

The Needs of Families of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Their Relation to Certain Variables

Omar Fawwaz Abdel Aziz

Faculty of Education- king abdulaziz University
dr.omarabdelaziz@yahoo.com

Abstract: The current study has targeted the recognition of the cognitive, financial, psychological and social needs of the families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). As well as the relation of the same to some variables related to characteristics of the (ASD) child such as his/her gender, the chronological age, the degree of disorder, in addition to variables related to the characteristics of the family such as economic level. The study sample is composed of 58 families with male and female children with (ASD) who join the Institute of Intellectual Education and the Saudi Society for Autism in Jeddah. The researcher has developed the scale of the families' needs and has verified its Persistence and credibility. This scale is composed of three dimensions which are: cognitive needs, financial needs, and psychological and social needs. Results were as follows: 1. there are no differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ at the averages of the accumulative score due to the gender of the child with (ASD). 2. there are differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ in the accumulative score attributed to the variable of the chronological age of the child with (ASD) and it was in favor of the age group of (6-12). 3. there are no statistically significant differences at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ at the averages of the accumulative score and the sub-dimensions among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the difference in the degree of disorder. 4. there are no statistically significant differences at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ in the averages of the accumulative score and the sub-dimensions among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the variable of the difference in the household income.

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1. Introduction

The existence of a child with (ASD) in a family is considered one of the major problems and challenges faced by families with disabled children. It may also have a great impact on the family's adjustment and thus result in the surfacing of some needs in these families such as cognitive, financial, psychological and social needs.

The statement of problem and research questions:

Families with children with (ASD) face anxiety and stress regarding the availability of sufficient financial resources for education, treatment, and medical services (Yahya, 2009). Mandell and Salzer (2007) notices as well that almost 50% of mothers who have children with (ASD) were either prevented from work at all or have restricted working hours and restricted type of offered work.

Bromley, Hare, Davison, & Emerson, (2004) notices as well that mothers of children with (ASD) suffer a great deal of psychological pressure related to the lack of support in raising their children. In addition to the above mentioned, the review of literature indicates that informal social support may have an impact on the reduction of the stress of mothers with children with (ASD) (Bromley, Hare, Davison & Emerson, 2004).

Mandell and Salzer (2007) indicate that communication with other families of similar cases

having children with (ASD) may reduce the stress and social isolation in addition to increasing chances of obtaining information about available services.

Families with children with (ASD) need a system of support that helps them obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to raise and train their children affectively. This support can be through the provision of information about their child's disorder and the need to answer the financial, psychological and social needs, the thing that makes them feel respected by others (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2005). Al-Qaryoti (2009) notes that the intensity of the impact of the existence of a special needs child on a family is defined by many factors including: the educational and cultural level of the parents, the size of family, the type and degree of disability, and finally the gender of the disabled child.

Specifically, the current study has sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the cognitive, financial, psychological, and social needs of the families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?
2. Are there differences in the needs of families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) related to the variable of gender?
3. Are there differences in the needs of families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) related to the variable of chronological age?

4. Are there differences in the needs of families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) related to the variable of the degree of disorder?
5. Are there differences in the needs of families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) related to the variable of the level of family income?

Significance of the study:

The significance of this study lays in:

1. Specifying the basic needs of families of children with (ASD) according to priority and significance.
2. This study contributes in the improvement of the level of services offered to families of children with (ASD).
3. The scarcity of scientific studies that handle the needs of families of children with special needs and especially families of children with (ASD).

Limitations of the study:

1. This study sample is limited to families of children with (ASD) whose age is (6-18) of both male and female genders who joined the Institute of Intellectual Education for boys and the Saudi Society for Autism in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
2. The period of specifying the needs of families of children with (ASD) was limited to the second semester of the school year 1434/1435 Hijri.

Definition of Terms:

Autism Disorder: A developmental disorder resulting from neurological dysfunction, and occurs before the child reaches the third year of age and is characterized by impaired communication in verbal and non-verbal, and the inability to establish social relations, and the emergence of stereotyped behaviors, and abnormal response to sensory stimuli.

