

# Moving to adulthood, in times of economic crisis and relationships between siblings with autism

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## Summary

The purpose of this research is to investigate a) the transition to adulthood for people with autism (DCM-V, 2013), b) the psychodynamical relationships between siblings with autism and typical development and c) the management of the problem in times of economic crisis.

The research conducted in the field of special education needs (Avramidis, Kalyva, 2006)[10]. The methodology is mixed and used for qualitative data collection tools such as: a) Methodology of Observation people with autism in eight families, b) Methodology Intervention people with autism through nine nonretarded brothers in Achaia prefecture with recorded interviews and c) Special Teaching focusing in skills named as (semi)-independent living in times of economic crisis and when parents are unable to provide care. For the collection of quantitative data was used a questionnaire with four level, scaled to the individual family environment with autism progresses towards adulthood. Responses were coded numerical description (N1) respecting research ethics.

The results demonstrated that the transition to adulthood is quite difficult for the same person with autism and for their brothers / s formal development. The psychodynamic relationships between siblings with autism and typical development proved to be influenced by negative and positive emotions in the context of aid relationships within the family.

In conclusion, the management of the problem in times of economic crisis appear to affect in the future of people with autism to adulthood. Particularly highlighted the inefficiency of the special education skills for (semi) - independent living.

**Keywords:** autism, siblings relationships, transition, adulthood

## Introduction

Autism is described according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) and the current version of DSM- V (2013) of the American Psychiatric Organization. The revised edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, disorders on the spectrum referred to difficulties in social interaction, communication, stereotyped, repetitive behaviors and restricted interests and activities. According to DSM- V (2013), the "Autism Spectrum Disorder" (ASD) is considered as a single diagnostic category with a group of symptoms from Autism, Asperger Syndrome and PDD-not otherwise specified (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) [1].

Since the family is the child with autism, the family chain is disrupted (Tsoni, 2010 [32], Kogel, Kogel, Frea, Smith, 1995) [8]. We have a little research about what happens to the course to adulthood and the transition of individuals with autism and about what psychodynamic relations are developing between the family members. Siblings of children with autism have many questions to help them understand the situation (Paliatsou, and Tetradi, 2015) [28]. The brothers show interest in participating in improving the situation (Christakis, 2013) [34]. The care, however is a vast responsibility for them and causes fatigue, frustration and anxiety. Their maturity is unable to respond to such responsibility (Kogel, Kogel, Frea, Smith, 1995, [8] Drossinou, 1999, [15] 2007 [14] 2009 [13] Paliatsou, and Tetradi, 2015) [28 ]. This is one reason the brothers often choose a profession related to a psychologist or assistant educator in the special education and training for people with autism.

Synodinou (1996) describes in her book 'Childhood Autism, Therapeutic approach' psychotherapeutic proposals with some case studies and manage relationships with parents. Parents of children with autism (Synodinou, 2014) [31] are overwhelmed by a multitude of emotions: (a) guilt, the guilt of feeling have mostly mothers who are supposed to manage advisory (b) the criticism that this self-blame valid for both parents, requires group counseling and treatment. (c) The refusal, under which parents deny the problem or say they do

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not know it. (d) The environment surrounding, the family environment which is difficult to understand the problems of the family. (e) The performance is also affected by the family system and causes effects in its structure. Once parents understand the problem and identify the etiology, there is a secondary benefit. The primary benefit is harder when they do not recognize. (f) The non guilt is necessary for parents. Drossinou (1999 [21], 2000 [19], 2012 [20]) shall state that parents knowing the etiology of the problem or no feel less guilty and could be ready to attend counseling treatment and support programs. The family can be supported through a systematic approach and advice is supported in follow up interventions that help capture realistic expectations of parents. Studies for the Greek family with a child with autism is limited. A recent study (Kotsopoulos, Papadakis, 2012) [25] in the province of Western Greece in 30 member families with ASD showed significant impact on parents because suitability intensive effort to respond to the specific needs created autism.

