

Family of a child with autism spectrum disorders: analysis of inclusive potential

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Abstract

Introduction. Working with the family of a disabled child in the context of its support combines special education, education, family psychology, and sociology. This paper is based on the analysis of measurable parameters of parental effectiveness in families raising children with autism spectrum disorders as a result of testing the mechanisms for assessing and studying inclusive potential. **Methods.** The study included 160 families raising children with autism spectrum disorders. The parameters of family functionality were groups of competencies, and the indication was measuring the degree of parental inclusiveness expertise. The study used the Self-Assessment of Parental Inclusiveness and the Expert Assessment of Inclusive Potential questionnaires developed by the authors. The results of the analysis were indicators of expert accordance and non-accordance in the form of overestimation or underestimation of subjective assessments. **Results.** Structured data on subjective expert assessments of family functionality were obtained in the context of five basic groups of competencies, including information-related, communicative, value- and meaning-related, personal, and educational competencies. Subjective attitudes towards information and communication support received from various services and departments were revealed. The problem of a unified family approach to the issue of encouraging and stimulating children was addressed. Data on the level of psychological and emotional comfort, attitudes towards the prospects for development and the specificity of attitudes towards the child and his defect were presented. The shortcomings and problems in the development of inclusive family competence are a

lack of parental awareness of the special educational needs of children and the necessary special conditions, a lack of conflict-free communication skills, a lack of family education resources and parents' personal resources. Analyzing adaptability, educational resources, personal maturity, ecological compatibility in relationships, availability and quality of channels for receiving assistance help determine priority areas and the nature of targeted psychological and educational support for families raising children with autism spectrum disorders. **Discussion.** The proposed framework for the quantitative and qualitative analysis and evaluation of parental competency enables us to reconsider the nature of interaction with families raising children with autism spectrum disorders and to change the system of their psychological and educational support.

Keywords

children with autism spectrum disorders, family inclusive potential, self-assessment of parental inclusiveness, parental competency, family functionality

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Introduction

In modern studies, the concept of "inclusive potential" is closely linked to the population of individuals with disabilities (IWDs) as a particular set of their own resources. The social environment strongly determines the system of relationships within the family, education and the broad sociocultural space. In general, the family inclusion potential is defined as its role in carrying out the tasks of education and social integration with respect to its own child. This definition and the potential for the rehabilitation of children with disabilities are considered as the basis of the paradigm of parental effectiveness for the formation of a culture of inclusion of all subjects of civil society.

Families raising children with ASD

Families raising children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) represent a very large group with high social activity (Tkacheva, 2023). This situation must be taken into account

as an effective tool for identifying and preventing the deep socio-psychological and socio-environmental maladaptation of high-functioning autistic children. The subjective space of families where primary socialization of children with ASDs takes place has been little studied from the point of view of creativity and inclusion (Semenova, Bozhkova, & Koneva, 2022). A comprehensive scientific study of the competency of parents, which is the potential for inclusion, is required.

Inclusive potential

In terms of terminology and substance, the concept of "inclusive potential" should be interpreted as a complex of opportunities and resources of different environments, including social ones, in combination with the established system of important relationships and the level of the potential for personal adaptation and rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities (Afonkina, 2016). In contrast to individual potential, the inclusive potential of a family that raises a child with a disability is built on intra-family resources and the abilities of all family members, their functional effectiveness and competency (Starobina, 2018). It is the level of development of certain competencies that determines the potential of the family in terms of effective active participation in the processes of education, upbringing, comprehensive development, socialization, and integration of children into various types of social activity.

Inclusive competency

The inclusive competency of parents should be considered as their general ability and readiness to perform rational and effective functional tasks and provide conditions conducive to the complete development and well-being of their children, other family members and the family as a single system of life (Smogorzewska & Osterhaus, 2023). The assessment of the inclusive potential of a family consists of aggregated indicators for individual abilities of family members. The choice of competency groups incorporated in inclusive potential assessment mechanism allows a systematic assessment of the capabilities and resources of the family from the point of view of educational and sociocultural processes. The inclusive competency of family members is revealed through the understanding and acceptance of certain functions, rational possession of knowledge and skills in the field of constructive interaction with a child with disabilities and its effective inclusion in various types of social activities (Chemirilova, Kirilova, Gavrilova, & Akieva, 2021).

