

Development of Autistic Students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center

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Abstract

Autistic Students could develop to their fullest potential. It required the participation of parental in promoting development. The purposes of this research were (1) to study current situations and desirable situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students, and (2) to study needs for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students. The statistics used were percentage, mean, standard deviation, and the Index Modified Priority Needs Index ($PNI_{modified}$). The results were as follows: (1) overall current situations of parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students were at the moderate level, and overall desirable situations of parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students were at the highest level. (2) The top 3 highest needs were participate in promoting the development of autistic students, participate in environmental modifications, and participate in making Individualized Education Program.

Keywords: Autistic Students, Developmental Promotion, Participation, Parents, Needs Assessment

Introduction

Promoting the development of autistic students is an activity that encourages autistic children to develop themselves based on the stages of child development, designing developmentally appropriate practice program that suitable to the learning ability of each child is necessary for supporting them so that they can use the program in daily life (Sirirutrakha, 2018). Having said that, parents also play important role in the promotion and development of autistic children because they are always in close contact with the child therefore, they need to be involved in every process to help develop the child to his full potential and live with the least amount of burden (Special Education Bureau). Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center is an educational support lower case for children with special needs providing assistance services in the early stages or at first sight of a disability of a child; initial preparation for school and a special school for disabilities; perform duties according to the requirement of the Special Education Center in which has roles and duties in the development and training of caring for people with disabilities as well as providing education, organizing a system, and promoting and supporting the preparation of Individualized Education Program, Individualized Family Service Plan. According to the self-assessment report of Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center academic year 2020 found that the first standard of learner quality has a point that should be developed namely, that the family should participate in the development of the learners' potential. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the needs and ways of development of these children including the participation of parents in promoting the development of autistic students at Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center and this study is expected to be a guideline for encouraging and promoting autistic students to have a better quality of life.

Review of Literature

Promoting the development of autistic students will help them to be more independent and be able to do self-care. The program is an intention and cooperation of many groups of personnel such as doctors, Occupational therapists, Psychologists, etc., special education teachers wanting to promote the development in the autistic students together with the parents who are playing the most important role in the process of caring autistic students, they are also as the first teacher influencing the learning experience of the students, with their caring and proper training plans, it can help students with autism live a happy social life without burdening others. The researcher studied the concepts of Ron Leaf & John McEachin (1999); Kristen (2014); Khamngam (2007); Yamang (2007); Rajanukul Institute(2012); Special Education Bureau (2013); Duangbangyang (2013); Rinchan(2014); Office of Special Education Administration (2015);

Praduchpongpetch and Amdonkloi (2017); Thonghem and Piamkhum (2017); Sirirutrakha (2018). The details are as follow:

1. Participate in making Individualized Education Program was the opportunity to comment on parental participation in making Individualized Education Program is appropriate for each child's ability level. This may be because treating and helping autistic students takes a lot of time and cooperation between school administrators, parents, teachers, and multidisciplinary teams. Individualized Education Program was supporting services, media, facilities and any other assistance education for individual children with disabilities and review and revision of Individualized Education Program as appropriate.
2. Participate in promoting the development of autistic students was the opportunity to comment on parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students; Gross-Fine motor skills, Eye-hand coordination skills, Social skills, Language and Communication skills, Learning skills, Activity of Daily Living skills, and Recreational activities for helping autistic students to live up to their potential requires.
3. Participate in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions was opportunity to comment parental participation in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions were promoting activities according to autistic students' interest, participation in school activities, participation in community activities, and participation in a parent's autistic students group for enhancing the learning experience for students with special needs.
4. Participate in environmental modifications was the opportunity to comment on parental participation in environmental modifications for appropriate each autistic students' ability; Home modification's appropriate, Media, Service, Technology, Educational facilities for autistic students, and good relationships within the families of autistic students.
5. Participate in the evaluation and draw conclusions was the opportunity to comment on parental participation in the evaluation and draw conclusions of individual promoting the development, screening, and conclusion of individual autistic students. More so, they should participate in the overall assessment of the school's performance and guidelines for educational development in the next academic year.

Research Objectives

1. To study current situations and desirable situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students.
2. To study needs assessment for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students.