Kotsopoulos (2014) in an article entitled Parents of Children with Autism, shall state that in an effort to support their child experiencing high levels of stress and suffer from depression mainly because the mother is responsible for the daily care of the child. In the same article (Kotsopoulos, 2014) [26] stresses that parents need psychological support and guidance. Parents have higher rates of depression, compared with parents of normal children, parents of children with Down syndrome and the parents of children with mental retardation of unknown etiology (Yirmiya, Shaked, 2005) [9]. The psychological distress of parents accompanied with high financial burden in seeking educational and therapeutic program where the local community seems to be silent on the need to create community structures.

Christakis (2013) [31] in his book "The education of children with disabilities. Introduction to special education", in the chapter on children's autism spectrum pp.190-232 refers to aid parents need (Christakis, 2013 pp. 209-211, 2013) [32]. Other researchers (Glazzard, Overall, 2012 [4]) indicate that in many cases, siblings adopt lifestyle individualistic, ignoring the problem. Not involved in anything, putting a safeguard their man. Their attitude differs from the rest of the family, especially when they have to work to earn their living in times of economic crisis. Even when the eldest child of the family is the daughter often takes parenting role, entrusted with great responsibilities and is prone to psychological problems. These are amplified more than the thought of parents that she will continue in their role when they 'will leave from life "and other own thoughts on the" stigma "of autism, which still connects her wedding. There are siblings in the family, so their path is better, because the weight is distributed in all, make groups

together, cooperate and support each other. The Italian professors (Barisone, 2015 [2] Graziano, 2015 [5]) said that in Italy there are groups for siblings of children with autism, operating information and support for those. Many times their feelings are ambivalent and support their integration (Drossinou, 2015) [18]. Gkonela (2006) [12] states protection and assistance alternating moods. Pity for the family, but also a strong interest for themselves, their future. Despair, and power through the problematic situation.

In the context of Postgraduate at the Interstate cooperation between the University of Peloponnese and Turin, Galanis, (2014 [11]) has studied the "Psychodynamic interaction nonretarded siblings in families with a pervasive developmental disorders on the spectrum of Autism". The Programme research entitled "Building skills training in special education and training for management problems to pupils with complex cognitive, emotional and social difficulties and their families." In this context we studied the psychodynamic relationships between siblings (Galanis, (2014 [11]) formal development and non formal "disabled" brother, also the negative and positive influences from the out of house activities, the social environment which are disturbed. Even we have studied the stress experienced by brothers and how psychodynamic relationships assistance has dependence to the future autonomous or semi-independent living brother with autism when parents die (Galanis, (2014 [11])).

This work is part of the aforementioned essay. The purpose of this study focuses on the investigation of the transition to adulthood for people with autism (DCM-V, 2013), the study of psychodynamic relationships between siblings with autism and typical development and the management of the problem in times of economic crisis.

## Methodology

The research conducted in the field of special needs education. The methodology is mixed and consists of quantitative and qualitative data (Avramidis, Kalyva, 2006, pp.198 p. 337) [10].

The sample of interviewees consists of 9 siblings' formal development in the prefecture of Achaia, 6 men and 3 women. Three of his siblings age, ranging 5-18, five brothers from 19-29 years old and a brother from 30-40 years.

The tools for collecting qualitative data used the Methodology of Observation (1) to people with autism in eight families, the Methodology of Intervention (2) to people with autism through nine nonretarded brothers in Achaia (Galanis, 2014) [11] with recorded interviews

(Avramidis, Kalyva, 2006) [10]. Also we used the Methodology of Special Teaching (3) (Drossinou, 2002 [16], 2002 [17], 2000) [24] emphasizing into training skills and transition skills (semi) with purpose to the independent living in times of economic crisis and when parents are unable to provide care. The recorded interviews with semi-structured questionnaires refer to questions asking to describe his feelings on hearing the diagnosis brother with ASD. Moreover reported in certain themes.

