

The study of screening autism spectrum disorder among 2 to 5 years old children in Ardabil between the year 2016-2017

Abstract

Background and objective: Autism is a kind of developmental disorder that characterized by social impairment, communication difficulties, and restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior. Considering the poor prognosis of this disease and the lack of awareness among Iranian society, the welfare organization of the country has begun screening of children aged 2 to 5 years in the country and Ardabil province. The purpose of this study was to determine the results of screening of autism spectrum disorder in children aged 2-5 years in Ardabil during 2016-17.

Methods: This cross-sectional descriptive-analytic study was conducted on all children with autism spectrum disorder in 2016-17 in Ardabil. The coordination was carried out with the Welfare Organization. Satisfaction and written consent were obtained from the Welfare Organization. Data collection forms were designed and duplicated and the required information was collected from patients. Incomplete cases were completed in partnership with parents. Written consent from parents was obtained by the Welfare Organization. In all stages of data collection, ethical measures such as confidentiality and privacy were observed. The Children's Autism Assessment Scale (CARS) was used to assess autism spectrum disorder in children

Results: A total of 23 children with autism spectrum disorder were considered, of whom, 16 (69.6%) were male and 7 (30.4%) were female. Mean age of the children was 3.13 ± 1.1 years. The mean of total score of these children in CARS was 38.88 ± 5.8 and the highest scores of children belonged to the following subscales: fear and nervousness (2.89 ± 0.89), verbal communication (2.87 ± 2.8), activity level (2.87 ± 0.56), object use (2.84 ± 0.84), imitation (2.69 ± 0.77) and level and consistency of intellectual response (2.67 ± 0.55). The severity of autism was mild to moderate in 6 cases (26.1%) and severe in 17 cases (73.9%).

Conclusion: The findings of this study showed that the frequency of autism spectrum disorder is higher among males and is severe in the vast majority of patients. These findings show the importance of providing immediate and appropriate treatment interventions for these children.

Key Words: Autism spectrum disorder, Children, Ardabil.