The Needs: The desire to receive services or are the goals that must be achieved from the point of view of the family. In this study they are defined as those needs expressed through the scale of needs of families of children with (ASD) which the researcher has prepared and which includes the cognitive, financial, and psychological & social needs.

Cognitive needs: The cognitive needs of families of children with (ASD) is the need to obtain information about the nature of their child's disability and its characteristics and the pressure that would be placed on the family. Also, the need to know the future opportunities to educate, train, and employ their children in appropriate vacations as well as the proper medical interference methods. These are expressed in this study in the items under the scale of the needs of families of children with (ASD).

Financial Needs: The financial needs of families of children with (ASD) is the need for financial support to ensure the basic requirements such as health care, transportation, additional supporting services such as verbal and vocational training, the provision of learning and recreational aids. These are expressed in this study in the items under scale of needs of families of children with (ASD).

Psychological and Social Needs: The Psychological and social needs of families of children with (ASD) can be defined as the need for moral support from relatives, friends, and society in general to reduce psychological pressure placed on the family, as well as the need for the presence of outreach programs specializing in family support, the need for recreational and sports activities places for those with (ASD). These are expressed in this study in the items under the scale of needs of families of children with (ASD).

Related Literature:

There have been a number of studies in the education literature related to the needs of families of children with (ASD). Among these studies are:

First: Foreign studies:

Leyser&Dekel (1991) have conducted a study that aims at defining the needs of disabled children and their relation to some variables. That study contained a sample of 82 families with disabilities. The results indicated the presence of statistically significant differences related to gender which are in favor of disabled males, as well as the economic level of the family which are in favor of poor families and to the absence of differences due to the variable of chronological age.

In a study conducted by Krauss (1993) on 121 parents of disabled children, and which aimed at defining the types of pressure placed on those families, the results have indicated that the degree of pressure is affected gender in favor of males compared to females while there are no differences in pressure related to the variable of chronological age the disabled child.

Mackintosh, Myers, and Goin-Kochel (2006) have conducted a study that aimed at discovering the resources used by parents of children with (ASD) to obtain information and support. The study was conducted through the utilization of surveys online where the study sample was composed of 498 parents. The results have indicated that the largest source of information for families were successively as follows: Other parents of children with (ASD), Specialists in (ASD), doctors and teachers, family members, friends, spouses, web pages, meetings of the Autism support group, newsletters related to autism, books, conferences, and finally workshops .

Sen and Yurtsever, (2007) have conducted a study about the basic needs of families with disabilities. The results have indicated that families need information about the nature of disability suffered by their children and that they also need financial support to face expenses resulting from taking care of the disabled child, as well as social support.

Papageorgiou and Kalyva (2010) have conducted a survey to determine the needs and expectations of participants in support groups, study sample consisted of 299 parents of children with autism, and the results indicated that the cognitive needs come first at the rate of 64.5% to know the latest advances in the field of autism, then the need for practical support at the rate of 19.5% and 8% the need for support of other parents with (ASD) children, and finally the need for psychological support at the rate of 8%.

Hsiao (2013) has conducted a study that investigated the relationship between the type of family life and the exhaust level of parents, and the partnership between families and professionals for families of children with (ASD). Study sample was composed of 236 of parents of children with (ASD). Results have indicated that the age of child and the kind of school services offered contributed significantly to the professional partnership between family members, and was the only variable that contributed significantly to the exhaust of parents, and the situation of parental relationship. The two variables which contributed greatly to the quality of family life were family income and age of the child with (ASD).

Jeans (2013) has conducted a study on a sample of 22 families of young children with (ASD). The aim of this study was to evaluate needs and support services through online discussion groups. The results indicated that mothers rather than fathers have found the online discussion groups more useful to meet needs and support services for the families. As for the definition of priority of needs, the mothers have pointed out that the need for emotional support, potty training, and sleep for the children with (ASD) as higher priority compared to fathers.

Second: Arabic Studies:

Alhasan (1992) has conducted a study that aims at recognizing the needs of families of children with disability on 313 families. The results have pointed out statistical significance of differences in needs according to the variables of chronological age, gender, and the type of disability of the disabled child on the need for information in favor of the families of male younger children.