Information-related competencies

A family is a relatively open social system with emotional, informational, and activity links with other members of the community (Churkina, 2023). This demonstrates the importance of considering information-related competencies (ICs) as an important component of the overall inclusive potential of the family. The following indicators should

be considered as indicators of the level of development of this group of competencies : (a) demonstration of knowledge in the fields of special education and psychology affecting the processes of education, upbringing, development and socialization of children with disabilities; (b) knowledge of the age characteristics of children in the normal and deviant development; (c) knowledge of the abilities of searching, receiving, and transmitting information to a communication partner; and (d) awareness of information on the current state of individuals belonging to important social groups, situations, events, and processes that are of objective or subjective importance in the life of a person and society (Tkacheva, 2023).

Communicative competencies

Among the most important components of the inclusive potential is a group of communication competencies (CCs), which form the basis for constructive, comfortable and productive relationships with others. These competencies determine the readiness and ability to establish and maintain contacts, build interactions and relationships with different groups of citizens, predict, prevent or effectively resolve conflict situations (Zotova, 2020). Particular importance is placed on the ability of parents to create constructive interactions with their children, taking into account their age-related, psychological, individual and typological characteristics (Kurdyumova, 2020). The nature of social interaction between the family and various social institutions in resolving urgent educational and general developmental tasks is also important (Chugaeva, 2017). Social interaction must be understood as a specific type of activity represented by following functional components: socially oriented, performing, and effective ones (Krushnaya & Pinkus, 2016).

Parents' attitudes towards the effectiveness of psychological and educational support for children with disabilities, especially ASDs, are quite sceptical, and experts' attitudes towards parents' competence and claims are unclear. Consequently, parents and teachers treat each other as part of the problem, not as a means of solving the problem (Mckenzie, Vassallo, & Dallos, 2020).

Educational competencies

The educational competence group (EC) provides parents with the ability and willingness to solve independently various problems related to the education, spiritual and moral development of children. The structure of educational competence should include rationality of educational strategies, guidance, development and implementation of educational potential, degree of involvement of the immediate environment in education, and adaptability of educational resources (Gerasimovich, 2018). In relation to the adaptability of educational resources, it is worthwhile to address the problem of theoretical awareness and practical training of parents in the area of motivating and stimulating strategies that strengthen desired behavior and stop negative behavioral

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reactions. Most parents of children with ASDs believe that these skills are lacking (Iadarola, Levato & Harrison, 2018).

The rational design of the object-developing environment at home, combined with appropriate tools, substantially optimizes the process of child development, its adaptation to the objective and social reality of the surrounding world. Changing the comfortable and developing environment, their modelling in the context of family education, must fully take into account the individual characteristics of the child's activity, his interests and potential for emotional response (Yaremchuk, 2019). In this case, it is necessary to consider some characteristics that determine the quality and rationality of environmental conditions, including spatial (location selection, fullness and structure of premises, design and object organization), (b) temporal (fullness of events, taking into account the child's perception, inclusion in processes, satiation with activity); (c) emotional (moderate emotional loads, use of attractive stimuli, naturalness and moderation of adults' expressive displays), and (d) meaning-related (variability of meaning levels – sensory interests, performance of activities, constructive and productive activities, emotional response).

In view of the adaptability of educational resources, it is worthwhile mentioning the problem of theoretical awareness and practical training of parents in the field of motivation and stimulating strategies to strengthen desirable behaviors and stop negative behavior reactions. Most parents raising children with ASDs believe that these skills are lacking (Galkiene & Blinkevičienė, 2019). Limited knowledge and insufficient abilities in supporting, encouraging and punishing children, effective motivation and stimulation of positive behavior are also noted (Kizilkaya & Sari, 2021).

Value- and meaning-related competencies

Parents' value- and meaning-related competencies (VMCs) determine their willingness and ability (a) to accept their own child and others as an unconditional value, regardless of specific developmental characteristics, undesirable behaviors, and inappropriate appearances, (b) to maintain a friendly environment and a favorable climate in the family and in the immediate environment of the child, and (c) to systematically participate (possibly with a long-term perspective) in the development and realization of the potential of their child, to overcome internal and external obstacles, difficulties and resistance (Bicheva, Kovchegova, & Gorshenina, 2022).

