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## **Relationships from Perspectives of ASDs**

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The concept of an “ASD” is contested. In the review of the literature of the past decades, researchers had been looking at “Autistic Spectrum Disorder” (ASD) within a biogenetic basis in which automatically categorises differences in behaviour or social interactions presented by the individuals with a diagnosis of a ASD into an “impaired” classification. An issue of “having problems” lies within the life of children with the diagnosis. The biogenetic explanation of ASDs implies the impairment in social ability is to be empathised, which also indicates, in other words, that this inability leads to difficulties of forming or maintaining relationships. Does this mean that children with ASDs are “disordered” rather than “having differences/ difficulties”? In contrast to the biogenetic view, Rogers (1995) suggests that “human beings become persons through a process of personal growth and self discovery”. (Cited in Barresi, J, 1999, P.79) This social construction perspective gives us an evolutionary understanding of children with Asperger’s syndrome, as a specific focus within the broader “category” of ASDs. Dennet (1978), listed six conditions of personhood, they are: (1) persons are rational beings; (2) they are beings or objects to which mental predicates or states of consciousness apply; (3) they take a personal stance toward them; (4) they are capable of taking a reciprocal personal stance toward us; (5) they are capable of verbal communication;(6) they are capable of a form of self-consciousness not found in any other species. A primary question has to be answered: “Can children with Asperger’s Syndrome, following the above conditions of “personhood” be considered as persons?” It is indeed difficult to define children with Asperger’s syndrome as persons in accordance with biological causes in this sense. An assumption has arisen whereby the nature of an autistic spectrum deficit precludes children from naturally developing relationships with others which supports the development of “person”. We challenge this position. Therefore, this research is framed around the question of “personhood” and its relationship with others which is seen as an authentic human relationship. Arising from these concerns, the study

carried on serial interviews to understand the nature of relationships experienced by ASD diagnosed individuals, and how ASD impacts their relationships, which eventually leads to the frustration in sexuality.

*Yushuo, Kuo is a PhD student in University of Exeter. Current research focus is on Autistic Spectrum Deficits (ASDs), and their relationships in experiencing implementation of inclusion schooling. To what extent, by considering human rights (which may include diversities of needs, sexuality, and equality), and personhood, my research also aims to give a view of the provision of Special Educational Needs (SENs) to reduce "special" in terms of the given human rights.*