

Research Paper

How are Social Skills Affected of Children with Autism from Age 3 to 8 Years

Chahna Lahewala^{1*}

ABSTRACT

This research investigates how Autism spectrum disorder [ASD] affects the development of social skills of children from the age 3 to 8 years and what remedies could be followed to assist them. This study researches on social skills of 3 to 8 years old non - neurodiverse and neurodiverse child to get an idea of how does Autism delay the development of social skill like: interacting with people, speaking for their needs, trying to get ready themselves, performing physical activities for every child at different ages. In addition, a survey was also done and the data was collected from the parents with neurodiverse children to strengthen the details of my research. Later, a report was also sent to the parents with specific remedies and therapies for their child. The findings indicate, children do face different developmental issues but if early intervention and therapies are provided on time, it can make a big difference in a child's skills and outcomes in later life.

Keywords: *Social Skills, Children, Autism*

Autism spectrum disorder [ASD] is a neurodevelopmental disorder which involves persistent changes in social communication, restricted interests, and repetitive behaviour. It is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain. This neurological and developmental disorder affects how neurodiverse children interact and behave with others. ASD is influenced by both genetic and environmental factors that affect the development brain, and factors that correlate with ASD risk.

Autism looks different for everyone, every neurodiverse child has different strengths and limitations. Some can speak while others are nonverbal or minimally verbal. Some have intellectual disabilities, while some do not. ASD impacts how a person perceives and socialises with others and the symptoms are generally observed in the first 2 years of the child's life. According to the research by CDC, (Centers for disease control and prevention) boys get diagnosed with autism four times more often than girls. Furthermore, around 1% of the world's population has autism spectrum disorder (ASD), which is more than 75 million people. Almost 1 in every 100 children are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. There are several treatments and services that can improve the symptoms and ability to function of the autistic child.

¹Research Scholar

*[Corresponding Author](#)

Received: September 23, 2024; Revision Received: December 28, 2024; Accepted: December 31, 2024

How are Social Skills Affected of Children with Autism from Age 3 to 8 Years

As the autistic children transition through their life stages, they may need different types of support and accommodations.

Currently, in recent years, autism awareness has increased, leading to the development of new interventions and educational programs aimed at improving social functioning in children with ASD. Around the world, countries have started adopting various strategies to support children with autism. Countries have started focusing on early diagnosis, behavioural therapies and more. Every year 2nd april is also celebrated as World Autism Awareness Day. On this day awareness is spread about ASD and its effects on millions of individuals globally. Currently, Qatar has the highest rates of Autism across the world and WHO estimates that 1 in 100 children worldwide are diagnosed with ASD. Despite the awareness everywhere, significant gaps still exist in many regions, particularly in low-resource settings and low-and middle- income countries where specialised care is limited.

Studying about and spreading awareness about Autism is really important because given the rising number of children diagnosed with autism and the vital role of development of social skills play a long-term important role in their development, it is crucial to understand the impact of autism on social skills on children during early childhood. Early intervention often plays a key role in improving outcomes.

Variables:

- **Independent Variable:** Presence of Autism in children
- **Dependent Variable:** Effects on social skills
- **Controlled Variable:** Age group 3 to 8 years, Environment for observing them with time of the day

METHODOLOGY

Objective: My paper aims to explore the extent to which autism affects the social skills of children aged 3 to 8 years. By analysing current studies, real-world interventions, and expert opinions, the research seeks to answer the question: To what extent does autism in children from the age of 3 to 8 years affect their social skills?

Hypothesis:

- **H₀** (null hypothesis) = Autism won't affect social skills of children from age group 3 to 8 years.
- **H₁** (research hypothesis) = Children from the age 3 to 8 years with Autism will face social skill problems and the severity of Autism can increase if early intervention is not provided.

Sample: As a part of my sample, I surveyed 4 parents with neurodiverse children out of which 1 child was a girl and other 4 were boys. The age of children was from 3 to 8 years.