Personal competencies

The group of personal competencies (PCs) ensures the fullest possible realization of individual potential, active and productive life, effective functioning and comprehensive development. This group of competencies is the basis for maintaining mental and physical health, the need for self-knowledge, self-development, and self-realization. The most important skills include (a) adaptive and productive self-expression and self-

development, (b) high tolerance of frustration, resistance to personal deformations and stress, (c) adequate level of aspirations and internal control position, and (d) predominance of sanogenous cognitive schemes and absence of irrational attitudes (Dyachkova & Bayandina, 2021).

There are sufficient studies that confirm the existence of a wide variety of different experiences among parents of children with ASD that affect their condition, function and overall quality of life and their immediate environment. Chronic stress and a high level of neuropsychological tension, low predictability of children's behavior and conditions nourish and increase the fear of stigmatization, safety and children's overall well-being (Domalanta et al., 2017).

Problems and purpose

The existing scientific research of the authors on the problem of the culture of inclusion (Kudryavtsev, Kashtanova, 2023), modeling the assessment procedures for the inclusion potential of families raising different categories of children with disabilities (Kashtanova et al., 2023), has enabled the organization of a more detailed assessment of families of children with ASDs as a main sample of the experimental study and its presentation in the form of a detailed analysis of the measured characteristics of the aspects.

The purpose of this study is to highlight the results of an experimental assessment of the inclusive potential of families raising children with ASDs, in the context of individual competence groups and different degrees of expertise.

The analysis sample presented here defined the problematic area of this study, dedicated to the assessment and subsequent study of the inclusive potential of families raising children with ASD through the prism of parental effectiveness and the overall function of the family. An important measure in this case is the degree and nature of the expertise of parents themselves and its objectivity in relation to the characteristics obtained from support specialists.

Methods

The experimental analysis of the inclusive potential of families raising children with ASDs was based on the analysis and study of their subjective assessments, which were linked to objective data of experts carrying out training and support tasks for this contingent.

Instruments

The main methodology of research was the diagnostic complex developed by the authors, including the Self-Assessment of Parental Inclusiveness and the Expert Assessment of Inclusive Potential questionnaires.

The statistical processing was based on the analysis of contingency tables using the Pearson χ^2 criterion. The questionnaires are based on the identification of individual groups of competencies and parameters of parental effectiveness and include blank forms designed for quantitative and qualitative analysis using the R. Likert scale.

Participants

The main respondents were parents of 160 families with ASD children. The second sample included 164 experts who implemented direct psychological and educational practices in working with autistic children and their immediate environment. Factorial characteristics were individual competency groups – information-related, communicative, value- and meaning-related, personal and educational ones, which parameters constitute the family competence profile that characterizes its inclusive potential.

Results

Based on the author's approach to analyzing and assessing the inclusive potential of families raising children with disabilities of different categories, we developed diagnostic tools, including the Self-Assessment of Parental Inclusiveness and the Expert Assessment of Inclusive Potential questionnaires. These diagnostic tools are sufficiently described by the authors (Kashtanova & Kudryavtsev, 2024). In the analysis of primary data, in development, the indicator of the level of parental expertise in subjective assessments of individual parameters of their own inclusive competencies was taken into account. Differences in subjective and expert assessments of individual functional indicators were considered as result indicators. There were three categories of assessment – underestimation of subjective assessment (parents estimate the parameter lower than experts), overestimation of subjective assessment (parents estimate the parameter higher than experts) and expert accordance, if assessment positions were fully consistent.

Table 1 presents the percentages for the designated expert indicators. The first column indicates competencies according to their belonging to a group. Values are given at the end of the table.

