

FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS: WHAT ARE THEIR FAMILY NEEDS?

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The aim of this study is to determine the needs of families of children with communication disorders, specifically of children with Autism. A survey was conducted using the translated and adapted version of "Family Needs Survey Questionnaire" (Colorado Home Intervention Program, 2002, Bailey et al, 1990). The questionnaire consists of 2 parts; part I requires participants to complete the demographic information of their family, while part II requires them to select the needs that they would require, those that they are unsure of or they do not require, within the six needs domains. The domains consists of (K1) Need for Information, (K2) Family functioning, (K3) Needs for social and professional support, (K4) Explaining to others, (K5) Community services, and (K6) Financial needs. Reliability test following a pilot study yielded a high reliability (Cronbach alpha value, 0.82). 31 respondents with children with Autism involved in this study and they were needed to answer two parts in this survey. Results revealed no positive relationship between the age of the child and the domain of needs listed, whilst one domain (K2) had a significant relationship with the family's socioeconomic status, and two others (K3 and K6) with level of parent education. The needs of the families are dependent on the factors which influenced the families. The needs of each family may differ from one family. In order to give the best services to the family, professional must put the needs of the family as the most important aspect to be considered. Hence, from this study, the professionals could get better picture on the family needs and the findings of the result could be used as a guide to understand the family problems.

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