The first pillar was investigating transition to adulthood issues (Graziano, 2015 [5], Avramidis, Kalyva, 2006 [10]) and relationship help (Barisone, 2015 [2], Synodinou, 2014) [30] [31]. Here the researchers asked to learn if the brothers had visited a psychologist to help them manage psychodynamic relations during the transition to adulthood brother with autism (Drossinou, 2001) [23]. Even they are seeking to learn the feelings of the brothers to the conflicts of parents (Kotsopoulos, 2014) [26] because of ASD brothers had felt that interest of their parents were more focused on the individual with ASD than the same.

Another thematic axis investigating the transition to the economic crisis and asked about the quest for future job brother / sister in the same city resident person with ASD or somewhere else and even in this period of economic crisis. Particular attention was the question about what will make the brothers when parents are unable to care for persons with ASD or flee from life.

Also another thematic axis investigate the transition in relation to the community and asking to know if their friends know the special educational needs his / her brother and the residential and if they feel embarrassed by "promiscuous" behavior in the social environment. Here the researchers were asked to describe the future of "adult" brother with ASD in case it is impossible to continue the care of parents.

For the collection of quantitative data was used a questionnaire 4scale likert (Very 1, Fairly 2, A little 3, Not at all 4) with the person's family environment with autism progresses towards adulthood.

## Research and design stages

1st Stage: There were the general outlines in which research is based.

2nd Stage: Found the target group (parents of individuals with ASD and typical developing siblings), was telephone contact with them as well as information for the purpose of research. Then they set the dates and times to conduct interviews.

Stage 3: Obtained interviews with semi-structured questionnaires.

Stage 4: Carried out the analysis and processing of the data by the method of multiple analyzes.

## Conclusions effect

All the interviewees' brothers no retarded found to consist in the majority quite good up to excellent students. The psychodynamic relationships between siblings.

The psychodynamic relationships between siblings with autism and typical development and the transition to adulthood for people with autism (DCM-V, 2013) largely depends on the management of the problem in times of economic crisis. Most brothers would say balanced the psychodynamic relations between siblings with autism and typical development and the transition to adulthood. Two of the brothers argued that they maintained a balanced relationship.

## The transition to adulthood for people with autism (DCM-V, 2013)

The results demonstrated that the transition to adulthood is quite difficult for both the person with autism and for their brothers / s formal development. It proved by research that most siblings nonretarded will seek job to provide their assistance to the family environment and to continue harmonious life with his brother with ASD. Only two siblings are indifferent towards vocational rehabilitation and a brother nonretarded stated that it wishes to work in the same city with his brother with ASD.

In moving to immediate or future rehabilitation of people with ASD, it proved that two sampled brothers think to take under full protection. While four think the guesthouse and Centre Supported Living. Two brothers did not take position and declared that it does not employ the transition of their brother.

Similar studies (Barisone, 2015 [2], Kogel, et al, 1995 [7], Kogel, RL et al., 1995, [8] Drossinou, 2004 [22] Notas, 2006 [27], Paliatsou, and Tetradi, 2015 [28], Synodinou, 1999 [31], 2014) [30] lead to similar results.

## The psychodynamic help relationships from nonretarded brothers it vary in the administration to "disabled"

The results demonstrated that psychodynamic relationships between siblings with autism and typical development as affected by negative and positive emotions in the context of relationships help within the

family. The investigation has shown that the seven sample nonretarded brothers spend some time every day with people with ASD. Friends of the five siblings without an ASD partially aware of the specific educational needs of individuals with autism and one of his brothers has not contacted his disability brother. They features that friends of most nonretarded brothers know partially disabled person with ASD and all his brothers except one have been no unpleasant position because of indiscriminate behavior of social networks (Koegel, 2013 [6], Kogel, et al., 1995 [8], Drossinou, 2002 [17], 2004) [22]. The dominant emotions nonretarded brothers during conflicts of their parents is regret (9 replies), anxiety (5 replies) and complaints (5 replies) and orgi-anger (3 replies).

