



Parental Strategies and Difficulties in Managing Children with Special Educational Challenges

Ana Marie Polinar¹

Lilibeth Pinili²

Danilo Cebe³

Janine Joy Cañete⁴

Marjorie Añero⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5} Tagbilaran City SpEd Center, Cebu Technological University, Philippines.

Email: anamariepolinar@gmail.com

(✉ Corresponding Author)

Abstract

This study explored the lived experiences, parenting practices, and challenges faced by parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), specifically focusing on those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Using a qualitative phenomenological design, the research gathered insights from ten parents enrolled at a Special Education (SpEd) center in Tagbilaran City. Findings revealed that parents play a crucial role in supporting their child's learning, emotional development, and social engagement through personalized routines, structured learning, and unconditional care. However, the study also uncovered significant challenges, including emotional stress, financial burdens, limited time, and difficulty in accessing adequate resources and services. Themes such as the journey of acceptance, resilience, and the importance of emotional and institutional support emerged as central to the caregiving experience. The study highlights the need for collaborative educational practices, accessible support systems, and inclusive programs that empower parents and enhance the well-being of children with SEN.

Keywords: Autism spectrum disorder (ASD), Lived experiences, Parental challenges, Parental practices, Resilience, Inclusive education, Special Educational Needs (SEN).

1. Introduction

Parents play a fundamental role in the growth and success of Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSENs). They act as advocates, ensuring that their children access appropriate educational tools and services tailored to their needs (Rosales et al., 2022). At home, parents foster learning by creating nurturing routines and personalized activities that promote development (Padillo et al., 2021). Effective collaboration between parents, teachers, and therapists helps maintain consistency across home and school environments (Valera, 2024). Parents also play an emotional role by offering reassurance, building resilience, and boosting their child's confidence (Rens & Louw, 2021). Moreover, parents provide critical emotional support to their children. They help LSENs cope with frustration, anxiety, and self-doubt by cultivating a positive self-image, encouraging autonomy, and reinforcing small achievements. This kind of support boosts emotional resilience and confidence qualities essential to navigating the social and academic challenges often encountered by LSENs (Rens & Louw, 2021).

However, raising LSENs comes with significant challenges. Many parents face difficulties understanding special education policies, navigating complex support systems, and managing the financial burden of specialized therapies and equipment (Vistar et al., 2024). Emotional stress, time constraints, and social isolation often compound their struggles (Unseen Pictures, 2022). Despite these hurdles, many parents display remarkable resilience, adaptability, and dedication. Their capacity to persevere under pressure is often supported by informal networks, such as parent support groups and community-based programs, which can provide emotional, informational, and practical support (Valencia & Sagnep, 2022).

In Bohol, parents are particularly active in supporting LSENs despite resource limitations. They participate in school planning, community support groups, and supplement learning at home through consistent schedules and targeted interventions (Valencia & Sagnep, 2022). Nonetheless, systemic barriers persist. Although the Department of Education (DepEd) supports inclusive education, rural schools often lack resources and trained personnel (Padillo et al., 2024). Non-governmental organizations play a key role in bridging gaps, advocating for awareness, and facilitating access (Campado et al., 2023).

Parents often serve as co-educators in home-based learning environments, particularly highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, where their involvement was essential (Rosales et al., 2022). Parent-assisted programs have shown to significantly improve academic competencies (Valencia & Sagnep, 2022). Moreover, studies emphasize

that strong school-family collaboration is key to enhancing child development and emotional well-being (Jansen van Rensburg et al., 2024). To address these challenges, studies recommend the expansion of training for both educators and parents, development of inclusive policies, and better allocation of educational resources.

Ultimately, conducting a focused study on the lived experiences of parents in Bohol's SpEd schools will provide valuable insights into best practices and gaps in the current support system. This research could inform future policy, foster inclusive education, and highlight the vital role of parents in the holistic development of LSENs.

2. Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences, parenting practices, and challenges faced by parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SENs). The phenomenological method was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the parents' daily realities, capturing their emotional responses, coping strategies, and level of involvement in their children's education. This approach allowed for an authentic exploration of participants' perspectives, shedding light on the core essence of their caregiving experiences. The participants were ten parents from the Tagbilaran City SPED Center, each with a child enrolled in the 2024–2025 academic year. Participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling, an appropriate strategy for qualitative inquiry as it ensures the inclusion of individuals with firsthand caregiving experience and relevant contextual knowledge (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024). Data were collected using a validated, five-part interview guide developed in consultation with qualitative researchers and special education professionals. The guide encompassed key areas such as parenting approaches, encountered challenges, emotional reactions to the child's condition, coping mechanisms, and support requirements. Interviews were conducted in Cebuano to foster natural and comfortable expression, then translated into English for thorough analysis. Thematic analysis was carried out using the framework proposed by Wolgemuth et al. (2024), involving systematic coding and the identification of recurring themes. This process revealed core patterns including routine management, emotional stress, communication challenges, learning support needs, and parental hopes for their child's future. The insights derived from these themes offer meaningful implications for designing targeted support programs to empower families of children with SENs.

3. Results

3.1. Parental Practices in Managing the Educational and Developmental Needs of Children with SENs

Engagement in Learning. Engagement in learning is crucial for children with ASD, as it significantly impacts their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Creating an engaging learning environment involves recognizing individual strengths and preferences, allowing for tailored educational experiences. Visual supports, structured routines, and hands-on activities can enhance focus and participation.

Additionally, fostering positive relationships with teachers and peers encourages social interaction, which is vital for communication skills. Incorporating interests into lessons can also motivate children with ASD, making learning more relatable and enjoyable. Furthermore, involving families in the educational process promotes consistency and reinforces learning at home. Ultimately, enhancing engagement in learning for children with ASD facilitates academic success and supports their overall well-being and self-esteem.

Participant 1 disclosed that:

Dili kara adlaw me magtuon, siguro naa ray 3 times a week kay mabored man gud sya dayun. (We don't study every day; we probably do it only about 3 times a week because he easily gets bored.)

Participant 2 narrated that she is busy working:

Usahay rako makatudlo sakong anak tungod sa busy nakong trabaho pero ginatudloan pud nako sya kada gabie. Sa school ako syang ignun nga musuwat ka kay akong paliton ang imung activity ug mao nai motivation nya na para kanunay mag suwat. (I can only teach my child sometimes because of my busy work, but I also teach him every night. At school, I tell him to write because I will buy his activity, and that becomes his motivation to keep writing.)

Also, Participant 3 added:

Pag atiman sa pagkaon, pagbisti ug paghatag ug malinarwun na pamuyo, pagpa eskwela sa adlaw na naay klase, pagbabati sa among pagmahal, pag-atiman ug pagpasunod sa maayung pamatasan. (Taking care of his food, dressing him, providing a peaceful home, sending him to school on days when there are classes, expressing our love, caring for him, and teaching him good behavior.)

The engagement of children with ASD in learning has significant data implications for educational practices and policies. Research indicates that higher engagement levels correlate with improved academic outcomes, social skills, and emotional well-being. Qualitative data collected through interviews identify effective strategies that foster engagement, such as individualized learning plans, sensory-friendly environments, and interactive teaching methods. Analyzing this data helps parents understand each child's unique preferences and needs, enabling targeted interventions.

Furthermore, longitudinal studies can track engagement over time, providing insights into the long-term benefits of engaged learning. Ultimately, leveraging data to enhance engagement strategies ensures that children with ASD receive the support necessary for successful learning experiences and personal growth.

The study of Yang et al. (2024) emphasizes the significance of incorporating the interests of children with ASD into educational practices. By aligning curriculum with students' interests, researchers found that engagement increased significantly, leading to better learning outcomes and social interactions.

Acar et al. (2021) explored the effect of parental involvement on children's engagement in learning. The findings suggested that children with ASD who experienced active participation from their parents showed enhanced engagement levels, communication skills, and emotional regulation.

This research reviewed various strategies for increasing engagement among children with ASD in classroom settings. Debasu and Chekol (2024) highlighted the effectiveness of positive behavior support and individualized instruction in promoting active participation and reducing challenging behaviors.

Mohamed and Almaz (2024) investigated the role of sensory-friendly environments in promoting engagement among children with ASD. The findings suggested that classrooms accommodating sensory needs significantly increased attention and participation during learning activities.

The duty of care principle states that adults who are involved with children who have disabilities should help them grow and develop. A study by Opoku et al. (2024) showed that if parents do not understand unhealthy food well, it can affect the growth of these special children. The study also pointed out that teachers often do not work together or communicate about the nutrition and healthy lifestyles of special children.