Methodology

This study was descriptive research with a sample of 94, consisting of 2 school administrators, 52 teachers, and 40 parents. The sample size was determined by comparing the tables of Krejcie and Morgan (Krejcie and Morgan, 1997). It was obtained by using Stratified Random Sampling (Srisa-ard, 2017). There were instruments used in this research: 1) a five-rating scale questionnaire about current situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students the Index of Item Congruence (IC) of 1.00, the discrimination between .32 - .80, and the reliability of .96; 2) a five-rating scale questionnaire about desirable situations for participation in promoting the development of autistic students the Index of Item Congruence (IC) of 1.00, the discrimination between .44 - .80, and the reliability of .96. The statistics used were percentage, mean, standard deviation, and the Index Modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}).

Results

The results of the research were divided into 3 parts as follows:

1. Current situations and desirable situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center. The data was descriptively presented through the mean and the standard deviation. (S.D.)

Table 1: Mean, Standard deviation and interpretation of opinions on current situations and desirable situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center

Areas of Parental Participation in Promoting the Development of Autistic Students	Current situations			Desirable situations		
	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation value	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation value
1. Participate in make Individualized Education Program	3.39	0.30	Moderate	4.67	0.34	Highest
2. Participate in promoting the development of autistic students	3.26	0.17	Moderate	4.72	0.34	Highest
3. Participate in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions	3.68	0.22	High	4.66	0.32	Highest
4. Participate in environmental modifications	3.33	0.22	Moderate	4.66	0.34	Highest
5. Participate in the evaluation and draw conclusions	3.42	0.22	Moderate	4.69	0.35	Highest
Total	3.41	0.11	Moderate	4.68	0.26	Highest

From Table 1, it was found that overall, the respondents rated a moderate level (\bar{x} = 3.41) on the current situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center. When considering each area, it was found that one of the five areas was at a high level (\bar{x} = 3.68) and four at a moderate level (\bar{x} = 3.26-3.42). The area with the highest mean was the third area, the area of the participation in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions (\bar{x} = 3.68) and the area with the lowest mean was the contribution in promoting the development of autistic students (\bar{x} = 3.26).

Opinion on the desirable situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center as a whole was at the highest level (\bar{x} = 4.68). In addition, when considering each area, it was found that all areas were at the highest level (\bar{x} = 4.66-4.72). The area with the highest mean was the third area, the area of the participate in promoting the development of autistic students. The lowest mean was the third area, the area of the participate in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions; and the fourth area, the area of participate in environmental modifications (\bar{x} = 4.66).

2. Needs for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students using Modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified})

Table 2: Analysis of the Modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified})

Areas of Parental Participation in Promoting the Development of Autistic Students	Mean of current situations (D)	Mean of desirable Situations (I)	PNI_{modified} (I-D)/D	Rank
1. Participate in making Individualized Education Program	3.39	4.67	0.378	3
2. Participate in promoting the development of autistic students	3.26	4.72	0.448	1
3. Participate in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions	3.68	4.66	0.266	5
4. Participate in environmental modifications	3.33	4.66	0.399	2
5. Participate in the evaluation and draw conclusions	3.42	4.69	0.371	4
Total	3.41	4.68	0.372	-

Table 2, it shows found that the Modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) of parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in the overall was .0.372. When considering each area, it was found that there were 3 areas with higher averages than the overall averages. The Modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) were ranked in descending order as follows: 1) Participate in promoting the development of autistic students (PNI_{modified} = 0.448), 2)

Participate in environmental modification ($PNI_{\text{modified}} = 0.399$), and 3) Participate in making Individualized Education Program ($PNI_{\text{modified}} = 0.378$).

Discussion

This particular research results show a plethora of interesting points to be discussed as follows:

1. The result of the study on the current situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center in overall was at a moderate level. When considering each area, it was found the highest average was the area of the participation in promoting and supporting the activities of educational institutions.

This is probably because parents play the most important role in the development of autistic students as they are the ones who closely take care of the students at all times as well as they perceive the emotional problems and the needs of children quite well. Thus, with these consequences, each family has different experiences and problems in the management and handle with the students, some are successful in the development and some families are failure in the management of autistic students which causes stress and anxiety. Therefore, it is important to form a parent group or club to develop the potential of autistic students as parents and families know and understand the needs of them better. To build a network for the development of students with autism, organizations involved in development include government agencies, the private sector, local governments and organizations that play a role in supporting the development of students with special needs which these various organizations should come together to coordinate cooperation provide information and carrying out various activities integrated for the potential development of students with special needs (Special Education Bureau, 2013). This is in line with the research of Euawong, et al (2021) who conducted research on a learning management model for basic education students affected by the COVID-19 situation. The results showed that parents, communities, and educational institutions should cooperate in enhancing students' self-learning habits and cooperate in learning management. In addition, schools should build networks of cooperation with communities or local agencies. to obtain support for learning management and operations of educational institutions in terms of budgets, media, materials and equipment, including the distribution of internet signals. Importantly, parents should cooperate, take care of the students, support learning management in the situation of COVID-19 continuously and have more opportunities to do activities with them that can support the relationship between the parents, teachers and school to be tighter.

