching information can be absorbed by students optimally so that it causes changes in behavior. So that efficiency includes whether by using the media, the time, effort, and costs incurred to achieve these goals are small.

The scope of the content of parental guide materials to train autistic children's communication at home refers to the basic competencies of the Interaction, Communication and Behavior Development curriculum set by the Directorate of Basic Education PKLK Guidance, Director General of Basic Education (2014), namely carrying out initial communication correctly, communicating 2 way correctly and Writing communication. Parental guidance to train autistic children's communication is needed so that autistic children's communication skills can improve.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that the needs of people parents to guidelines for practicing language and communication at home in the very high category. Parents really need a communication teaching program that contains information on communication learning materials, explains the steps in practicing communication and explains the steps for practicing 2-way communication in autistic children. Parents really need a guide containing information about program targets in training communication, including guides that are able to improve the communication skills of autistic children, guidelines that are in accordance with the teaching methods of teachers in schools, and guides that are able to meet the communication needs of autistic children. The technical quality of the content of the guide that parents really need is a guide that uses good and correct Indonesian language, conveys communication learning steps that are arranged in a coherent and systematic way, a guide that is flexible and easily accessible, is economical and affordable for parents, and presents material according to scientific truth. Parents also really need an effective and efficient guide, meaning that the guide is interesting, conveyed in a concise and clear manner, and provides motivation and confidence for parents in practicing communication.

## **CONCLUSION**

The technical quality of the content of the guide that parents really need is a guide that uses good and correct Indonesian language, conveys communication learning steps that are arranged in a coherent and systematic way, a guide that is flexible and easily accessible, is economical and affordable for

parents, and presents material according to scientific truth. Parents also really need an effective and efficient guide, meaning that the guide is interesting, conveyed in a concise and clear manner, and provides motivation and confidence for parents in practicing communication.

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