Table 1

Primary indicators of self-assessment of parental inclusiveness in relation to individual groups of competencies (%)

N ^o	Parameters of functionality	Underes- timation of subjective assessment (-)	Overestimation of subjective assessment (+)	Expert accordance
IC1	Availability and quality of channels for receiving assistance	59.4	11.8	28.8
IC2	Parent awareness	53.7	13.7	32.6
CC1	Ecological compatibility in relationships	25	40.6	34.4
CC2	Culture of social interaction	36.8	15.6	47.6
CC3	Interaction with teachers/ specialists	21.2	30.6	48.2
CC4	Interaction with other parents of children with disabilities	31.2	43.7	25.1
CC5	Orientation in communication tools	28.1	33.7	38.2
VMC1	Attitude towards the "defect"	32.5	35.6	31.9

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№	Parameters of functionality	Underestimation of subjective assessment (-)	Overestimation of subjective assessment (+)	Expert accordance
VMC2	Continuity of generations	25.6	41.2	33.2
PC1	Personal maturity	26.8	50	23.2
PC2	General cultural development	17.5	57.5	25
PC3	Individual resource state	33.7	37.5	28.8
PC4	Self-education	20.6	58.7	20.7
EC1	Rationality of educational strategies	30.6	20.6	48.8
EC2	Mentoring	34.4	28.1	37.5
EC3	Educational potential	38.1	40.6	21.3
EC4	Involvement of the immediate environment in the educational process	36.2	28.7	35.1
EC5	Adaptability of educational resources	41.2	27.5	31.3

Note. Legend: IC – information-related competency; CC – communicative competency; VMC – value- and meaning-related competency; PC – personal competency, EC – educational competency.

The data are presented in percentages, and the row is 100 %, representing a sample of 160 families raising children with ASDs. The second column reveals the content of each competency, which may help navigate the following data tables.

Further analysis of the data enabled us to classify them not by individual competency groups, but by the statistical significance of the relationship between the factor and the result characteristics. We should note that all indicators have acceptable thresholds for the admissibility of differences in statistical data, but have different threshold values. Table 2 shows the competencies with the highest significant relationships ($p < 0.001$) which shows the regularity of these indicators.

Table 2

Competencies with the highest values of statistical significance for expert competency (%)

Factors	Effective signs			Sum
	Underestimation of subjective assessment (-)	Overestimation of subjective assessment (+)	Expert accordance	
IC1	<u>59.4</u>	11.8	28.8	100
IC2	53.7	13.7	32.6	100
CC1	25	40.6	34.4	100
CC2	<u>36.8</u>	15.6	<u>47.6</u>	100
VMC2	25.6	41.2	33.2	100
PC1	26.8	50	23.2	100
PC2	17.5	57.5	25	100
PC4	20.6	<u>58.7</u>	<u>20.7</u>	100
EC5	41.2	27.5	31.3	100
Total	306.6	316.6	276.8	900

Note. $df = 16$, $\chi^2 = 146.857$, Critical value $\chi^2 = 39.3$ ($p = 0.001$), relationships between factors and effective signs are significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

We should note that parents considerably underestimated their assessments of information-related competency (IC1 – Availability and quality of channels for receiving assistance; IC2 – Parent awareness), educational competency (EC5 – Adaptability of educational resources), and communicative competency (CC2 – Culture of social interaction). At the same time, parents have quite high values when they overestimate their own assessments of these competencies. First of all, this concerns the group of personal competencies, including PC4 – Self-education, PC2 – General cultural development, and PC1 – Personal maturity. We should also note VMC2 – Continuity of generations and CC1 – Ecological compatibility in relationships.

About 40 % of parents of children with ASDs assess ecological compatibility in relationships, ecological relations, the ability to listen, hear and understand each other, and the right to make mistakes in their own or other people's actions as very high. At the same time, 50 % of respondents expressed concern about children's inclusion in a single social and cultural space in the family.

Regarding the adaptability of educational resources, it is necessary to emphasize some of the positions that are lacking from the point of view of parents themselves. Approximately 52 % of respondents believed that in their families there was insufficient attention to equipping places for games, activities, organizing daily life and using special means. This result emphasizes the importance of implementing the environmental approach in the education of children with autism in families. 47.8 % of parents raising autistic children say they have not yet developed a unified, sustainable and effective system to stimulate and encourage children. For most highly rated indicators, a low level of agreement with experts – expert accordance – was observed.

