JOURNEYING WITH AUTISM: EXPLORING PARENTS LIVED EXPERIENCES IN NAVIGATING THEIR CHILDREN'S TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

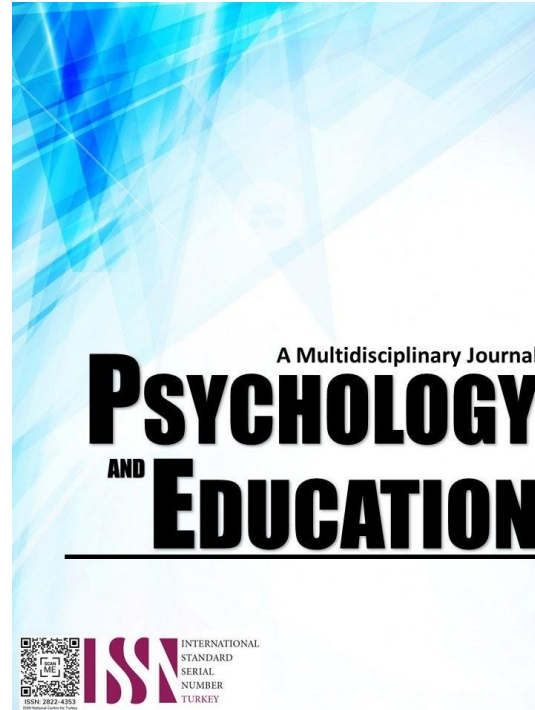# Journeying with Autism: Exploring Parents' Lived Experiences in Navigating their Children's Transition to Adulthood

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Abstract

Parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) face numerous challenges as their children transition to adulthood, requiring a deeper understanding of their experiences, particularly within the Filipino context. Limited resources, financial constraints, and the need for inclusive policies further complicate their journey. This study aims to explore the emotional, financial, and logistical difficulties encountered by parents of children with ASD in Manila, Philippines. It also seeks to identify the coping mechanisms and strategies they adopt, as well as the systemic barriers they face. Employing a transcendental phenomenological approach, this qualitative research captured the lived experiences of six (6) parents through in-depth interviews. The study examined their struggles, including financial burdens, emotional stress, and the complexities of accessing specialized support. Findings highlight the significance of early intervention, specialized therapies, peer support networks, and advocacy for inclusive educational practices. The study underscores the urgent need for policy reforms, increased funding, and the development of targeted educational and vocational programs for individuals with ASD.

Keywords: *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), transition to adulthood, parental support, inclusive Education, phenomenological approach, coping strategies, transcendental phenomenon*

Introduction

The transition to adulthood for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) poses unique challenges for families worldwide. It explored the lived experiences of parents supporting their children with ASD during this difficult life stage. Drawing on global and local research, it explored the details of caregiving, identified support systems, and understood parental perspectives on the future of their children with ASD.

Identifying supportive resources and acknowledging parental perspectives on the future of their child with ASD are vital steps toward addressing service gaps and facilitating smoother transitions. And recognized the interplay between parental experiences and the well-being of individuals with ASD featured the urgency for tailored interventions and support services.

Previous studies on a global perspective on the transition to adulthood for individuals with ASD were enriched by diverse research efforts. Bradshaw (2022) conducted a study in the United States, shedding light on the intricacies of social integration during the transition phase.

This research illuminated the challenges individuals with ASD encounter as they navigate social environments while transitioning from adolescence to adulthood within the U.S. context.

Despite these global insights, recent research conducted by Mendoza (2022) in the Philippines has shed light on the experiences of Filipino families with individuals diagnosed with ASD. It emphasized the necessity for tailored interventions that align with the unique cultural and societal aspects of the Philippines, highlighting the importance of context-specific approaches to support families navigating the challenges of ASD.

Additionally, Martinez (2022) highlighted the role of community support networks in the Philippines in supporting individuals with ASD and their families. Understanding local networks that families can access are essential for crafting comprehensive support systems. This research emphasized the significance of community engagement and collaboration in enhancing the overall well-being of individuals with ASD and their families in the Filipino context.

This study aimed to understand how parents navigated the challenges of supporting their children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) during a crucial life stage. By exploring the difficulties faced and the strategies used, the research sought to uncover how parents find a balance between offering needed support and encouraging independence in individuals with ASD.

