



Effective communication between teachers and parents in handling children with autistic disorders (case study of handling autistic children at Al Azhar 13 Rawamangun Islamic Kindergarten)

Septiyani Endang Yunitasari¹, Tri Rahayu Budiarti², Lilis Amperawati³, Siti Agustiani Rubiah⁴
Ludgardis Mongawara⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5}Universitas Panca Sakti Bekasi, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article history:</i></p> <p>Received Jan 02, 2023 Revised Jan 16, 2023 Accepted Jan 30, 2023</p> <hr/> <p><i>Keywords:</i></p> <p>Autism; Early Childhood; Communication;</p>	<p>The problem in this study is the lack of effective communication between teachers and parents, so the handling of autistic children is not optimal. The research aims to provide an overview of effective communication between teachers and parents in handling children with autistic disorders to optimize their growth and development. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a case study focusing on children with autistic disorders at Al Azhar 13 Rawamangun Kindergarten. Data collection was carried out using observation, interview and data documentation techniques. Through this research, it was found that effective communication between teachers and parents has increased the participation of parents in assisting their children, including through conducting two-way communication between teachers and parents, observing and detecting children who have autistic symptoms, recording parents, making agreements with parents to hold scheduled meetings, submitting daily journal reports and communicating through media in the form of telephone, WhatsApp, video recordings. So that parents have more concern and complete attention to the development of their children. While success in children is shown by being able to respond when invited to communicate, socialize, have a sense of comfort in their environment, and reduce tantrum conditions.</p>

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Corresponding Author:

Septiyan Endang Yunitasari,
Universitas Panca Sakti Bekasi,
Hankam Raya Number 54 Street, Jatirahayu, Pondok Melati, Bekasi City, 17414, Indonesia
Email: Seyseseysept@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings, which cannot be separated from communication between humans and is always marked by interaction between humans, for example association in the family, neighborhood, school, workplace, social organizations and others. Human interaction is a form of

communication in society, but not all humans can communicate well as expected, such as children with special needs.

According to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 70 of 2009, inclusive education is an education delivery system that provides opportunities for all students who have disabilities and have potential intelligence and/or special talents to participate in education or learning in an educational environment together with students in general (Indonesia, 2009). With such an implementation system, inevitably, it demands early childhood education institutions to prepare teachers who do not have the background and knowledge of how to handle children with special needs, one of which is children with autism. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or what is more commonly called autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder (Pastari & Sumastri, 2022). These disorders affect language development and a child's ability to communicate, interact, and behave. Until now it is not known exactly what causes autism disorder. Symptoms of autism that need to be known are classified into two categories namely (Nurfadhillah et al., 2022; Purwanto & Sukamto, 2021): (a) First Category: This category refers to persons with autism with impairments in social interaction and communication. These symptoms can include social sensitivity problems and impaired use of verbal and nonverbal language. (b) Category Two: Persons with autism with disorders involving rigid, repetitive patterns of thought, interests, and behaviors. Examples of repetitive motions, such as tapping or squeezing your hands, and feeling irritated when the routine is interrupted.

Organic developmental disorders experienced by autistic children cause children to experience abnormalities in social, language (communication) and intelligence aspects so that children need special attention, assistance and educational services. Autistic children who have limitations in communicating are not the same as normal children who are able to communicate and place themselves in their environment. Autism is a developmental disorder that affects the difficulty of social interaction, communication and language.

Here are some choices of common therapy methods for people with autism (Putri, 2022): 1. Behavioral and Communication Therapy. This therapy is carried out by providing a number of teachings to sufferers, including basic everyday skills, both verbal and nonverbal. Examples of behavior and communication therapy, namely: a. Applied behavior analysis (ABA), to increase positive behavior and prevent negative behavior. b. Occupational therapy, which aims to help with life skills such as dressing, eating, and relating to others. c. Sensory integration therapy, to help someone who has problems with touch or with sights or sounds. d. Speech therapy to improve the communication skills of people with autism. 2. Family therapy, which is aimed at parents and families with autism. The goal is for families to learn how to interact with sufferers and also teach sufferers to speak and behave normally. 3. Administration of Drugs. Administration of drugs can not cure autism, but can control the symptoms. Examples are drugs to treat seizures, drugs to treat behavior problems, drugs to treat depression, and drugs to treat sleep disorders.

