

**Parents of children with ASD in Kazakhstan and the choices they make for
educational placement of their children**

Aizhan Atshabarova

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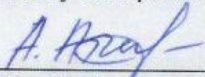
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www.nu.edu.kz

53 Kabanbay Batyr Ave.
010000 Astana,
Republic of Kazakhstan

October 2019

Dear Aizhan Atshabarova,

This letter now confirms that your research project entitled: Perspective from Parents of Children with ASD about Inclusive Education has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Somerton

On behalf of Elaine Sharplin
Chair of the GSE Research Committee
Professor
Graduate School of Education
Nazarbayev University

Block C3, Room 5006
Office: +7 (7172) 70 9371
Mobile: +7 777 1929961
email: elaine.sharplin@nu.edu.kz

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**Parents of children with ASD in Kazakhstan and the choices they make for
educational placement of their children**

Abstract

Studying the perspectives of parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) might assist in the effective inclusion of their children in a school setting. The present study investigates the choices parents make, regarding the educational placement of their child with ASD. The main purpose is to understand the parental experience of enrolling their child with ASD into homeschooling, mainstream, or correctional school settings. In addition, the research discusses their recommendation in providing children with ASD with quality education. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is used as a theoretical framework for the study, underpinning the construction the research. A qualitative phenomenological case study was employed as a research design. A semi-structured interview was conducted with 6 parents who lived in one of the major cities in Kazakhstan. Participants were recruited via Non-Government Organizations that work with children with ASD. The findings illustrate the impact of different ecological settings on a child's development, and parental views about their child's education. Only one parent in the present study had a child enrolled in an inclusive class at an ordinary school, while other parents enrolled their children in homeschooling. Based on the findings, the main difference between parents who chose homeschooling or school setting is the attitude of administration and peers, even as other factors played a role in their decision-making processes. Furthermore, respondents noted the support of all stakeholders in their child's lives such as, low-quality management systems, inappropriate academic programs, and the individual characteristics of their children. The majority of interviewees expressed positive attitudes towards inclusive education in Kazakhstan and mentioned developments in this

policy. The main limitation of the present study is the small sample size and the participants recruited from one location. The researcher acknowledges that the picture in other cities may vary.

**Қазақстандағы аутизмi бар балалардың ата аналары балаларын
оқытудағы таңдауы**

Аннотация

Аутизмi бар балалардың ата-аналарының көз қарасын зерттеу осы балаларға арналған инклюзивтi бiлiм беру жүйесiн дамытуға жәрдемдесуi мүмкiн. Бұл зерттеуде аутизмi бар ата-аналардың баласының бiлiмiне қатысты таңдауын қарастырады. Бұл зерттеудiң негiзгi мақсаты аутизмi бар балалардың ата аналары балаларын жалпы бiлiм беретiн мектептерде, коррекционды мектепте немесе үйде оқытуды таңдаған себептерiн жақсы түсiнуге бағытталған. Сонымен қатар, зерттеу аутизмi бар балалардың ата-аналары сапалы бiлiм беру жөнiндегi ұсынысын зерделеуге тырысты. Бронфенбреннердiң экологиялық жүйелер теориясы зерттеудi құруға негiз болды және зерттеудiң теориялық шеңберi болып табылады. Зерттеу әдiсi ретiнде сапалы феноменологиялық тәсiл қолданылды. Қазақстанның үлкен қалаларының бiрiнде тұратын 6 ата-анамен сұхбат өткiзiлдi. Зерттеудiң қатысушылары үкiметтiк емес ұйымдар арқылы сұхбатқа шақырылды. Зерттеулер экологиялық шеңбердiң баланың дамуына және ата-ананың баланың бiлiмi туралы көзқарасына қалай әсер ететiндiгiн көрсетедi. Бiр ата-ананың баласы кәдiмгi мектепте инклюзивтi сыныпта оқиды, ал басқа ата-аналар баласын үйде оқытуға шештi. Зерттеу нәтижелерiне сүйене отырып, баласын уйде және кәдiмгi мектепте оқытатын ата-аналардың арасында негiзгi айырмашылық – администарцияның және баланың қатарластырының қарым-қатынасы. Бұл факторлар ата-ананың шешiмiне негiз болды. Сонымен қатар, қатысушылар өз балаларының өмiрiндегi барлық мүдделi тараптардың қолдауын, менеджменттiң сапасыз жүйелерiн және сәйкес емес академиялық бағдарламаларды атап өттi. Қатысушылардың көпшiлiгi Қазақстандағы

инклюзивті білімге оң көзқарастар білдірді және осы саясаттағы дамуды атап өтті.

Сұхбаттың белгілі бір ғана қалада өткізілуі зерттеудің шектуі болды, өйткені басқа қалаларда жағдай басқаша болуы мүмкін.

**Родители детей с РАС в Казахстане и выбор, который они делают по
определению учебного учреждения для своего ребенка**

Аннотация

Изучение мнения родителей детей с расстройством аутистического спектра (РАС) может помочь в эффективном включении их ребенка в инклюзивную школьную среду. В этом исследовании изучается выбор родителей, имеющих детей с аутизмом, в отношении образования их ребенка. Основная цель состоит в том, чтобы понять родительский опыт зачисления ребенка с РАС в домашнюю школу, обычную или коррекционную школу. Кроме того, в исследовании предпринята попытка изучить их рекомендации по обеспечению ребенка с РАС качественным образованием. Теория экологических систем Бронфенбреннера является теоретической основой исследования, которая послужила для ее построения. В качестве метода исследования использовался качественный феноменологический кейс. Полу структурированное интервью было проведено с 6 родителями, которые живут в одном из крупных городов Казахстана. Родители были приглашены через неправительственные организации, которые имели контакты родителей. Полученные данные иллюстрируют правильное влияние экологических условий на развитие ребенка и взгляды родителей на образование своего ребенка. Только один ребенок учится в инклюзивном классе в обычной школе, в то время как другие родители перевели своего ребенка на домашнее обучение. Основываясь на полученных данных, главным различием в ответах среди родителей, которые выбрали домашнее и школьное обучение, было отношение администрации и сверстников, что является главным фактором в их выборе. Кроме того, респонденты отметили уровень поддержки всех заинтересованных сторон в жизни их детей, некачественные

системы управления и неподходящие академические программы. Большинство опрошенных выразили позитивное отношение к инклюзивному образованию в Казахстане и отметили развитие этой политики. Ограничением исследования может быть то, что родители были опрошены в одном определенном городе. Картина в других городах может быть другой.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. ASD Spectrum Disorder

“ASD spectrum disorder (ASD) is characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, including deficits in social reciprocity, nonverbal communicative behaviours used for social interaction, and skills in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships” (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013, p. 31).

Children with ASD have difficulties in understanding social situations, expressing their ideas and thoughts, and often making eye contact (Copeland, 2018). The diagnosis consists of challenges in two domains, restrictive and repetitive behaviour and social and emotional communication. Sometimes children with ASD have other co-morbidities that impair intellectual development (APA, 2013).

ASD is a lifelong developmental disorder that can require high levels of care resulting in psychological difficulties in caregivers (Colombi, 2017). Children with ASD experience challenges going to regular schools (An, Chan, & Kaukenova, 2018). The most common challenge in the general school setting for children with ASD is socialization (Eldar, Talmor, & Wolf-Zukerman, 2009). Often these children have sensory difficulties and challenges concerned with their behaviour. ASD is a spectrum and no two individuals will have the same difficulties thus; this condition is considered a heterogeneous disorder (Weitlauf, Sathe, McPheeters, & Warren, 2017). Peer relationships are the most widespread problem among pupils with ASD in middle and higher school (Bolourian, Stavropoulos, & Blacher, 2019).

1.2. Rates of Diagnosis Internationally and in Kazakhstan

It has been estimated that the rate of diagnosis is around one out of one hundred children with ASD globally (Marco et al., 2012). However, according to recent figures from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, almost one in 59 children have ASD (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [CDC], 2019). The official epidemiological reasons for ASD are still unknown; however, ASD could be the result of different causes that are individual to each child (Ratajczak, 2011). Genetic factors are the most prevalent reasons that researchers assume the number of children with ASD is increasing (CDC, 2019). Environmental risk factors also are in the list of potential causes (Szatmari, 2003).

Statistics of children diagnosed with ASD are growing in Kazakhstan (An et al., 2018). An et al., claim that in 2017 there were approximately 2000 children officially diagnosed in Kazakhstan, which is well below global averages. The current number of children with ASD in Kazakhstan is not precise because the registration of all children is not in the official system. The reasons for this are social stigma, lack of resources, and the processes involved in the diagnosis (Rollan & Somerton, 2019). The views of parents and society in general indicate there is a lack of understanding related to the causes of ASD, which underpin the social stigma associated with a diagnosis (Fischbach, Harris, Ballan, Fischbach, & Link, 2016). Often, people try to avoid a person with stigmatized characteristics (Someki et al., 2018). According to the Kazakhstani Ministry of Public Health reports, 2.6 out of 100 thousand children have ASD and this number has raised for the earlier diagnosis at around 5 years of age (Sadyrov, 2018). For instance, 835 children with ASD were officially recorded in 2015, in two years' this figure had doubled (Kanibolodskaya, Madenov, & Utegenov, 2018). Besides, three ministries – Public Health, Education and Science, Labor and Social Protection of Population – reported disparate numbers of children with ASD in Kazakhstan. The Ministry of Education and Science

reported the highest number of children with ASD due to the reason that every child is required to be enrolled in school, and be registered before going to study in Kazakhstan (Legal information system of Regulatory Legal Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan ‘Adilet’, 2016). When it comes to the Ministry of Public Health’s reports, the estimates relied on data according to the number of requests for financial support. Based on global averages on the prevalence of ASD in Kazakhstan might be approximately thirty thousand children that are currently unaccounted in official statistics from the Ministry of Education (Baibatchanova, Kovaleva, & Zhamshitov, 2018). In summary, the actual number of children with ASD is much higher than what is in official data (Sadyrov, 2018).

1.3. Inclusive Education Internationally

The issue of inclusion is one of great importance to all schools in many countries around the world (Ainscow, 2005). Inclusive education is providing the same right of access to education among all people (Stubbs, 2008). The main idea is to maximize the potential of all students and minimize the barriers of being educated (Dreyer, 2017). The Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education advocated the importance of inclusive education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1994). The Salamanca Statement claimed the effectiveness of inclusion in creating solidarity between people, and providing education for all. The policy recommendations of inclusive education have stipulated equal opportunity for children, young people, and adults with disabilities to have quality education (UNESCO, 1994). The European Agency Statistics on Inclusive Education (EASIE) revealed that various countries interpret the meaning of inclusion and children’s rights differently (Ramberg, & Watkins, 2020), and the way of understanding key concepts plays an essential role in implementing inclusive education (Stubbs, 2008). Furthermore, many countries experience

challenges in implementing inclusion within the school system. Often this is concerned with the idea of integrating children with disabilities into general classes (Ainscow, 2005). The Members of the United Nations endorsed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030, which focus on lifelong learning for all people; regardless of the weaknesses and strengths of learners (United Nations, 2016). This obligates all schools to have an inclusive policy and related practices (National Council for Special Education, 2011).

Several factors influence the development of the process of including children with ASD in mainstream classes with other children. Gavalda and Oinyi (2012) noted the following four elements, such as the personal needs of children, school environment, teaching staff, and quality interaction with parents. Inclusion is more than just being physically in an educational environment. The study indicated that for children with ASD, it is just as important to have a sense of belonging (Goodall, 2018). The effective system of inclusion requires the willingness of all stakeholders to meet students with SEN (Special Educational Needs) (Elkins, Van Kraayenoord, & Jobling, 2003). The United Nations Convention (2006) has stated that all children are entitled to quality education and this includes the opportunity to study with their same-aged peers (as cited in Davies, Elliott, Sin, Yan, & Yel, 2017). Discrimination and segregation in society will not improve if children do not have the opportunity to study together. Furthermore, children with ASD will not experience a sense of belonging with their peers. Ideally, all children must be educated, communicate with peers, and experience diversity from an early age at school. Besides, studies have indicated that children with ASD that are placed in a well-supported and resourced school environment show a high level of social competence (Lyons, Cappadocia, & Weiss, 2011). Inclusive education will help to create tolerant generation with open-mindedness to diversity (Stubbs, 2008). In addition, it requires the hard work of all

stakeholders, which takes time, money and resources, and does not happen immediately (Corbett, 2002).

1.4. Inclusive Education in Kazakhstan

The current situation of providing mainstream educational opportunities for children with ASD is still questionable in Kazakhstan. The corporate foundation “Bolashak” received more than seven hundred requests from parents of children with ASD in applying for quality education in 2018 (“Deti-autisti mogut uchitsya v kazahstanckih shkolah po spetsialnym programam”, 2018). However, statistics show that the necessary conditions and requirements for this were created in only 30,7% of local schools in Kazakhstan (Legal information System of Regulatory Legal Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan ‘Adilet’, 2016). It can be seen that only a small percentage of children with SEN have the opportunity to be enrolled in schools and study with their same aged peers, which is twenty-seven percent of all students with SEN (Legal information system of Regulatory Legal Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan ‘Adilet’, 2016). According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2014), the Kazakhstani government has set a goal to increase the percentage of inclusive schools by seventy percent in 2020 and fifty percent children with SEN will have the opportunity to study in mainstream education. The government recognize the necessity to prepare qualified tutors for children with SEN, upgrade the psycho-pedagogical remedial auditoriums from 137 to 220, and pedagogical, psychological and medical seminars from 57 to 85 by 2019 (OECD, 2014).

Many parents of children with ASD have the desire to see the implementation of educational programs for inclusive teaching in regular schools (An et al., 2018).

Furthermore, parents of children with ASD as stakeholders in the educational system now

request to have inclusive classes at Kazakhstani schools. In addition, parents have reported that there are few schools with an appropriate condition for inclusive education and it is problematic to educate their children in ordinary schools (An et al., 2018).