Subramanyam et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of effective communication in promoting healthy child development. Factors like schooling, the design of the curriculum, inclusivity, teacher training, awareness of new developments, and interactions between parents and teachers significantly influence children's well-being. Key aspects that affect the growth of children include a healthy environment, physical activity, proper nutrition, exposure to microplastics, and the impact of global warming. It is crucial to approach child well-being scientifically and to understand the laws and policies that support child welfare and protection.

The second question focused on how parents felt when they first discovered their children's special educational needs.

The Journey of Acceptance. Acceptance for children with ASD is a multifaceted process that involves understanding, empathy, and support from families, peers, and society. Acceptance begins with awareness, where individuals learn about ASD's characteristics and challenges, fostering a sense of empathy.

Families play a crucial role by advocating for their children's needs and educating others to combat stigma. Schools and communities must create inclusive environments that celebrate diversity, promoting friendships and social interactions among children with ASD and their peers.

Furthermore, acceptance encourages children to embrace their unique strengths, helping them build confidence and self-esteem. Ultimately, this journey towards acceptance not only enhances the lives of children with ASD but also enriches the communities that support them, fostering a culture of understanding and compassion.

Participant 1 shared her feelings toward acceptance of her child's lifetime condition, and she said:

Sakit sa buot pero amo na lang gedawat ang sitwasyon nga ingun ana sya. (It hurts, but we have just accepted the situation as it is.)

Participant 2 also, who is in denial, mentioned:

Una Nakong gibati kay indenal ko na naka huh??? Ngano? So on nakadawat rako. (At first, I felt in denial, thinking, 'Huh??? Why?' But eventually, I accepted it.)

Participant 3 is also in denial of her child's condition:

Sa kinaunhan, maglisod ko pagdarwat but akong gi lift up ni God ang tanan. Inubanan sa akong pagpangga ug pag mahal ug pagpasunod sa maayung disiplina. (In the beginning, I found it hard to accept, but I lifted everything up to God. Along with my love, care, and adherence to good discipline.)

Also, Participant 4 felt bad on her child with ASD:

Nasakitan ko sa sitwasyon sa bata. (I am hurt by the child's situation.)

Furthermore, Participant 6 narrated that:

Medyo magool pero ang importante makadawat ka ug unsa sya nagkinahanglan sa pagmahal sa ginikanan inobanan sap ag ampo sa Ginoo naa kanunay magpuyo sa atong kasingkasing ug panimalay Thank God Bless. (I'm a bit sad, but what matters is that you can give him the love he needs from his parents, accompanied by prayers to God, who will always dwell in our hearts and home. Thank God. Bless.)

Participant 9 added:

At first worried and denial. Wala kadawat ky normal ra gyud siya tan-arwun. (At first, I was concerned and in denial. I couldn't accept it because he looked completely normal.)

The journey of acceptance for children with ASD has significant data implications for educational and social programs. Research indicates that acceptance can lead to improved mental health, social skills, and academic performance among children with ASD. Data collected through interviews reveal attitudes towards ASD within families, schools, and communities, highlighting areas needing improvement.

Analyzing these data can inform targeted interventions, such as teacher training programs and awareness campaigns for peers and parents. Longitudinal studies can track the progress of acceptance over time, linking it to various outcomes like emotional well-being and social integration.

Furthermore, leveraging data to understand the journey of acceptance helps create supportive environments that promote inclusivity and enhance the quality of life for children with ASD.

The research conducted by Humphries (2024) looked into how parents view acceptance and the difficulties they encounter while supporting their children with ASD. The findings highlighted the emotional impact of stigma and the importance of community support in fostering acceptance.

The study of Mokoena and Kern (2022) focused on siblings' role in the acceptance journey of children with ASD. It found that siblings often experience a unique process of acceptance, influenced by family dynamics and their understanding of ASD, which can positively impact their relationships.

Ke et al. (2018) examined the effectiveness of social skills training programs in promoting acceptance among peers. Results indicated that structured interventions not only improved social skills in children with ASD but also fostered greater acceptance and understanding among their peers.

Badger et al. (2024) investigated the role of schools in promoting acceptance for students with ASD. The findings suggested that inclusive educational practices and anti-bullying initiatives significantly enhance peer acceptance, leading to improved social interactions and emotional well-being for children with ASD.