The act of educating is not a reflex or spontaneous act without a clear purpose, but is a rational, intentional, prepared, planned action to achieve a certain goal (Koilmo et al., 2020). Thus, every citizen, whether born normal or with special needs, has the same right to get an education.

Autism is a developmental disorder that significantly affects verbal, nonverbal communication and social interaction, which affects success in learning. Other characters that accompany autism include repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental changes and inappropriate responses to sensory experiences (Banoet et al., 2016; Nugraheni, 2012).

Autism can also be interpreted as a disorder of the development of communication, cognitive, behavior, social skills, sensory, and learning). Some of the autistic children show antisocial attitudes, behavioral disturbances and gross motor barriers (often running aimlessly) (Kamilah & Awalludin, 2021).

We need to provide parents with an understanding of all matters related to their child's condition, symptoms that appear during observations at school, consult experts, how to handle and treat them, keep encouraging and motivating children to stay confident. Everything will not work without good cooperation and communication between parents and teachers at school (Rieskiana, 2021).

The important role of the teacher who understands the character of autistic children is very much needed by parents because the right treatment will make the child controlled so that they develop optimally and independently. How to deal with children with autism requires cooperation between parents and teachers. Communication and programs provided by schools must be re-applied at home.

Based on the field facts obtained, it is known that the role of parents is needed in increasing communication and attention to children. This is what then makes researchers interested in examining the role of parents in improving communication skills in children with autism. This is reinforced by the opinion of Danuatmaja (2003) that the role of parents for children with autism is very important. There are many things that parents of autistic children can and should do, namely by confirming the diagnosis and at the same time knowing whether there are other disorders in the child. Then, parents must also foster good communication with doctors or therapists. And parents must actively ask the therapist or doctor about the child's condition and the progress that has been achieved by the child.

Based on the condition of autistic children, good communication patterns are needed between parents and their children who have autism through students at school so that their children with autism can achieve optimal and maximum growth and development in the physical, psychological, emotional, mental, personality, patterns of behavior, communication, patterns of play and social interaction.

The problem occurred in Al Azhar 13 Rawamangun Kindergarten, namely parents of children with autistic disorders have not shown their full attention and good cooperation with the school and teachers. Meanwhile, to be able to carry out appropriate assistance and stimulation for autistic children, the role and attention of parents is needed. Therefore, through this research the authors aim to seek good cooperation and effective communication between parents and teachers in dealing with children with autistic disorders, as conveyed through the findings in previous research that in order to achieve success in optimizing the growth and development of autistic children, it is necessary to have a pattern of good cooperation between parents and teachers.

In daily life, children with autism spend more time with their parents than with the teachers at their school. So that parents must understand and master communication patterns with their children who suffer from autism through the help of teachers at their schools. Cooperation between parents and teachers is very supportive and determines success in dealing with children with autism disorders.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with research subjects on early childhood who have autism disorders in Al Azhar 13 Kindergarten Rawamangun in the academic year 2022/2023. The aim of the research is to provide an overview of effective forms of communication between teachers and parents in dealing with children with autistic disorders to optimize their growth and development. Data collection techniques using observation, interviews and data documents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results of observations, interviews and documentation that researchers conducted at TK Al Azhar 13 Rawamangun, that in carrying out effective communication with people/parents to deal with children with autism disorder, do steps to observe parenting patterns with parents, provide parents with an understanding of the characteristics of children with autism. After parents understand the condition of children with autistic disorders through early detection of child growth and development (DDTK), schools make efforts to treat children with autistic disorders through effective communication and collaboration with parents.

Children with special needs can be classified into several groups according to the type of disorder, which includes groups of children with mental retardation, learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, physical abnormalities, hearing damage or impairment, visual damage or impairment, language and speech disorders and so on. In the description of the meaning of children with special needs or extraordinary children, it is stated that children with autism are an integral part of extraordinary children. According to Hanafi, Autism is an organic development disorder that affects children's ability to interact and live their lives.