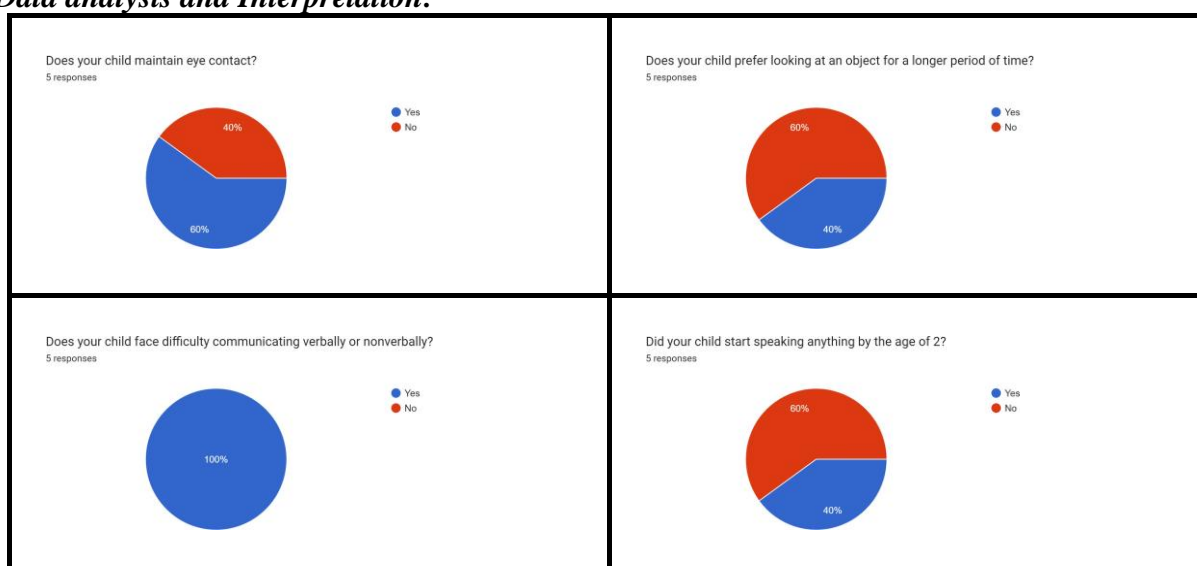
Questionnaire:

1. Does your child maintain eye contact?
2. Does your child prefer looking at an object for a longer period of time?
3. Does your child face difficulty communicating verbally and nonverbally, such as through hand gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions?
4. Did your child start speaking anything by the age of 2?