Parveen et al. (2024) examined the community's role in accepting individuals with ASD. The findings emphasized that awareness and educational programs in community settings significantly improve perceptions and promote inclusivity.

Challenging life situations can leave anyone feeling exposed. Families with children who have special needs are particularly at risk, just like those dealing with other tough issues, such as poverty or a parent's mental health problems. Plavčák's study (2024) suggests that we need to handle families with children who have special needs with sensitivity, flexibility, and well-rounded support. It's essential to view these families within the context of their lives, taking into account the emotional challenges of raising a child with special needs and any other hardships they might encounter. Support should be customized to fit the unique needs of each family and developed together with them.

Today, education has become a crucial indicator of development and the success of society, focusing on the knowledge and skills that children need to acquire. In practice, however, children's experiences may not be in line with the goals set by adults, and instead of enjoying school, they can experience reluctance and stress. Soo (2024) explores the sources of vulnerability in the school environment by observing the experiences of children.

The third question was the description of a child's educational journey.

Impact of Transformative Learning. Transformative learning has a profound impact on learners with ASD, fostering personal growth and enhanced life skills. It involves critical reflection and a shift in perspectives, enabling individuals to understand their experiences and the world around them deeply.

This approach promotes self-advocacy for ASD learners as they become more aware of their strengths and challenges. Engaging in transformative learning experiences can enhance communication skills, social interactions, and emotional regulation, empowering learners to navigate their environments confidently.

Furthermore, supportive educational settings that encourage transformative learning cultivate resilience and adaptability, equipping ASD learners with essential skills for lifelong success. This approach enriches their academic journey and enhances their overall quality of life and social integration.

Participant 1 mentioned:

So far sa among nakita niya ganahan sya kaayu mu eskwela. (So far, from what we've seen, he really enjoys going to school.)

Also, Participant 2 narrated how difficult for her teach her child with ASD:

Una walay nahibarw-an bisag unsaon ug tudlo pero pag have na sya therapy nagka inamay na syag kamao labi na sa school kay nindot motudlo ilang teacher. (At first, he didn't know anything, no matter how much we tried to teach him, but after he started therapy, he gradually became more knowledgeable, especially at school because his teacher is great at teaching.)

Participant 3 added:

Dako kaayu ug kausaban, dghan kaayu syag nakat-unan sa school ilabina ang good behavior. (There has been a considerable change; he has learned a lot at school, especially about good behavior.)

Participant 4 narrated her experiences in her child's academic journey. She said:

Sa una dli ko kasabot sa buot nya ipasabot, karun kasabot nako kay tinudloan namn sya sa iyang teacher. (Before, I couldn't understand what he was trying to say, but now I understand because his teacher has been teaching him.)

Participant 6 shared her joy regarding her child's academic progress:

Dako kaayu ug kausaban sa wala pa maka eskwela ug karun cge na sya ari sa school daghan na sya nakat-onan pinaagi sa ilang bootan nga teacher. (There has been a huge change from when he wasn't in school to now; he is always here at school and has learned a lot thanks to their kind teacher.)

Participant 8:

So far, he has improved dramatically, especially in his tolerance for sitting, learning life skills, and increased eye contact.

The impact of transformative learning on learners with ASD has significant data implications for educational practices and outcomes. Research indicates that transformative learning fosters self-awareness, critical thinking, and social skills, improving academic performance and emotional well-being.

Analyzing this data allows teachers to track progress in communication and social interactions, providing insights into individualized learning plans. Longitudinal studies can further examine the long-term benefits of transformative learning, linking it to enhanced independence and life satisfaction. Leveraging data on transformative learning helps create inclusive and supportive educational environments that maximize the potential of ASD learners.

Although not exclusively focused on ASD, Mezirow's foundational work on transformative learning theory highlights the process of critical reflection and its potential to change individuals' perspectives to enhance their self-awareness and self-advocacy skills (Magree, 2024).

Kaimara (2023) examined the effectiveness of transformative learning strategies in promoting social skills among adolescents with ASD. The study found that engaging in reflective practices and experiential learning opportunities enhanced social awareness and peer interactions.

Klefbeck (2023) explored the impact of reflective practices on the learning experiences of students with ASD. The findings suggested that incorporating reflection into learning processes significantly improved emotional regulation and personal growth.