The result of the study on the desirable situations for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center in overall was at the highest level. When considering each area, it was found that the area with the highest average was the area of participate in promoting the development of autistic students, this may be because helping a child with autism to live up to their potential requires the assistance of healthcare professionals, family empowerment, school collaboration and the help to improve the development of the students that done by the multidisciplinary team. Studies have shown that if full development is started and stimulated within the first 5 years, improvement can be achieved through speech training, occupational therapy, sensory integration, and behavior modification to promote optimal development, and stop problem behaviors and create new desired behaviors. In addition, the empowerment of autistic students is parental participation in ongoing training and goes hand-in-hand with support from both healthcare professionals and schools including the collaboration with school personals as they can provide educational assistance that is appropriate for each child's ability level and needs. The key concept of educational management for these students is education management must be consistent with the potential of each individual (Kalpka, 2018). This is coherent with Thonghem and Piamkhum (2017)'s research who studied the parental involvement in promoting the development of children with autism at Child and Adolescent Mental Health Rajanagarindra Institute. The results showed that 1) After having the parents take part in the training program to promote the development of autistic students aged 4-6 years, the training is done at home every day for 60 minutes a day for 8 weeks, the result of the assessment or the posttest shows that the test passed criteria representing an average score of 90.63%, which was higher than before the test; 2) parental survey responses showed that parents' participation in the development of children with autism was at a high level in the all areas and consistent with research by S. Andrew Garbacz et al. (2016)'s research who studied the relationship between parents and teachers in the development of children with autism. The results showed that family involvement and parent-teacher relationships are essential for the development of children with autism, and the cooperation of parents in the development will allow children to develop better than families that do not participate in the promotion of development.

2. Needs for parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students in Nakhon Phanom Special Education Center was at the highest average found that the area of participate in promoting the development of autistic students. This may be because treating and helping autistic students takes a lot of time and cooperation between parents and children with autism's relatives and treatment groups consisting of doctors, nurses, speech therapists, special

education teachers to jointly rehabilitate the autistic students' academic performance. Ongoing assistance will ensure a successful treatment outcome. However, the healer cannot determine exactly how long it will take because the improvement of autistic students depends on many factors such as parenting style, environment, severity of disease, the structure and the redundant irregularities of autistic students. Additionally, as autistic students grow in age, parents should be aware of the management of unwanted behavior modifications during therapy (Department of Mental Health, 2019). This is coherent with ChaichanaSaeng (2017)'s research who studied the community participation in promoting the development of children aged 2–1 years. The results showed that the implementation of the strategy to assess the ability of parents of children aged 2-1 years to promote child development in the family was to participate in family activities by having the parents organize child development activities in the family so that children can have activities with parents and another member in the house. In addition, building a network of nurse public health volunteers and families to promote the development of children aged 2-1 years as well as community involvement in the promotion of child development, participation in the perception of child developmental problems, follow up and visit, planning, surveillance, assessment for every family and training to educate parents about the development of children aged 2-1 years.

Suggestion

1. School administrators and teachers should create an understanding among parents about promoting the development of autistic students. Meetings should be held to convey the messages of advantages and disadvantages of participating in the development of autistic students to their full potential as well as to realize the collaboration of all relevant sectors.
2. School administrators and teachers should work together to promote the development of the autistic students. After receiving the stimulation training service and receiving advice from the hospital or special education center, parents should regularly implement the stimulating development trainings for the students so that they can develop as close to a normal child as possible and as quickly as possible.
3. The development guidelines resulting from research should be implemented or implemented in educational institutions in a concrete manner in order to enhance the participation of parents in promoting the development of autistic students.

Suggestions for future research

1. The factors affecting the development of parental participation in promoting the development of autistic students should be researched to provide teachers or people who are interested in ways to promote the development of autistic students.
2. Should research and compare the effect of parental participation in promoting the development of students with autism between the special education center and special schools for disabilities.

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