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Psychosocial Intervention for Mothers of Children with Autism Spectrum
Disorder (ASD): A Randomized Controlled Trial

Introduction

Parenting is often described as one of life's most rewarding experiences, offering profound joy and fulfillment. The process of nurturing a child, guiding their development, and witnessing their growth and achievements is a source of immense pride and satisfaction for many parents. However, parenting also comes with its fair share of challenges. The demands of raising a child can be overwhelming, involving significant emotional, physical, and financial investments. Balancing the needs of the child with personal responsibilities, maintaining a healthy family environment, and ensuring the child's overall development can create a complex and often stressful experience for parents.

When a child has special needs, the challenges associated with parenting can become even more pronounced. Special needs children often require additional attention, specialized care, and tailored support, which can place additional strain on parents. The emotional and psychological impact of dealing with a child's special needs can affect the entire family dynamic, including the parent's mental health and overall quality of life. This heightened stress is often compounded by societal pressures, stigma, and the perceived inadequacy of existing support systems.

Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

In 1912, Paul Eugen Bleuler who is a Swiss Psychiatrist, first used the term "autism" in the *American Journal of Insanity*. He based the term on the Greek word "autos," meaning "self," to describe what he identified as a form of schizophrenia manifesting in childhood, a condition he also named (Blake et al., 2013). Among his patients, he observed tendencies towards social withdrawal, diminished interest in others, and difficulties in effective communication (Zauderer, 2023). It was not until the 1940s that autism gained recognition as a distinct condition. In 1943, American psychiatrist Leo Kanner published a seminal paper titled "Autistic Disturbances of Affective Contact" in the journal *The Nervous Child* (Blake et al., 2013) outlining a group of 11 children, comprising eight boys and three girls aged between 2 and 8, who consistently exhibited a strong inclination towards solitude since infancy. These children

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by Mona Alice Marbaniang

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