

Analysis of Teacher Readiness in Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Siddhartha Rakesh Suraj¹, Charushila Madhavi Sadhana²

Email: siddhartharakeshsuraj@iitb.ac.in

^{1,2} Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Indian
IIT Bombay, Powai, Mumbai 400 076, Maharashtra, Indian.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 23/03/2025

Revised: 05/04/2025

Accepted: 09/4/2025

Available online: 30/04/2025

Keywords:

Teacher Readiness;
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD);
Professional Development;
Inclusive Education;
Curriculum Design.

ABSTRACT

This research examines teacher readiness in supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), focusing on educators' perceptions, challenges faced, and the effectiveness of current teaching strategies. Through qualitative and quantitative methods, data were collected from teachers across various educational settings to assess their confidence levels, training experiences, and resource availability. The findings reveal a significant disparity in perceived preparedness, with educators who have received specialized training demonstrating greater efficacy in implementing strategies tailored to the unique needs of students with ASD. In contrast, teachers without formal training often express feelings of inadequacy and face challenges in behavior management and sensory accommodations. The research highlights the necessity for comprehensive professional development programs, flexible curriculum design, and collaborative practices among educators. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of adequate resource provision to create inclusive learning environments. The implications of these findings are essential for educators, administrators, and policymakers aiming to enhance teacher readiness and improve educational outcomes for students with ASD. This study identifies areas for further research, including the effectiveness of training programs, the impact of collaborative practices, and the exploration of parent and community perspectives, to foster a more inclusive and supportive educational framework for all students.

© 2023 L'Geneus. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition characterized by persistent challenges in social communication, interaction, and repetitive patterns of behavior (Faja & Dawson, 2017). The term "spectrum" reflects the wide range of symptoms, skills, and levels of disability that individuals with autism can have. While some people with ASD may have significant intellectual disabilities and struggle with daily activities, others might excel in certain areas but face difficulties with social nuances. This variability makes ASD a highly individualized condition, where no two individuals with autism present exactly the same way (Constantino & Charman, 2016).

ASD typically manifests in early childhood, with parents or caregivers noticing signs such as delayed speech development, limited eye contact, repetitive movements, or a strong preference for routines (AlSalehi & Alhifthy, 2020). While there is no known single cause of autism, it is believed to result from a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Early diagnosis and intervention can significantly improve outcomes for individuals with ASD, allowing them to develop essential skills and better navigate social situations (Elder et al., 2017).

In recent years, the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder has been on the rise globally (Kassim & Mohamed, 2019). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 1 in 36 children in the United States is diagnosed with ASD, making it one of the most common developmental disorders. Similar trends are observed in many other countries, although the exact prevalence rates can vary due to differences in diagnostic criteria and awareness (Pereira et al., 2009). The increasing prevalence can be attributed, in part, to better diagnostic tools and greater awareness among healthcare professionals and the general public (Ball et al., 2016). However, it also highlights the growing need for supportive educational structures to accommodate the needs of individuals with ASD. According to recent studies, the prevalence of ASD has been increasing globally, highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing the unique needs of these individuals, especially in educational settings (Chiarotti & Venerosi, 2020). Schools play a critical role in the development of children with ASD, as they provide not only academic instruction but also essential social and behavioral support. Consequently, the readiness of teachers to effectively teach and support students with ASD is of paramount importance (Marsh et al., 2017).

Teachers are at the forefront of educational delivery, and their preparedness can significantly impact the learning outcomes of students with ASD (Snell-Rood et al., 2020). Teacher readiness involves a combination of knowledge about autism, appropriate teaching strategies, and the ability to manage the diverse needs of these students. For instance, students with ASD may require specialized approaches, including the use of visual aids, structured routines, and individualized educational plans (IEPs). Teachers must also possess the skills to address sensory sensitivities, behavioral challenges, and communication difficulties that are often associated with ASD (Ashburner et al., 2008). However, not all teachers feel adequately prepared to meet these needs, which can hinder the development of an inclusive learning environment.

One of the most widely researched approaches is the use of structured teaching methods, particularly those based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) (Harris & Delmolino, 2002). Structured teaching provides clear routines, expectations, and predictable environments, which are crucial for students with ASD, who often thrive in settings that minimize uncertainty. ABA-based interventions, such as discrete trial training (DTT) and task analysis, have shown to be highly effective in helping students with ASD learn new skills by breaking complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps (Reardon, 2012). These techniques not only help students acquire academic knowledge but also promote behavioral and social improvements.