The Study by Alshakhs and Assartawi (1998) has aimed at investigating the needs of families of

children with disability, which are considered essential to face the psychological pressure resulting from their children's disability. The study sample consisted of 661 families. The results have pointed that the needs of the families were in the following order: financial support, cognitive needs, societal support, and social support. The results have also shown that there is presence of statistically significant differences in needs based on the variable of age in favor of the young children while there is no presence of statistically significant differences in need based on the variable of the level of monthly income.

In another study conducted by Alhadidi (2001), she aimed at investigating problems faced by families of children with mental disability in Jordan. The sample of study was composed of 200 mothers of mentally disabled children. The results of the study have shown that the order of problems was as follows: Economic, then psychological, then social problems successively. The results have also pointed out the difference in the intensity of problems based on the change in the variables of gender and the degree of disability of the mentally disabled child. The variable of the child's age has not shown any statistically significant effect

From the review of literature, it is clear that most of previous studies have their intention focused on investigating the most prominent needs of the families with disabilities and that they vary in results. As for the Arabic studies and those in the Saudi Arabia, it is noticeable the scarcity of studies that handles the needs of families of children with (ASD).

2. Method and methodology:

Sample of study:

The sample of study consists of 58 families of children with (ASD) of both males and females who join special education centers in Jeddah. As for the distribution of sample based on the variables of gender, age, degree of disorder, and the level of family income, the numbers were as follows: numbers based on the variable of gender are 48 families of male children with (ASD) and 10 of female children with (ASD), numbers based on the variable of age are 34 children for the age group (6-12) and 24 children for the group age of (12-18), numbers based on the variable of the degree of disorder are 26 children with a mild degree of disorder and 32 of medium degree, numbers based on the variable of family income 32 of low income (less than 5000 SR) and 16 of medium income (5000-10000 SR) and 10 of high income (more than 10000 SR).

Study tools:

For the purpose of this study and following the steps below, the researcher has prepared a special tool

of needs which is a scale for the needs of families of children with (ASD):

1. Surveying the literature in education studies related to the needs of families of children with special needs in general such as (Bailey & Simeonsson, 1988), and that of the needs of those with (ASD) in particular and specifically studies of Sen and Yurtsever, (2007), Papageorgiou and Kalyva (2010), Hsiao, (2013).
2. The researcher, then, has designed the study tools in the final form which is three dimensional as follows:
 - a. Cognitive needs and it contains 11 items.
 - b. Financial needs and it contains 9 items.
 - c. Psychological and social needs and it contains 8 items.

The credibility and persistence of the study tools:

1. The credibility of the study tools: The credibility of the scale of the needs of families of children with (ASD) was verified through two methods, these are:
 - a. **The credibility of judges:** the scale was viewed by a group of 5 judges who are specialized in special education, psychology, and counseling to obtain their opinion about the extent to which the

items of the scale are appropriate in its language formation and belonging to the dimension it falls under. That was in the initial form of the items which were 29 items. Taking into consideration the recommendations of the judges, and their comments, amendments were made were the scale finally contained those items which obtained a rate of 80% of the judges' approval so that the final number of items in the scale became 28 in its final form distributed on the three dimensions of the scale which are cognitive needs, financial needs, and psychological and social needs. The degree of response on the scale was divided into three categories as: 'I strongly need it', which was given a score of 2, 'I mildly need it', which was given a score of 1, and 'I totally do not need it', which was given a score of 0, and thus the highest score a person may get on the scale of needs is 56, and the lowest is 0 score.

- b. The credibility was also calculated through the features of interrelatedness of performance in the three dimensions compared to the final accumulative score. Table number (1) shows credibility factor of statistical function which is sufficient for study purpose.