Several factors may influence the decision of parents when it comes to deciding on the educational setting of their children with ASD. One of the factors is that the nature of ASD is not something well understood for society in general in Kazakhstan. Parents of children with ASD report that the stigma associated with children with the disorder has existed in Kazakhstan for a very long time, and the isolation and exclusion of children and families with ASD is a common practice (An et al., 2018). The views of parents and society in general indicate there is a lack of understanding related to the causes of ASD, which underpin the social stigma associated with a diagnosis (Fischbach et al., 2016). This only perpetuates exclusion in society and supports the creation of new correctional schools.

Often, parents of children with ASD do not necessarily feel confident in the ability and experience of teachers, tutors, and psychologists to educate their children at regular schools. This can lead to parents preferring to have their children educated at home, which is not a guarantee for a quality education (An et al., 2018). Baimoldina and Kudysheva (2015) have stated that teacher training for students with SEN is not a routine practice in Kazakhstan. Other factors such as bullying, segregation, and personal uncertainty might also contribute to the exclusion of children with ASD (Hebron & Humphrey, 2014). Finally, there is evidence that many teachers are not willing to teach children with ASD (Baimoldina & Kudysheva, 2015). The above-mentioned issues have been identified as some of the main challenges in the creation of inclusive education in Kazakhstan for children with ASD.

1.5. Importance of the Research

The present research aims to understand the reasons that parents choose a specific educational setting for their children with ASD. Parents of children with ASD play an essential role in their growth from childhood to adolescence (Spiers, 2015). The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan aims to create appropriate conditions to improve inclusive education at Kazakhstani schools (Legal information system of Regulatory Legal Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan ‘Adilet’, 2016). The freedom to study and communicate with peers at schools should not be limited for any child in spite of the child’s individual needs. The main aim of this policy is achieving seventy percent of Kazakhstani schools with relevant conditions to have implemented inclusive education by 2020 (OECD, 2014).

As the current topic concerns education and schools it touches on a range of different stakeholders. Parents of children with ASD have an integral role in their involvement in the development of their children’s education. They are a key group of people and a critical support in their child’s education. Conditions at home also have a significant influence on children’s adaptation at school. Research has displayed that parents of children with ASD who have a strong relationship with the school authority and teachers, improves the situation for the benefit for their child (Bush, Cohen, Eisenhower, & Blacher, 2017). Educators or teachers in schools can influence the condition of inclusion among students. For example, Parsons et al, (2011) pointed out that schoolchildren with ASD indicated that their teacher’s tolerance and adaptability had an impact on their inclusion to the community (as cited in Goodall, 2018). Maintaining collaborative partnership between parents of students and school governance are important in creating the conditions for inclusive education (Gavalda & Oinyi, 2012). Furthermore, parents of typically developing (TD) children, also have an impact on the atmosphere in the class.

Many factors might influence the reasons for a parent's choice of educational placement for their child with ASD in Kazakhstan. Consequently, it is important to take into account all factors and hear these directly through the voices of parents. In summary, it is crucial to explore the perspective of parents of children with ASD relating to the educational choices they make and the reasons that underpin their choices if current reforms in education are to be successful.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

In research, a theoretical framework provides a lens through which the researcher can better analyze and understand a particular topic. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), it defines a structure that illustrates the study from philosophical, epistemological, methodological, and analytical perspective (as cited in Adom, Hussein, & Agyem, 2018). A theoretical framework acts as a guide in constructing and understanding the range of variables that may have influence on a particular subject or topic (Trigueros, 2018). In this instance, the theoretical basis of the present research is the Bronfenbrenner ecological systems theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory explains the various types of environmental systems that have an influence on human development (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017). Bronfenbrenner claimed that children develop when they interact with various settings (Harkonen, 2007). To put it another way, it describes the interaction between an individual and their environment. As this research concerns the reasons why parents have their children educated in certain settings, the ecological systems theory was chosen for the purpose of framing the present study (see *Figure 1*). It allows the researcher to understand the factors that influence the decision-making processes from the individual or child focused level, through to a range of

other factors such as family situation, teachers, schools, peers, community and government.

The ecological model consists of Micro-, Meso-, Exo-, and Macrosystems as interconnected types of environmental systems (Ettetal, & Mahoney, 2017). It is important to note that individual characteristics of the child are at the centre of the interaction of all settings (Harkonen, 2007). The developing child's beliefs and life statement occurs firstly on a personal level. The Microsystem includes the closest people to a child with whom the interaction is direct. For example, family, school, and peers are in microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The Macrosystem contains the interaction between the members of microsystem (Ettetal, & Mahoney, 2017). The main idea is the process when one system level influences another system level. The Exosystem is broader in context than the previous two. In this context, factors that influence the life of the child have a connection, but are not directly involved. The most external setting is the Macrosystem. This involves systems and structures such as socially accepted norms, beliefs, and culture (Ettetal, & Mahoney, 2017). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is a key concept of understanding the process of education and human socialization (Harkonen, 2007).

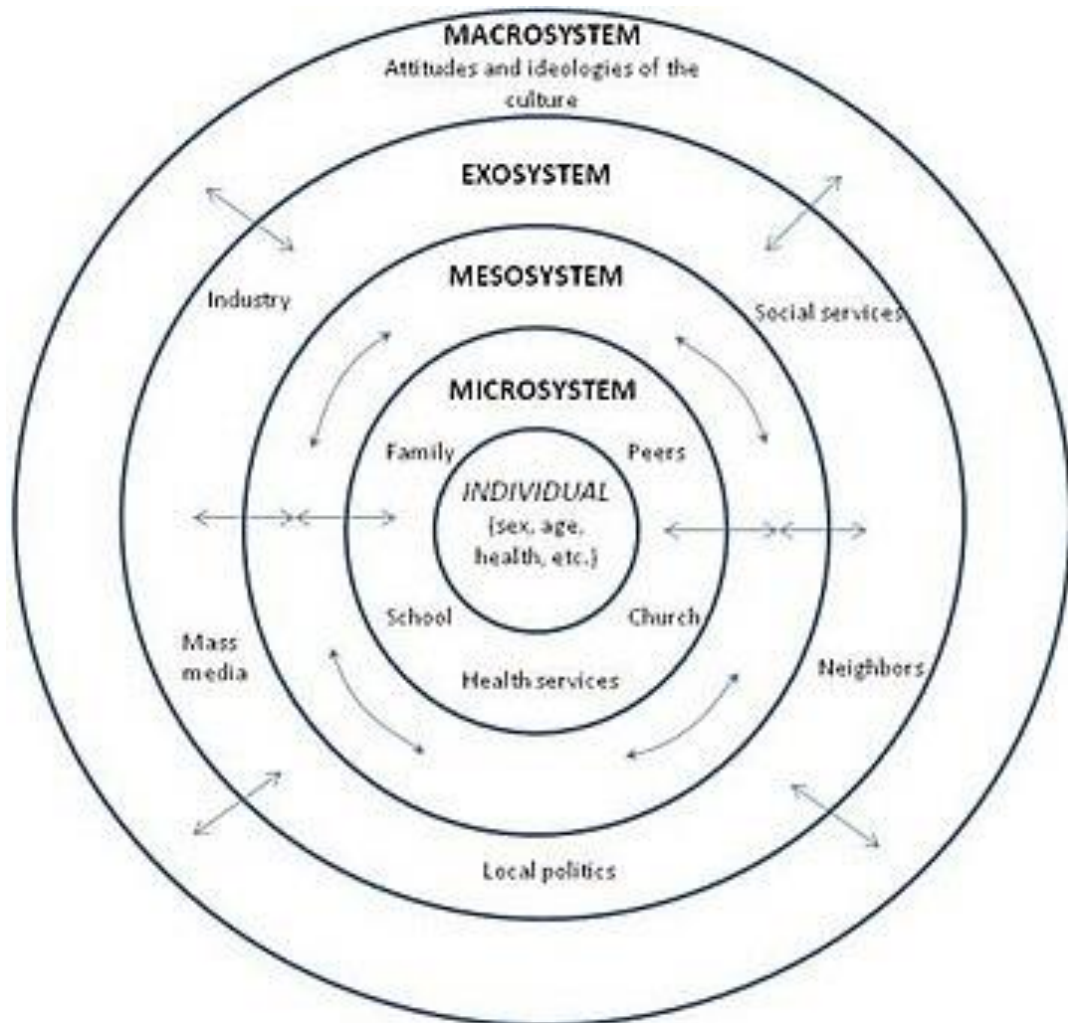


Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's ecological system of Human Development

1.7. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this research is to understand the decisions that parents of children with ASD make, regarding the education of their child and the reasons they choose to either homeschool, mainstream, or place their child in a correction school setting. Moreover, the research will identify some of the particular concerns or challenges that they face when determining their options in seeking a quality educational setting for their child.

1.8. Research Questions

The research questions are the following:

RQ1 What factors influence the decision of parents of children with ASD to choose either mainstream, correctional, or homeschooling for their child's education?

Sub-question b. What other factors do they believe are barriers or enablers to accessing a quality education for their child?

1.9. Chapter Summary

The present study focuses on the factors that influence school placement and challenges faced by parents of children with ASD. The thesis contains the following chapters: the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion.

The literature review presents research that is directly related to the central focus of the study. The methodology chapter explains the research design and method for data collection and the results and discussion chapters present an interpretation and analysis of the data aligned with the theoretical framework and discussed in relation to previous research.

Finally, the conclusion summarizes the findings and limitations of the study and presents recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents studies related to the education of students with ASD. An analysis of the literature under review covers the following topics: individual characteristics of children with ASD, educational opportunities based on stakeholders in children's microsystem, the beliefs and attitudes of parents towards their child's education, and formation of an inclusive culture during the present time in Kazakhstan and the Soviet period time in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

A child with ASD has their own characteristics in learning style and behaviour (White, Keonig, & Scahill, 2007). However, key features of the disorder are located in the social and emotional domain of development along with restricted and repetitive behaviours (APA, 2013; Bussanich, Hartley, & Bolt, 2017). Several studies have investigated the individual personalities and challenges of children with ASD that might influence on the quality of their education. The following studies will demonstrate specific characteristics of children with ASD, which are elements considered to be at the individual level within the ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

2.2. Individual: The Child

2.2.1. Physiological

Sometimes children with ASD have physiological illnesses that might increase their hyperactivity and social interaction. For example, gastrointestinal problems are widespread among children with ASD (Navarro, Liu, & Rhoads, 2016). This research synthesized actual data from other research to determine whether there is a correlation between ASD and bowel disease. Such disorders can often causes a lack of social interaction and disobedient behaviour. The reason is that children's physical condition provokes

discomfort that leads to challenging behaviours. However, the study suggested that the consumption of probiotics supplements is a questionable solution to overcome such challenges (Navarro et al., 2016).

2.2.2. Hyperactivity

According to Simonoff et al. (2008), a psychiatric disorder is part of the specific pattern of ASD. This research aimed to determine the type and frequency of mental disorders related to ASD in a total of $n=112$ cases of children aged between 10 and 14 in the United Kingdom (UK). The results showed that 70% of participants with ASD recruited for the study had at least one psychiatric comorbidity such as social anxiety and hyperactivity. These are the most common psychiatric challenges associated with the diagnosis (Simonoff et al., 2008). The following three articles also corroborate these findings.

Robinson, Goddard, Dritschel, Wisley, and Howlin (2009) noted that one of the characteristics of children with ASD is executive dysfunction, which is also a feature of hyperactivity. The researchers were investigating differences between children with ASD and TD children in their level of language and intelligence quotient (IQ). This study recruited 108 children in the sample and conducted in the UK. This would mean that students with ASD find it challenging to keep in control of their studies and behaviour. The research also reported that children with ASD preserve ability to have mental flexibility and generativity. The research suggested further investigation to measure the influence of these challenges on children's effectiveness in their academic performance (Robinson et al., 2009).

2.2.3. Socialization

The findings of White et al. (2007) also support the results of the study by Simonoff et al., (2008). Researchers reviewed published studies and unpublished dissertations that were written beginning between 1985 and 2006. The topic concerned social group training for children with ASD. The results showed that children with ASD might express their feelings in an atypical way. In most cases, they find it difficult to hide their emotions. Recommendations from the research indicate that approaches employed to overcome challenges in social communication for children with ASD are unknown and need further investigation (White et al., 2007). Consequently, some parents think that child's disorder is the main barrier for their child to acquire quality education, while others consider that it is not a barrier for included to educational setting.

Palmer, Fuller, Arora, and Nelson (2001) interviewed $n=140$ parents of children with SEN to understand their level of support associated with inclusive education. One parent stated that she was not sure about enrolling her child in mainstream school due to a child's disability. Many circumstances might be the reason for families' decisions regarding their child's education. The individual personality and challenges of children with ASD are one of the main factors for deciding to choose a particular type of education for a child with ASD (Palmer et al., 2001). The results of a study by Elkins, Van Kraayenoord, & Jobling (2003) also supported the idea that parents of children with SEN who have an anti-inclusion stance towards education, believe that their child's disability will be a challenge. The research interviewed $n=354$ parents in Australia to understand their opinion about their child or children with SEN studying in an inclusive environment (Elkins et al., 2003). However, other studies have shown that given the right conditions, children with ASD can learn effectively and show satisfactory results at school. For instance, an experimental study by Hulusic and Pistoljevic (2012) found that despite having verbal issues in communication, all four participants with ASD could master computer programs without

detailed instructions. The research showed that a computer-assisted approach might be a useful tool for increasing valuable skills in children with ASD. This pilot project was tested among children with ASD and showed positive preliminary results. Children with ASD have basic skills for learning new material and able to implement acquired knowledge in practice. (Hulusic, & Pistoljevic, 2012). Similarly, Bush et al., (2017) investigated the formation of parental expectation associated with an academic performance of their children with ASD at school. The result of this mixed method study demonstrated that parents were optimistic and believed that their child would achieve the same results, as any other child. However, since only parents with high economic circumstances participated in the research, the researchers note that the findings might be different in families with low social income. (Bush et al., 2017). These findings show how a family's economic circumstances can play a role in parents' decision-making processes.

