

The State of Autism in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Many people in the world undergo various challenges which either affect them socially or even psychologically, hence, creating negative impacts in their lives. In this study, the major focus is autism, which is a disorder associated with the mental state of an individual, which mostly affects their interactions, as well as their communication processes. In this study, therefore, the major focus shall be the analysis of the case of autism, as it is in the 21st century. The areas which shall need analysis include: the introduction to the issues of autism, the anatomical, physiological, pathological and epidemiological issues related to autism, the body systems affected by autism, what happens at the cellular and the genetic levels, as well as the most important chemical and biological issues in relation to autism. The other major areas which shall need analysis include the economic issues involved in autism, economic theories and approaches which best explain the issue of autism, the statistical facts related to the issue of autism, as well as the best statistical processes used in the study of the issues of Autism, which can best provide the required answers and explanations regarding autism. There will be analyzing of a variety of sources from online platforms where the use of qualitative methods will produce information.

Keywords: autism, mental state, statistical facts

The State of Autism in the 21st Century

Children, as well as adults, undergo various health challenges, some of which a majority of the people are born with, but other which develop as the people grow (Zander, 2005). Autism is a mental disorder, which usually occurs in individuals causing development challenges in their communication processes, their social interactions, and eventually the display of a repetitive and restricted character (Brentani et al., 2013). In most cases, the cases for the autism disorder are detected in children, when they attain their second or even their third year; the signs then develop and become complicated with time.

The issue of autism is believed to be caused by two major predisposing factors, which come from the environment as well as from genes in an individual (Fuentes et al., 2012). For any individuals to be associated with the disorder, research has shown that the individual must have been subjected to certain risk factors, which then predisposes the unborn baby to the dangers of developing the disease. Some factors such as infections that come about as a result of pregnancy, for instance, rubella, and the disposition to particular dangerous factors like cocaine main problems that cause contraction of the autism disorder among majority of children across the world (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) & United States Department of Health and Human Services (2012).

Autism has major impacts on the processing of information in the brain since there is usually a change and interruption to the functionality of the brain cells, the nerve cells, as well as the connection of information via the synapses within the brain (Florida State University, 2015). Although many children are detected with the autism disorder, which is further classified as the autism spectrum (ASD), and where another closely related, although a weaker problem, known as the Asperger syndrome, is also classified as a mental disorder detected in many children.

There are many challenges for the children who are detected with the autism problem, as a majority do not recover from the condition, and thus, they need to be assisted in their adulthood to handle a majority of cases. A small number of children can be helped to recover from this condition, where their speech is enhanced, their behavior improved and their self-care capabilities enhance, with the proper care, and early medication (National Institute of Mental Health, 2015). Environment plays a major role in enhancing the healthy development of children with autism.

As it shall be seen in this essay, there has been a large number of persons who have autism worldwide in the 21st century. Many of the individuals have, however, continued to suffer while hiding, or even suffer due to lack of a person to help them, and others have been looked down upon by their families and their societies making them to be isolated members who are stigmatized. With that said, people have begun to amend their negative attitude to a positive one towards those individuals diagnosed with autism within the societies (Martin, c. 2010). Today, the increased number of individuals diagnosed with the autism disorder has faced many challenges which make their life somehow difficult.

The Scientific Perspective of Inquiry

For one to understand the manner in which a majority of the individuals who are diagnosed with the autism disorder operate, it is important to understand the autism disorder scientifically. The scientific perspective of inquiry covers the anatomical, physiological, pathological and epidemiological issues related to Autism, the body systems affected by autism, the most important chemical and biological issues about autism, and finally, what happens at the cellular and the genetic levels. As shown in this section, autism has various impact on the anatomical, psychological, pathological, as well as the epidemiological impacts on the

individuals who are diagnosed with the ailment. Autism is characterized by various aspects, which include: impairment in various disciplines, challenged communication, challenged social interactions, and focus on a specific activity (Mattila, 2013). The orientation of people depends on the family one comes from which affects the way they interact with other society members.