Specific Challenges Parents Encounter in Managing the Educational and Developmental Needs of Children with SENs

Supporting a Child Without Excess Pressure. Supporting a child with ASD requires a delicate balance between fostering growth and avoiding excessive pressure. Creating a nurturing environment that encourages exploration and learning at the child's own pace is essential. Parents and teachers can provide support through structured routines, clear expectations, and positive reinforcement, which help build confidence without overwhelming the child. Allowing for breaks and incorporating sensory-friendly activities can further reduce anxiety and create a sense of safety.

Additionally, focusing on the child's interests can enhance motivation and engagement in learning. By fostering a supportive atmosphere that prioritizes emotional well-being and self-acceptance, caregivers can empower children with ASD to develop their unique strengths and navigate challenges effectively, ultimately promoting holistic growth without undue stress.

Participant 1 shared her views:

So far wala paman kayo ko naglisod kay wala nako ge pressure akung anak sa makaya ra niya. (So far, I haven't had much difficulty because I haven't pressured my child beyond what he can handle.)

Participant 2 wanted the best for her child with ASD. She said:

Gusto nako na makamao na akong anak sa pagsulat ug basa ug storya. (I want my child to be able to read, write, and tell stories.)

Participant 6 added:

Pinakaimportante hatagan panahon ug pag atiman ug pagmahal. (The most important thing is to give time, care, and love.)

Furthermore, Participant 8 added:

The most critical challenge for now is communication skills and understanding commands verbally.

The data implications of supporting a child with ASD without excess pressure are significant for both educational practices and developmental outcomes. Research indicates that a low-pressure approach can enhance emotional well-being and reduce anxiety in children with ASD, leading to better engagement and learning. Data collected through assessments, observations, and feedback can identify effective strategies prioritizing individualized learning and emphasizing strengths rather than weaknesses.

Analyzing this data allows teachers and caregivers to tailor interventions that foster growth while minimizing stress. Longitudinal studies can further explore the long-term benefits of supportive, pressure-free environments on social skills, communication, and academic performance. Also, leveraging data to create supportive frameworks ensures that children with ASD can thrive emotionally and intellectually, promoting their overall quality of life.

Efstratopoulou et al. (2022) examined parental stress levels about the expectations placed on children with ASD. The findings indicated that a supportive and understanding approach significantly reduced stress for parents and children, highlighting the importance of minimizing pressure.

Efthymiou (2024) explored the impact of high-pressure educational environments on children with ASD. The results suggested that creating a relaxed and supportive learning atmosphere improved emotional regulation and increased student motivation.

Ketcheson et al. (2022) investigated the role of mindfulness practices in reducing anxiety for children with ASD. The study found that incorporating mindfulness techniques into daily routines created a calming environment, promoting focus and emotional stability without added pressure.

Involving parents in their child's education creates a positive learning atmosphere, boosts students' confidence and motivation, and helps them achieve better academically, especially when they face learning challenges. According to a study by Ybañez et al. (2024), there is no clear connection between how engaged parents are and the difficulties that learners with learning challenges experience, as noted by their parents. The research showed that a solid connection between parents and teachers is crucial for building a supportive learning environment that

caters to the specific needs of these students. When parents get involved in their child's education, it promotes teamwork and a sense of shared responsibility.

The research by Chebil and Radjel (2024) showed that while professional development helps teachers gain knowledge and skills, they still struggle to use those skills in real-life situations due to limited chances to practice. The findings also emphasize the importance of ongoing and targeted training to enhance teaching methods for children with disabilities. Additionally, they confirm that special education teachers need professional training and continuous support to succeed.

The second question was the ways a parent thinks he/she has grown due to these experiences.

Maturity and Resilience in the Face of Adversity. Children with ASD often demonstrate remarkable maturity and resilience in the face of adversity. Despite the challenges associated with social communication and sensory sensitivities, many children with ASD develop coping strategies that help them navigate difficult situations. This resilience is often fostered through supportive environments, where caregivers and teachers encourage problem-solving skills and emotional regulation.

By providing opportunities for children to confront and overcome obstacles, they learn to adapt and thrive. Additionally, their unique perspectives can lead to innovative thinking and creativity. As they encounter and manage adversity, children with ASD can develop a strong sense of self and an enduring ability to face life's challenges. Furthermore, their journey reflects their strength and the power of support in fostering resilience and maturity.