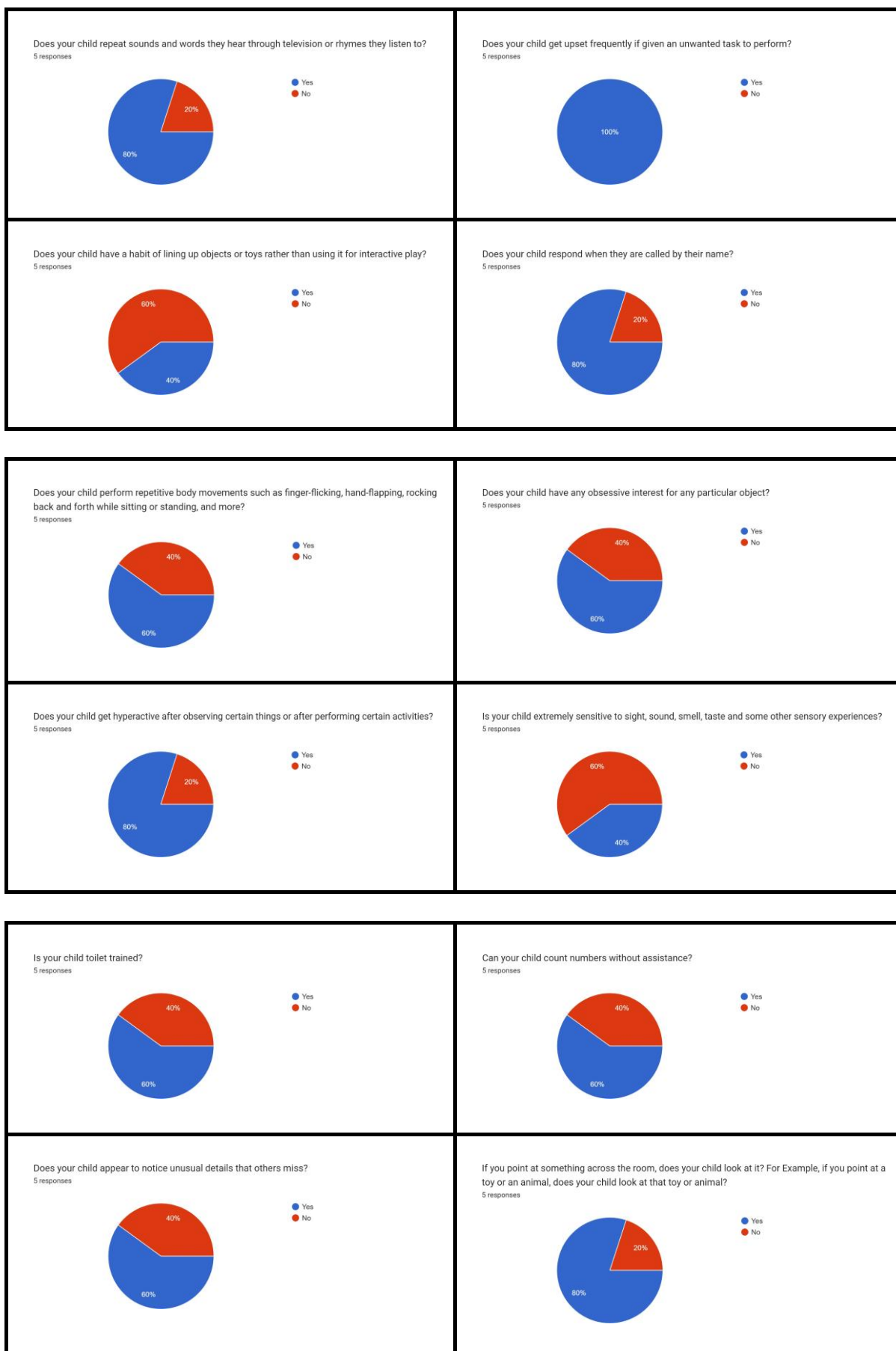
How are Social Skills Affected of Children with Autism from Age 3 to 8 Years

5. Does your child repeat sounds and words they hear through television or rhymes they listen to?
6. Does your child get upset frequently if given an unwanted task to perform?
7. Does your child walk normally or on toes?
8. Does your child have a habit of lining up objects or toys rather than using it for interactive play?
9. Does your child respond when they are called by their name?
10. Does your child perform repetitive body movements such as finger-flicking, hand-flapping, rocking back and forth while sitting or standing, and more?
11. Does your child have any obsessive interest in a particular object?
12. Does your child get hyperactive after observing certain things after performing certain activities?
13. Is your child extremely sensitive to sight, sound, smell, taste and some other sensory experiences?
14. Is your child toilet trained?
15. Can your child count numbers without assistance?
16. Does your child appear to notice unusual details that others miss?
17. If you point at something across the room, does your child look at it? For Example, if you point at a toy or an animal, does your child look at the toy or animal?
18. When you smile at your child, does he or she smile back at you?
19. Does your child tend to give random answers to questions, or make random comments?
20. Does your child struggle to socialize with other children?
21. Does your child show little awareness of dangerous situations?
22. If something new happens, does your child look at your face to see how you feel about it? (FOR EXAMPLE, if he or she hears a strange or funny noise, or sees a new toy, will he or she look at your face?)