Research Questions

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of parents as they navigate the transition to adulthood with a child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It seeks to understand the challenges they face, the coping mechanisms they adopt, and the support systems they utilize or lack during this critical period. Additionally, the study examines parents' perspectives on their child's future, particularly in terms of independence, employment opportunities, and social inclusion.

To achieve this objective, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the experiences and narratives of parents as they navigate the transition to adulthood with a child diagnosed with autism?
2. What support systems and resources do parents identify as helpful or deficient during the transition period, and how do they negotiate these challenges?
3. How do parents conceptualize and envision the future for their child with autism as they transition into adulthood, particularly concerning their child's independence, employment prospects, and social inclusion within the broader community?

Literature Review

This study reviewed the literature on the experiences and challenges faced by parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) during the transition to adulthood. It focuses on parental stress and uncertainty, the necessity of comprehensive support systems, parental empowerment and advocacy, cultural and socioeconomic factors, and the importance of effective communication and collaboration. Through a thematic literature review, the study identifies key themes and their impact on the transition process, offering insights for theory and practice.

The literature consistently highlights the significant stress and uncertainty parents face as their children with ASD transition to adulthood. Studies by Farley and colleagues (2023) and Orsmond and colleagues (2018) indicate heightened levels of parental stress due to concerns about their child's future, including employment prospects, independent living, and societal integration. This stress is exacerbated by the lack of clear guidelines and readily available support resources, making the transition period particularly challenging for parents (Taylor & Seltzer, 2021).

Comprehensive support systems are crucial for individuals with ASD during their transition to adulthood. Smith and colleagues (2023) emphasize the need for multifaceted support, encompassing shifts in education, employment, living arrangements, and social relationships. Early intervention and continuous support are essential for empowering individuals with ASD to develop independence and adaptability (Anderson et al., 2021).

Parental advocacy and empowerment play a pivotal role in ensuring successful transitions for individuals with ASD. Hodgetts and colleagues (2023) highlight the importance of parents advocating for their child's needs within educational, vocational, and community settings. Empowering parents with knowledge and skills fosters confidence, enabling them to better support their children during this critical period.

Cultural beliefs and socioeconomic status significantly influence parental perspectives and the level of support they can provide. Mandell and colleagues (2022) and Summers and colleagues (2019) discuss how cultural expectations and economic resources affect parents' attitudes toward their child's independence and future. Disparities in access to community resources can further compound the challenges faced by families.

Effective communication and collaboration between parents and professionals are foundational for addressing the complex needs of individuals with ASD. Research underscores the importance of open communication channels and collaborative relationships in developing tailored transition plans (Bopp et al., 2022; Roux et al., 2020).

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized qualitative methods, specifically transcendental phenomenological methodology, based on Edmund Husserl's philosophy, to uncover the essence and significance of these lived experiences, providing valuable insights into the challenges faced by these families(Smith, Johnson, & Davis , 2020) . This approach aimed to explore the underlying structures of consciousness and limit assumptions, offering a comprehensive understanding of the transition process. The findings contribute valuable insights for theory, practice, and future research on supporting individuals with ASD during their transition to adulthood.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were used to explore the experiences of parents supporting adult children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) during their transition to adulthood in Manila, Philippines. According to Flick (2004), qualitative methods are effective in explaining human behavior within social structures. This approach allowed for a detailed examination of participants' experiences, beliefs, and interactions, generating rich, non-numerical data

Participants

This study explored the lived experiences of parents navigating their children's transition to adulthood with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Manila, Philippines, during the 2023-2024 school year. The research setting was carefully chosen to examine the accessibility of resources, education, and community support within Manila's physical and social environment. Participants were selected using specific criteria to ensure their experiences aligned with the study's objectives. The researcher employed purposive sampling to identify parents of children with ASD who were in the transition phase to adulthood. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at convenient times, primarily in the afternoons, allowing participants to share their insights in a comfortable setting. Additionally, the study involved public schools to further explore the role of educational institutions in supporting families with children diagnosed with ASD. Integrating the discussion on the research locale, sample, and sampling enhances coherence and ensures a structured presentation of

methodological details, ultimately strengthening the study's transparency and reproducibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Flick, 2018).

To reach the targeted sample of parents supporting adult children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Manila, the study employed a purposive sampling strategy. This approach involved deliberately selecting participants who met specific criteria to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the caregiving experiences. The selection criteria included parents of adult children with ASD who were in the transition phase to adulthood, those whose children were enrolled in transition programs within public schools, and those actively involved in their child's caregiving and decision-making. By applying these criteria, the study aimed to capture diverse yet relevant parental experiences regarding the challenges, resources, and support systems available during this critical life stage.