In summary, these individual characteristics either independently or together, can create challenges for children in their learning and communicating with their peers. The character of a child can have a significant influence on their parents' decision about their choices of educational placement, depending on the way the ASD disorder affects a child's level of behaviour and social functioning.

2.3. The Microsystem

The microsystem encompasses the community that children have a direct relationship with (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). Regarding this system level within the ecological model, indicates that family and school are some of the more direct settings that have an influence on a child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Parents influence a child's life as much as a child affects their parents' circumstances and perspectives (Harkonen, 2007). It would be significant to analyze parental fears, beliefs, and thoughts to

understand their choices in enrolling their children to various educational settings (Palmer et al. 2001). Paquette and Ryan (2001) support this idea that parental microsystems might have an impact on a child's life due to parents being part of a child's environment.

Moreover, a pleasant school environment leads to a child's well-being (Blažević, 2016).

For example, the potential incompetence of teachers in teaching children with SEN is one of the main concerns of parents (Palmer et al., 2001). It also highlights the importance of a teacher's role in the process of education. In overall, this part reviewed literature about the influence of parents and the school community (teachers, psychologists, and peers) on a child's education.

2.3.1. Parents

Bussanich et al. (2017) interviewed $n=175$ parents of children with ASD to investigate the parental influence on their children's behaviour. Findings show that parental state has strong impact on the growth of their child with ASD. Moreover, the findings showed that close family relationships create more stability in a child's behaviour (Bussanich et al., 2017).

Parents of children with ASD may face a high level of physical and mental pressure, and the quality of their standard of living could be low in comparison with parents of TD children (Pisula & Porebowicz-Dorsmann, 2017). Despite this, the results the study (Pisula & Porebowicz-Dorsmann, 2017) showed that 17% of these parents had positive expectations and believed that their child with ASD would achieve the same result in academic performance as any other child. The level of parental stress can depend on different issues: the well-being and age of children, their personal characteristics and assistance from the society (Pisula & Porebowicz-Dorsmann, 2017). The findings from Gong et al. (2015) supported these factors, and show that the parents of children with ASD

are more inclined to have higher rate of anxiety, depression, and stress than other parents without children with ASD. These researchers took a survey of $n=188$ parents of children with ASD and 144 parents of TD children. The results showed that the behavioural problems of children with ASD increase parental stress level (Gong et al., 2015). Hartley et al. (2017) also compared the life of parents of children with ASD and parents of TD children. More than $n=340$ parents with and without children with ASD completed a questionnaire. Half of the participants were parents of a child with ASD at the age of 5-12 years, and the others were parents of TD children at the same age bracket. Couples who have a child with ASD expressed empathy to each other by comparing parents of TD children despite having many issues and challenges. The first group had more unsolved conflicts than the couples who had a child without disabilities (Hartley et al., 2017).

2.3.2. Teachers

A teacher's experience, knowledge, and skills are some of the essential factors in creating a tolerant inclusive environment for children with ASD. The study (Makovec, 2018) pointed out a teacher's role in any students' growth and academic performance, which is crucial for organizing an inclusive environment for children with ASD. Makovec (2018) investigated the importance of teachers' performance in a school setting, and the factors influencing it. The researcher reviewed existing empirical studies and teachers with considerable experience in teaching are more qualified to present their professional development. The result showed that teachers' professional capacity is determined through their personality traits. The research suggested taking into consideration the factor of teacher's personal traits to evaluate their professional identity. Overall, teachers are crucial members of a child's microsystem environment, their role always vital in education (Makovec, 2018).

Falkmer, Anderson, Joosten, and Falkmer (2015) showed the similar results in their study by reviewing twenty-eight empirical studies about parental attitudes towards inclusive education from 1990 to 2011. The inclusionary requirements for the studies listed in the review were being empirical study in the western countries and included students at the age between 6 and 16 with ASD. According to the results of the review of studies, overall findings indicate that parents think that teachers have a significant influence on children with ASD during their children's study at school. One of the recommendation that arose from this study was to develop greater interaction between parents and teachers. A strong relationship between parents and teachers facilitate the improvements of a child's growth. In summary, the research showed the importance of the teacher's role as well as that of the parents (Falkmer et al., 2015). Elkins et al. (2003) also supported this in their findings. The researchers conducted an open-ended survey to analyze parental views associated with inclusive education. This study included $n=354$ parents of children with SEN in Australia. Parents noted that their children did not get an individual approach because teachers were overwhelmed with large classes in public schools. They underlined the importance of teachers' characteristics. Consequently, 70% of participants indicated that they preferred patient teachers for their children with SEN. Overall, the interaction between parents and teachers is an important factor that affects a child's development (Elkins et al., 2003).

As previous research described parental attitudes towards inclusion, a teacher's identity is crucial. Lindsay, Proulx, Thomson, and Scott (2013) described the perspectives of teachers who had experience in educating children with ASD in Ontario, Canada. They interviewed $n=13$ teachers to understand the challenges that they face in the teaching process. They reported that it was often hard to understand the behaviour of children with ASD, because they did not have sufficient experience in teaching children with ASD. They

were also concerned about a lack of practical training and resources to enable them to be successful in the teaching situation (Lindsay et al., 2013). Vaughan, Clampitt, and Park (2016) examined the role of peer mentoring in Canada. The teachers were involved in the practice of peer mentoring, and then they had an interview and survey about this experience. The research showed positive feedback about the progress in teaching among respondents who were involved in the program (Vaughan et al., 2016). Similarly, Koroleva (2017) has recommended peer mentoring as a way to develop a teacher's competency. In addition, peer mentoring among teachers is also considered an effective way to enhance education. The study investigated the perception of peer mentoring among teachers in two Kazakhstani schools and the frequency of its practice. The data presented the benefits of peer mentoring in the teaching process. However, teachers do not completely understand its benefits, which leads to misunderstanding between mentors and mentees (Koroleva, 2017).

2.3.3. Psychologists

According to Bronfenbrenner (1986), psychologists should understand the environment of a child, namely the home, school, close surroundings, and culture (as cited in Burns, Warmbold-Brann, & Zaslofsky, 2015). A psychologist is sometimes a part child's microsystem, and communication with parents and teachers is essential at this level. Psychologists are usually a part of a problem-solving group of people at school when it comes to dealing with specific needs of a child or family (Burns et al., 2015).

Combes, Chang, Austin, and Hayes (2016) agreed that psychologists are part of a child's microsystem environment as they interact directly with the child. Their research recruited $n=220$ psychologists in schools to take survey about their use of social skills training for children with ASD in the United States [U.S.]. The main inclusion criteria

were that they were currently working in a school setting or had practical experience in the last three years. According to the result, 47% of these psychologists revealed that they did not have social skills training courses for students with ASD when they studied at university. Moreover, more than half of participants were not provided with this type of training during their internship. The research concluded that this level is not sufficient for student progress (Combes et al., 2016).

2.3.4. Peers

Equally, peers are essential stakeholders in the microsystem environment of a child. According to Ladd (1999) poor relationships with peers can cause inappropriate social behaviour (as cited in Blažević, 2016). The study found that the attitudes of peers influence parental satisfaction about the school environment. Spending time at school with peers assists to develop children's social behaviour (Blažević, 2016). For example, Lyons et al. (2011) showed in their study that after enrolling in an inclusive class and communicating with peers, children with ASD demonstrated better social skills. In the study, 46 parents were interviewed who had a child with ASD to examine the level of their social interaction. The researchers compared children in enrolled in full inclusion settings and partial inclusion settings to discover the importance of peer communication. As a result, it appeared that the full inclusion settings for students with ASD resulted in closer friendships with their peers and improved levels of socialization (Lyons et al., 2011).

Bradley (2016) investigated the role of a peer-mentoring program in increasing peer relations among school students. He took $n=12$ students with ASD and $n=36$ TD students from five local schools in England and conducted semi-structured interviews to analyze the impact of peer mentoring among school students. The results indicated that peer mentoring improved tolerance, self-satisfaction, and academic comprehension of students. However,

the study showed that only limited number of such programs existed (Bradley, 2016).

Siew, Mazzucchelli, Rooney, and Girdler (2017) similarly investigated the impact of peer mentoring programs among students with ASD. The researchers noted that such programs improve higher educational achievements of educators with ASD. A quantitative and qualitative study was used to analyze the progress of 10 students with ASD who were enrolled in the peer-mentoring program. The researchers asked about their anxiety, comprehension of new materials, feelings, and experience. They also compared prior answers of participants and after having taken part in the program. The results show that the well-being of the students and their academic achievements were increased (Siew et al., 2017). After reviewing the above-mentioned studies, it might be supposed that peer communication plays an essential role in children's education and growth.

According to the literature, as children with ASD usually spend with parents, teachers, peers, and psychologists, they have a crucial impact on their formation. Consequently, parental attitudes towards their children's education emerge from these factors.

2.4. The Mesosystem

The previous section described the importance of school members and parents in the life of children with ASD. Two settings, family and school, are environments where children live and grow. Their interaction of child's family and school community has a direct relation to the child's development and the formulation of parental perspectives towards education. Conversely, the mesosystem constitutes a relationship between two or more groups which can affect a person, in which case, school and family communication are especially essential (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Parents support the idea of providing their children with general education at a mainstream school; however, this depends on the

conditions present at the school (Palmer et al., 2001). Overall, the topic is important because the interaction between parents and teachers is very intimate. Challenges that teachers experience directly influenced those of parents. A collaboration between parents and teachers should occur to create a pleasant environment for children with ASD. According to Epstein (1983), teachers and parents' communication is associated with children's life at the level of the mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

2.4.1. Parents and Teacher Relationship

Azad and Mandell (2016) investigated teachers and parents' perceptions of inclusive education at elementary schools in the U.S. The teachers and parents were selected as participants for this study beforehand. Then they were interviewed individually. Overall, $n=18$ teachers and $n=39$ parents from 13 schools took part in the study. More female participants were interviewed than male participants. A short interview that was seven minutes long was considered one of the limitations of the study because participants could not deliver their thoughts completely. For example, teachers focused on children's behaviour, whereas parents thought a lot about their children's academic achievements. Overall, the results suggested the improvement of home-school collaboration to progress child's academic performance (Azad & Mandell, 2016). Stoner et al. (2005) also investigated the interaction between the parents of children with ASD and educators. They preferred to use a cross-case method to evaluate multiple records and interviews with parents of children with ASD. The research showed that parental participation in an educational setting is significant for children's study and development (Stoner et al., 2005).

The amount of time devoted to communication is also a crucial factor that influences effectiveness of parents and teacher relationship. Chakravarty (2017) studied the frequency of parent and teachers' communication. Concerning this, parents expressed a desire to have

more time to consult with teachers. Moreover, they suggested organizing more training for teachers to enhance their competency. This study analyzed the answers of parents and concluded with some useful recommendations from their perspectives. Parents preferred to work and teach their children in collaboration with the teachers. The most significant suggestions were to pay attention to the parental experience, inform them about the educational process, and develop the interaction between the school community and the parents. A limitation that appeared during the research was that many parents of children with ASD were representatives of the middle-class, which meant that the results did not cover all parents. In conclusion, parents are more interested in their children's education than any other stakeholders are (Chakravarty, 2017).

Su, Guo, and Wang (2018) investigated the attitudes of different stakeholders towards inclusive education. In total, $n=712$ participants took part in a survey, namely $n=170$ parents of children with ASD, $n=337$ parents of TD children, and $n=197$ educators. Parents of children with ASD had the highest desire to implement inclusive education among all participants. All stakeholders had different opinions about what constitutes an inclusive environment in schools. In general, all stakeholders responded positively about inclusive education (Su et al., 2018). Samadi and McConkey (2018) pointed out that a relationship between all stakeholders is essential to organize quality education. The lack of qualified tutors and teachers and negative attitudes of TD children towards inclusive education are the main barriers improving inclusive education. They investigated the perception of parents of children with ASD and other developmental disabilities in Iran. The participants had various experiences and social backgrounds. Their children had to be between the ages of two and five years old. The questionnaires were delivered to 120 parents of students with developmental disabilities in various Iranian districts. They also underlined the importance of teacher's training to improve their expertise in teaching

children with ASD. Overall, out of the eighty-nine parents who answered the questionnaires, almost 70% had the desire to enroll their children in mainstream schools (Samadi & McConkey, 2018).

2.4.2. Parents' Views to Inclusive Education

Hamilton and Wilkinson (2016) studied the parental perception of children with ASD in transferring from primary to secondary schools in New Zealand. The researchers decided to choose a qualitative method to explore the issue. In this study, ASD branches were responsible for contacting parents and sending them invitations letters to participate in their study. As a result, five parents of children with ASD accepted the invitation and agreed to take part in an interview. Overall, one father and four mothers took part in the research. They agreed to have the interview at the workplace or their home. All of them had positive attitudes towards inclusive education, but they were afraid of their children having challenges in mainstream schools (Hamilton, & Wilkinson, 2016). Similarly, Majoko (2017) studied parental view on the involvement of inclusive education in Zimbabwe. The qualitative study design was conducted with twenty-four participants. Overall, it consisted of six focus group interviews. The researcher noted in his study that parents of children with ASD had positive attitudes towards inclusive education, and they provided some feedback about the situation. The researchers said that it would be a good idea to observe lessons at schools. Other recommendation to overcome challenges might be to increase the quality of supportive services and develop the relationship between stakeholders involved in this issue (Majoko, 2017).

Some parents think that existing special schools might be a barrier creating inclusive education (Kasari, Freeman, Bauminger, & Alkin, 1999). Their quantitative study investigated the perspectives of parents of children with ASD and with Down syndrome at

the age 2-18 regarding to inclusive education. They also thought that inclusive education would be a good idea for their children (Kasari et al., 1999). Similarly, according to Abbasi (2017), parents of children with ASD had also positive thoughts towards creating inclusive education. To ascertain this, he used a qualitative ethnographic study to analyze parental attitudes towards their children with ASD in inclusive education. They conducted semi-structured interview via Skype and individual face-to-face meetings. Moreover, the research also noted the significance of teachers' role in the process of developing inclusive education at schools (Abbasi, 2017).

De Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert (2010) reviewed some available literature to understand the parental view of inclusive education. After a computer search, the researchers examined $n=346$ articles manually. The majority of articles were not suited according to the criteria that each article be recently written, have empirical information, and have involved participants with children with ASD or SEN. Overall, ten articles were chosen to discover the perception of parents to educate their children with ASD in mainstream schools. Most of them had a positive point of view of inclusive education. As in previous research, they also noted that service for children with ASD had to be appropriately organized (De Boer et al., 2010). Ary (2017) pointed out that it is essential to manage a support system through convenient services. In a research using a phenomenological design to study parental perceptions of programs for inclusion at schools. 10 Pennsylvanian parents of children with ASD were asked about their knowledge regarding enrolling their children to a school with an inclusive program. An important criterion was that their children had to have been enrolled in the program for five years. Interaction with peers develops an emotional state of the child with ASD (Ary, 2017).

Parental views, beliefs, and expectations towards the education of their children influence the family environment and their child's development (Darling, 2007). The result

of the reviewed literature showed that parents of children with ASD have positive thoughts about inclusive education. Furthermore, parental interaction with teachers might have a strong influence on their perception about school setting.

2.5. The Exosystem

Exosystems contain larger communities than mesosystems. Local politics, NGO's, social services, and mass media affect a child's life. An exosystem is a social layer that a child is not directly engaged with (Harkonen, 2007). This part of the chapter demonstrates literature that studied the Kazakhstani context.

2.5.1. Kazakhstan

Very little literature exists to help understand inclusive schools in Kazakhstan. Iskakova, Ahmetkaliyevna, and Shestakova (2016) studied regulatory support for inclusive education, the organization of the educational process in an inclusive school, and conditions for the inclusion of children with SEN in the educational placement in the Republic of Kazakhstan. As a result of their study, the researchers recommended developing classroom organizations, working groups in the lesson and teaching certain methods concerning the classroom curriculum (Iskakova et al., 2016). Rollan and Somerton (2019) studied the influence of civil society on inclusive education reform in Kazakhstan. They interviewed local NGO representatives who were working with parents of children with ASD. The findings raised questions about assumptions relating to the evolution of policy in a post-Soviet country, which involves a top-down approach. The recommendation of this study is to provide resources and financial support for the NGOs to increase inclusive education (Rollan & Somerton, 2019).

An et al. (2018) studied the perception of parents of children with ASD of support services for their children in Kazakhstan. They conducted a group interview with $n=17$ participants, which showed that a lack of awareness and tardy diagnoses are the main reasons for the challenges that arise among children with ASD. A lack of specialists is also one of the barriers to create inclusive education. The research had some limitations. Interviews were conducted in only two large cities of Kazakhstan. Yet another situation might exist in other small cities (An et al., 2018). Khamidulina (2018) also studied parental views on and understanding about inclusive education. This study showed that Kazakhstani parents understand all the benefits of inclusive education. However, they questioned the readiness of society and the infrastructure to welcome children with SEN. Nowadays children with SEN do not use all available opportunities and are deprived of their rights that are written in the constitution. Children with ASD are often isolated from society, as their diagnosis is not understood well. The parents of these children experience psychological pressure and do not usually put enough efforts into fighting for children's rights (Markova and Sultanaliyeva, 2013).

Markova and Sultanaliyeva (2013) investigated another barrier to create inclusive schools. Local schools administration are worried about the decrease in their school's rating due to spending time for including children with SEN to the school setting. They focus on the status by trying to show high school rating and thus weaken social equity. Directors with more experience are more likely to accept children with SEN. In other cases, this research found that often schools are forced to teach children with SEN without the appropriate support (Markova & Sultanaliyeva, 2013).

Even as fewer studies have been conducted concerning inclusive education in the Kazakhstani context, those that exist are very recent and highlight the existing challenges relevant for the present study. However, according to literature discuss here, it might be

supposed that many external issues should be improved to provide quality education for children with ASD.

2.6. The Macrosystem

The Macrosystems consist of various values, beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and laws in a community (Harkonen, 2007). Kazakhstan is similar to Russia as both of these countries were parts of the USSR (Fredborn Larsson, 2010). To understand the current policy and culture of inclusive education in this country, it is necessary to analyze its formation.

2.6.1. Post-Soviet Contexts

Makoelle, (2020) recently investigated the language and terminology in inclusive education in Kazakhstan. Nowadays, the transformation of schools into inclusive education is improving, but the terminology from the Soviet period still exists. A semi-structured interview was used to explore the views of school directors, teachers, professionals, and parents whose child with ASD had been enrolled in the school setting for three consecutive years. In the USSR, psychologists working in schools obtained guidance from pediatricians and psychiatrists to evaluate the level a child's handicap. The concept of inclusive education as to what creates the gaps between theory and practice is not still clear (Makoelle, 2020).

The situation might be the same in other countries, which were parts of the Russian Federation. For example, Vodonos (2013) investigated the improvement of Russia's special education standards according to the history of the USSR, the viewpoints of stakeholders, and the legality of the issue. The results show that methodological supports do not fulfill the requirements of children with SEN. The researcher recommends including

stakeholders' opinions when creating the standards for inclusive education and implementing them smoothly in school settings (Vodonos, 2013). Moreover, Phillips (2009) explored the perception of disability rights in the context of the USSR. Findings showed that often people with SEN had to deal with either no support or too much compassion. Overall, the government could not provide the appropriate conditions for people with SEN (Phillips, 2009). The research "Brief Report: Analysis of ASD and Its Treatment in Modern Russian Defectology" (Lebedinskaya & Nikolskaya, 1993) is the first report related to ASD from Eastern Europe. They investigated the role of parents in their children's development and worked on the relationship between the child and their parents to remove their feelings of guilt and fear. They used psychological, medical, and educational methods to treat children with ASD according to their individual needs. They believed that each child differed from others and needed a personalized approach (Lebedinskaya & Nikolskaya, 1993).

According to the literature, the experience had an impact on the formation of understanding about inclusive education. As a result, studying microsystem of child's ecological system is important to create an inclusive environment.

2.7. Chapter Summary

In conclusion, according to the literature that has been reviewed here in this chapter, various factors in a child's ecological settings play an important role in the formation of parental perspective about their child's education. Thus it can be concluded that it is necessary to understand the viewpoint of parents towards the reasons they choose for school placement for their children with ASD. These literatures are the basis for investigating the factors that form parental understanding about inclusive education for their children with ASD.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented literature that covered a range of research directly related to the topic and concepts under investigation. Based on the findings presented in the previous chapter, this chapter will describe research design, methods, and instruments proposed to answer the research question. This research uses a qualitative approach as the nature of the research questions explore the constructs associated with the decisions parents of children with ASD make about their education. Qualitative research is formed on the basic idea that "reality" is subjective: each person builds a personal idea about the world based on his or her specific interaction with the outside world (Cropley, 2019). A qualitative researcher is not inclined to generalize from one context to another because the content of each case is different (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, & Morales, 2007).

3.2. Research Design

The researcher has chosen to use a qualitative approach to investigate the topic as it provides the opportunity to collect data that can explore each participant's ideas and experiences in greater depth than quantitatively (Creswell et al., 2007). This research is broadly phenomenological as it explores parental attitudes and their experiences of having a child with ASD and their educational choices. Phenomenological research aims to explore the perception of different stakeholders who share a similar experience (Lester, 1999). Creswell (1998) claims that if the main purpose of the study is to investigate the human experience, it is the best criteria to use phenomenological research design (as cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Each qualitative research implies a phenomenological characteristic, but phenomenological cannot be implemented to all qualitative research (Padilla-Díaz, 2015). The phenomenological approach might apply a single participant or intentionally selected sample (Lester, 1999). Multiple participant

research was chosen to explore the ideas and thoughts of participants in accordance with their particular experience and their educational choices.

This research is also a case study because it investigates real people's attitudes to the status of their children with ASD in inclusive education in Kazakhstan. A case study describes a particular example of a real person in a real situation (Cohen et al., 2007). A small sample of participants is enough for case study research as it provides opportunities to improve a better comprehension of participants' attitudes or experiences on an individual level (Creswell, 2002). One of the deviation of the qualitative case study is the collective study (Creswell et al., 2007). In a collective study, one issue is selected, and then it is investigated from different perspectives (Creswell et al., 2007). In the present research, parents of children with ASD explain their attitudes and experiences on the same issue, which is inclusive education in Kazakhstan from their own unique perspectives. In general, the case study focuses on a personal view of the event of one participant or group of participants (Cohen et al., 2007).

3.3. Sampling Procedures (Participants)

Participants in a qualitative phenomenological case study are selected in accordance with "purposive sampling" (Cohen et al., 2007). This means that all participants in the research should have common characteristics and experiences that apply to the research question. "Purposive sampling" makes it difficult to generalize the results but is the appropriate way to collect in-depth information from people who deal with the investigating issue (Cohen et al., 2007).

The present study recruited 6 participants as this number should be sufficient to obtain the necessary data to answer the research questions. This number is considered suitable for case study research (Creswell, 2002). Participants were recruited via Non-

Government Organisations (NGO's) that work specifically with families who have children with ASD. Initially, the researcher searched for relevant NGOs working with parents of children with ASD in one of the cities in Kazakhstan. Once these were identified, the researcher contacted the NGO via e-mail and send information concerning the aims, purpose, research questions and contact information of the researcher. The NGO responded and supported the research. The researcher visited the NGO and informed about the research parents to have volunteers who met the inclusionary criteria for participation in the study. The researcher ensured that participants met the inclusionary criteria for participation in the research. Inclusionary criteria for participation in the study require participants to currently have a school aged child diagnosed with ASD and who speak Russian, Kazakh or English.

One of the biggest cities in Kazakhstan was chosen as the research site. The choice of the site was selected for several reasons. Firstly, there are several NGOs based in the city that support parents who have children diagnosed with ASD. Secondly, the researcher has had experience of working with NGOs before and has developed a collegial working relationship with them. Thirdly, many NGO's have missions that match the aim of the research and they are eager to improve and contribute to the improvement of inclusive education by supporting different research.

The interviews were conducted with six parents of children with ASD while their children were skiing in a mountain camp near one of the big cities in Kazakhstan. All respondents were mothers. There were no male participants interviewed as they did not consent to take part in the interview, explaining that felt they were not as informed about their child's education as much as their wives were. All of the respondents were parents of male children who were between the ages of 8 and 16, and all participants' children were diagnosed with ASD. Of the six parents who participated in the interview, five reported

that they had enrolled their child in homeschooling. Only one respondent indicated that her child attended an inclusive class at a local school. Parents whose children study at home had the experience of going physically to special schools.

3.4. Instrument

In qualitative research, one-to-one interview, a group interview with some participants, or telephone interview might be conducted (Creswell, 2014). Overall, interview, discussion, and observation are considered to be the dominant qualitative methods that investigate different attitudes and experiences (Lester, 1999). In this instance, the interview was chosen as the main method for data collection in the present study. This method is attributed to phenomenological-based research, which provides the necessary data via conducting an interview. This method is considered the most suitable for data collection strategy in phenomenological research (Padilla-Díaz, 2015). A semi-structured and open-ended interview instrument was used to collect parental perspectives. Kyle and Brinkman (2009) explain that it is better to ask open or semi-structured questions during the interview as it allows participants to share their experiences on a more personal level rather than being restricted to structured responses. The questions in the interview protocol (see Appendix 1) have been constructed based on similar studies reviewed in the literature. For example, questions such as “What does inclusive education look like for your child?” and “What knowledge and skills do you think a general education teacher requires to teach effectively in an inclusive classroom?” (Chakravarty, 2017). The instrument was provided in three languages, English, Russian, and Kazakh.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

Once potential participants have agreed to participate in the research, they nominate a convenient time and place for interview. This was in a relaxed environment that was in a public space such as a quiet café or outdoor area ensuring that the participant felt comfortable and there was no risk to the researcher. The researcher met the participant and went through the informed consent with the participant, explaining the aim of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality, and the risks and benefits of participation. The researcher also asked the participant if the interview could be recorded for transcription purposes. If this was declined, then only notes would be taken from the interview. All participants agreed to be recorded.

The participant then signed the informed consent form (see Appendix 2) in the language they were most comfortable with (Russian, Kazakh, or English). One signed consent form was provided to the participant for them to keep and another retained by the researcher and taken back to be stored in a hard copy in a lockable drawer in the researcher's office. The researcher assigned a numbered code to the participant and stored this code in a password protected file on the researcher's laptop. The numbered code was used as the only form of identification on the transcript. The interview could then begin and it was estimated that each interview would take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete. The researcher made notes by hand of particular interest during the interview process. If at any time the participant appeared uncomfortable with any of the research questions, the researcher would halt the interview and ask the participant if they wished to proceed. The researcher complied with their wishes.

Once the interview was completed, the researcher advised the participant that they would email the transcript in their language of choice so that the participant could ensure that the researcher had obtained their true meaning prior to beginning the data analysis.

The numbered transcription was stored in a separate password protected file. The file kept on the researcher's laptop to the numbered codes with identities.

The study is associated with minimal risk research because participants are adults and informed consent is given prior to data collection. However, a few risks were considered that were potentially related to the research. The research was considered to be a focus on individual experience and thoughts which might be sensitive to share with others. To avoid revealing any personal information about what was shared by the participant, each participant was named by the number coding for storage the data (see ethical considerations) to protect the confidential nature of the information they disclosed in the interview.

3.6. Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted using Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. Codes and categories were grouped into themes. Then, they were placed under the corresponding level of the framework within the ecological model. This allowed the research to determine what factors tended to have more influence on a parent's choice of school placement.

