



THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL SELF-EFFICACY IN SELF-CARE ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

ASD is characterized by challenges in social communication, restricted interests, and repetitive behaviors, significantly impacting daily functioning and self-care abilities in affected children. The prevalence of ASD has been rising, making effective treatment and rehabilitation essential. The study explores the influence of parental self-efficacy on the independence of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The research utilized a quantitative correlational analysis with a cross-sectional design involving 53 parents of children diagnosed with ASD. Total sampling was employed to gather data, focusing on how parental self-efficacy, defined as the confidence parents have in their ability to manage parenting tasks, affects their children's independence. The research location was Our Dream Indonesia in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. To measure parental self-efficacy, the Self-Efficacy for Parenting Tasks Index (SEPTI) by Coleman and Karraker (2000) was used, adapted into Indonesian. To measure child independence, the Waisman Activity of Daily Living Scale (W-ADL) was modified and adapted to the child's developmental stage. The validity test results for the Self-Efficacy value are in the range of 0.347-0.771, and a Cronbach's alpha reliability value of 0.718-0.834. Cronbach's alpha reliability results range from 0.88 to 0.94, and a validity value of 0.78-0.82. The results of the reliability test showed that the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.875, and the independence questionnaire was 0.791. The data analysis process used univariate and bivariate analysis. Univariate analysis was conducted to determine frequency distribution and central tendency, and bivariate analysis was used linear regression to examine the closeness of the relationship between variables. The findings indicated that self-efficacy accounted for 29% of the variance in children's independence as measured by the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.29$). This suggests that higher levels of parental self-efficacy are associated with increased independence in children with ASD. The study concludes that enhancing parental self-efficacy is crucial for improving children's ability to meet their daily needs independently. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the role of parental confidence in managing the complexities of raising a child with autism. Parents who feel more competent are likely to engage more effectively in their child's care and therapy, ultimately fostering better outcomes for their children.

Keywords: autism spectrum disorder; children; self care; self efficacy

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INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition marked by challenges in social communication, as well as restricted interests and repetitive behaviors. A common diagnostic feature of ASD is ongoing difficulties in social interaction and communication across various settings (Rabie, A. H., & Saleh, A. I., 2023). Symptoms of ASD often emerge within the first two years of a child's life and may include learning challenges, struggles with communication, difficulties in social interaction, and repetitive patterns of behavior.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as a collection

of lifelong neurodevelopmental disorders affecting approximately one in every 160 children globally (World Health Organization, 2019). The incidence of ASD has been rising annually, with a notable increase in 2014 when it was reported that one in 59 children had the condition. By 2016, both global and regional rates of autism continued to escalate. Currently, it is estimated that about six in every 1,000 children worldwide are diagnosed with ASD, and individuals with this disorder often face significant health challenges (Bearss, K., Johnson, C, et al., all. 2015). The number of children diagnosed with autism is growing consistently, a trend that is also evident in Indonesia. In Southeast Asia, the prevalence of ASD stands at around six cases per 1,000 individuals, with a higher occurrence in males compared to females, raising considerable concern about this upward trend (Shrestha, M., Basukala, S, et., all. 2024).

Data on the incidence and prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) indicate that there are two new cases per 1,000 individuals annually, leading to a total of ten cases per 1,000. With Indonesia's population at 237.5 million and a growth rate of 1.14%, it is estimated that there are approximately 2.4 million individuals with ASD in the country, with an annual increase of 500 new cases (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, 2018). Consequently, around 2.4 million children in Indonesia are affected by ASD, with this number rising by 500 each year (Kurniawan, R., Purnamasari, W. M., et., all. 2018).

The primary characteristic of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is their difficulty in learning and engaging in various contexts and social interactions, which leads to a slower development of self-care skills compared to their non-autistic peers (Perry, A., Flanagan, H. E., Dunn Geier, J., & Freeman, N. L., 2009). The heterogeneous nature of the nervous system in children with ASD can also result in intellectual limitations that impact cognitive abilities, mental functioning, and motor skills, often classified as intellectual disabilities (Karya, G. 2022). Additionally, the presence of intellectual disabilities can further hinder the adaptability of children with ASD. Self-care is one of the essential daily activities that requires independence for children with autism. This skill encompasses the ability to meet basic needs such as eating, dressing, personal hygiene, and toileting. When children develop self-care skills, they gain independence, which empowers them to make their own choices and plays a significant role in shaping their personality development (Önder, A. 2003).

