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Institutional and family support impact on health-related quality of life of children with autism spectrum disorders during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Problems: Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) tend to have a notably poorer quality of life than the general population, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aimed to analyze the association between institutional support and family support on the health-related quality of life (HRQoL) of children with ASD during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted in October 2022 in a School for Special Needs in Malang City, East Java Province, Indonesia. The pediatric quality of life inventory (PedsQL) and Institutional and Family Support questionnaire were used to measure the HRQoL and support perceived by parents of children with ASD. We analyzed each component of the PedsQL and the Institutional and Family Support questionnaire. The independent T-test was performed to analyze the association between HRQoL and perceived support by parents of children with ASD. **Findings:** The results showed that most participants (72.7%) were women aged 40. As many as 69.39% of participants had more than one child, and 16.33% declared they had other children who experienced the same problem (special needs children). This study indicated that the average health-related quality of life score in children with ASD was 57.41 (9.418). The finding of this study showed a significant mean difference in HRQoL scores in children with ASD who received high institutional and family support compared to those who had low ($p = 0.028$, 95% confidence interval [CI] = -11.071 to 0.664). **Conclusion:** Institutional support positively impacts children with ASD's quality of life. Therefore, it is essential to improve the adequacy of support felt by families while caring for children with ASD. © 2024 Wiley Periodicals LLC.

Author Keywords

autism spectrum disorder; COVID-19; family support; quality of life

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autism, child, child parent relation, coronavirus disease 2019, cross-sectional study, family support, female, human, male, pandemic, psychology, quality of life; Autism Spectrum Disorder, Child, COVID-19, Cross-Sectional Studies, Family Support, Female, Humans, Male, Pandemics, Parents, Quality of Life

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