Once participants approved the transcripts, all materials were gathered into various files with names. All the data was collected in to one document for analysis. Then mail merge facility was used to divide and compare similarities (Lester, 1999). Hand coding needs time to collect the data (Creswell, 2014).

A textual analysis attempted to find the answer to the question 'what' and structural analysis described the answer for the question of 'how'. Overall, phenomenological analysis is explaining and analyzing the text to define the context (Padilla-Díaz, 2015).

All information was collected and analyzed through 6 steps according to Creswell (2014). Once the interview was finished, it was analyzed in order not to forget about all the

memos during the process. Every interview was recorded and collected to files, and then the process of transcription was done. The materials were named and divided into several files. Secondly, transcripts were read carefully. The researcher revealed the main idea of the interview. Coding was the third step of the data analysis. Coding is organizing all findings logically and identifying into several parts by words (as cited in Creswell, 2014). Data about people's background, locations, and time were taken into account coding. As for the last step, which was the fifth step, all the data was performed in a qualitative narrative. In the end, the findings were explained in qualitative research.

To sum up, the main idea of phenomenological research was to understand the main meaning of the parental experience to have a child with ASD. In addition, it was crucial to emphasize that participants express objective or subjective experience (Padilla-Díaz, 2015). As phenomenological research implies purposive sampling, it is directive (Padilla-Díaz, 2015).

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The research has completed the mandatory institutional ethics training known as CITI training. As the study follows institutional ethical guidelines concerning confidentiality, the research should not reveal the identity of those who took part in the interviews in any of the data or subsequent publication. In research involving human subjects, the anonymity or confidentiality of participants should be obligatory and agreement should be signed between participant and researcher (Cohen et al., 2007). In this instance, each of the participants were known to the research because of the nature of data collection, thus the data was treated as confidential. Each participant was given a number code to ensure that their actual identity was not associated with their transcript.

Each participant was provided with informed consent in verbal and written format in Kazakh, either Russian, or English languages. This described the ethical requirements of the institution and the researcher regarding the voluntary nature of participation, aim of the study, risks and benefits of participation in the research, and how the researcher intended to protect the researcher's identity during data collection and data storage.

The researcher used a number code for each audio and corresponding transcription during the analysis. Allocation of a code designated participants' transcript. Transcripts and code numbers with their corresponding participants' identities were retained in a separate password protected file on the researcher's laptop.

Chapter Four: Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results from interviews with six participants. Five of the interviews were with parents who had chosen to homeschool their children and one interview with a parent who had enrolled their child in an inclusive school. It should be noted that the parents who have chosen to homeschool, take their children to school intermittently for meeting with specialists or a teacher but they do not attend school on a full time basis. The interviews were conducted to understand the reasons that parents of children with ASD choose certain school settings. Several dominant themes emerged from the analysis. These were compiled into a table in order to answer the research questions. The results show that parents of children with ASD had a general dissatisfaction with the provision of learning supports in mainstream schools for inclusive education. Other findings show that parents' decisions are also influenced by other factors such as the lack of qualified specialists and low levels of awareness on the needs of children with ASD among other stakeholders such as students, parents of TD children and school administration. There appeared to be little differences between the views of parents who chose to homeschool and the parent who had enrolled their child in an inclusive school. The only difference was related to the satisfaction of peer communication and attitudes of administration.

The findings based on the responses from participants are organized according to the relevant parts of the ecological model. For example, responses from parents that related to the individual characteristics of their child were placed in the 'Individual' domain of the ecological model and those that related specifically to peers, tutors, and teachers are organized under the 'Microsystem' domain. All main themes and subthemes have been

organized into the table below (see Table 1). These will be presented respectively throughout this chapter.

Table 1. Findings organized under Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model

Individual	Microsystem	Mesosystem	Exosystem	Macrosystem
Characteristic of child	Parents	Teachers and parents’ relationship	Local polices	Attitudes of the culture
non-verbal	Role of educator	<i>Time</i>	Academic program	<i>Awareness</i>
unsociable	Personal life	<i>Management system</i>	Education right	Mass media
obedient	Stress level	<i>Misunderstanding</i>	<i>Management system</i>	<i>Awareness</i>
	Teachers	Parents and administration’s relationship	Community	
	<i>Special expertise</i>	<i>Awareness</i>	<i>Awareness</i>	
	<i>Awareness</i>	<i>Special expertise</i>	NGOs	
	<i>Readiness</i>	<i>Misunderstanding</i>	<i>Management system</i>	
	<i>Personal characteristic</i>		<i>Awareness</i>	
	Tutors			
	<i>Special expertise</i>			
	<i>Responsibilities</i>			
	Peers			
	<i>Awareness</i>			
	<i>Personal characteristic</i>			

4.2. The Individual

Each of the parents that were interviewed explained that the decision about school placement for their child’s education depended on their child’s individual characteristics. They mentioned examples such as of this like being nervous when the child was at school due to the child’s disorder, and a specific behaviours or needs of their child. For example,

one parent (P#6) reported, *“I completely agree with homeschooling, as we have a behavioural disorder. I think, in his case, since he has an intellectual disability. In any case, an individual program is better for him in terms of learning new material”*. Most parents understood that such characteristics were barriers for inclusion to some degree.

One participant said:

“Well, their main problem is socialization. They [the child] find it difficult to communicate with people. Then it leads to such strange behavioural form. My child is non-verbal. He does not speak. Some sounds have just gone, which is a barrier. He avoids society, loud noises, and crowded places. This is all barriers for us”. (P#5).

The results indicate that most parents had chosen to transfer to homeschooling for their child because they felt that regular school would be wasted learning time. One participant (P#1) said, *“Therefore, we felt that we were wasting time. We were not getting anything from school at all. It was undesirable to socialize and learn”*.

Four parents who chose homeschooling for their child explained that their children are capable of learning and achieving good results in their academic performance. One parent explained, *“People with ASD are obedient. My son is studying. He learns easily. He has behavioural problems; if you find an approach to him, then you can teach him everything”* (P#6). Similarly, another parent who enrolled her child in homeschooling claimed:

“Well, in general, he is a very calm and obedient child. Where you ask him to sit, he will sit there. That is why they did not have such problems with ... he is not violent. He does not climb and tear down the curtains” (P#4).

Only the one parent who had their child enrolled in an inclusive mainstream school mentioned (P#2) that she was satisfied with the quality of education at their children’s school, however, other participants said that they felt wary, and indicated that they felt

stressed when their child was at school, and decided to take them for homeschooling. Four out of six participants explained that their children were easily distracted and lost their interest to study because the teacher could not control several children at the same time.

One parent stated who enrolled her child in homeschooling:

“My child is calm. His classmates offended him; one might say, such situations made me transfer my children to homeschooling. Moreover, he did not understand the program properly. The reason was that he loses his attention usually because many students study with him. I like individual approaches at home” (P#1).

4.3. The Microsystem

4.3.1. Parents

The standard perspective among most participants (five) was that the idea of inclusive education is good, but they cannot entrust their child fully to school. Only one participant (P#2), who had enrolled her child to an inclusive class, expressed trust in the typical school setting. However, parents mentioned other challenges of homeschooling, such as lack of communication and insufficient quality of private parental life. While talking about the drawbacks of homeschooling (P#4) said, *“The negative reflection is that I cannot focus on my own life. I do not work. My life revolves only around him. He must be taught. I am completely a teacher for him in all subjects”*. This was a common theme among participants. However, some parents mentioned that with homeschooling they have more opportunities to work closely with teachers when their children are taught at home and felt that sometimes parents deliver more information than teachers to their children. One parent (P#5) agreed with this statement *“Our teacher came twice in a week for an hour to teach my child. At another time, I teach him”*. Parents believed they spend much with their children and take more responsibility for educating their children. Another participant (P#6) said, *“My friend and I opened a centre. We are trying to improve inclusive education in our own”*.

Two parents mentioned the impact of the child's behaviour on their own wellbeing in increasing their levels of stress. One parent (P#2) stated, "*He laid on the floor and cried. Then, after all, I was disappointed. I was ashamed*". Another parent (P#6) said "*Well, sometimes I am offended, then I'm unpleasant, somewhere I have to defend my own and my child's interests*".

4.3.2. Teachers

All participants agreed that they believe there is a lack of knowledge about ASD among teachers. Participant (P#2) whose child is in the inclusive class described the situation when her child entered school, "*First-time teacher was afraid of working with my child. She used to call me whenever my child did not behave well. Fortunately, she learned. Today, she knows how to act and does not disturb me often as before*". Another homeschooling participant revealed:

"Sometimes I did not know who to calm down. When my child had a seizure, the teacher started to panic. I always think if the teacher knew the characteristics of children with ASD and taught them well, the situation would be different. My child is a pretty good student if he is taught correctly. They had a minimal number of children in the class, but they still could not cope with them. There were a teacher and children with a different diagnosis. Sometimes when I came to school, I observed how my child was walking alone on the street. Probably, it was the main reason to take him from school and enroll in homeschooling" (P#1).

Five of those interviewed suggested that teachers at school will need to take courses to learn how to teach children with ASD in an inclusive environment. One participant (P#1) commented, "*The policy of inclusive education is accepted, it's certainly good, but the specialists haven't prepared*". Another explained:

"Firstly, I think, knowledge of physiology is significant for teachers. They must understand why the child is screaming, why he leads one way or another, why he can learn one material and does not learn another. He must understand these processes, what is happening in his brain" (P#6).

4.3.3. Tutors

When the participants were asked about the support of tutors in inclusive classes, some (three) commented on the lack of tutors at schools. One participant (P#1) answered, *“There was no tutor in the classroom of my son. They said there is one at school, but he is busy. Then it means that there was one tutor for the whole school”*. Moreover, parents expressed their concerns about tutors’ responsibilities and particular expertise. As one participant said:

“Tutors perform the duties of a nanny, in other words, they are not engaged in their education there. Therefore, children did not acquire any knowledge. Tutors just helped him to move from one class to another class. Well, in general, as a nanny, not a tutor, but a nanny” (P#1).

Another parent (P#4).also agreed with this idea *“Just walking after the child to make sure no one offends him... I think, most of all, a tutor is needed to explain what he did not understand and direct him...”*.

4.3.4. Peers

Participants whose children were enrolled in homeschooling reported that their children had a lack of peer communication. In contrast, the parent of the child who is enrolled in an inclusive class reported that the child has a good communication with classmates. One participant (P#4) said *“I always try enrolling my child in different clubs as he is in homeschooling; nevertheless, it is not enough. He needs friends and communication with peers”*. However, many participants revealed that their child did not have communication with others when they went physically to school. One participant (P#1) reported, *“He had no friends, but in the classroom, I don’t remember that someone had a friendship with someone”*. Some parents suggested holding meetings with TD children and their parents to increase awareness of children with SEN. Other participants

expressed the belief that the attitudes of TD children influenced the views of their parents.

For instance, one participant (P#3) said *“Well, not all parents of typically developing children understand this diagnosis and many are afraid...they think that it is infectious and try not to allow their children to communicate with such our children”*. Conversely, the participant (P#2) had positive feeling about her child’s relationship with classmates. She stated:

“All children like my son. They know that he has a difference. Come and sit down! Do you want to go to the blackboard? Would you like to go to the bathroom? Everyone is caring about him. They try to help him and want to sit with him” (P#2).

Another participant said:

“No, he did not have a relationship with children, because they did not have this autistic spectrum at all. He was just with himself. He was not offended. Sometimes they teased him that he was stupid. I have heard it from teachers. Well, there was no contact, games, communication, friendship and so on” (P#4).

4.4. The Mesosystem

4.4.1. Teacher Parents Relationships

Almost all of the participants (five) expressed similar feelings about their relationship with teachers. Their attitude was not dependent on their child’s type of education. However, one participant had another experience when here child had previously been enrolled in a special school.

“I always tried to be in close relation with the teachers of a child at school. We had a good relationship with tutors in kindergarten. However, the schoolteacher had another approach and distant from parents. She had her own private life. She could not find extra time for us to talk about progress. Then, we decided to sign up for homeschooling” (P#4).

One participant (P#5) claimed *“To be honest, I explained everything to the teacher. I say what is necessary for my child. She consults with me”*. Overall, most parents (five) reported that they communicate with teachers when they came to school for their children. For example, the participant with a child enrolled in an inclusive school (P#2) stated, *“I*

talk with teachers daily when I pick my child from school". Another homeschooling participant said (P#3) *"But quite often since she comes to our house three times a week, we communicate with her three times a week"*.

4.4.2. The Relationship between Parents and Administration

In response to the question: 'What was the attitude of administration to your child?' most (five) of those interviewed indicated that they did not have a close relationship with the administration of their local school. However, in general, according to the participants, the attitudes of administration was generally good. The participant whose child studied in an inclusive class expressed positive feelings about school administration and their close relationship. As she stated (P#2) *"We have a very good principal at our school. She understands about ASD. She always helps us. If there is a problem, the principal always immediately intervenes"*. One participant (P#5) reported, *"We do not communicate with the administration, because I do not go there. Well, once or twice in a year, I go there related to documents"*. Another parent (P#4) said, *"The administration has, in general, good attitudes... but what can they do? We are not going to complain about our teacher. What do we get? In general, a bad attitude, that's why we thought and switched to this option, homeschooling"*.

4.5. The Exosystem

4.5.1. Local policies

Participants' comments about current policy were the same irrespective of if their child was enrolled to homeschooling or a school setting. Participants suggested some improvements could be made from their perspectives. For instance, four mentioned that the duration of lessons is not effective for children with ASD. According to participants,

children with ASD need to have a break over time. One participant (P#4) commented, *“At home, we can have short breaks. If he wants, he rests and then we start to study again”*.

Moreover, participants noted that the program should be fitted individually as a very child has own characteristics and ability. However, the participant whose child study in inclusive setting agreed with schools recognizing the particular needs of children with ASD and stated that her child’s school had adapted.