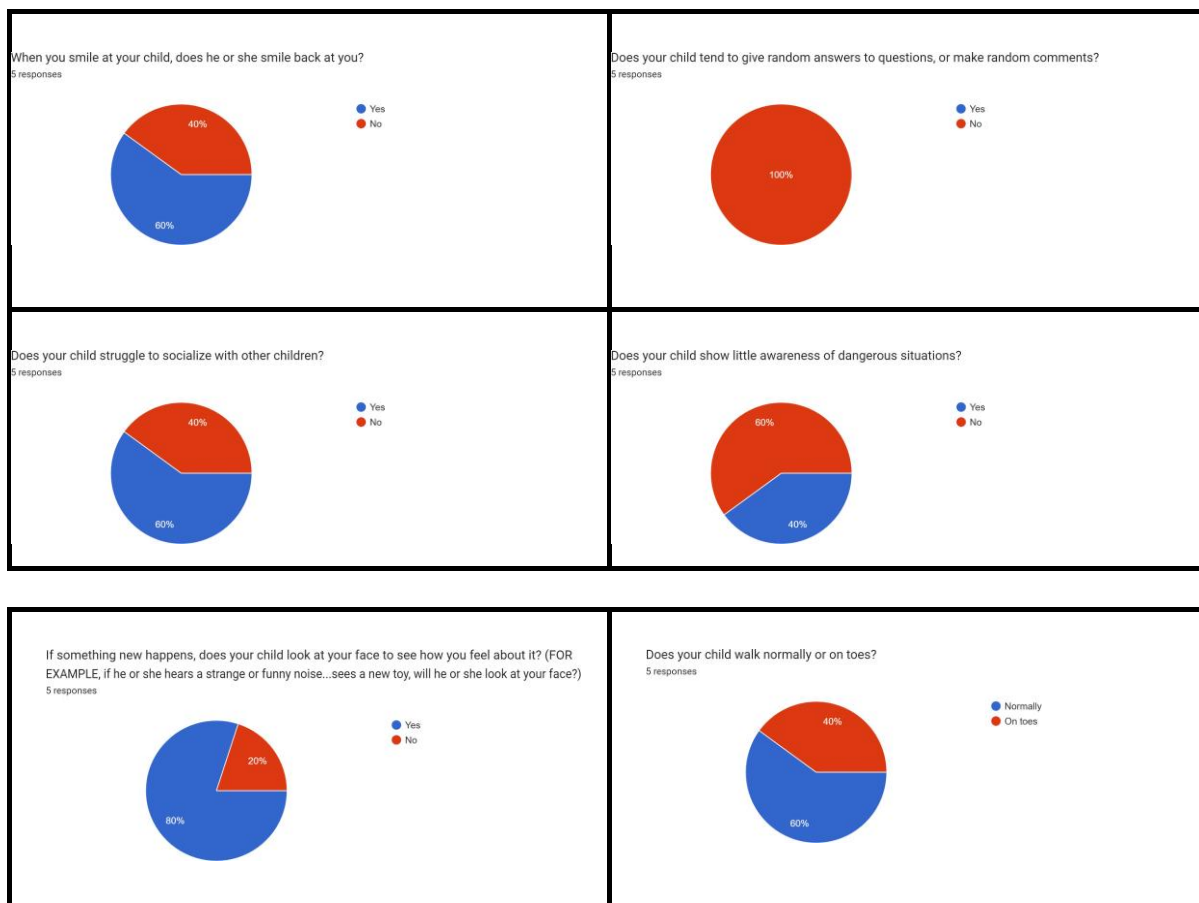
Data analysis and Interpretation:



How are Social Skills Affected of Children with Autism from Age 3 to 8 Years



How are Social Skills Affected of Children with Autism from Age 3 to 8 Years



Based on the data in the pie chart, it is evident that children with autism commonly encounter significant challenges related to social skills. These difficulties include struggling to communicate effectively, difficulties with toilet training, heightened levels of hyperactivity, and other developmental obstacles. The chart reveals that a substantial proportion of children with autism require intensive, individualized therapeutic interventions to address these challenges.

This analysis underscores the different social and developmental problems these children face and highlights the importance of having therapies. While some children might do well with general therapy, they need personalized support that focuses on their specific challenges. These therapies can include things like speech therapy, occupational therapy, or help with behavior and social skills. The chart also stresses that starting therapy early and keeping it going is key to improving their quality of life and helping them develop better skills.

To summarise, the pie chart analysis reveals that autism has a considerable impact on social skills in children aged 3 to 8 years. These findings align with the hypothesis proving it correct; therefore, I will accept my research hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research highlights the significant impact that Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has on the social skills of children between the ages of 3 to 8 years. As ASD looks different for everyone. Some have intellectual disabilities, while some do not. ASD impacts how a person perceives and socializes with others and the symptoms are generally observed