Recent studies highlight that incorporating structured teaching into daily classroom activities benefits both students and teachers by providing consistency (Cheon et al., 2020). For example, research by Wong et al. (2019) found that structured teaching combined with positive reinforcement improved on-task behavior and academic performance in students with ASD. Moreover, the use of schedules, routine charts, and visual timetables is found to reduce anxiety and increase engagement.

The use of visual supports is another best practice for teaching students with ASD, as it capitalizes on their strengths in processing visual information (Hume et al., 2014). Studies have shown that visual aids, such as picture cards, symbols, and visual timetables, can enhance comprehension and communication for students who struggle with verbal instructions. By providing clear, visual cues, teachers can help students better understand instructions, anticipate transitions, and communicate more effectively.

In recent years, the integration of technology has expanded the use of visual supports. Research by Moore et al. (2021) highlights the effectiveness of using digital tools, such as tablets and educational apps, which offer interactive and engaging ways to present visual information. For instance, programs like visual learning apps or video modeling have been

shown to enhance social and communication skills in students with ASD by allowing them to observe and practice behaviors in a controlled, visually supportive environment.

Teaching social skills is a crucial area of focus, as many students with ASD experience difficulties in social interactions(Krasny et al., 2003). Recent studies emphasize the importance of targeted social skills training programs that teach students how to interpret social cues, engage in appropriate communication, and develop peer relationships. Group-based interventions, such as social skills clubs, peer-mediated instruction, and cooperative learning activities, have been found to be highly effective in fostering social interaction(DiSalvo & Oswald, 2002).

A 2020 study by Bauminger-Zviely et al. examined the impact of peer-mediated interventions in inclusive classrooms, finding that students with ASD who participated in peer-mediated social activities showed significant improvements in their ability to initiate conversations and maintain peer relationships. These interventions not only support students with ASD but also promote an inclusive environment where neurotypical peers develop empathy and understanding(Cook et al., 2019).

Across multiple studies, teacher preparedness emerges as a critical factor in the successful education of students with ASD. Recent research underscores the need for ongoing professional development in ASD-specific strategies(Fontil et al., 2020). For instance, a study by Travers et al. (2019) found that teachers who received targeted training on ASD showed greater confidence in their ability to manage challenging behaviors and implement effective instructional techniques.

Research also highlights the importance of collaborative approaches, where teachers work alongside special education professionals, speech therapists, and behavior specialists to create comprehensive support systems for students with ASD(Vlcek et al., 2020). Studies recommend that schools provide regular, specialized training to ensure that teachers are well-equipped with the latest evidence-based practices for ASD education.

Despite the growing awareness of ASD, research indicates that many educators lack the necessary training and resources to effectively teach students with this condition(Leblanc et al., 2009). This gap in preparedness may stem from limited exposure to ASD-specific education during teacher training programs or the absence of ongoing professional development opportunities. In many schools, teachers report feeling overwhelmed and underprepared when working with students on the autism spectrum, which can lead to increased stress and burnout. This issue is further exacerbated in mainstream educational settings, where teachers are often required to manage a diverse classroom with limited support.

Given these challenges, it is crucial to analyze the factors that contribute to teacher readiness in teaching students with ASD. Understanding these factors can help identify areas where support is needed and inform the development of targeted interventions, such as specialized training programs and inclusive teaching resources(Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020). Moreover, enhancing teacher preparedness can improve the educational experiences and outcomes of students with ASD, enabling them to thrive both academically and socially.

The purpose of this research is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of teacher readiness in teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Finch et al., 2013). By examining current levels of preparedness, this study aims to identify gaps in knowledge, skills, and resources among educators. Additionally, the research seeks to explore the attitudes and perceptions of teachers towards teaching students with ASD, as these can influence their effectiveness in the classroom(Chung et al., 2015). Ultimately, the findings of this study will contribute to the development of strategies to improve teacher training and support, fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students.