The Anatomical, Physiological, Pathological and Epidemiological Issues Related to Autism

There are the anatomical, physiology, pathology and epidemiology factors that are closely related to autism, and there is need to address in the 21st Century. There is no clear cellular, molecule, or even any known system which unifies the various individuals who are diagnosed with the autism disorder, as in the other mental disorders (Preiserowicz, 2015). Many scientists are usually torn between understudying autism as a disorder which is caused by the combination of various molecular dysfunctions, or the act of a single molecular dysfunctionality. As shown in many studies, autism occurs as a function of the brain development, where important information is disturbed during the relaying process. Autism is created through the alteration of the brain formation process and functionality, a factor which happens soon after an individual is conceived (Norris, 2006). The challenge affects a majority of the individuals who are exposed to the predisposing factors.

The Body Systems Affected by Autism

Autism affects many children in the world today. The brain is the most affected organ in the body of the individuals who are diagnosed with autism across the world (Herberta & Arranga, 2006). As the brain develops, the synapses which transmit information from one body part to another, and which aid in the process of coordinating the information are affected. Upon conception, the brain develops, but with its development interrupted by the dis-coordination between various parts of the body, and majorly the brain, unlike in children who have no autism

(Lathe, 2006). The neurons are affected, which then affect the activity coordination, as well as the communication process within the body, disturbances during gestation in the neuronal migration, poor dendritic spines formation, and finally the poor synthesis of the neurexin-neurologin cell-adhesion system.

Activities in the Cellular and the Genetic Levels

There are various impacts of the activities which take place in the cellular and the genetic levels during the formation of autism in many individuals. There are various processes which take place in the cell and also the genetic formation of an individual who is diagnosed with autism (Herbert, 2012). As proven by studies the cellular and the genetic formation of autism depend on some features. There are various cellular and genetic factors which lead to autism (Randolph-Gips & Srinivasan, 2012). According to the study, the brain region suffers from over-connectivity by neurons which are excess neurons, and that there are unbalanced networks created by the excitatory-inhibitory processes.

The Most Important Chemical and Biological Issues Related to Autism

There are many important chemical and biological issues related to autism, and which affect the individuals who have the problem. A majority of the individuals who are diagnosed with the autism disorder are usually found to contain high levels of chemicals which emanate from medicine, and other various sources, such as drugs like cocaine (Verhoeff, 2018). A majority of the individuals are also associated with many biological factors such as age of the parent involved which is a key determinant to whether a child will be affected with autism or not, the order in which children are born, is also important in analyzing the various cases of children (Karimi et al., 2017). The natural surroundings of a child and the growing environment presented

to them after its birth play an important role in determining whether that particular child will be affected by the autism disorder or not have the disorder.

The Analytical Perspective of Inquiry

In this section, the major areas of analysis shall include the economic issues involved in autism, the economic theories and approaches which best explain the issue of autism, the statistical facts related to the issue of autism, as well as the best statistical processes used in the study of the issues of Autism, which can best provide the required answers and explanations regarding autism. This study addresses how the diverse aspects of the autism disorder can be tackled.

Economic Issues Involved in Autism

The economic issues relating to the problem of autism have been addressed by many authors who have had diverse views on the challenge of autism. Across the world, the issue of autism has had many economic impacts on the economies of many countries (Mandell, 2012). A lot of money has been used by a majority of the families which have children who have autism to provide them with medical care, hence, affecting the economic well-being of a majority of the families. To the individuals with the autism disorder, money has to be spent on medication, daily upkeep, and even the maintenance in their adulthood. A lot of money has been spending by families who have children with autism disorder to medicate them, take them to school, ensure their safety, and also enhance their general welfare. In the UK, £2.7 billion is depleted annually for the wellbeing of the persons who have autism to make sure they lead a normal life (Knapp et al., 2017).

Economic Theories and Approaches Which Best Explain the Issue of Autism

The autism problem in the 21st century can be explained using some economic theories and concepts. The understanding of the economic theories which best explain the issue of autism emanates from the understanding of the economic cost of the problem to the individual, the family, the society, the nation, and the world in general to (Sharpe and Baker, c. 2010). The Cognitive theories of autism form a major basis for understanding the issue of autism in the 21st century. It is important to analyze the weak central cohesion theory, the theory of mind and finally the executive function theory (Rajendran & Mitchell, 2007).

Statistical Facts Related to the Issue of Autism

There are various studies which have addressed the issue of autism, giving figures and statistical data on the number of individuals who are faced with the same challenge in the modern world. Looking at the US, in the last two decades, so many individuals have been diagnosed with autism disorder which has increased with a large margin of 600% (Yazbak, c. 2010). In every 68 children born, at least one is prone to be having the autism disorder. For every 42 boys born, one is also presumed to be autistic, while in every 189 girls born, only one is prone to the disorder (Child Guidance Resource Centre, c. 2018). Today, an estimate of 3.5 million Americans are known to have autism, while 1% of the world population is autistic, and 55,000 children and adults have to receive medication for autism annually across the US.