The group of value-related and meaning competencies, in particular the Generational continuity parameter, was revealed through the level of generational conflict, the implementation of the function of spiritual communication in the family and the priority of family values. 60 % of the respondents rejected the existence of a conflict between adults and children in the family; 40 % assessed the relationship between parents and children as a conflict.

Table 3 shows the second block of indicators with a pronounced indicator of the reliability of differences scores ($p < 0.01$).

The lowest expert accordance value was for EC3 educational competency – Educational potential (overestimated by parents in their subjective assessments), and a relatively high expert accordance value was for EC1 – Rationality of education strategies. In the context of PC3 parameter (Individual resource state), more than 80 % of respondents expressed constant fears about their children's lives, health and well-being that they would not overcome alone.

In our study, 43.8 % of respondents felt psychologically comfortable and 27.5 % felt strongly uncomfortable; 51.3 % of parents who participated in the study indicated

the presence of toxic people and their relationships in their environment; 43.1 % of respondents reported a predominance of pessimistic attitudes and 41.3 % complained about the lack of stable and reliable sources of psycho-emotional support.

Table 3

Competencies with the highest values of statistical significance for expert competency (%)

Factors	Effective signs			Sum
	Underestimation of subjective assessment (-)	Overestimation of subjective assessment (+)	Expert accordance	
PC3	33.7	37.5	28.8	100
EC1	30.6	20.6	48.8	100
EC2	34.4	28.1	37.5	100
EC3	38.1	40.6	21.3	100
EC4	36.2	28.7	35.1	100
Total	173	155.5	171.5	500

Note. $df = 8$, $\chi^2 = 21.410$, critical value $\chi^2 = 20.09$ ($p = 0.01$), relationships between factors and effective signs are significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

The next parameter block has the lowest differences scores, while remaining in the acceptable value corridor (Table 4). First, we should note here the existence of the main part of the parameters relating to the group of communication competencies.

Table 4

Competencies with the minimum acceptable values of statistical significance for expert competency (%)

Factors	Effective signs			Sum
	Underestimation of subjective assessment (-)	Overestimation of subjective assessment (+)	Expert accordance	
CC3	21.2	30.6	48.2	100
CC4	31.2	43.7	25.1	100
CC5	28.1	33.7	38.2	100
VMC1	32.5	35.6	31.9	100
Total	113	143.6	143.4	400

Note. $df = 6$, $\chi^2 = 13.389$, critical value $\chi^2 = 12.6$ ($p = 0.05$), relationships between factors and effective signs are significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

These results indicate that the expert compliance indicator for the CC3 parameter - Interaction with teachers/specialists - is quite high. There is also a tendency to overestimate the quality and intensity of their interaction with other parents of children with different disabilities. At the same time, only 18.7 % of respondents considered they were of a certain weight and authority in the parent community, 50 % emphasized it was difficult to respond, and 31.3 % assessed themselves negatively.

An important parameter is the attitude of parents towards their child's deficiency (VMC1), which, among other things, emphasizes the level of identification with the child and his condition. The position of "I am my child; my child is me" was shared by 41.4 % of the parents surveyed.

Discussion

Analyzing indicators should be started with information-related competency, i.e. with the IC1 parameter – Availability and quality of channels for receiving assistance. According to the survey, most parents believe that their children do not receive sufficient medical assistance and support - the average assessment score is 2 out of 4 possible. The low assessment of the availability and quality of assistance and support provided by public organizations was somewhat unexpected (only 28.8 % of respondents evaluated positively). Parents receive more tangible support from educational institutions (57.5 % of respondents evaluated positively).

Regarding the IC2 parameter – Parent awareness, there is no coincidence that close attention is currently paid to the issue of informing persons with disabilities and their family members about the nature of disabilities and the prognosis, prospects, assistance options and possible development paths and routes (Bogacheva, Ivanov, & Simashkova, 2019). The greatest involvement of parents of children with disabilities in their development, education, and socialization, based on the principles of the participative approach, will ensure the maximum effectiveness and efficiency of comprehensive support for children (Shkitina & Kasatkina, 2019; Bystray, Belova, Shtykova & Orlova, 2022).

The next indicator with a very high level of reliability of differences is CC2 - Culture of social interaction, which has the highest percentage of coincidences between subject assessments and expert assessments, and can also indicate a fairly unified understanding of the content of this competency.