Table (1) Factor of statistical function which is sufficient for study purpose

		Knowledge	Finance	Social	Total
Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	1	.446**	.430**	.752**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.001	.000
	N	58	58	58	58
Finance	Pearson Correlation	.446**	1	.281*	.809**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.033	.000
	N	58	58	58	58
Social	Pearson Correlation	.430**	.281*	1	.729**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.033		.000
	N	58	58	58	58
Total	Pearson Correlation	.752**	.809**	.729**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	58	58	58	58

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

2. **Persistence:** It was extracted using internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient using Cronbach's Alpha to measure the internal consistency among the items of the scale, The value of coefficient of internal consistency for the overall scale is (0.80).

The Design and statistical treatment:

The current study is a survey study following a descriptive approach in research. It has aimed to identify the needs of families of children with (ASD) and their relationship to gender, age and degree of disorder, as well as the level of household income and thus included a number of independent variables, namely:

- The gender of the child with (ASD), and it has two levels: male and female.
- The chronological age of the child with (ASD), and it has two levels: 6-12 years old, and 12-18 years old.
- The degree of disorder, and it has two levels: simple and medium.
- The level of the household income, and it has three levels: low, medium, and high.

The Dependent variables:

The needs, and they have three dimensions, namely (cognitive needs, financial needs, psychological and social needs).

Statistical treatment: As for statistical treatment, the researcher has used statistical analysis of variance for repeated values and the arithmetical averages were calculated as well as the standard deviations using the test of (Independent Sample T-test).

3.Results

Below is a survey of the results reached in this study:

1. Results related to the first research question which is: ‘What are the cognitive, financial, and psychological and social needs of families of children with (ASD)?’

To answer this question, arithmetical averages and standard deviations of the different needs were calculated. Table number (2) shows the results. The researcher has adopted the scale below to categorize the degree of those needs where a need is considered low if its arithmetical average is (0 – 0.66), medium if its arithmetical average is (0.67 – 1.33), and is high if its arithmetical average is (1.34 – 2.0).

Table (2)The arithmetical averages and standard deviations and the descending ranking of cognitive, financial, and psychological & social needs of families of children with (ASD) based on the responses of the families

Item No.	Arrangement	Mean	±Std. Deviation
1	1	1.88	.328
2	3	1.81	.395
3	4	1.69	.536
4	4	1.69	.466
5	4	1.69	.466
6	5	1.66	.479
7	2	1.85	.365
8	4	1.69	.536
9	5	1.64	.484
10	7	1.48	.599
11	6	1.50	.628
Cognitive needs		18.50	2.92
12	2	1.62	.644
13	4	1.55	.729
14	3	1.57	.595
15	5	1.52	.731
16	6	1.50	.707
17	1	1.64	.693
18	7	1.47	.777
19	8	1.40	.770
20	9	1.28	.812
Financial needs		13.54	4.914
21	3	1.41	.795
22	2	1.43	.728
23	1	1.55	.679
24	4	1.35	.738
25	6	1.00	.772
26	5	1.02	.737
27	8	.85	.767
28	7	.90	.741
Psychological & social needs		9.50	3.970
Total		41.54	9.061

The arithmetical average of the needs collectively has reached (41.53) which is considered a

high score. The cognitive needs have ranked first among needs with an arithmetic average of (18.5)

which is considered a high score. The highest arithmetic average of the cognitive needs dimension reached (1.88) which is a high score in item number (1) which is 'the need for information about services to be offered to my child with (ASD)'. Second in the cognitive needs dimension came item number (7) which is 'the need for information about the medical intervention methods with children with (ASD)' with an arithmetical average of (1.85) which is a high score. Third came item number (2) which is 'The need to know the proper jobs for my child with (ASD) with an arithmetical average of (1.81) which is a high score. Then came items number (3,4,5,8) fourth which are successively the need for: 'books and scientific publications, learning the behavior modification techniques, knowledge of the characteristics of my child, knowing the sources of support and assistance' with an arithmetical average of (1.69) which is a high score. Item number (6) came fifth which is 'the need of knowing the medical intervention with my child with (ASD)' with an arithmetical average of (1.65) which is a high score. As for the 6th ranking, there is item number (11) which is 'the need for knowing how to deal with my other children under psychological pressure' with an arithmetical average of (1.5) which is a high score. Last came item number (10) which is 'the need to identify the sites of scientific methods to learn to deal with people with (ASD)' with an arithmetical average of (1.48) which is also considered a high score.