The Best Statistical Processes Used in the Study of the Issues of Autism, Which Can Best Provide the Required Answers and Explanations Regarding the Condition

Use of some statistical analysis can seek explanations and answers on the autism problem. One of the best strategies which can be used in the provision of the statistical information is through the analysis of the medical records, which have been provided by a majority of the public and the private hospitals across the world (Directorate C - Public Health

and Risk Assessment, c. 2010). The needed statistical data and information on autism disorder in the world can be obtained by knowing the government, and it carries out its functions.

Information on the autism disorder can be understood by an individual having prior knowledge of the relevant institutions (Özerk, 2016).

Ethical Perspective of Inquiry

Looking at ethics, certain concerns need to be looked at from the ethical point of view including the approach in which several types of research have been conducted on the autism problem. This section covers the rules and regulations that govern the autistic challenge, ethical barriers that affect the manner in the problem of autism is addressed by medical practitioners, how ethical theories relate to the issue of autism, and lastly, how money, power, and control are all relevant to the autistic problem and its treatment.

Laws Governing or Pertaining Autism

Various laws are governing the issue of autism, and which are applied in various places around the world. Looking at laws that are relevant to the issue of autism, the number one rule is the human rights recognition which is found in many constitutions of various countries in the world (Choutka et al., 2004). The other law which governs the issue of autism is the provision of freedoms, provision of adequate and urgent medical care and attention to the sick individuals, provision of the best education to the autistic persons, and finally the consideration for various positions which have been set aside for the people living with disabilities (Fina & Cera, 2015). Other major laws governing the same issue of autism is the respect for personal views, personal property, as well as the consideration into various positions within the family, the society and the nation as a whole.

The Ethical Obstacles Which Affect How the Issue of Autism Is Addressed By the Medical Community

There are various ethical obstacles which affect how the issue of autism is addressed by the medical community. A lot of negativity is attached to autism as a disorder, and the negativity is transferred to the people who are affected by the same (Rossi et al., 2012). Another barrier is the challenge of finances where the government together with the family members do not offer support to the victims. In most cases, a majority of the individuals face challenges, since their families do away with them, view them as burdens, and try to withdraw any support they offer to the individuals (McMahon et al., 2006). In addition to the barriers is the challenge of stereotyping which is related to the manner in which people with autism are treated in the society and how they look at themselves.

How the Ethical Theories Apply to the Issue of Autism

The issue of autism can be looked at by application of some of the ethical theories of autism. First, the theories give the basic understanding of how autism develops in individuals, giving the readers the knowledge on what they can do to minimize the cases of autism, and also encourage a state of common development among all individual (Hiraishi, 2010). Also, the ethical theories of autism apply in this problem in the sense that, they try to explain the way in which different individuals view the autism issue and the way in which the issue can be tackled in the society.

The relationship between Money, Power and Control and The Issue of Autism and Its Treatment

The problem of autism and its treatment is affected by money, control, and power. The families who have money can access medication early in life and help their children getting

better, and doing away with the autism challenges (Celiberti, 2016). Families that are financially unstable undergo a lot of straining in trying to get money to treat their children which leads to the death of the children eventually. In most cases, power and control enable people to access medication at any time, and thus, the children are saved for good.

Cultural Perspective of Inquiry

Different cultures in the world perceive autism differently. Children with autism require a lot of care and support from both their parents and other members of the society. Autism disorders are known to affect people from various cultural backgrounds. Social interactions for people with autism pose a challenge to them. The individuals need a special education which is culturally bound (Perepa, 2016). To be socially competent means an individual can take part fully in a social situation which makes it difficult for those with autism disorder to function as expected by their cultures in societies they live in. This study will look at cultural values and norms are influencing the issue of Autism and how it is addressed differently in different cultural contexts, the societies most affected by the issue of autism and reasons behind the same as well as cultural traditions affecting treatment of the disorders.