Children with ASD require significant support from parents and caregivers by providing direct assistance when the child carries out self-care activities, providing instructions in self-care practices both directly and using video modeling methods, and assistance in daily life. Impact on children with ASD who have a low degree of independence in self-care, children tend to be uncooperative in carrying out activities in daily life. The long-term effect of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is that children may grow into individuals who remain reliant on those around them. Additionally, a lack of independence can lead to the development of maladaptive behaviors (Karsih, 2012). Developing self-care skills is crucial in promoting independence for children with ASD. Mastering these skills not only enhances the child's abilities but also contributes to improving the overall quality of life for both the child and their family.

The family serves as the most significant developmental support microsystem for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Chen, Y., Cheng, T., & Lv, F., 2022). Parents, in particular, are the primary source of support in caring for these children due to their high level of involvement in parenting. This crucial role positions the family as a vital caregiver in the therapeutic process for the child. The extent of parental support for children with ASD can be influenced by their level of self-efficacy, specifically Parenting Self-Efficacy (PSE). Parenting self-efficacy refers to parents' beliefs about their ability to effectively fulfill their parenting responsibilities (Kurzrok, J., McBride, E., & Grossman, R. B., 2021). This perception is central to understanding behavioral issues in children, as it reflects parents' sensitivity and satisfaction with their parenting style and actions. The impact of

self-efficacy is often linked to a stable emotional state (Chen, Y., Cheng, T., & Lv, F., 2022). Parents are instrumental in teaching children the importance of self-care. However, children with ASD frequently exhibit unique traits that can present challenges for parents and impact their self-efficacy levels. The formulation of the problem in this study is "How is the self-efficacy of parents regarding self-care towards independence in children with autism spectrum disorder?"

METHOD

The research employs a quantitative method utilizing correlational analysis with a cross-sectional approach. The sampling technique involved a total sampling of 53 parents who have children with Autism Spectrum Disorder at Our Dream Indonesia in Bandung City. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument. To assess Parenting Self-Efficacy, the Self-Efficacy for Parenting Tasks Index (SEPTI) developed by Coleman and Karraker (2000) was adapted for use in Indonesia. For evaluating children's independence, the Waisman Activities of Daily Living Scale (W-ADL) was modified and tailored to align with the developmental stages of the children. The validity test was conducted at the Hasanah Mekar Rahmah Foundation School for Children with Special Needs, which shares similar characteristics with Our Dream, the research site. The test involved 31 parents of children with autism. Validity test with 31 respondents ($n=31$), the r table value at a significance level of 5% is 0.34.

The validity results for the Self-Efficacy instrument, specifically the Self-Efficacy for Parenting Tasks Index (SEPTI), showed validity values ranging from an r -value of 0.347 to 0.771, while Cronbach's alpha reliability values ranged from 0.718 to 0.834. For assessing children's independence, the Waisman Activities of Daily Living Scale (W-ADL) was used, which was modified and adapted to align with child development stages. The reliability of this instrument was indicated by a Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.88 to 0.94, and its validity was reflected in an r -value between 0.78 and 0.82. For items deemed invalid, a content validity assessment was performed with experts, leading to corrections that ensured the statements accurately represented the indicators in the questionnaire. Consequently, the final number of statements used in the research remained at 53 for self-efficacy, with independence items adjusted according to the child's developmental age. Then the questionnaire is valid for use in research.