As for results regarding financial needs, they ranked second with an arithmetical average of (13.53) which is considered a high score. The highest arithmetical average was that of item number (17) which is 'the need for money to offer assisting extra services to my child with (ASD)' with an arithmetical average of 1.64 which is a high score. Second ranked item number (12) which is 'the need to provide a proper job for my child with (ASD) after giving him training' with an arithmetical average of (1.62) which is a high score. Third came item number (14) which is 'the need for more governmental help to meet the needs of my child with (ASD) such as (food, treatment, and transportation)' with an arithmetical average of (1.57) which is a high score. Fourth came item number (13) which is 'the need to ensure transportation mean to transport my child with (ASD) to the institute or school' with an arithmetical average of (1.55) which is a high score. Fifth ranked item number (15) which is 'the need to provide cash to join specialized training courses' with an arithmetical average of (1.52) which is also considered a high score. In the sixth rank came item number (16) which is 'the need for more help to pay for the toys which my child with (ASD) needs' with an arithmetical average of (1.50) which is a high score. Seventh

ranked item number (18) which is 'the need for extra cash for medical care' with an arithmetical average of (1.47) which is a high score. Eighth ranked item number (19) which is 'the need for financial assistance to purchase requirements for my child with (ASD)' with an arithmetical average of (1.40) which is a high score. Last ranked item number (20) which is 'the need for financial support from relatives to reduce pressure placed on family' with an arithmetical average of (1.40) which is a high score.

Regarding results related to the psychological and social needs, this dimension ranked third with an arithmetical average of (9.50) which is considered a high score. The highest arithmetical average in this dimension is that of item number (23) which is 'the need to have people in our society the disorder of my child' with an arithmetical average of (1.55) which is a high score. Then, second came item number (22) which is 'the need for help to practice recreational activities' with an arithmetical average of (1.43) which is a high score. Third ranked item number (21) which is 'the need for the school to encourage my child with (ASD) to participate in the learning, athletic, and recreational activities' with an arithmetical average of (1.41) which is a high score. Fourth ranked item number (24) which is 'the need to have meetings with the team to follow up on the performance of my child with (ASD)' with an arithmetical average of (1.35) which is a high score. Fifth ranked item number (26) which is 'the need for more friends to whom I can talk' with an arithmetical average of (1.02) which is a medium score. Sixth came item number (25) which is 'the need to get rid of the depression caused by the condition of my child with (ASD) with an arithmetical average of (1.00) which is a medium score. Seventh ranked item number (28) which is 'the need for chances to meet and chat with families of children with (ASD) with an arithmetical average of (.90) which is considered a medium score. Last ranked item number (27) which is 'the need for organized meetings with the psychiatrist to discuss the problems of our family' with an arithmetical average of (.85) which is considered a medium score.

2. The results related to the second research question . This question is: 'Are there differences of statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ among the needs of families of children with (ASD) caused by the children's gender? To answer this question, it has been calculated the arithmetical averages and standard deviations using (Independent Sample T-test) to examine the indication of the differences among the needs of families of children with (ASD) based on the difference in the children's gender. Results were as detailed in table (3):

Table (3) The arithmetical averages and standard deviation and the values of the T-Test of the cognitive, financial, and psychological & social needs based on the variable of gender.

	t-test	Female		Male		df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	±Std. Deviation	Mean	±Std. Deviation		
Cognitive needs	1.197	19.50	2.72	18.29	2.94	56	.236
Financial needs	2.908	17.40	.97	12.73	5.027	56	.005
Psychological & social needs	.785	8.60	4.12	9.69	3.96	56	.436
Total	1.539	45.50	5.52	40.71	9.47	56	.129

Results in Table (3) have shown that there are no differences of statistical significance in the averages of the accumulative score caused by the gender of the children with (ASD). As for the results on the sub-dimensions, it has been noticed that there are no differences of statistical significance in the averages of the cognitive and the psychological and social needs due to the variable of gender. Results have also shown that there are differences with statistical significance in the average of the financial needs as the T value reached (2.91) and it has been clear from the arithmetical averages that these differences were in favor of females with arithmetical average of (17.40) rather than males (12.73).