Instruments

This study utilized semi-structured interview guides as the primary data collection instrument. The interview guide was self-constructed based on a review of relevant literature on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and parental experiences during the transition to adulthood. It aimed to explore the emotional, financial, and logistical challenges parents face, their coping mechanisms, and their perspectives on future opportunities for their children with ASD. The guide comprised open-ended questions to allow participants to share detailed narratives while ensuring consistency in data collection.

To establish content validity, the interview guide was reviewed by three experts in special education and qualitative research. Their feedback ensured that the questions were clear, relevant, and aligned with the study's objectives. Pilot testing was conducted with two parents of children with ASD who were not part of the main study to refine the wording, sequence, and clarity of the questions. Reliability was enhanced by maintaining a consistent interview procedure and using member checking, where participants reviewed summaries of their responses to confirm accuracy and authenticity.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face in locations convenient for the participants, ensuring a comfortable and open discussion. Each session lasted between 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the depth of responses. All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim for data analysis. This structured approach ensured that data collection was systematic, reliable, and aligned with ethical research standards, contributing to the study's methodological rigor.

Procedure

The researcher employed three primary qualitative data collection methods for the study: semi-structured interviews, journaling, and arts-based data. Semi-structured interviews provided in-depth insights into parents' experiences navigating their children with autism into adulthood. Conducted in private settings with participant consent and audio recordings, these interviews focused on personal experiences. Transcriptions were validated by participants to ensure data reliability. Journaling complemented this by capturing daily challenges and strengths through personal journals, enriching understanding. Arts-based data, such as photos taken during interviews, provided contextual insights into participants' lives, enhancing the study's depth and connection to the topic.

Data Analysis

Using Moustakas' framework (1994), the researcher analyzed data from interviews with parents supporting adult children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Manila. The study employed diverse data sources, including interviews, observations, and arts-based data, to uncover themes and patterns in participants' experiences. This approach, supported by rigorous documentation and participant journals, provided a rich understanding of the challenges and supportive practices in urban settings, contributing valuable insights to the field.

Ethical Considerations

The study underscored ethical considerations in educational research to ensure credible outcomes and address issues like plagiarism. Researchers prioritized obtaining informed consent, maintaining privacy and confidentiality, and respecting diversity by valuing participant experiences. Participants' well-being was prioritized, with open communication and the option to withdraw. Transparency, honesty, and impartiality characterized the research process and publication of findings. Data integrity, accuracy, and confidentiality were rigorously protected. The researchers maintained accountability for the ethical conduct of the study.

Results

This study presents an in-depth analysis of the lived experiences of six parents navigating the transition to adulthood with their children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Manila. Through semi-structured interviews conducted with each participant, the research sought to uncover the challenges, triumphs, and nuanced strategies employed by parents in supporting their children through this critical life stage. Thematic analysis of the data illuminated profound insights into the daily realities, coping mechanisms, and aspirations of these families during their transition to adulthood.

Theme 1: Parental Experiences and Narratives during Transition to Adulthood

Parenting a child with autism during their transition to adulthood presents a multifaceted journey filled with challenges and diverse experiences. Parents' narratives provided deep insights into the emotional, social, and practical dimensions of this process, shaping

their perspectives and adaptive strategies along the way.

Theme	Category	Key Insights	Supporting Statement
Parental Experiences and Narratives during Transition to Adulthood	Initial Adjustment to Diagnosis	Parents initially struggled to understand and accept their child's autism diagnosis. Some attempted to normalize their child's behavior while acknowledging the need for specialized support.	"She was attending a private school at that time, but the teacher said they couldn't accommodate her because she would suddenly scream…" (P02; Line 20) "Even the usual things a mother does to calm a child, like giving milk or putting them to sleep, didn't work. So, for me, it felt like I had postpartum depression." (P01; Line 95)
	Impact on Family Dynamics	Parents faced emotional turmoil before the diagnosis, struggling to interpret their child's behavior. The transition also affected family relationships and discipline dynamics.	"I'd come home to find my child throwing a tantrum. I didn't understand why. It turns out she had something, but we hadn't had her diagnosed yet." (P01; Line 37-38)
	Coping Strategies and Adaptation	Parents emphasized acceptance, faith, and learning as essential coping mechanisms. They viewed the experience as a challenge that strengthened both the child and the family.	"Since that's what the Lord gave us, what's important is acceptance. We accepted that the challenge was given to us by the Lord." (P05)

Theme 2: Parental Emotional Journey and Coping Mechanisms

The profound emotional experiences of parents as they navigated the transition to adulthood of their children who were diagnosed with autism. Participants recounted a range of emotions, from initial shock and denial to eventual acceptance and resilience.