According to Participant 1 because of her challenges:

Na mature sa pagsulbad sa mga problema. (He has matured in solving problems.)

Participant 2 added:

Na mature ug kalit tungod sa pagsulbad sa problemang wai kahumanan pero katawa gihapon ta bisag naay problema. (He has suddenly matured due to solving endless problems, but we still laugh even when there are issues.)

Also, Participant 3 mentioned:

Wla nakoy panahon na maglingaw-lingaw sa sarili kay nafocus na gyud akong attention sap ag atiman sa akong anak. (I no longer have time to entertain myself because my attention is focused on taking care of my child.)

Participant 6 said:

Daghan ko nakat onan nga maayong pagtolon-an ug kaayuhan sa akong kaugmaon. (I have learned a lot about good education and the well-being of my future.)

Participants 8 and 10:

I was able to develop more patience and understanding in handling his needs. P8. *It increased my patience and understanding of my son's condition.* P10

The data implications of maturity and resilience in children with ASD in the face of adversity are significant for understanding developmental outcomes and support strategies. Research indicates that resilience is linked to positive mental health and coping mechanisms, which can be measured through assessments and behavioral observations.

Analyzing the data allows researchers to track the development of maturity and resilience over time, providing insights into effective support systems. Leveraging this data can help teachers and caregivers implement strategies that foster resilience, promote emotional well-being, and empower children with ASD to navigate life's challenges successfully.

Ameis et al.'s (2020) study discusses resilience in children facing adversity, including those with developmental disorders like ASD. The study highlights factors contributing to resilience, such as supportive relationships and adaptive coping strategies.

The study by Chan et al. (2024) focused on the role of mindfulness and emotional regulation in promoting resilience among children with ASD. The findings suggested that mindfulness practices helped improve emotional responses and coping strategies, leading to greater maturity in handling adversity.

Kuenzel and Duerden (2024) explored the connection between early experiences of adversity and later resilience in children with ASD. It found that positive interventions and supportive relationships could mitigate the effects of early challenges, promoting emotional growth and maturity.

Sultana and Purdy (2024) investigated how important parental education is in handling the challenges of today's parenting, especially in helping children develop their communication skills. Communication plays a crucial part in early growth, as it supports children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. By using proven strategies and working together, parents can be empowered to build an environment that promotes overall growth and learning for their kids. When difficulties come up whether they are related to communication, learning issues, social problems, or academic struggles parents who have effective strategies and knowledge can better support and advocate for their children.

The study of Qorib et al. (2024) discovered that communication is essential for helping children with intellectual disabilities grow socially and emotionally. Parents who worked closely with teachers noticed they felt more confident in helping their children learn at home, which also helped the kids deal with challenges in both

settings. Using therapeutic communication is key when teaching children with disabilities, and a strong partnership between teachers and parents is essential for it to be effective.

Several studies have examined the positive impact of inclusive, heterogeneous learning environments and parental involvement on student achievement. However, for children with special educational needs, exclusionary processes due to labelling and insufficient support for parental involvement often remain unresolved. The study of Dan et al. (2024) shows that family involvement is influenced by individual, organizational, and social factors, with teachers' integration approach playing a crucial role. The findings may help us better understand how schools and parents of children with special educational needs interact. They can also guide us in preparing and supporting teachers effectively. The third question was the kind of support a parent thinks is the most beneficial in moving forward.

Embracing Strength in the Face of Challenges. Embracing strength in the face of challenges is a vital theme for children with ASD. Despite encountering various obstacles in social interactions, communication, and sensory processing, many children with ASD possess unique strengths that can be harnessed for personal growth. These strengths often include exceptional focus, attention to detail, and creative problem-solving abilities.

By recognizing and nurturing these qualities, caregivers, and teachers can foster a positive self-image, encouraging children to view challenges as opportunities for growth. Creating supportive environments celebrating individual talents helps build resilience, empowering children to navigate difficulties confidently. Embracing their strengths enhances their self-esteem and allows children with ASD to thrive and contribute meaningfully to their communities, transforming challenges into pathways for success.

Participant 1 answered:

Physically and mentally support.