“There is a special resource class, where psychologists and speech therapists work with a child. When the child is tired in the classroom, when he is not sitting, the child goes there to rest. Then he comes back to class and continues his lesson” (P#2).

Another participant (P#3) stated, *“Firstly, it seems to me that we need textbooks for such children, where it is more accessible in a language that will be understandable to them”*. When participants were asked if they faced any challenges when choosing either homeschooling or enrolling their child in a mainstream or correctional school, all of the participants revealed that they had no problem. One individual stated:

“We did not have problems. If I asked for homeschooling from the Psychological Medical and Pedagogical Commission (PMPC), they allowed us to study at home. If I asked for studying at school, they enrolled my child in school. There was never a problem” (P#6).

Another parent (P#3) also said, *“No, we didn’t have problems. We collected documents as usual. But there were no such difficulties, schools immediately accepted us”*.

Among six participants who responded to this, five reported that they did not experience any problem with enrolling in school. Only one participant (P#1) said that she had issues with collecting documents to be enrolled in school.

4.5.2. Community

A recurrent theme in the interviews was a sense amongst participants that people were not aware of ASD. All parents suggested organizing information sessions with

parents of TD children and teachers. However, they thought positively about the future of inclusive education. Parents wished to create inclusive education correctly. One participant said:

“Our society, let's say, is not ready, but I want to say that now the situation is better. I do not know about eight or nine years ago when it all started, when he was three or four years old, people wondered and did not accept. Now it is much easier” (P#6).

Another participant (P#3) agreed, *“The population should be provided more information that children with ASD are also ordinary children, that they should be treated on an equal way with other children”*. Overall, these data show that one of the main barriers of children with ASD is socialization. One participant (P#5) said, *“School is a barrier for us because there are unprepared teachers, children, and society”*.

4.5.3. Non-Government Organisations

Non-government organisations (NGO's) often play a key role in supporting families with additional needs, however, one participant noted that they visited NGOs and liked their approaches. She said:

“These are only two days, an hour only, when the teacher comes to teach my child, in the rest of the time we are at the centre from morning till night. I feel calm there. The child is fully occupied. We get everything that is necessary for us in this centre. This includes training and a speech therapist, psychologist, music therapy, logo rhythmic, and artists. They are involved in sports, there is football, and everything is captured” (P#4).

4.6. The Macrosystem

4.6.1. Attitudes of the Culture

According to the data, people are not ready to accept children with ASD. One participant said:

“Children generally keep the distance, this is not only about school, but it happens also on the street, because the child is strange, it is not clear how to communicate with him. It is necessary to explain them. So, every time, at least I often get some

comments in the buses, on the playgrounds, and in the hospitals, well, everywhere, everywhere ... This is normal, because, on the other hand, I understand them.” (P#6)

Another participant (P#3) said, *“We are faced with problems since our inclusive education in Kazakhstan is not at the level we would like. Well, in general, children with ASD need society there, communication with the children ... ”.*

4.6.2. Mass Media

Many parents suggested increasing awareness via media. For instance, one participant said:

“But, I think, yes, you need more information, since you have noticed more and more of these children every day, unfortunately, therefore, yes, you need to disseminate information. Because ... people, children with special needs have the same rights; they are the same members of society. This is such a big work, propaganda, information; I don't know, ideological, political” (P#6).

Another participant support this idea by saying:

“This must be done very carefully. Because I said at the beginning, the specialists are unprepared; tutors must be trained, teachers must be trained, even these typically developing children should be prepared to communicate with our children. Their parents, the administration, and the teachers should be... This is all, I think, to propagandize in the media. Provide the population with more information that they are also ordinary children, that they should be treated on an equal way with other children” (P#6).

4.7. Chapter Summary

Parents expressed positive attitudes towards the future of inclusive education in Kazakhstan. However, they have concerns about the current state of inclusive education at schools, which were considered a substantial influence on parents' choices and decisions

around school placement. The main differences between the parents who chose homeschooling and general school for their child related to the peer communication and attitudes of school administration. In the case of children in homeschooling, they experienced unacceptance from their classmates and school authorities at school.

Individual characteristic and the preparedness of school community were the valuable indicators for parents to choose particular type of their child's education. The data indicate that factors at the 'Individual' and 'microsystem' level prevail over other settings with regard to parents' decisions. It is important to note, nonetheless, that parents emphasised factors across the five levels of the ecological model. For example, parents indicated the importance of the acceptance of their children to society, the macrosystem. As one participant (P#5) said, "*The important thing is the readiness of society. They must be ready to accept our children*". The level of awareness among all stakeholders is required to be across all five systems, as they all have influence to some degree on the general state and well-being of a child and their parents.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1. Introduction

This section provides a discussion of the findings organized in relation to the theoretical framework. The data indicate the main barriers, which are related to the settings of child's ecological system. This chapter will synthesize the data in the results chapter with the research presented in the literature.

5.2. The Individual

The results highlight that one of the reasons that parents who participated in the present study choose an individual program and enroll in homeschooling was their child's diagnosis. Moreover, those parents whose children are in currently in homeschooling believed that sending their child to regular school was a waste of time. The main reason they gave were that their children are not provided with educational and social support. Only one parent who enrolled her child in inclusive class did not agree with this opinion. However, she also noticed the importance of paying attention to the individual characteristics of a child with ASD, and choosing a particular type of education for them. For example, this parent said that her child with ASD is in inclusive class because it is impossible for her child to study in regular class without individual support. More specifically, these results reveal that the child's characteristics, and thus their particular needs in relation to the provisions currently available in school, influenced their choice regarding their child's education.

As socialization is a crucial part of a child's development, parents frequently enroll their child with ASD in a school setting with the expectation that their children will socialize there. However, the findings here show that often children with ASD are not interested in communicating with peers. Consequently, they lack peer interaction and

opportunities to socialize, even if they are at school. The study by Simonoff et al. (2008) who interviewed $n=112$ parents of children with ASD, highlight that some children with ASD have high levels of social anxiety when interacting with others. Higher levels of anxiety of children with ASD in school can also result in behavioural difficulties and of challenges with friendships and learning.

Keen (2009) indicated that children with ASD showed low levels of social participation by analyzing previous findings in the literature. Furthermore, he highlighted that social communication is a valuable factor to acquire knowledge at school (Keen, 2009). As a result, such characteristics associated with children with ASD is a reason for parents to avoid regular schools for educating their children. However, the social anxiety of children with ASD might be improved if individual approaches will be provided for them.

5.2.1. Other System Level Interactions that Influence the Individual level

Keen (2009), explained that teachers were often not aware of ASD and hold the necessary qualification and knowledge for teaching in an inclusive class. For example, even in earlier research in the U.S. by Palmer et al., (2001) indicate that parental views are formulated through their interactions with the school. However, the findings (Palmer et al., 2001) show that one parent stated that it was questionable to enroll their child into mainstream school because of his specific characteristics. Similarly, in the study by Elkins et al., (2003) several parents out of $n=354$ parents of children with SEN in Australia, thought that their child's diagnosis causes extra difficulties for a child at a regular school. It can be assumed that all these views developed due to the insufficient expertise of educators to interact with children with ASD. However, to place this study in a clearer context, The Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE) (Commonwealth of Australia,

2006) was introduced after Elkins et al., (2003) conducted their study. The DSE, which outlines specific responsibilities for schools and teachers in supporting children with SEN, so they will not be in breach of anti-discrimination legislation. Therefore, it is important to consider the changes in provisions for children with SEN that may have occurred after this policy was passed in 2005. Thus, it is important to balance understand the parent's beliefs about the needs of their child, and the school's ability to offer a quality education with the appropriate conditions to meet the child's needs. According to the findings of the present study, four out of all six parents indicated that they believe in their children's ability and capacity to study on the same level as other children, and conversely, only two indicated that their child's diagnosis is a barrier in receiving a quality education.

Correlating with the current findings, Bussanich et al. (2017) found that the majority of out of $n=175$ parents of children with ASD in the U.S. believed that their children with ASD were capable of being taught and needed to require individual programs and approaches according to their interest and opportunities. Similarly, Bush et al. (2017) explained that parents of children with ASD expected the same results from their children as other children at school. The studies by Bussanich et al. (2017) and Bush et al. (2017) have results later than the previously mentioned studies (Keen, 2009; Palmet et al., 2001; Elkins et al., 2003). It means that due to the latest improvements in education, individual characteristics of children with ASD might not be as much of a barrier in contexts where appropriate educational supports are available to meet the learning needs of children with ASD. Furthermore, even though research indicates that some children with ASD cannot control their mood and behaviour (Robinson et al., 2009), the current results highlight that this is not always the case and children with ASD are often obedient and well behaved. Overall, based on the recent result of the studies by Bussanich et al. (2017) and Bush et al., parents of children with ASD might think that their children's characteristics are a barrier to

learning in mainstream school settings. However, as previous research and the findings of the present study suggest, it may be more to do with factors such as provision of appropriate supports in schools. These factors will be discussed below in the ‘microsystem’.

5.3. The Microsystem

5.3.1. Parents

The participants’ responses indicate that mothers are very active in the upbringing and education of their children more so than fathers. All of the fathers declined to take part in the interview by explaining their incompetency to answer questions about their child’s education. In the study “Concerns of parents and teachers of children with ASD in elementary school” in the U.S. where the researchers interviewed $n=39$ parents, the same tendency was apparent (Azad & Mandell, 2016). The reason might be that mothers spent much time with their children than parents because fathers are usually at work.

The current findings show that all participants spend an inordinate amount of time with their children with ASD. However, a parent whose child was enrolled in an inclusive class had more free time than the other five parents. The child goes to inclusive class for half a day each day when children in homeschooling spend the whole day at home with parents. Bussanich et al. (2017) explained that when parents establish strong relations with their children, their child’s behaviour is stable and obedient. This study included $n=175$ parents of children with ASD. However, it might be argued that being in homeschooling does not always mean a closer and stronger relationship between parent and their child than when a child goes to school. Conversely, the parents of children who are homeschooled will have limited opportunity to dedicate time to their own interests. All these factors influence children’s life as parents are in their close setting.

5.3.2. *Teachers and Tutors*

The vital role of teachers and tutors has already been highlighted in the literature, which was supported by participants' responses in the present study. All participants said that teachers and tutors play an important role in a child's education. The parents whose children were enrolled in homeschooling explained that they decided to educate their children at home because of two reasons. Firstly, they felt that teachers are not qualified to work in inclusive classes. Secondly, they raised the issue with the lack of tutors at schools.

Homeschooling parents expressed how they were worried about their child when they were at school. They doubted the teacher's ability to keep control of all the children in a class. Moreover, their main concern were that their children just were physically present at school, and were not actually involved in genuine learning. A lack of tutors exacerbates the situation. However, parents expressed positive hopes for the future of inclusive education. Hamilton and Wilkinson (2016) described the same issue in their research in New Zealand where parents expressed positive feelings about the concept of inclusive education in the sense that their children would be in a safe place. It can be supposed that parents feel that their children are in a safe environment when they are in control at home. They preferred homeschooling, as they could work closer with the teacher. Moreover, they felt that the teacher could concentrate more on their child's particular academic needs.

Even though all parents raised several concerns related to teachers' qualifications, they felt it was important to be ready to share their experience and work collaboratively with the teacher. For example, the parent whose child was enrolled in an inclusive class pointed out that initially, she had assist educators to teach her child. Similarly, parents who chose homeschooling for their children also note that they have the opportunity to teach their children in collaboration with teachers. Overall, all parents noted the important role of teachers and were ready to help them. Abbasi (2017) interviewed $n=5$ parents of children

with ASD in the U.S. and also noted teachers' crucial role in the creation of inclusive classes. Parents of children with ASD in the present study believe in the improvements of teachers' awareness about ASD.

5.3.3. Peers

All participants in the present study indicated that they felt that interaction with peers is one of the main reasons for creating inclusive education. According to the parent whose child studies in an inclusive class at school, all children in the class have a good attitude towards their child. However, the homeschooling parents thought that their children need socialization because their children lack the socialization with peers at home. However, these parents highlight that their children did not have peer interaction when they were at school. According to the parents' responses, they believe it is important for children to learn to develop relationships with peers, as they have to be prepared for future life. Ary (2017) interviewed $n=10$ parents of children with ASD in the U.S., whose children were enrolled in an inclusive school. The findings of this study note that communication with peers increases the emotional state of children with ASD (Ary, 2017). All parents in the present study also pointed out the importance of peer communication. However, the homeschooling parents think that one of the main barriers for their children at school is the negative attitude of other children. It was one of the reasons for choosing to transfer their child to homeschooling for some parents. Samadi and Mckonkey (2018) also reported in their research in Iran that parents preferred to choose homeschooling because of the non-acceptance of their child by other children at school. Similar to the Kazakhstani context, this may be because the concept of inclusive education is new for Iranian schools (Samadi and Mckonkey, 2018). The current results also revealed that the negative attitudes of TD children' towards children with ASD might be due to a lack of awareness about the

diagnosis. For instance, the parent whose child goes an inclusive class thinks that her child has a high level of peer communication because all children in her child's class had the opportunity to learn about ASD as the school and teacher explained it to them.

5.3.4. Other System Level Interactions that Influence the Microsystem

It is clear from the findings that parents often experience considerable stress and anxiety for their children with ASD. However, parents whose child was enrolled in homeschooling experience less awareness about their child because they spend most time together at home. Australian parents also indicated that it is emotionally difficult for them that their children with ASD have challenges more than other children (Elkins et al., 2003). Hartley (2017) interviewed $n=178$ parents of children with ASD and $n=174$ parents of TD children in the U.S. and found out that the first of a group of parents face more pressure than the second. The findings of the present study reveal that this type of stress depends on the readiness of society to accept children with ASD. For instance, the parent whose child was enrolled to an inclusive class said that she felt more stress initially when school community was not ready to accept a child with ASD. At present, she feels more comfortable because educators have now learnt to teach her child. In contrast, the parents whose children were homeschooled said that they had a lack of confidence in schools. Consequently, they preferred homeschooling for their children to more closely control the learning process at home.