The reliability test results for the self-efficacy questionnaire indicated a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.875, while the independence questionnaire yielded a value of 0.791. Both questionnaires are considered reliable for research purposes, as they have Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the threshold of 0.6. Before being given the research questionnaire, respondents were informed about the aims and objectives of the research and then provided informed consent. When collecting data, respondents who agreed and were willing to become respondents in the research signed their agreement on the consent sheet provided. The data analysis process in this quantitative research uses univariate and bivariate analysis. Data analysis of 53 parent respondents who have children with autism. Univariate analysis to determine the frequency distribution and central tendency, and bivariate analysis was carried out using linear regression to see the closeness of the relationship between variables.

This research has obtained ethical approval from the Research Ethics Commission of the Faculty of Health Sciences and Technology (FITKES) at Jenderal Achmad Yani Cimahi University, with the reference number 014/KEPK/FITKes-Unjani/VI/2024. Before initiating the research, the researchers conducted validity and reliability tests on the research instruments.

RESULT

Table 1.
Demographic Characteristics Of Parents With Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder

Variable	f	%
The job of parents		
Civil servants	5	9.9
Dentist	1	1.9
Lecturer	3	5.7
Teacher	3	5.7
Housewife	6	11.3
therapist	2	3.8
Entrepreneur	24	45.3
private employee	10	18.9
Education		
Senior high school	12	22.6
Associate's Degree	4	7.6
bachelor's degree	29	54.7
post-graduate degree	8	5.1
Number of children		
1	10	18.9
2	20	37.7
3	15	28.3
4	5	9.4
5	3	5.7

Table 2.
Test The Correlation between Self-Efficacy and Independence

Self Efficacy	Self Efficacy independence	
	Pearson Correlation	
	1	.538**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	53
Independence	Self Efficacy independence	
	Pearson Correlation	
	.538**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	53

The results of the correlation test indicate a relationship between self-efficacy and independence in children with autism, with a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.000.

Table 3.
Linear Regression Test Results (Uji t) Self-Efficacy on the Independence

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-21.644	8.325		
	Self Efficacy	.165	.036	.538	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Independence

In this analysis, the regression line equation details can be found in the 'Coefficients' table, specifically in column B, where the significance value is reported as 0.000. This indicates a linear relationship between self-efficacy and the independence of children with autism. In this study, the 95% confidence interval (CI) for the regression coefficient of self-efficacy on independence is: 95% CI (0.093 – 0.237).

DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the coefficient of determination, represented by the R Square value, is 0.29, meaning that 29% of the variation in children's independence can be explained by parents' self-efficacy in self-care. This demonstrates that self-efficacy influences children's independence. Furthermore, the regression line equation details can be found in the 'Coefficients'

table, specifically in column B, where the significance value is reported as 0.000. This indicates a linear relationship between self-efficacy and the independence of children with autism.

This is relevant to the research results Wwidya, S. Nurlita et al tahun 2023 about correlation of self-efficacy, parental involvement, and self-determination with student learning independence. The research findings indicate a significant correlation between self-efficacy, parental involvement, and self-determination with learning independence, contributing 57.30% to the variance in learning independence among high school students. In contrast, the previous study shows that 29% of children's independence variation is explained by parents' self-efficacy in self-care. Both studies highlight the importance of self-efficacy, but the current research demonstrates a stronger combined effect with parental involvement and self-determination on learning independence.

These findings align with Albert Bandura's (1997) theory, which defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions necessary to achieve specific goals. Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to take risks, confront challenges, and persist through difficulties key factors in fostering behavioral independence. This concept also extends to parents of children with special needs, where higher self-efficacy plays a critical role in encouraging and developing independent behavior in their children.

The research indicates that individuals with high self-efficacy are more capable of establishing ambitious goals and are more dedicated to putting in the effort required to achieve them. They are also more likely to perform autonomous actions, which is a hallmark of behavioral independence. When individuals feel confident in their ability to do something, they will be more likely to try and sustain their efforts, which increases their autonomy (Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (Eds.). 2020). Likewise, parents who have good self-efficacy appear to have measurable and directed efforts in directing their children who have special needs.

