## Regression in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Is it a real Diagnosis?

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**Introduction**: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition that significantly impacts social, communicative, and developmental abilities, persisting throughout an individual's life. Due to its heterogeneous nature, ASD manifests in varying degrees, from individuals with nearly typical development to those requiring substantial support in daily activities. A notable phenomenon among children with ASD is regression, characterized by the sudden loss of previously acquired skills—such as language and social abilities—without an identifiable cause. Many affected children experience regression during early childhood, often after demonstrating typical developmental progress. This study investigates regressive autism through a case study of five children diagnosed with regressive ASD. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing clinical interviews with parents and two standardized tools: the third edition of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, assessing the children's developmental status across five core domains. The third edition of the Gilliam Autism Rating Scale (GARS-3) was also administered to determine the specific type and severity of autism. Additionally, analysis of videos provided by families used the coding system developed by Warner and Dawson to identify critical developmental milestones. The findings indicate that regression was observed across multiple developmental areas, particularly in communication skills. However, gross motor skills remained relatively intact, as all children continued to demonstrate proficiency in this domain despite regression. While parental reports and developmental questionnaires confirm regression as a significant developmental concern, this study highlights the need for further empirical investigation through comprehensive longitudinal data collection. It suggests that reliance solely on parent observations and video documentation may be insufficient to fully understand the complexities of regression in children with ASD.

**Keywords**: Developmental regression, autism, communication, language loss