Theme	Category	Key Insights	Supporting Statement
Parental Emotional Journey and Coping Mechanisms	Emotional Impact of Diagnosis	Parents experience mixed emotions upon diagnosis, including joy, gratitude, financial stress, and psychological struggles. Their child's presence brings comfort despite the burdens they face.	"It's joyful to have Nasha because sometimes when you have so many problems, you just look at her and wish you were Nasha—without bills, without expenses, not knowing you have no money left. At least she has her own little world. She's always happy. Nasha is always happy." (P02; Line 55-59)
	Coping Strategies and Support Systems	Parents highlight the need for societal adaptation to neurodiversity rather than expecting children with ASD to conform. They advocate for awareness, understanding, and acceptance to combat stigma.	"To help the study and make people more aware of children with special needs or autism. They aren't the ones who need to adjust to our world; we need to adjust to them. They're just wired differently, like comparing Windows to Macintosh." (P1; Line 85-91)
	Parents emphasize that research plays a vital role in educating communities, helping them understand the challenges parents face, and fostering inclusivity.	"This research will help others understand the challenges we face as parents. Some people see us as unsuccessful or think our children are poorly raised. We hope this study promotes acceptance and better understanding in the community." (P3; Line 44-51)	Parents emphasize that research plays a vital role in educating communities, helping them understand the challenges parents face, and fostering inclusivity.

Theme 3: Sibling Dynamics and Family Interactions during Transition to Adulthood

The study explored how families raising children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) journeyed the transition to adulthood. Sibling relationships emerged as pivotal, fostering understanding and growth amid the challenges of ASD. Despite occasional conflicts, siblings were depicted as steadfast sources of support and unconditional love for their ASD-diagnosed family members.

Theme	Category	Key Insights	Supporting Statement
Sibling Dynamics and Family Interactions during Transition to Adulthood	Sibling Relationships and Understanding	Parents emphasize the need for patience and understanding among siblings, as repetitive behaviors can sometimes cause irritation.	"Now that she is an adult, she is sweet to her siblings. However, sometimes her siblings get irritated because she repeats things. I teach them to be more patient and understanding towards their sister because that's just how she is." (P1; Line 220-223)
		Children with autism may develop strong bonds with siblings, relying on them for companionship in familiar settings.	"Non-verbal. She doesn't use verbal communication, but she doesn't want to leave without her sibling. Whenever she goes out, her sibling has to be with her. She can't be left alone unless she's going to school. Her sibling always needs to be with her. That's how it is." (P2; Line 73-76)
		Despite communication challenges, children with autism display cognitive and emotional capabilities, surprising their families with moments of understanding and learning.	"If you see her, you wouldn't think there's anything wrong. Unless you talk to her, the problem is with her speech and hearing, but her mind and heart work well. Actually, there are times when she answers questions we didn't expect her to be able to. But as part of it, she's learning." (P5; Line 30-33)
	Family Support and Collaboration	Acceptance within the family fosters harmony, with some children acting as mediators in family conflicts.	"Nasha is like the one who brings us together. Sometimes, when Daddy and I are arguing, she tells us to 'stop it.' We stop immediately. She doesn't want to see us arguing or having a dispute. So, when she sees us arguing, she says, 'Stop it!' Because Daddy quickly stops when she says 'stop it.'" (P2; Line 134-135)
	Impact on Family Dynamics	Children with autism may develop a sense of authority in the family when often left in their care, but may struggle to exercise it effectively.	"Social interaction, you know. So, we also had conflicts in raising her. Since she's left with us, she feels like she has authority, but she can't really exercise that authority because she can't handle it." (P1; Line 33-36)
		Children with autism may be closer to one parent and less expressive with siblings, leading to efforts to encourage stronger sibling bonds.	"She's not very expressive or open with her siblings. She's closer to her father. I tell her siblings to spend time with her and guide her, but she often prefers her sister's help." (P3; Line 90-97)
		Parents hope that research and understanding will benefit their child's long-term development, even in their absence.	"Daddy hopes that through this research, even if we can't help Paul now, it will assist him in maturing, even after we're gone." (P4; Line 44-46)

Theme 4: Support Systems and Resources during Transition Period

Support systems and resources play a crucial role in helping parents navigate the challenges of raising children with autism into adulthood. Participants highlighted the diverse support systems and resources they accessed to meet their children's and families' needs.