By knowing the symptoms, it is hoped that teachers and parents can provide appropriate treatment to prepare these children to adapt to their environment in everyday life, by optimizing their abilities. When in our institution it is known that there are children with symptoms of autism disorder, the first thing that must be done is to convey this information to their parents, of course it must be conveyed very carefully (Noach et al., 2021), because sometimes there are parents who do not accept opinions or information from the school, and are advised to consult a doctor or an expert. Unless educational institutions do provide facilities for this, either doctors or therapists. Results of consultations with doctors, what therapy should be given in accompanying autistic children, this is what requires cooperation between teachers at school and parents at home, so that the treatment provided can be properly, consistently and sustainably.

In TK Al Azhar 13 Rawamangun it is known that there are children with symptoms of autistic disorders, so the school is taking the following steps:

The first step the teacher observes and detects children who have autistic symptoms, as data that must be conveyed to parents. Field findings show that there are two children who have autism with symptoms that appear as follows:

Group A 1 person, has the following disorders, namely when asked to communicate they don't respond, often do repetitive talk/behavior, when given media to play they tend to be passive, can't socialize with friends/teachers, if crying/tantrums are difficult to persuade, contact eyes for only a few seconds.

Group B 1 person, has the following disorders, namely when asked something the answer is not connected, often has tantrums and explodes, likes to be alone, always holds objects while doing activities, speaks less focused/not clear, eyes are not focused (looking in another direction), hard to concentrate. The results of this identification are not only the results of observations at school but also an illustration when the teacher conducts home visits.

The results of observations about the symptoms of autism are in accordance with previous findings which stated that autism is a developmental disorder that significantly affects verbal, nonverbal communication and social interaction, which affects success in learning. Other characters that accompany autism include repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental changes and inappropriate responses to sensory experiences. (Banoet et al., 2016; Nugraheni, 2012).

Autism is defined as a disorder of the development of communication, cognitive, behavior, social skills, sensory, and learning). Some of the autistic children show antisocial attitudes, behavioral disturbances and gross motor barriers (often running aimlessly). (Kamilah & Awalludin, 2021).

Based on the identification results obtained regarding children with autistic disorders in groups A and B, then the teacher prepares the next step to convey the identification results to their parents.

Step two is by recording data on parents whose children are identified as having autistic disorders and inviting parents to communicate about their child's condition.

In conveying this information to his parents, in line with opinion (Noach et al., 2021), of course, must be conveyed with great care, because sometimes there are parents who do not accept opinions or information from the school, and are advised to consult an expert. Providing parents with an understanding of all matters related to their child's condition, symptoms that appear during observations at school, and suggesting that they consult an expert, how to handle and treat them should be given, keep encouraging and motivating children to stay confident, in accordance with the opinion of the previous findings.

The third step is that the school suggests or recommends that parents consult experts. We convey this to give you an idea of the importance of consulting a doctor or an expert to ensure there is no interference, or whether the autism disorder is mild or severe. This is reinforced by the opinion of Danuatmaja (2003) that the role of parents for children with autism is very important. There are many things that parents of autistic children can and should do, namely by confirming the diagnosis and at the same time knowing whether there are other disorders in the child. Then, parents must also foster good communication with doctors or therapists. And parents must actively ask the therapist or doctor about the child's condition and the progress that has been achieved by the child. Cooperation between parents and doctors or therapists is very important to increase the success of therapy (Rachmayanti & Zulkaida, 2015). There are many things that parents of autistic children can and should do, namely by confirming the diagnosis and at the same time knowing whether there are other disorders in the child. Then, parents must also foster good communication with doctors or therapists. And parents must actively ask the therapist or doctor about the child's condition and the progress that has been achieved by the child. Cooperation between parents and doctors or therapists is very important to increase the success of therapy (Rachmayanti & Zulkaida, 2015; Susanto, 2018). There are many things that parents of autistic children can and should do, namely by confirming the diagnosis and at the same time knowing whether there are other disorders in the child. Then, parents must also foster good communication with doctors or therapists. And parents must actively ask the therapist or doctor about the child's condition and the progress that has been achieved by the child. Cooperation between parents and doctors or therapists is very important to increase the success of therapy (Rachmayanti & Zulkaida, 2015; Ritonga & Hasibuan, 2016).