All respondents in the present study noted the importance of explaining to a child's classmates about the diagnosis. Moreover, they believe that parents of TD children should be also involved in this process. Parents have a crucial influence on children's views as it is their close setting in the microsystem and they have the opportunity to influence a child's behaviours and thinking. Children's perspective are often reflective of parental

views (Blažević, 2016). That is why many parents pointed out the importance of working with parents of TD children as well as with other stakeholders. Khamidulina (2018) interviewed $n=3$ parents of TD children in Kazakhstan and she indicated they are happy to welcome children with SEN at schools (Khamidulina, 2018). These findings highlight the importance of raising awareness, particularly within those in a child's microsystem, as this factor as well as others such as socialization and teacher training influence parents' decision-making processes concerning school placement for their children. It was clear from the present findings that even though peer communication was an important factor for parents, they chose homeschooling, as they could not be certain that their children will have peer interaction if they go to a school setting or if that interaction would be positive. The parent, whose child goes to inclusive class, expressed positive feeling about the level of peer communication in her child's life.

To conclude, the data suggest that parents of children with ASD experience high levels of stress, particularly those who homeschool. They indicate that the lack of free time affects their overall well-being. However, this stress could be alleviated should the appropriate supports and conditions be available in school. The awareness of society and local policies on the level of 'exosystem' might cause such circumstance at school. Overall, the attitudes of stakeholders in microsystem depends on the understanding in 'exosystem', which also affect the level of communication between all these stakeholders (parents, teachers, and peers). These factors will be discussed below in the 'mesosystem'.

5.4. The Mesosystem

5.4.1. Teachers and Parents' Relationship

The present findings confirm that the quality of teachers and parents' relationships has an influence on parents' decisions concerning their child's education. A similar

conclusion was reached by Bush et.al. (2017) in the U.S. According to the findings of Bush et al., teachers and parents are the main people with whom children with ASD spend most of their time with, and as a result, their influence in a child's life are strong.

All parents in the current research expressed a willingness to be in close relationship with teachers. Chakravarty (2017) indicate similar views where findings showed that parents of children with ASD wanted to be heard and collaborated with school administration and teachers. The reason might be that parents know better their children's individual needs. Consequently, this knowledge is useful for teachers in their practice. For instance, Falkmer et al. (2015) reported that interaction between teachers and the child's family should be close to improve the adaptation period of the child at school. However, according to homeschooling parents in the present study, they decided to homeschool because they felt teachers at ordinary schools usually do not have time to communicate with parents. They felt that with homeschooling, they have time to communicate with teachers and observe the learning process. Participants explained that sometimes in homeschooling teachers obtain more advice from parents than vice versa. In most cases, they substitute teachers and teach their children themselves. They explained that they communicate with their child's teachers each time the teacher comes to their home. In contrast, the parent whose child was enrolled in the inclusive class said their relationship with their child's teacher is not frequent as it was at the beginning. The reason may be that as her confidence the teacher has improved; she is not as worried about the process of teaching as she was initially.

All parents pointed out the importance of their interaction with teachers. The homeschooling parents communicate with the teacher regularly when they make their home visits and feel that the teachers have more opportunity to focus on their child than they would if they were in a classroom.

5.4.2. Parents and Administration's Relationship

The homeschooling parents explained that they did not have close contact with school administration, only the parent whose child attends an inclusive class described a healthy and frequent relationship with the school administration. Stoner et al. (2005) also reported that the communication between parents and school community is important. However, parents often know only what their child tells them. Without some efforts to develop effective lines of communication between school administration and parents, relate misunderstandings can arise between school and parents (Stoner et al., 2005). These results support the development of good management systems between parents and school administration.

The present findings have highlighted the importance of a school principal's competency and how their knowledge concerning ASD influences parental attitudes towards school. The main difference in responses between parents who enrolled their children in inclusive class and homeschooling parents were the principal's attitudes. This result ties in well with previous studies. For example, Markova and Sultanaliyeva (2013) studied case study of particular NGO in Kazakhstan. According to the result, school administrations often do not have the desire to accept children with SEN. As a result, it is a barrier for creating inclusive education (Markova & Sultanaliyeva, 2013). A lack of awareness about ASD among school principals might lead to their unwillingness to accept children with in their school.

The findings of the present study indicate the level of interaction between parents and school administration does have influence on parental attitudes towards their child's educational placement, and parents noted that school principals play significant role in creation inclusive education.

5.4.3. Other System Level Interactions that Influence the Mesosystem

The data revealed that the parents in the present study respect teachers' work and the challenges involved with teaching children with different backgrounds and needs. These findings are directly in line with previous results in the literature (Palmer et al., 2001). Parents can understand a teacher's situation and the challenges involved with teaching many children with different characteristics in general class in the U.S. (Palmer et al., 2001). The reason might be that parents of children with ASD are emphatic to people (Hartley et al., 2017). In the present study parents chose homeschooling because they were uncertain about teachers' expertise in teaching children with ASD in a whole class context, they felt more confidence in the teacher when they could control the process of teaching at home.

The findings pointed out that improvement of local policy and awareness about ASD in society might develop the relationship between parents and school communities. These factors will be discussed below in the 'exosystem'.

5.5. The Exosystem

5.5.1. Local policies

The results indicate that all parents of children with ASD support the policy of inclusive education. Several other research findings also support these results (Majoko, 2017; Su et al., 2018). These findings show that parents of children with ASD do want their children to study with other children in one school environment. For example, in the study "Parental perspectives on inclusion: Effects of autism and down syndrome" an American parent of a child with SEN thought that an inclusive environment was of benefit to their child, and current focus on the topic of special education only delayed the

improvement of inclusive education policy (Kasari et al., 1999). However, this study was conducted more than twenty years ago and policies and practices would have changed considerable since that time.

According to parents in the present study, they feel that currently the management of inclusive policy is very weak. Parents explained that even as they believed in their children's ability to learn in school, there was an inappropriate educational program currently in place. The results line with other findings. Australian parents of children with SEN considered that state schools focus on academic knowledge rather than life skills, which influence parental negative feeling about inclusion (Elkins et al., 2003). It might be supposed at that time educational specialists did not necessarily have expertise on the topic of ASD.

The present findings show the importance of focusing on the challenges already discussed in this chapter to develop inclusive education policy in Kazakhstan further. All parents expressed their support about the development of inclusive education in schools. Moreover, they explained that they could already see the progress and development of inclusive culture in Kazakhstan. However, at present, homeschooling parents are not satisfied with the level provision and supports available for their children in schools.

5.5.2. Community

These results go beyond previous reports, showing that in general, there is a low awareness of ASD in Kazakhstan. Similarly, the study by Khamidulina (2018) showed that society does not understand the advantages of inclusive education. Consequently, the process of inclusion is slow because society is reluctant to accept children with ASD fully. It is also one of the reason of parental decision to choose homeschooling for their children with ASD. A lack of information among society more broadly is a barrier to developing

inclusive policy, culture and practices at schools (An et al., 2018). These external mechanisms still have some influence on the decision-making processes of parents. The main benefits of inclusion are social communication, tolerance of students, and freedom (Elkins et al., 2003).

5.5.3. Non-Government Organisations

According to the present findings, one of the homeschooling parents is a member of a local NGO in one of the cities in Kazakhstan. The NGO provides psychological support for children with ASD and their parents. The level of psychological support is one of the important factors for parents. A large number of health care doctors in Kazakhstan do not have official in-service training on psychological health for the last five years (World Health Organization, 2011). This data demonstrates that little is known about the psychological support at school.

5.5.4. Other System Level Interactions that Influence the Exosystem

The data demonstrate that the community's lack of awareness about ASD leads to barriers for children being accepted in to quality education. All parents in the present study suggested raising awareness about ASD in the community to overcome such barriers. The level of awareness affects the attitude of child's stakeholders on the level of 'microsystem'. Moreover, the effectiveness of policy implementation also influences the attitude of school communities and their relationship with parents. For example, if teachers have fewer administrative responsibilities at school, they will have more time to increase their expertise in inclusive education. It might be supposed if appropriate condition are provided for the school community, the attitudes of wider society too would be influenced and change over time. However, incorrect information and different stigmas might discourage

the process of policy implementation and the community's awareness about ASD. These factors will be discussed below in the 'macrosystem'.

5.6. The Macrosystem

5.6.1. Attitudes of the Culture

The analysis found evidence of the stigma associated with children diagnosed with ASD. Parents in the present study revealed that sometimes it is challenging to be in a social place with their child because of people's attitudes. They explain that people do not understand the diagnosis and try to avoid contact with their children.

Phillips (2009) studied the rights of people with disabilities in the context of the USSR. The results showed that in most cases, people do not know how to act with children with disabilities. For example, one group of people say sorry for children with ASD, another group of people tries to avoid communication (Phillips, 2009). All these attitudes can cause misunderstanding in society and new challenges for a child with ASD.

5.6.2. Mass Media

Taken together, these findings show that there is a connection between awareness about ASD among society and the improvement of inclusive education. All parents recommended delivering the message of tolerance towards all people at the country level. Creating inclusive cultures and producing inclusive practices are about setting values of inclusion, designing education for all, and providing support for people (Booth, & Ainscow, 2002). Overall, the data suggested spreading information through the media.

5.6.3. Other System Level Interactions that Influence the Macrosystem

It might be supposed that five out of six parents chose homeschooling for their children to protect them from stigma. After interviewing school principals, educators, professionals, and parents of children with ASD, Makoelle (2020) also reported in his study, the concept of inclusive education is not clear for people in Kazakhstan. This has been attributed to attitudes that previously prevailed when Kazakhstan was under Soviet governance (Makoelle, 2020).

Overall, the findings show that the most extensive system, which is ‘macrosystem’, influences the following little settings: exo, meso, micro, and individual systems. For example, culture, values, and given information in the media form awareness among the society on the level of ‘exosystem’. It leads to the understanding and attitudes of teachers, school principals, and peers of a child with ASD towards inclusive education on the level of ‘microsystem’, which also has an influence on their relationship on the level of ‘mesosystem’.

5.7. Chapter Summary

In conclusion, the findings of the present study show that all levels within the ecological system have an impact on a child’s growth and education. These results also highlight the interconnected nature of the ecological model on the reasons that parents of children with ASD choose certain school placements for their child. However, the level that appears to have the greatest impact on parent’s decision-making processes is that within the micro and meso systems. The results highlight that this is where the key parts of development in inclusive education are currently at their weakest. Even as parents raising the importance of socialization and interaction with peers, many parents still choose to homeschool because current resources are not in place as yet with most schools. However,

with a supportive and knowledgeable teacher, improved levels of awareness from other parents and children, supportive school leadership, and the necessary resources, parents will be more confident the sending their children with ASD into inclusive schools.

Chapter Six: Recommendations and Conclusion

The present research has focused on the experiences of parents of children with ASD, and how they shape their decisions on school enrolment. In line with previous research (Kocayörük, 2016), parental opinions are important for the development of inclusive education. The findings show that some parents in Kazakhstan are eager to educate their children with ASD in inclusive classes, and are supportive of inclusive policy. They believe that the situation in Kazakhstan through educational reforms has already improved to some degree; however, the capacity of many schools does not as yet provide a sufficient level of support (An et al., 2018). The interviews conducted with parents as part of the present research indicate current weaknesses, and their recommendations are focused on ways to improve the development of inclusive education in the Kazakhstani context, especially for children with ASD. Investigating this issue in Kazakhstan makes the research more significant for stakeholders because few studies have been conducted in this context.

Various factors shape a child's development; and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was chosen as the framework for the research (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). This framework has allowed the researcher to analyze the data through the lens of the different levels of influence, placing the child and their own individual characteristics at the centre. The findings of the present study mostly align with other research discussed earlier in the literature review. The majority of these studies underlined the importance of the parents' role in a child's growth and development (Blažević, 2016). The results of the current study support previous findings as well as providing a unique understanding into the lives of parents of children with ASD in Kazakhstan.

The results of the present study reveal that many parents of children with ASD choose homeschooling over mainstream 'inclusive' classes or correctional schools, as they

are not satisfied with the current level of supports and resources at schools. The present research determines the main factors that influence parental satisfaction. All five ecological systems were shown to shape parental beliefs as to the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality education for their child with ASD. However, the study identified some major reasons that influenced parental choices.

A child's characteristics and teacher competency have a significant impact on parental attitudes and perspectives. Every participant expressed the importance of interactions and influences between individual and micro level systems in the ecological model. In most cases, a child's diagnosis was the basis for parental choice. For example, a parent who chose homeschooling for her child indicated that her child with ASD loses attention quickly, which caused challenges for teachers at school. Furthermore, teachers found it challenging to control all children's attention in an inclusive class, because they do not have enough experience, knowledge, and skills in the topic of ASD. As a result, they are afraid of taking responsibility for children with ASD and teaching them.

The study concludes that socialization (engagement with peers) and school leadership support are significant factors for parents, because these were dominant themes in both the parents who choose homeschooling and the parent who enrolled their child in an inclusive classroom. The implication of these findings demonstrates that socialization and peer communication are vital social supports for children with ASD enrolled in schools. Thus when this is absent within the school context, parents feel that their child is better off being homeschooled as at least their academic needs can be attended to. The findings also demonstrate a strong influence of leadership through the attitudes of principals toward inclusive education. The parent who chose inclusive schooling underlined the positive attitude of their principal at school. Conversely, the homeschooling parents indicated that they felt that a lack of support from leadership and administration

influenced their decision to homeschool. These findings are important for those involved in policy development, resourcing and school management in strengthening these areas of weakness in order to progress the development of inclusive education in Kazakhstan.

Despite these findings, the researcher recognizes some limitations of the present study. Due to a small sample size, the findings are not generalizable. Analyzing only six parental perspectives of the study is not representative of the full picture for all Kazakhstani cases. To put it another way, generalizing the situation for the whole country is complicated just relying on six stakeholders' views. Another limitation is the participants (sample) were from one city in Kazakhstan. Furthermore, it should be recognized that the research was conducted in a major city with better facilities than other cities and rural areas. Therefore, the findings in other cities or rural locations might indicate even lower levels of support than the present study. Consequently, other factors might influence the decisions of parents in other cities.