Theme	Category	Key Insights	Supporting Statement
Support Systems and Resources during Transition Period	Access to Therapy and Intervention Services	Early detection and intervention play a crucial role in managing autism. The hereditary aspect of autism was also acknowledged, alongside the significant financial and emotional commitment required.	"When I studied Autism, I learned that it's more hereditary, possibly from the mother's side since she has an aunt with it. We detected it early, and since my wife is a nurse, we started therapy for Gabriel when he was two or three. We really committed to it despite the high cost. His first school was at Trade on Lacson Avenue." (P6; Line 10-11)
	Financial Strain and Accessibility of Support	Raising a child with autism requires continuous therapy, daily tutorials, and financial resources to sustain the child's needs.	"Yes, we needed money for therapy, daily tutorials, and his other needs. We had to support him and manage his demands, like going to Jollibee after therapy, which was crucial to avoid meltdowns." (P6; Line 141-143)

		Community organizations, such as Special Olympics Pilipinas, provide effective support by fostering a sense of belonging for children with disabilities through sports.	"Community support, like from Special Olympics Pilipinas, is effective because it helps children with intellectual or other disabilities feel that they belong through sports." (P6; Line 160-162)
	Family and Community Support Networks	As children grow, they develop self-awareness and responsibility, making them more reliable within the family.	"Now that she's older, she's more self-aware and responsible. I think she's more dependable with her two siblings." (P1; Line 175-176)
	Educational Support and Advocacy	Children with autism become more curious about their future, comparing themselves to peers. Parents provide reassurance and guidance to help them navigate their developmental progress.	"She asks unexpected questions about her future and compares herself to her cousins. I reassure her that she's doing well and that she should focus on her own path. I'm glad she's becoming more involved and caring." (P5; Line 51-54)
	Government and Institutional Support	Parents express concerns about future care arrangements for their children if they are no longer around, citing a lack of trust in the local government's ability to provide reliable assistance.	"There's more. For example, if we're no longer around to care for her, it's good to know that in Australia, if parents of children like Paul pass away, the government will take them in. But here, with corruption in the government, it won't happen." (P4; Line 251-256)

Theme 5: Envisioning the Future for Children with Autism

The study provided by the participants offer valuable insights into how parents of children with autism conceptualize and envision their children's future as they transition into adulthood. Participants shared their hopes, aspirations, and concerns regarding their children's independence, employment prospects, and social inclusion within the broader community.

Theme	*Category*	*Key Insights*	*Supporting Statement*
Envisioning the Future for Children with Autism	Independence and Self-Sufficiency Goals	Therapy significantly improved communication skills and behavioral challenges, allowing for better adjustment.	"Adjustment? None really. When he was younger, he had severe tantrums and didn't communicate much. We did a lot of therapy for that. Once he improved and managed better, we stopped therapy." (P2; Line 206-208)
		Parents actively train children with autism to become more independent through household tasks, helping to prepare them for self-sufficiency.	"He may not be very independent yet, but I've started by having him help me in the kitchen. I trained him to cut vegetables like kangkong when I'm busy. I tell him to wash and cut them. When I'm baking, I ask him to take out the flour and other ingredients. This way, he helps with the preparation, and I don't have to run around for ingredients. He's diligent with these tasks." (P4; Line 189-195)
	Employment and Vocational Training	Vocational training and employment initiatives tailored for individuals with autism are essential for their self-sufficiency and future integration into the workforce.	"No, just prayers, ma'am. As I said, we're hoping that eventually, everything will turn out well." (P6; Line 90-91)
	Social Inclusion and Community Engagement	Schools play a crucial role in providing benefits and support for children with autism, contributing to their overall well-being.	"It's a big help, ma'am. Yes, it's beneficial because we receive benefits from it. The school provides significant benefits as well. It's a big deal." (P2; Line 231-232)
		Encouraging children to engage in activities they enjoy, such as singing, fosters self-expression and confidence in safe environments.	"I let him do the activities he enjoys, like his passion for singing. If he wants to sing, he can, whether it's karaoke or something else. I support and allow him as long as I know he's in a safe place and well cared for." (P1; Line 478-481)
	Educational and Skill Development Programs	Schools provide an essential training ground for developing socialization skills, which contrasts with the child's more isolated behavior at home.	"It's not exactly the same because at school, Nasha manages to interact with other people. When we're at home, we stay indoors. Nasha's socialization skills are developed at school." (P2; Line 282-284)