Also, Participant 2 shared her views that she needs to be vital for her child with ASD:

Gi encourage nako akong kaugalingun na to be strong and brave lang gyud ta bisag unsa pang problema muabot. (I encourage myself to be strong and brave no matter what problems come our way.)

Participant 8 added:

The most valuable support would be the help I continuously receive and advice from therapists and SpEd teachers.

Participant 10 replied that:

Educate oneself, do what is best for the child, and get emotional support from family.

The data implications of embracing strength in the face of challenges for children with ASD are significant for educational and therapeutic practices. Research indicates that focusing on individual strengths can lead to improved self-esteem, motivation, and overall well-being among children with ASD.

Data collected through assessments, observations, and parent feedback can identify specific strengths, such as attention to detail or creativity, allowing for tailored interventions that capitalize on these abilities. Longitudinal studies can track the impact of strength-based approaches on social skills, academic performance, and emotional regulation over time.

Analyzing this data empowers teachers and therapists to implement strategies that foster resilience, ultimately transforming challenges into opportunities for success and personal growth for children with ASD.

Warren et al. (2021) explored the strengths and abilities of children with ASD. It found that emphasizing their unique skills, such as attention to detail and creativity, helped improve self-esteem and fostered a more positive self-concept.

The study of Coder (2024) focused on the impact of strength-based approaches in educational settings. The findings indicated that when teachers highlighted students' strengths, it increased engagement, motivation, and academic achievement among children with ASD.

Wright et al. (2024) examined the role of resilience in children with ASD. It revealed that recognizing and cultivating individual strengths, such as problem-solving abilities, significantly contributed to their capacity to overcome challenges.

The study by Kokorelias et al. (2019) investigated the role of family support in embracing strengths. It highlighted how families focused on their child's strengths created a more positive home environment, improving emotional well-being.

Cherewick and Matergia (2024) examined coping strategies in children with ASD. The findings suggested that leveraging personal strengths, such as creativity and focus, helped children develop effective coping mechanisms in the face of challenges.

4. Discussions

Parental involvement in the education and development of children with ASD is critical, yet it is often shaped by emotional, social, and systemic challenges. Parents reported the importance of engaging in their child's learning while balancing work and household responsibilities. This aligns with findings from White and Talpade (2024), who emphasized that parents deeply value resources and tailored support to manage their children's educational needs effectively (White & Talpade, 2024). Furthermore, psychological stress, often intensified by a lack of systemic support and the demands of caregiving, is a consistent theme across studies. Di Renzo et al. (2021) found that both maternal and paternal stress significantly impact family dynamics and the emotional well-being of the caregivers (Di Renzo et al., 2021). Similarly, Plyaskina et al. (2021) highlighted the need for structured psychological support programs to help parents manage emotional strain and maintain positive relationships with their children (Plyaskina et al., 2021). Acceptance is another vital theme that emerged in the study. The emotional journey of accepting a child's diagnosis often begins with denial, fear, and sadness before progressing toward

resilience and advocacy. This emotional transition is consistent with the findings of Lupo et al. (2024), who reported that initial reactions to diagnosis commonly include grief and fear, followed by a gradual shift towards empowerment as parents seek support and information (Lupo et al., 2024). Hsiao (2023) further emphasized that parental resilience is influenced by emotional regulation and the presence of strong support networks, both informal and professional (Hsiao, 2023). As demonstrated by Nugaeva et al. (2022), comprehensive psychological support tailored to the needs of families with children with ASD can significantly improve both parent-child relationships and parental mental health (Nugaeva et al., 2022). These insights underscore the importance of designing inclusive programs that not only address the educational needs of the child but also offer holistic support for the parents.

5. Conclusion

Parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) play a vital role in their child's educational and developmental journey, often acting as teachers, advocates, and emotional pillars. Despite their deep commitment, they face a range of challenges including emotional stress, financial strain, limited resources, and difficulty navigating complex support systems. Their journey toward acceptance is often marked by initial denial, grief, and confusion, eventually evolving into resilience, maturity, and empowerment. Through personalized strategies, emotional support, and active involvement, parents foster their children's learning, social integration, and self-esteem. The findings highlight the need for sustained and accessible support systems that cater not only to the needs of the children but also to the well-being of their caregivers. Strengthening partnerships between families, educators, and service providers is crucial in building inclusive environments where both children and their parents can thrive and succeed.

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