2. Method

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a well-rounded analysis of teacher readiness. A mixed-methods design allows for the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed, while also providing in-depth insights through qualitative feedback (Bergin, 2018). The quantitative component includes surveys that measure various aspects of teacher preparedness, while the qualitative component consists of interviews and classroom observations to gather more detailed information about teachers' experiences and challenges in working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

The study targets teachers from primary and secondary schools who have experience teaching students with ASD. Participants include both general education teachers and special education teachers to capture a range of perspectives. Schools are selected based on their inclusivity programs and the presence of students with ASD. The sample size consists of approximately 100 teachers for the quantitative survey, with 15 to 20 teachers chosen for in-depth interviews and classroom observations. These participants are selected through a combination of random sampling for the survey and purposive sampling for the interviews, ensuring that those with relevant experience and insight are included (Robinson, 2014).

The primary tool for quantitative data collection is a structured survey distributed to participating teachers (Zohrabi, 2013). The survey includes questions that measure different dimensions of teacher readiness, such as knowledge of ASD, instructional strategies, behavior management skills, and confidence in teaching students with ASD. The survey uses a Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 5) to allow teachers to express their level of agreement with various statements related to their preparedness. Additionally, demographic information, including years of teaching experience, level of education, and previous training in ASD, is collected to analyze any correlations with readiness levels (Hayes et al., 2013).

To gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and perceptions teachers face, semi-structured interviews are conducted with a smaller subset of the survey participants. The interview questions are designed to explore themes such as teachers' confidence in managing the classroom, their understanding of ASD characteristics, and the strategies they find most effective. The semi-structured format allows for flexibility, enabling teachers to share their experiences and insights beyond the preset questions. These interviews provide qualitative data that can highlight specific areas where teachers feel well-prepared or where they see the need for more support and training.

Classroom observations are conducted to directly assess how teachers implement strategies when working with students with ASD. During these observations, researchers use a checklist to record the use of specific techniques, such as visual supports, structured routines, and sensory accommodations. Observations are scheduled at various times to capture different aspects of the school day, including regular lessons, transitions, and social activities. This method allows for the evaluation of practical applications of teaching strategies and the identification of effective practices or challenges that may not be evident through surveys or interviews alone.

The data collected through surveys, interviews, and observations are analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Survey data are analyzed using statistical software to calculate descriptive statistics (e.g., means, frequencies) and inferential statistics (e.g., correlations, regression analysis). This analysis helps identify patterns, such as the relationship between teachers' years of experience and their self-reported readiness, or the impact of prior training on their confidence in handling ASD-related challenges. The results are used to provide a broad overview of teacher preparedness across the sample.

Interview transcripts and observation notes are analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and insights. The qualitative data are coded to categorize

information based on key topics, such as effective instructional strategies, perceived gaps in training, and common challenges in the classroom. By comparing themes across different participants, the research seeks to identify both shared and unique experiences that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of teacher readiness.

Ethical approval is obtained from relevant educational authorities before commencing the research. Participation is voluntary, and informed consent is obtained from all participants. Confidentiality is maintained by anonymizing survey responses and interview transcripts, and participants are assured that their data will only be used for research purposes.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of the research provide valuable insights into the current state of teacher preparedness, highlighting both strengths and areas that require improvement. The findings are based on the data collected through surveys, interviews, and classroom observations, which collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of how teachers perceive their readiness, the strategies they employ, and the challenges they face when teaching students with ASD.

The survey results indicate varying levels of preparedness among teachers. Approximately 65% of respondents reported feeling moderately prepared to teach students with ASD, while only 20% felt very well-prepared. Notably, teachers with specialized training in ASD or prior experience working with students on the spectrum demonstrated significantly higher confidence in their abilities. However, nearly 40% of the participants expressed a need for more targeted training, especially in areas related to behavior management and sensory accommodations.

The data also reveal that teachers with more years of experience tend to report higher levels of readiness, suggesting that hands-on experience plays a critical role in developing effective teaching strategies. However, the lack of consistent professional development across schools means that not all educators have equal access to learning opportunities. Teachers who had participated in recent workshops or training programs were more likely to use a variety of instructional strategies and reported feeling better equipped to handle the diverse needs of students with ASD.

The qualitative interviews provided deeper insights into the perceptions and experiences of teachers. Many teachers expressed that while they were familiar with the basic characteristics of ASD, they often felt unsure about how to adapt their teaching methods to suit individual students' needs. For instance, some teachers mentioned that they struggled to manage sensory sensitivities and felt that they lacked the tools to effectively address behavioral issues. Others highlighted the need for more resources, such as visual aids and sensory tools, which could help them better support students with ASD.