Most parents focus on the development, education and socialization of their children in heterogeneous groups, among children of different categories, which is perfectly consistent with their constant focus on ensuring the maximum inclusion of children with ASDs in all areas and types of activities (Andreeva, 2021). At the same time, 36.8 % of respondents felt that this competency was not sufficiently developed, mainly due to the lack of skills in non-conflict communication, forecasting, prevention and effective conflict resolution.

Let us examine a number of indicators for which parents make higher assessments compared to specialist assessments, which also have reliable differences ($p < 0.001$). First, we should pay attention to three indicators of the group of personal competencies, including PC4 - Self-education, PC2 - General cultural development, and PC1 - Personal maturity. For example, 58.6 % of parents of children with ASDs overestimate their own level of education and self-education. The greatest difference in assessments is observed in relation to the level of parental awareness of knowledge deficits and the need for further education (Mohammadi, Rakhshan, Rakhshan & Gillespie, 2019).

Regarding the issue of general cultural development, attention is drawn to the relatively high parental assessment of the subjective importance of aesthetic, environmental and cultural and historical education of the child in the family. It is very difficult to overestimate the role of artistic and aesthetic education in the development and education of children, regardless of their level of development and health (Kostenko, 2014). According to the results of several studies, art therapy, which introduces children to visual arts, music, theatre and applied arts, effectively compensates and neutralizes disorders related to social relationships, language, undesirable behavior and emotional breakdown (Wypyszyńska, Zaboklicka, Stachura, Sito, & Męcik-Kronenberg, 2021). More than 72 % of parents interviewed indicated a high level of this competency. However, these assessments correspond to the opinions of experts in 15 % of cases.

The findings suggest that 50 % of respondents assess their own level of personal maturity high, while among the main criteria they highlight the critical attitude towards themselves and their actions, the willingness to speak openly about the problems of children and families (which differs considerably from the assessment of experts, who estimate that this indicator is 28.6 % lower). The same difference in assessments is observed in relation to the needs of parents in the interests that are not related to the child, which characterizes the degree of disidentification of parents with their children, parents seem to be more dependent on the situation of the child than they try to demonstrate. It should be noted that the personal maturity of parents first manifests itself in the establishment of emotional contact with the child, in the understanding of his condition, wishes and experiences, in the presence of a stable and consistent strategy of interaction with him and his immediate environment (Evlampieva, 2016).

The high assessment of the VMC2 parameter – Continuity of generations – reflects the focus on family values and the function of spiritual communication among family members. At the same time, both parents' subjective self-assessment and specialists' assessments indicated a high level of intergenerational conflict. Thus, 40 % of respondents emphasized the presence of problems between adults and children in extended families.

In general, in personal competencies there are the smallest coincidences in assessments, with a clear tendency to overestimate in subjective self-assessments of parents. The main predictor of family and social negative reactions to the individual characteristics of autistic children is insufficient and distorted views on the category of

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persons with disabilities and the opportunities for helping and supporting these persons (Morozov, Morozova, Tarasova, & Chigrina, 2023).

The second block of indicators with a quite pronounced indicator of the reliability of differences scores ($p < 0.01$) consists mainly of indicators of the group of so-called educational competencies. We should immediately note that there is a tendency to overestimate the EC3 parameter - Educational potential – with the lowest level of agreement between parents and experts, which indicates different interpretations and approaches to the content of this definition. We believe that the EC4 parameter – Involvement of the immediate environment in the educational process – deserves special attention. 36.2% of parents surveyed gave this indicator a low rating, while it is noted that parental satisfaction is 37.5% for the parameter of Involvement of the immediate environment in the educational process. We should note that even in formally complete families, almost all the activities related to an autistic child fall on the shoulders of the mother, while other family members are often excluded from direct participation in supporting an autistic child (Morozov & Chigrina, 2022). Both parents and specialists rated the ability of family members to organize activities and various forms of leisure with children, as well as to implement rational education strategies (EC1) relatively high.