The results of consultations with doctors / experts showed that the two children did have autism disorders or disorders, and it was suggested that they should do some therapy. What therapy is appropriate to give to children in dealing with autism disorders. Collaboration is needed between teachers at school and parents at home, so that the treatment given can be carried out in an appropriate, consistent and sustainable manner.

Fourth step There is an agreement between the teacher and parents must communicate and work together consistently to provide assistance. Scheduled for the teacher, parents and therapists to meet every weekend (Friday) to discuss and discuss the results of the therapy activities suggested by the therapist for a week, see the results and progress. And parents fill out children's daily journals at home as reports on child handling activities. Some of the therapeutic activities carried out include: On Mondays and Wednesdays, the therapies that are carried out are occupational therapy, sensory integration therapy. Tuesdays and Thursdays the therapy is speech therapy, visual therapy and play therapy. Friday family therapy and evaluate the implementation of therapy for one week.

Apart from meetings every Friday, on other days parents and teachers always communicate with each other via telephone, WhatsApp, video calls, and video recordings to convey the steps taken according to the advice of the therapist, whether done at school or at home. Accompaniment that is in line between activities at school and at home, according to expert advice, is a form of effective communication that is sought so that you can find out about children's development from time to time.

In the practice of handling children carried out with the cooperation of teachers and parents is not an easy thing to implement. Considering that the students being taught are children with special needs, who have a different learning process from regular/normal children in general (Dermawan, 2013). Education for autistic children must be given more attention than normal children in general, because not all autistic children are able to learn together with other children in general, because autistic children find it very difficult to concentrate around them (Sari, 2017). As a result of the conditions and characteristics of the disorder in autistic children, schools for them are specifically designed according to the type and characteristics of the disorder (Palupi et al., 2018).

To strengthen and motivate parents, teachers also try to visit information centers about programs, doctors, schools, therapy centers that are nearby and easy to access for handling autistic children. Adding insight about autism from various sources including: books, browsing from the internet, attending seminars and workshops. Join the association of parents who have children with autism, because from them you can get a lot of information about the handling they have undergone, recommendations for good therapist places, schools with programs for children with special needs.

After efforts and agreements were made with parents of children with special needs to carry out effective communication between teachers and parents during the last 3 months, the results showed that parents had more concern and full attention to mentoring activities and attention to them. a child's development.

After effective communication between teachers and parents in dealing with children with autism through scheduled therapy activities, there were positive developments in the two identified children. Children in group A shows development begins to respond when invited to communicate, can socialize, more comfortable with the environment. Children in group B have shown progress in being able to receive and carry out simple commands, have started playing with friends and communicating with limited responses, their tantrums have begun to decrease.

Based on the situation of autistic children, good communication patterns are needed between parents and their children who have autism through educators at schools so that their children with autism can achieve optimal and maximum growth and development in the physical,

psychological, emotional, mental, personality fields. Patterns of behavior, communication, patterns of play and interaction sound lucky. In daily life, children with autism spend more time with their parents than with the teachers at their school. Therefore, parents must understand and master communication patterns with their children with autism through the help of teachers at their schools. Once the importance of communication and interaction in human life, so that limitations are not an obstacle to communication and interaction. Therefore, the school and parents agree to continue to carry out effective communication in order to discuss the results of child development and follow-up actions on an ongoing basis, at least as long as the child is still in the educational environment at TK Al Azhar 13 Rawamangun.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted at Al Azhar 13 Kindergarten Rawamangun on children with autism in groups A and B, it can be concluded that effective communication between teachers and parents can promote positive development. The form of effective communication that is carried out is to carry out two-way communication between teachers and parents, observing and detecting children who have symptoms of autism, recording parents, making agreements with parents to hold scheduled meetings, submitting daily journal reports and communicating via media in the form of telephone, whatsapp, video recordings.

After the process of effective communication between teachers and parents has been going on for three months, it can be seen that the children in group A are starting to be able to respond when asked to communicate, to be able to socialize, to feel comfortable in their environment. Meanwhile, children in group B showed progress, including that children were able to receive and carry out simple orders, could socialize and communicate, and their tantrums began to decrease.

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