- Results related to the third research question: This question was: Are there differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the difference in the child's age?** To answer this question, it has been calculated the arithmetical averages and standard deviations using (Independent Sample T-test). Results were as detailed in table (4):
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Table (4) The arithmetical averages and standard deviation and the values of the T-Test cognitive, financial, and psychological & social needs based on the variable of the chronologica

	t-test	6-12		12-18		df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	±Std. Deviation	Mean	±Std. Deviation		
Cognitive needs	2.483	19.27	2.69	17.42	2.80	56	.016
Financial needs	4.425	15.62	3.05	10.58	5.54	56	.000
Psychological & social needs	1.423	10.12	3.84	8.63	4.06	56	.160
Total	3.868	45.00	6.83	36.63	9.68	56	.000

The results have shown that there are differences with statistical significance in the accumulative score due to the chronological age of the child and that they were in favor of the age group (6-12) where the value of (T) has reached (3.868) and the arithmetical average was (45.00) for the ages (12-18). As for the results related to the sub-dimensions, it is noticed that there are differences with statistical significance in the average of the cognitive needs where the (T) value reached (2.483). It has been noticed from the arithmetical averages that these differences were in favor of the children with (ASD) of age group (6-12) with an arithmetical average of (129.27) while it reached (17.42) for the age group (12-18). Results have also shown that there are differences of statistical significance in the averages of the financial needs where the (T) value reached (4.425). It was noticed from the arithmetical averages that these differences were in favor of those with (ASD) of the age group of (6-12) with an arithmetical average of (15.62) while it reached (10.58) for the age group of (12-18). Results have also shown that there are no differences with statistical significance in the psychological and social needs.

- Results related to the fourth research question. This question was: 'Are there differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the difference in the degree of the child's disorder?** To answer this question, it has been calculated the arithmetical averages and standard deviations using (Independent Sample T-test). Results were as detailed in table (5) to test the indication of the differences among needs of children with (ASD) based on the degree of the child's disorder.

Table (5) The arithmetical averages and standard deviation and the values of the T-Test of the cognitive, financial, and psychological & social needs based on the variable of the degree of disorder (simple or medium).

	t-test	Simple		Medium		df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	±Std. Deviation	Mean	±Std. Deviation		
Cognitive needs	1.181	19.0000	3.14960	18.0938	2.69240	56	.242
Financial needs	.112	13.6154	4.55260	13.4688	5.26084	56	.911
Psychological & social needs	.066	9.4615	3.95202	9.5313	4.04797	56	.948
Total	.408	42.0769	8.66221	41.0938	9.48805	56	.685

It has been noticed from results that there are no differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ among the needs of families of children with (ASD) in the averages of the accumulative score due to the degree of disorder. As for results on the sub-dimensions of the scale, it has been noticed, as well, that there are no differences with statistical significance in the averages of the cognitive, financial, and psychological and social needs due to the variable of the degree of the disorder.

5. Results related the fifth question: This question was: Are there differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the difference in the household income? To identify whether there are differences with statistical significance due to the difference in the household income, the (One Way ANOVA) has been used to clarify the indication of the differences among needs of families of children with (ASD). Results were as detailed in table (6):

Table (6) Results of the One Way ANOVA of the differences among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the difference in the household income

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Cognitive	Between Groups	15.131	2	7.566	.887	.418
	Within Groups	469.369	55	8.534		
	Total	484.500	57			
Financial	Between Groups	54.125	2	27.062	1.126	.332
	Within Groups	1322.306	55	24.042		
	Total	1376.431	57			
Psychological & social	Between Groups	30.931	2	15.466	.980	.382
	Within Groups	867.569	55	15.774		
	Total	898.500	57			
Total	Between Groups	13.025	2	6.512	.077	.926
	Within Groups	4667.406	55	84.862		
	Total	4680.431	57			

From the results above mentioned, it is clear that there are no differences with statistical significance at the level of $(0.05 \geq \alpha)$ among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the difference in the household income on the accumulative score of the scale. Results have also shown that for the sub-dimensions, there are no differences of statistical significance in the averages of the cognitive, financial and social and psychological needs due to the differences in household income.