Based on the findings, the first recommendation is for future researchers to investigate the current topic by using a quantitative research design and method. This will enable researchers to collect data that can be generalized. The findings of present study will serve as a framework for the development of a survey instrument and should be sufficient for further investigation to examine the perspectives of the broader population. Secondly, the researcher recommends including an additional dimension that investigates the level of psychological support for parents and their children. The present study and previous research (Pisula & Porebowicz-Dorsmann, 2017) indicate that the challenges faced by parents in supporting their children with ASD at home or in schooling are in some cases overwhelming. This can result in the poor physical and/or psychological wellbeing of parents, which in turn influences upon the well-being of their children. It was not the purpose of the present study to investigate this topic; however, this finding emerged from

the data. A representative of the Majilis of the Parliament who reported that it is necessary to organize psychological support for parents who have children with ASD (Sabekov, 2016) has previously raised this topic. This topic should be included in future researches.

In conclusion, the main findings demonstrate that there is some basis for improving levels of support within the educational system. Based on these findings, the study highlights the importance of focusing on child's 'microsystem' and 'mesosystem' to create an inclusive environment at schools. These data have captured the hopes and dreams of parents for a more supportive and inclusive educational system in the future, with greater opportunities for their children to participate in learning with their peers. Importantly, every parent in the present study has observed progress in the improvement of an inclusive environment, in society and some school settings. The findings demonstrate just how important a positive and supportive school community is to the future development of inclusive education in Kazakhstan.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Location _____ Date/time _____ Participant
Code _____

Hello! My name is Aizhan. I would like to interview you for my research. The aim of the study is analyzing parental choices of enrolling their children with ASD in a mainstream school, correctional school or homeschooling. The collected data will be used for scientific purposes (thesis dissertation, presentation, and conferences).

You are invited to be one of the six participants of the research. Your participation will be a contribution to the development of inclusive education. You participate on a volunteer basis. You can reject to be a part of the research at any time. If you feel uncomfortable, you are free to stop the interview or reject to answer some questions. Your name will not be recorded. You can identify the educational setting where your child studies if you would like. The interview takes 20-30 minutes of your time.

You were sent a consent form (Kazakh, Russian or English languages) and introductory letter before the interview. I have two copies of the consent form in each language; you can choose one to sign that confirm your agreement for the interview. Then we can start the interview, and you can keep one form of the consent form. If you do not have questions, may we start?

Interview questions

1. Can you tell me please what town or city in Kazakhstan you are from?

2. What is the age of your child?

3. Is your child a girl or a boy?

4. Where does he/she study? Where is your child currently enrolled for school?

Has your child be enrolled previously in another school?

5. What are some of the factors that influenced your decision to place your child in their current school/homeschool setting?

6. Do you feel satisfied with the level of support you child receives in school/setting?

7. Do you feel comfortable placing your child in a mainstream school? If yes, why? If not, why not? Have there been certain challenges have you experienced with enrolling your child in a mainstream school?

8. What was the attitude of other children, teachers, and administration to your child?

9. Can you describe for me the attitude of other children, teachers, and administration towards your child?

10. How often do you communicate with your child's teacher?
11. Do you think parents of children with ASD face educational challenges that others of typically developing children do not? If so, what pressures or stress does this place on family life?
12. What other factors do you believe are barriers or enablers for you child accessing a quality education?
13. How do you understand inclusive education? What is your personal definition of "inclusive education settings"? What do you think about inclusive education in Kazakhstan?
14. Do you have some suggestions on how to establish and organize inclusive schools?

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of the study: Perspective from Parents of ASD Children about Inclusive Education

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in a **research study** on investigating parental experiences regarding the choices you make about your child's education. This research aims to better understand the reasons that parents of children with ASD (ASD spectrum disorder) choose to educate their children in mainstream schools, correctional schools, or homeschooling environments in Kazakhstan. The research requires you to participate in an interview with the researcher and you will be asked to answer several questions about your experiences that relate to the aim and purpose of the research. As part of the research process, the interview will be audiotaped for transcription purposes. At the end of the interview process, you will be able to listen to your audio and I will email you the transcription to ensure I have captured the true meaning of your words.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take approximately 20-30 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The study is associated with minimal risk research because participants are adults and informed consent is given prior to data collection. However, a few risks might be considered that are potentially related to the research. The research is considered to be a focus on individual experience and thoughts which might be sensitive to share with others. To avoid revealing any personal information about what is shared by the participant, each participant will be named by the number coding for storage the data to protect the confidential nature of the information they disclose in the interview.

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are to determine suitable approaches and ways to create an inclusive education at Kazakhstani schools by taking into account parents' views of children.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your **participation is voluntary** and you have the **right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate.** You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Questions: If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work (name: Michelle Irene Somerton, email address: michelle.somerton@nu.edu.kz and phone number: + 7 7088 010601).

Independent Contact: If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to at gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;

- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I consent to having my interview recorded

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

According to the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan an individual under the age of 18 is considered a child. Any participant falling into that category should be given the Parental Consent Form and have it signed by at least one of his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫ КЕЛІСІМІНІҢ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ ФОРМАСЫ

Зерттеу жұмысының тақырыбы: Аутист балалардың ата-аналарның инклюзивті білім беру жүйесіне көз-қарасы

СИПАТТАМА: Сізді балаңыздың білім алуға байланысты жасаған таңдауыңызға қатысты ата-ана тәжірибесін білу үшін өткізіліп жатқан зерттеуге қатысуға шақырамыз. Бұл зерттеу ата-аналардың балаларын Қазақстандағы жалпы білім беретін мектептерде, коррекционды мектепте немесе үйде оқытуды таңдаған себептерін жақсы түсінуге бағытталған. Зерттеу сізден зерттеушімен сұхбатқа қатысуды талап етеді және сізден зерттеудің мақсаты мен мақсатына қатысты сіздің тәжірибеңіз туралы бірнеше сұрақтарға жауап беру сұралады. Зерттеу процесінің бөлігі ретінде сұхбат транскрипциялау мақсатында аудиоға жазылады. Сұхбат процесінің соңында сіз өзіңіздің аудиоңызды тыңдай аласыз және сіздердің сөздеріңіздің шын мағынасын түсініп алғанымды растау үшін транскрипцияны электрондық пошта арқылы жіберемін.

ӨТКІЗІЛЕТІН УАҚЫТЫ: Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен 20-30 минут уақытыңызды алады.

ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫНА ҚАТЫСУДЫҢ ҚАУІПТЕРІ МЕН АРТЫҚШЫЛЫҚТАРЫ:

Зерттеу тәуекелдерді минималды зерттеумен байланысты, өйткені қатысушылар ересектер болып табылады және мәліметтерді жинау басталғанға дейін ақпараттандырылған келісім беріледі. Алайда зерттеумен байланысты бірнеше қауіптер қарастырылуы мүмкін. Зерттеу басқалармен тақырыбы бөлісуге сезімтал болуы мүмкін жеке тәжірибе мен ойларға бағытталған деп саналады. Әрбір қатысушы сұхбат барысында ашқан ақпараттың құпия сипатын сақтау үшін мәліметтерді кодтау арқылы сақтайды.

Осы зерттеудің нәтижелері бойынша күтілетін артықшылықтар ата-аналардың балалардың көзқарастарын ескере отырып, қазақстандық мектептерде инклюзивті білім берудің қолайлы тәсілдері мен тәсілдерін анықтауға көмектеседі.

ҚАТЫСУШЫ ҚҰҚЫҚТАРЫ: Егер Сіз берілген формамен танысып, зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға шешім қабылдасаңыз, Сіздің қатысуыңыз **ерікті** түрде екенін хабарлаймыз. Сонымен қатар, **қалаған уақытта айыппұл төлемей және сіздің әлеуметтік жеңілдіктеріңізге еш кесірін тигізбей зерттеу жұмысына қатысу туралы келісіміңізді кері қайтаруға немесе тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Зерттеу жұмысына мүлдем қатыспауыңызға да толық құқығыңыз бар.** Сондай-ақ, қандай да бір сұрақтарға жауап бермеуіңізге де әбден болады. Бұл зерттеу жұмысының нәтижелері академиялық немесе кәсіби мақсаттарда баспаға ұсынылуы немесе шығарылуы мүмкін.

БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТЫ:

Сұрақтарыңыз: Егер жүргізіліп отырған зерттеу жұмысының процесі, қауіпі мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрағыңыз немесе шағымыңыз болса, келесі байланыс құралдары арқылы зерттеушінің жетекшісімен хабарласуыңызға болады: (аты: Мишель Ирен Сомертон, электрондық поштасы: michelle.somerton@nu.edu.kz және телефоны: + 7 7088 010601).

ДЕРБЕС БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТТАРЫ: Егер берілген зерттеу жұмысының жүргізілуімен қанағаттанбасаңыз немесе сұрақтарыңызбен шағымдарыңыз болса, Назарбаев Университеті Жоғары Білім беру мектебінің Зерттеу көрсетілген байланыс құралдары арқылы хабарласуыңызға болады: gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz.

Зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға келісіміңізді берсеңіз, берілген формаға қол қоюыңызды сұраймыз.

- Мен берілген формамен мұқият таныстым;
- Маған зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты мен оның процедурасы жайында толық ақпарат берілді;
- Жинақталған ақпарат пен құпия мәліметтерге тек зерттеушінің өзіне қолжетімді және мәлім болатынын толық түсінемін;
- Мен кез – келген уақытта ешқандай түсініктеме сіз зерттеу жұмысына қатысудан бас тартуыма болатынын түсінемін;
- Мен жоғарыда аталып өткен ақпаратты саналы түрде қабылдап, осы зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға өзкелісімімді беремін.

Қолы: _____

Күні: _____

Мен сұхбатымның жазылуына келісемін

Қолы: _____

Күні: _____

Осы қол қойылған және бекітілген келісім бланкінің қосымша көшірмесі сізде сақталады.

Қазақстан Республикасының заңы бойынша 18 жасқа толмаған адам бала болып саналады. Осы санатқа кіретін кез-келген қатысушыға ата-анасының келісім нысаны және оған кемінде бір ата-анасы (лары) немесе қамқоршысы (лары) қол қою керек.

ФОРМА ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ

Тема исследования: Отношения родителей детей с аутизмом к инклюзивному образованию

ОПИСАНИЕ: Вам предлагается принять участие в исследовании, по изучению опыта родителей в отношении выбора способа образования ребенка. Это исследование направлено на то, чтобы лучше понять причины, по которым родители детей с РАС (расстройства аутистического спектра) решили обучать своих детей в обычных школах, коррекционных школах или в среде домашнего обучения в Казахстане. Исследование требует, чтобы Вы приняли участие в интервью с исследователем Вам будет предложено ответить на несколько вопросов о Вашем опыте, касающихся целей и задач исследования. Как часть исследовательского процесса, интервью будет записано на аудиозапись для целей транскрипции. В конце процесса собеседования Вы сможете прослушать аудио, я вышлю вам по электронной почте транскрипцию, чтобы убедиться, что я уловила истинный смысл Ваших слов.

ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ: Ваше участие потребует около 20-30 минут.

РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА: Исследование связано с минимальными рисками, поскольку участники являются взрослыми и форма информационного согласия подписывается до сбора данных. Однако можно рассмотреть несколько рисков, которые могут быть связаны с исследованием. Считается, что исследование сосредоточено на личном опыте и мнении, что может быть деликатной темой для участника. Во избежание раскрытия какой-либо личной информации каждому участнику будет присвоено цифровое кодирование для хранения данных и для защиты конфиденциального характера информации, которую они раскрывают в ходе интервью.

Преимущества, которые можно разумно ожидать от этого исследования, заключаются в определении подходящих подходов и способов создания инклюзивного образования в казахстанских школах с учетом мнения родителей о детях.

ПРАВА УЧАСТНИКОВ: Если Вы прочитали данную форму и решили принять участие в данном исследовании, Вы должны понимать, что Ваше участие является **добровольным** и что у Вас есть право **отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время без штрафных санкций. В качестве альтернативы можно не участвовать в исследовании.** Также Вы имеете право не отвечать на какие-либо вопросы. Результаты данного исследования могут быть представлены или опубликованы в научных или профессиональных целях.

КОНТАКТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ:

Вопросы: Если у Вас есть вопросы, замечания или жалобы по поводу данного исследования, процедуры его проведения, рисков и преимуществ, Вы можете связаться с руководителем исследования, используя следующие данные: (имя: Мишель Ирен Сомертон, адрес электронной почты: michelle.somerton@nu.edu.kz и номер телефона: + 7 7088 010601).

Независимые контакты: Если Вы не удовлетворены проведением данного исследования, если у Вас возникли какие-либо проблемы, жалобы или вопросы, Вы

можете связаться с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета, отправив письмо на электронный адрес gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz.

Пожалуйста, подпишите данную форму, если Вы согласны участвовать в исследовании.

- Я внимательно изучил представленную информацию;
- Мне предоставили полную информацию о целях и процедуре исследования;
- Я понимаю, как будут использованы собранные данные, и что доступ к любой конфиденциальной информации будет иметь только исследователь;
- Я понимаю, что вправе в любой момент отказаться от участия в данном исследовании без объяснения причин;
- С полным осознанием всего вышеизложенного я согласен принять участие в исследовании по собственной воле.

Подпись: _____

Дата: _____

Я согласен на запись моего интервью

Подпись: _____

Дата: _____

Вам необходимо сохранить дополнительную копию этой подписанной и датированной формы согласия.

Согласно законодательству Республики Казахстан физическое лицо в возрасте до 18 лет считается ребенком. Любому участнику, попадающему в эту категорию, должна быть предоставлена форма согласия родителей и подписана по крайней мере одним из его / ее родителей или опекунов.