The Cultural Values and Norms Influencing the Issue of Autism

Autism disorders can be diagnosed by looking at the behavioral patterns of affected individuals which can lead to treatment measures. Autism problem should be viewed as a minority culture and not a disease as it can happen to any individual in the society regardless of their race, ethnicity or nationality. The western culture for instance values educating their population. Children with autism are slow learners, and they will receive special education. Cultures that do not value educating their children will not see autism as a disorder and will not be concerned about educating the affected children (Norbury & Sparks, 2013). Societies should

not discriminate against children with autism and rather have their cultures support educating the children.

How the Issue of Autism is Addressed Differently in Different Cultural Contexts and Situations?

The family is the number one place where socialization takes place. Different families from different cultural backgrounds react differently to autism disorders. Parents of autistic children are usually depressed and have poor marriages and a lot of anger. African Americans tend to believe that autism caused by factors like diet. Asians and Navajo Indians believe autism is a penalty from God, as something caused by witchcraft or a woman conceiving a child who does not belong to the husband. Latinos view an autistic child as God's gift and as a chance to be someone better in the society (Pitten, 2008). Autistic children should not be discriminated against as no one chooses to be born with the disorder.

Which Cultures or Societies Are Most Affected by the Issue of Autism and Reasons behind the Variance?

Autism affects more males than females, and it affects all people from different cultural backgrounds globally. Some Vaccines of children across the globe lead to the development of autism. Trauma during birth and illnesses together with genetics lead to autistic disorders. White American are diagnosed with autism earlier than other ethnic groups like African Americans which concludes that African Americans are the most affected by autism compared to their white counterparts (Ennis-Cole et al., 2016). The blacks miss out on educational opportunities as their parents are reluctant to seek help due to stigmatization (Roth, 2017). Parents should, however, be on the forefront in campaigning for change so their autistic children can get the required help.

The Cultural Traditions Affecting Treatment of Autism

Families of children affected by autism make decisions based on their cultural backgrounds which affect the diagnosis and treatment of their autistic children. Culture influences beliefs of people about disabilities such as autism. African Americans tend to seek help from families, churches or friends before going to the doctor. Whites, on the other hand, seek professional and traditional help while Latino Americans seek help from folk healers. Asian Americans, however, try to solve the problem by themselves and only seek help when they do not find any solution (Ennis-Cole et al., 2016). Treatment should be sought from professionals by parents of autistic children regardless of their cultural background.

Conclusion

Based on the above texts, autism disease is one of the most problematic issues worldwide as most individuals have been affected by the same and are not in a position to make changes in their wellbeing. In the study above, it is an important step to understand what causes autism disorder among various people in the world, if the disorder can be treated, and the way in which it has affected people globally in the 21st century. Based on what has been discussed in this essay, the conclusion is that an organization of genes together with factors of the environment are determinants as to whether a child will develop autism or not. Mostly, children born of mothers who during their pregnancy term took cocaine or those who took alcohol, as well as the surrounding of the child after it has been born play a significant role in promoting the health of the child and aiding them not have an autism disorder. Looking at the above discussion, the major observation made is that autism has a lot of impacts on how people conduct themselves in their young years or their old years. There are some major traits of individuals who are diagnosed with the autism disorder, which include: an adherence to a strict character, routine or trait, and the inability to enhance an effective communication process. Social development is

also something that poses a challenge where you find that many children want to stay isolated; they are not interested in playing with other children and tend to withdraw from anything that requires them to do.

The study above has concluded that there have been so many people in the world who have been diagnosed with autism disorder, in the past two decades with a margin being 600%. Looking at the economy, many individuals affected by autism have had so many challenges economically, as well as the families and the countries which have had an increased case of the people who have the autistic disorder. Generally, there has been a rift between people who are affected by autism and those that are not affected by the disorder, since, they dependants to their family members in their childhood and even the adult stage for major basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing. Many autistic victims are not in a position to have access to employment opportunities, as they are mostly seen to be unfit to interact with others and have leadership qualities in them. A system has however been constructed to ensure that there is an effective and efficient way to deal with people who have fallen victims of autism in the society. Laws have been stipulated to make sure autistic people are taken care of in the society where they live as governments have put in to place positions for disabled people where autistic individuals are placed, and they get to be employed. Laws like the human rights and equality laws have been stipulated to make the individuals live comfortable lives. The conclusion here is that autism problem has challenged many people around the globe for a long time, and the numbers of people with the disorder have gone up, but in the wake of the 21st century, improvements have been made in the way people view and handle the individuals with the autistic problem.

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