3. Discussion of Results:

1. With regard to the first question, cognitive needs ranked first with an arithmetical average of (18.5) followed by financial needs ranked second with arithmetical average of (13.53) and last came the

psychological and social needs ranked third with arithmetical average of (9.50). The results of the current study agree with those of Mackintosh *et al.* (2006), Sen and Yurtsever (2007), and Papageorgiou and Kalyva (2010)

As for results regarding the sub-dimensions, they were as follows: Regarding the items under the cognitive needs, the highest arithmetical average was that of the item that reads 'the need for information about services to be offered to my child with (ASD)'. The results in this context agree with those of the study by Papageorgiou and Kalyva (2010). The researcher attributed this result to the weakness of outreach programs directed to families of children with (ASD) by various societies and institutions, and which is related to the sources of support in the local environment. In the second place in this dimension

came 'the need for information about the medical intervention methods with those with (ASD)' and the results of the current study agree with those of Alhadidi (2001) in this regards. The researcher attributes this result to the fact that families of children with (ASD) are possible to become sick and thus need aging care and similar care. In the third place came the item of 'the need to know the proper jobs for my child with (ASD)'. The result of this study agrees with that of Daniel (1997) in this regard. The researcher attributes this result to the scarcity of the vocational rehabilitation programs in the local community as well as the weakness of outreach programs relating to vocational rehabilitation for people with (ASD). Generally, the researcher attributes results of the cognitive needs to the weakness of the outreach programs directed to families of children with (ASD) by NGOs and various governmental institutions, and which will help families to identify their characteristics and know the future of training, education and rehabilitation of children and learn professions suitable for them, which makes them feel the need for this necessary information, as well as their need for information about medical intervention with people with (ASD).

As for results related to the dimension of the financial needs, the highest arithmetical average was that of the item 'the need for cash to provide additional supporting services to my child with (ASD). The result in this study agrees in this regard with that of the study by Sen and Yurtsever (2007). The researcher attributes this to the fact that taking care of a child with (ASD) in a family exhausts most of the family financial resources which negatively affects the provision of requirements of other family members. The second rank was that of the item of 'the need to provide a proper job for my child with (ASD) after offering him training' which agrees with results of the study by Alhadidi (2001). The researcher attributes this result to the families' pursuit to achieve financial independence for their children with (ASD) through training them in jobs that agree with their abilities in order to make them get employed and thus achieve their financial independence. Third ranked the item of 'the need for more governmental help to meet the expandtures of my child with (ASD) such as (food, treatment, and transportation)'. Results of the current study in this regard agree with those of Sen and Yurtsever (2007). The researcher attributes this to the unavailability of enough number of buses of institutes to provide transportation in addition to the weak financial abilities of families to afford a special driver. In general, the researcher attributes the financial needs results to the fact that taking care of a child with (ASD) in a family exhausts the biggest share of the family financial resources as this child is

in need of training and rehabilitative services and additional supporting services as verbal treatment and the like which take a big share of the financial resources in the family affecting negatively the provision of its needs. This lead to the families' pursuit to achieve economic independence for their children with (ASD) through training them in jobs that suit their abilities so that they may become employed and thus become financially independent.