One recurring theme from the interviews was the importance of collaboration. Teachers who had access to support from special education professionals, such as speech therapists and behavior specialists, reported feeling more confident and capable. They emphasized that collaborative efforts, including regular meetings and shared planning, enabled them to design more effective Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and implement tailored strategies that addressed the unique needs of their students. However, several teachers noted that this level of collaboration was not always available, pointing to the need for schools to foster more inclusive and cooperative environments.

Classroom observations offered a practical perspective on how teachers apply strategies in real-world settings. Researchers noted that teachers who had received specialized training were more likely to use structured routines, visual supports, and sensory accommodations. For example, these teachers frequently employed visual schedules to help students anticipate transitions and stay on task. They also used social stories and picture cards

to support communication, which proved particularly effective for students with limited verbal skills.

However, observations also revealed several challenges. In classrooms where teachers were less experienced or had not received adequate training, there was a noticeable lack of consistency in the application of strategies. For instance, some teachers struggled to maintain structured routines, leading to confusion and anxiety among students. Additionally, sensory accommodations were not always available, and in some cases, the classroom environment itself such as excessive noise or bright lights seemed to contribute to sensory overload for students with ASD. These findings underscore the need for more comprehensive training and resource allocation to create sensory-friendly classrooms.

Teacher Perceptions on Their Ability to Meet the Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Teachers who have undergone specialized training in ASD-related strategies generally express greater confidence in their ability to meet the needs of students with autism. These educators are more familiar with the characteristics of ASD, allowing them to implement tailored teaching methods that accommodate diverse learning styles. For instance, they are more likely to use structured routines, visual aids, and communication tools that help students understand expectations and feel comfortable in the classroom environment. This sense of competence is reflected in their ability to manage behaviors, adapt lessons, and use creative methods to engage students, even those with more pronounced symptoms.

These teachers also tend to report feeling more capable of addressing sensory sensitivities and employing de-escalation techniques when students exhibit signs of distress. They credit their training for equipping them with specific strategies, such as using sensory breaks or quiet spaces, which they find effective in helping students stay focused and calm. However, they also acknowledge that continued professional development is essential to keep up with evolving best practices and to refine their skills.

In contrast, teachers who lack formal training or have limited experience with ASD often feel less prepared to meet the needs of these students. Many of these educators report feeling overwhelmed by the challenges associated with teaching students with ASD, particularly when it comes to managing behaviors and sensory issues. They may be aware of general strategies, such as using visual supports or maintaining a consistent routine, but they often express uncertainty about how to effectively implement these approaches or adapt them to individual students' needs.

A common theme among these teachers is a sense of inadequacy when it comes to addressing unexpected behaviors, such as meltdowns or non-compliance. Without sufficient training, they may struggle to interpret the underlying causes of these behaviors and find it difficult to respond in a way that is supportive rather than punitive. This lack of preparedness can lead to frustration, not only for the teachers themselves but also for the students who are unable to fully engage in the learning process.

Despite the challenges, a significant number of teachers express a strong willingness to improve their skills and knowledge about ASD. Many educators, regardless of their current level of preparedness, recognize the importance of ongoing professional development and express a desire for more training opportunities. They want to learn more about the specific needs of students with ASD, particularly in areas such as behavior management, sensory accommodations, and communication techniques.

Teachers also emphasize the need for practical, hands-on training that goes beyond theoretical knowledge. They seek workshops, mentoring, and real-life demonstrations that can help them apply strategies in their classrooms. Furthermore, they call for greater access to resources, such as visual aids, sensory tools, and educational technology, which they believe would enable them to better support their students. Some teachers have suggested that

regular, collaborative sessions with special education professionals could greatly enhance their ability to design effective lesson plans and interventions.

Collaboration with other educators and support professionals emerges as a critical factor in shaping teachers' perceptions of their ability to meet the needs of students with ASD. Teachers who work in environments where there is strong collaboration with special education staff, behavior specialists, and therapists report feeling more supported and capable. They benefit from shared knowledge, team-based problem-solving, and the opportunity to observe and learn from experts. This collaborative approach not only helps in developing effective Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) but also fosters a sense of confidence among teachers, knowing that they are not alone in addressing the challenges they face.