Research indicates that parents who have confidence in their ability to assist a child with autism can positively impact the child's development. These children often benefit from adaptive and proactive parenting approaches, rooted in parents' belief in their abilities. This also affects the child's social and emotional development, as well as their learning ability (Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (Eds.). 2020). Elevated self-efficacy levels in parents are linked to greater participation in intervention and educational programs. This engagement is critical to success in supporting children with special needs, where confident parents are more active in seeking help, educating themselves, and implementing effective strategies to help their child (Patterson, J. M., & Morgan, M., 2021).

Parental self-efficacy in assisting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in developing self-care and personal care skills is a vital factor that can affect the child's degree of independence (Murray, A. L., Munns, M., & Harnett, P. J., 2022). Parents who have a strong sense of self-efficacy in this area may be more likely to provide their children with the necessary support, guidance, and opportunities to develop these skills, ultimately leading to greater independence (Sreckovic, M. A., Hume, K. A., & Regan, T. E., 2020). Parents who possess high self-efficacy generally exhibit confident attitudes when implementing positive parenting practices, such as inductive reasoning, warmth, and support for autonomy, which foster adaptive outcomes. They also demonstrate acceptance and active involvement in their children's lives (Trecca, F., Bleses, D., Højen, A., & Laursen, B., 2022).

Parental self-efficacy is strongly linked to children's adjustment. It directly influences how well children adapt, while also being mediated by the behaviors and practices of the parents. Specifically, parental self-efficacy refers to the degree to which parents or primary caregivers feel

capable and confident in performing tasks and activities associated with child care (Salo, A. E., Junttila, N., & Vauras, M., 2022). Low levels of parental self-efficacy can be enhanced through nursing interventions grounded in the family empowerment model. Research findings indicate a positive and effective impact on increasing the self-efficacy of parents with children who have autism. Additionally, caregivers' or parents' understanding of autism improved after participating in the nursing intervention program (do Vale Costa e Silva, M. R., Roama-Alves, R. J., & Ciasca, S. M., 2022).

A strong sense of self-efficacy can assist parents in fostering an independent attitude in their children with ASD, particularly regarding self-care. To cultivate independence in their children, parents must take on the roles of guides, motivators, and facilitators, ensuring that this independence is nurtured from an early age through to adulthood (El, S., Hassan, S., El-Azzab, I, et al., 2022). This process requires positive attitudes, which are typically found in parents with high self-efficacy, such as being supportive and responsive. Consequently, families play a crucial role in developing self-care skills and activities for children with autism.

The literature indicates that parents of children with autism often encounter considerable challenges in promoting independence, as their children may have difficulties with task initiation, self-regulation, and executive functioning skills. A key factor influencing the independence of children with autism is the self-efficacy of their parents concerning self-care and personal care skills. Parental self-efficacy, defined as the belief in one's capability to effectively support and guide their child's development, has been associated with various positive outcomes for children with special needs. When parents are confident in their ability to teach and assist their children in developing self-care skills, they are more likely to encourage independence and motivate their children to perform these tasks on their own. Enhanced parental self-efficacy boosts parents' confidence in addressing their child's needs, resulting in more effective interventions. This sense of self-efficacy fosters resilience, allowing parents to better navigate the challenges associated with raising a child with ASD. Such resilience positively influences family dynamics, creating a supportive environment that encourages children's growth and independence. Parents with greater self-efficacy are more inclined to participate in activities that promote their child's independence, including teaching self-care skills.

The practical application of enhancing parental self-efficacy involves an approach that includes training, social support, and psychological interventions. These strategies not only improve the psychological well-being of parents but also contribute to the developmental progress of children with ASD. However, it is crucial to address the challenges that may hinder the effectiveness of these interventions, ensuring that parents receive the necessary support to foster their children's independence effectively.

CONCLUSION

There is a significant connection between individuals' self-efficacy regarding self-care and the independence of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Parental self-efficacy is intricately linked to the child's adjustment. On one hand, this directly influences the child's adaptation; on the other hand, parental behaviors and practices mediate these effects. Given that children with ASD often face obstacles in learning and social interactions, leading to slower acquisition of self-care skills compared to their non-autistic peers, parents play a crucial role in providing motivation and reinforcing progress toward enhancing their children's independence.

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