

A077 HSCI

Comparing Positive Reinforcement and Sensory Based Approach: Producing Positive Classroom Behaviors for Children with Autism

Abstract

Introduction: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can present with behavioral challenges due to underlying factors including sensory issues and communication barriers. Children with ASD in the general education classroom setting may struggle with maintaining positive behaviors. Research shows that positive reinforcement is a method that assists with improving classroom behavior. Sensory-based treatment is another method of treatment used to assist students with behavior regulation in the classroom. Despite extensive research on the two approaches, there is a gap in the literature concerning which method is preferred, and what behaviors are seen after using each approach.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to compare the use of a sensory-based regulation approach to a behavioral regulation approach to see which is the preferred method for teachers in improving classroom behavior management for students with ASD.

Methods: Participants will be selected using random sampling through social media platforms. This quantitative study will use multiple choice, ordinal ranking-scale questions, and a matrix table to survey elementary school teachers of general education classrooms that include students with ASD on their experience with using both a sensory-based and a behavioral approach. Descriptive analysis will be completed using SPSS to rank preferred strategy and behavioral outcomes.

Results: Data is currently being collected and will be reported in the results.

Contribution to Occupational Therapy: Understanding which treatment approaches teachers prefer to use with their students with ASD will help inform teachers what strategies may be useful in managing behaviors in the classroom. The research can be translated into the school setting to be implemented in the general education classroom by teachers, occupational therapists, and several other school faculties, for students with autism spectrum disorder as well as with students without disabilities.