	Therapy helps children gain independence in daily tasks such as dressing and bathing, gradually fostering self-care skills.	"No, she's being taught in therapy. I can see that she's learning to dress herself and even bathe herself. I tell her what to do, and she follows." (P6; Line 124-125)
Advocacy and Awareness Initiatives	Parents value sharing their experiences to help other families dealing with similar challenges, highlighting the importance of support and assistance.	"If this study can help children like Paul, why not share our experiences? It's a big help for people with cases like Paul's and for their parents. It's about providing support." (P4; Line 28-29)
	Parents learn from each other through shared experiences, filling knowledge gaps and providing mutual support.	"To share with you and other parents like me. I see that there are parents who also have gaps in their knowledge, but along the way, I learn from others and they learn from us as we share experiences with each other." (P5; Line 20-23)

Discussion

This study delved deeply into the intricate journey of parents raising children with autism as they transitioned into adulthood. It reveals a profound narrative of emotional resilience and adaptive parenting strategies among families facing the challenges associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Initially met with shock and emotional turmoil upon their child's diagnosis, parents underwent a transformative process of acceptance and adaptation as they witnessed their children's developmental milestones and social interactions evolved through adolescence into adulthood. The study underscored the pivotal role of support systems, where access to specialized therapies and community networks proved crucial in managing the daily complexities of caring for a child with autism. However, financial constraints and limited availability of services posed significant obstacles, underscoring the need for enhanced advocacy and policy reforms to ensure equitable access to necessary supports.

Moreover, the study highlighted the importance of peer support networks and community engagement in fostering emotional validation and practical assistance for families navigating the lifelong journey of autism care. Collaborative efforts with educational institutions are essential in promoting inclusive practices that cater to the unique needs of individuals with autism, thereby facilitating their integration into society. The participants expressed aspirations for their children to achieve independence and contribute meaningfully to their communities, emphasizing the significance of vocational training and inclusive employment opportunities aligned with their strengths and interests. Educational initiatives aimed at developing life skills and fostering lifelong learning are seen as vital in preparing individuals with autism for successful transitions into adulthood.

Theoretical insights drawn from Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory underscored the interconnectedness of individuals with their environments, advocating for systemic changes that support positive outcomes for individuals with autism. By addressing societal attitudes and enhancing support structures, stakeholders can create nurturing environments that empower individuals with autism and their families. The study calls for continued research and advocacy efforts to expand support services and improve societal acceptance, ensuring that individuals with autism can thrive and contribute fully to their communities.

Reflecting on methodological challenges, such as participant availability and the complexity of data synthesis, the study acknowledges the need for diverse research methodologies and larger sample sizes to capture a comprehensive understanding of the diverse experiences within the autism community. Future research directions could explore innovative approaches and policy reforms aimed at enhancing support systems and fostering inclusive environments that promote the well-being and autonomy of individuals with autism.

This discussion encapsulates the study's findings and implications, emphasizing the resilience of families, the importance of supportive networks, and the transformative potential of inclusive practices in supporting individuals with autism as they navigated the journey into adulthood.

Conclusion

The study concluded that parents navigating their child's transition to adulthood with autism initially experience denial and emotional turmoil but ultimately develop resilience and gratitude. Managing their child's unique needs significantly impacts their emotional well-being, reinforcing their crucial role in their child's development. Furthermore, parents recognize the value of various support systems, including therapy, financial aid, family and community networks, educational advocacy, and government assistance. However, challenges such as accessibility, affordability, and coordination gaps hinder their effectiveness. Parents also aspire for their children's independence, employment, and social inclusion, highlighting the need for tailored support systems that align with their specific needs and circumstances.

Based on these conclusions, it is recommended that government and private institutions enhance accessible and affordable support services for families of individuals with autism, particularly in therapy, financial assistance, and vocational training. Schools should

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strengthen transition programs that equip students with ASD with life skills and employment opportunities. Additionally, fostering stronger collaboration between parents, educators, and policymakers can address coordination gaps in support services. Lastly, awareness campaigns and community engagement initiatives should be promoted to reduce stigma and create a more inclusive society for individuals with ASD.

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