As with regard to the results of the dimension of psychological and social needs, the highest arithmetical average was that of the item of 'the need for people to understand the disorder of my child with (ASD)'. In this regard, the results of the current study agree with that of the study by Jeans (2013). The researcher attributes these results to the lack media programs in general in the field of community awareness of (ASD) despite the presence of specialized programs in politics, economy, sports and other but there is no dedicated and oriented programs towards people with (ASD) and their families, and this leads to the spread of negative attitude among members of society toward them. Second came the item of 'the need to practice recreational activities'. The result in this regard agree with that of the study by Sen and Yurtsever(2007). The researcher attributes this to the lack of programs available in the society which allows people with (ASD) to merge with their normal peers in addition to parents' observation that their children with (ASD) lack social skills which pushes them to pursue such programs in order to boost the social competency of their children. In the third place came the item of 'the need for the encouragement of school to my child with (ASD) to participate in the learning, athletic, and recreational activities'. The result in this study agrees in this regard with that of the study by (Leyser&Dekel,1991). The researcher attributes this to the lack of available programs in the society that offer a chance to children with (ASD) to share their peers in different learning and recreational activities. In general, the researcher attributes the results of the psychological and social needs the spread of negative attitude and wrong perception in society towards those with (ASD), in addition to the weakness of private societies that take care of families of children with (ASD) to help them face problems of psychological needs they face on the level of internal family relations (among siblings and between spouses) or on the level of external social relations (the relations with friends, relatives, and neighbors). This leads the family to face psychological problems such as that of stress, fear, and Self-blame. The researcher may attribute this to the lack of specialized media and outreach programs directed towards families of children with (ASD) which work on highlighting their abilities and

characteristics. The researcher also attributes this to the lack of the available programs in the society that offer the chance to merge those with (ASD) with their normal peers.

2. Results related to the second question: Study results showed that there are no differences with statistical significance at the level of ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) at the averages of the accumulative score due to the gender of the child with (ASD). Results of this study in this regard did not agree with those by Leyser&Dekel (1991), and Alhadidi (2001). The researcher attributes the results in this context to the Arabic culture related factors as the birth of a child with (ASD) in a family adds to the feelings of sadness and sorrow no matter what the gender of the child may be. It also limits the family's social interaction with others in addition to the negative attitude towards marrying from members of these families.

As for results regarding the sub-dimensions, it has been noticed that there are no differences with statistical significance in the averages of the cognitive and the psychological and social needs due to the variable of gender. Results have also shown differences with statistical significance in the averages of financial needs which were in favor of females which agrees with the results of the study by Alhadidi (2001). The researcher attributes this to the financial burdens of families especially when the child with (ASD) is a female.

3. Results related to the third question:

Results have shown that there are differences with statistical significance at the level of ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) in the accumulative score attributed to the variable of the chronological age of the child with (ASD) and it was in favor of the age group of (6-12). Results of the current study, in this regard, agree with those of the study by Alhassan (1992), AlShakhs and Al-Sartawi (1998), and Hsiao (2013). The researcher attributes this to the fact that the needs of families and the pressure they face which is connected to those needs is greater for the younger age groups as they are in need of care and continuous follow up by the family. The researcher may attribute this to the limited experience of families in dealing with their children especially at early age.

The researcher attributes the disappearance of statistically significant differences in the psychological and social needs to the continuous needs of families for moral support offered by societal institutes regardless of the chronological age of the child with (ASD).

4. Results related to the fourth question:

Results have revealed that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) at the averages of the accumulative score and the sub-dimensions among the needs of families of

children with (ASD) due to the difference in the degree of disorder. Results of the current study disagree with those of the study by Alhadidi (2001). The researcher attributes this to the fact that taking care of a child with (ASD) in a family, regardless of the degree of disorder, exhausts the biggest share of the family financial resources leaving the family as a result facing psychological and social pressure especially when there is negative attitude in the society towards people with (ASD) and their families. Thus families are in need of information resources to provide them with knowledge about how to teach and train their children.

5. Results related to the fifth question:

From results, it is clear that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) in the averages of the accumulative score and the sub-dimensions among the needs of families of children with (ASD) due to the variable of the difference in the household income. In this regard, the current study results agree with those of Alshakhs and Alsartawi (1998) while the results disagree with those of Leyser&Dekel, (1991). The researcher attributes this to the families intend to fulfill all the services allowed by their financial situation in addition to the governmental monthly allowance to support families of children with (ASD) regardless of the financial situation of the family.

Recommendations:

1. The activation of the specialized outreach programs directed towards people with (ASD) and their families.
2. The activation of the media programs related to people with (ASD) and their families for a better understanding of their characteristics and needs.
3. The increase in establishing NGOs that support people with (ASD) and their families.
4. Conducting further studies regarding the needs and focusing on the characteristics of the family such as size, cultural situation, the respondent's gender and other variables.

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