The assessments of the Individual resource state parameter were distributed evenly; more than 33 % of respondents indicated that their own psychological and emotional resources are quite low. In particular, 56.8 % of respondents considered themselves to be individuals with insufficient stress resistance. In the modern literature, there are many studies confirming that parents, especially mothers, of children with ASDs report more frequent symptoms of depression and increased psychological stress (Shahbaz, Khalid, Amir, & Yaqoob, 2023).

It should be noted that parents are less critical and assess themselves quite highly in the Interaction with other parents indicator, and they themselves rate the quality and intensity of their own communication with parents of normotypical children more highly. Experts believe that parents are more successful in building relationships with parents of children who also have limited health and functioning capabilities. Parents also rated their social role position in the parent community quite low. A fairly high percentage of coincidences is noted in the assessments of the interaction of parents of children with ASD with teachers/specialists (CC3). According to experts, parents are not inclined to belittle the contribution of specialists working with the child. Parents, in turn, are not inclined to exaggerate their importance and belittle the contribution of specialists in the development of the child and overcoming existing difficulties.

Finally, let us draw attention to two parameters that are not very pronounced, but not less interesting. First, it is necessary to note the assessment of the parents' own ability to orientate in communication tools (CC5). Of the parents interviewed, 47.4 % did not assess their oral, written and non-verbal communication skills sufficiently; 69.8 % of parents reported low levels of competency in alternative communication tools. Significant

differences in parents' and experts' assessments of parental positions were observed in terms of the ability to recognize non-verbal signals (facial expressions, gestures, posture, etc.), i.e. social facial perception abilities. The experts assess them much lower than parents; the difference in assessments is 25 %. Our analytical series is closed by such a parameter as Attitude towards the "defect", related to value- and meaning-related competencies. The most important manifestations of this group of competencies are the willingness and ability to accept a child (as well as other persons) as an unconditional value, regardless of developmental characteristics, behavioral characteristics and external data (Daniel & Govender, 2022). A lack of sufficient assessment of the unconditional acceptance of a child with ASDs by family members has been revealed; 27.4 % of respondents doubted the full and unconditional acceptance of the child in the family. We should note that value- and meaning-related competencies are often referred to as the main and leading force in the development of all other types of competencies. This feature is directly linked to the phenomenon of parents' identification with their child, which determines and strengthens pathological forms of attachment in the parent-child system, preventing the child from achieving a certain level of social adaptation (Giannotti, Venuti & Falco, 2023).

The study obtained reliable characteristics of the inclusive potential of families raising children with ASDs, which can be trusted when selecting constructive strategies for psychological and educational support. In particular, more than half of parents raising children with ASDs indicated a lack of knowledge and skills in providing space and environmental conditions for children's games and activities in the context of family education. The difficulties with relationships with parents (mothers, grandfathers) were also identified, which also affects family resources and reduces the functionality of educational potential. The lack of a culture of social interaction manifests itself in the absence of stable skills in non-conflict communication and in the willingness to open and close cooperation with different categories of subjects in the educational and socio-cultural environment.

More than 50 % of parents do not have the desired level of psychological comfort, and more than 40 % of respondents are pessimistic about the prospects for child development and report the lack of stable psychological and emotional support. Personal resources are characterized by a high degree of fear for children's life, health and well-being.

The presence of a phenomenon such as parents' identification with the child and its state is observed in more than 40 % of cases. This hypertrophied attachment can also be seen as a factor in reducing the possibility of inclusion and, therefore, as a subject of psychological correction work with family members.

The simultaneous analysis of the shortcomings and potential abilities of parents and the immediate environment, which are presented differently in the structure of competency profiles, shows targets to increase parental effectiveness. Priority areas for further correction, development, counselling and education in this area are based on identified shortcomings in the competency area based on the available resources of a particular family. Technological solutions to develop the comprehensive potential of

families raising children with ASDs can be implemented within the framework of specific thematic blocks of the event activities space of psychological and educational support corresponding to the competency groups discussed in this article.

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Vladimir A. Kudryavtsev developed the concept of the research strategy, worked with English-language sources, processed the data, and interpreted the results.

Svetlana N. Kashtanova prepared the plan and edited the text of the article, overviewed Russian studies, wrote the Abstract and Keywords, and formulated conclusions.

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Conflict of Interest Information

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.