None of the interviewees has produced psychological support to manage their emotions. The feelings of the brothers who dominated on hearing the diagnosis the person with ASD were questions, anxiety and fear. All siblings surveyed know that the person with ASD will have a lifelong need for care from someone. Their feelings during conflict between parents about the person with ASD, was mainly sadness, anxiety and complaints while none of the brothers is not supported by a corresponding psychological professional. The psychodynamic formal development assistance relationships siblings affected negatively or positively by the vocational rehabilitation effort and anxiety experienced for this. It is noteworthy that half siblings do not know several laws to ensure the person with ASD and future most think that a hostel or shelter semi-independent living would be a good solution for the person with ASD. Similar studies (Synodinou, 2014 [30] Christakis, 2013 [33] [34] Papageorgiou Mavropoulou, 2014 [29], Glazzard, Overall, 2012 [4], Drossinou, 2002 [17], 2000 [19] 2012 [20], Dobbins, & Abbott, 2010 [3]) result in similar results.

### **The management of the problem in times of economic crisis**

It is fully demonstrated that during the economic crisis the family income declined. Several members of the household sample environment remained unemployed. Merely the number of treatments for people with autism. Parents find solutions these people going to Creative Activity Centers capacities of municipalities in but provided incomplete care, since they can absorb a large number of specialists and therapists because of the economic crisis.

The economic crisis works devastating for all members of the family environment and the same person with ASD since as shown by parents' researches argue

that there is no "social state". Three of the siblings have already found a job in another city and country because of financial difficulties plaguing the mean time our country and the rest wish to work in Patras (Galanis, 2014) [11] to continue the harmonious relationship with the autistic sibling, but also to continue to offer the family. Couples have reduced their outputs, are overcome by stress, anxiety, sadness and uncertainty about the degree to be able in the future to contribute to the individual with ASD, but in contrast the desire of formal development brothers, most speculate that after their death, brother formal development will take in the full protection of the child with ASD. Similar studies (Kogel et al., 1995 [7], Drossinou, 1999 [15], 2002 [17] Gkonela, 2006 [12], Papageorgiou, Mavropoulou, 2014 [29] Tsoni, 2010 [32] Christakis, 2013 [33] [34]) result in similar results.

In conclusion, the survey results reflect the reality and confirm investigations (Koegel, 2013 [6], Graziano, 2015 [5], Kogel, et al., 1995 [7], Kogel, et al., 1995 [8], Barisone, 2015 [2], Dobbins, Abbott, 2010 [3], Christakis, 2013 [33] [34] Kotsopoulos, 2014 [26], Synodinou, 2014 [30], Tsoni, 2010 [32]). It is important to highlight that parents need immediate psychotherapeutic support, reliable information about the problem of their child, and advice on sources of help and where they can be found (Kotsopoulos, 2014) [26]. The difficulties faced by the brothers to be treated accordingly. As characteristically Kotsopoulos (2014) [26] the modern therapeutic approach tries to make the shareholders parents in the therapeutic effort, especially when some parents behave as spectators. Clearly brothers are fans events who have not chosen but the experience because they live in the same place and share family warmth times and intensity (Dobbins, & Abbott, 2010 [3], Glazzard, & Overall, 2012 [4], Paliatsou, & Tetradi, 2015 [28] Christakis, 2013 [33] [34]). The brothers are not required to offer the required constant care because the required task. The care of his brother from his brother with autism can be characterized by overprotection and attachment, which sometimes hinders the transition and increase autonomy levels (Avramidis, Kalyva, 2006 [10], Galani, 2014 [11], Gkonela, 2006 [12] Drossinou, 2012 [20]). Parents over the years trying to maintain balance between their children. However, the homelessness supported living in the prefecture of Achaia (Galanis, 2014 [11], Drossinou, 2004 [22]), the causes of insecurity and anxiety that parents experience for the future of their autistic children and in turn convey this "psychological burden" (Kotsopoulos 2014) [26] Synodinou, 1999 [31], 2014 [30]) who feel the other person no retarded family environment.

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