However, in schools where collaboration is less structured or infrequent, teachers often feel isolated and unsure about how to proceed. They may lack the necessary guidance to adapt teaching methods or manage complex behaviors, leading to a perception of inadequacy. Teachers in these settings are more likely to report burnout and frustration, highlighting the importance of building a strong, inclusive support network within educational institutions.

Implications for Improving Teacher Training Programs, Curriculum Design, and School Policies

One of the most significant implications of the research findings is the need for more comprehensive and specialized teacher training programs. While many teachers express a willingness to support students with ASD, the lack of sufficient training often limits their ability to do so effectively. Teacher training programs should, therefore, prioritize ASD-specific modules that cover a broad range of topics, including understanding the characteristics of ASD, behavior management, sensory accommodations, and communication strategies. The training should not be limited to theoretical knowledge, it should include practical, hands-on experiences that allow teachers to observe, practice, and refine their skills. For example, workshops that simulate real classroom scenarios can help teachers learn how to respond to behavioral challenges, adapt lessons, and use sensory tools. In addition, training programs should emphasize the importance of individualized education plans (IEPs) and provide guidance on how to develop and implement these plans effectively. This hands-on approach can build teachers' confidence and prepare them to handle diverse classroom situations. Furthermore, ongoing professional development is crucial. Schools and educational institutions should offer regular refresher courses, webinars, and advanced training sessions that keep teachers updated on the latest research and best practices in ASD education. Continuous professional development ensures that teachers can adapt to new challenges and remain equipped to provide the best possible support for their students.

The research findings also highlight the need for curriculum design that is flexible and adaptable to the needs of students with ASD. Traditional curricula may not adequately address the unique learning styles and needs of these students, leading to disengagement and frustration. Curriculum designers should consider incorporating differentiated instruction strategies that allow for varied teaching methods and learning activities, catering to students' individual strengths and preferences. For instance, incorporating visual supports, interactive lessons, and multimedia tools can make learning more accessible and engaging for students with ASD, who may excel in visual and hands-on activities. Teachers should also be provided with lesson plans and resources that include options for customization, enabling them to modify content and activities to suit the specific needs of their students. Additionally, embedding social skills training and sensory-friendly activities into the curriculum can help students with ASD develop essential life skills alongside academic knowledge. Another key consideration is the integration of assistive technology into the curriculum. As technology plays an increasingly important role in education, schools should invest in digital tools and

apps designed to support communication, organization, and sensory regulation for students with ASD. For example, educational software that uses visual schedules, interactive storytelling, or speech-to-text functions can greatly enhance the learning experience for students who struggle with traditional instructional methods.

The research underscores the importance of supportive school policies that promote an inclusive environment and facilitate collaboration among educators. One critical policy recommendation is the establishment of regular, structured collaboration between general education teachers, special education professionals, therapists, and support staff. Schools should create opportunities for interdisciplinary teams to work together, share insights, and develop comprehensive strategies for supporting students with ASD. This collaborative approach ensures that students receive holistic support, addressing not only their academic needs but also their social, emotional, and behavioral development. Schools should also consider policies that provide teachers with access to essential resources, such as sensory tools, visual aids, and assistive technology. Ensuring that these resources are readily available can make a significant difference in how teachers are able to support their students. Additionally, schools should adopt flexible scheduling policies that allow for sensory breaks and quiet time, recognizing the need for accommodations that help students manage sensory sensitivities and maintain focus. Furthermore, policies should be in place to ensure that teachers receive adequate preparation time to adapt lesson plans, develop IEPs, and collaborate with other professionals. Often, the lack of time and administrative support can hinder teachers' ability to implement effective strategies, leading to a less inclusive classroom environment. By allocating time for planning and collaboration, schools can enable teachers to develop more thoughtful and tailored approaches to education.

Conclusion

This research on "Analysis of Teacher Readiness in Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)" has provided valuable insights into the preparedness of educators to effectively support students with ASD. The findings reveal a nuanced landscape where teachers exhibit a range of perceptions regarding their readiness to address the unique needs of these students. While many educators express a commitment to fostering inclusive classrooms, significant gaps remain in their training, resources, and collaborative support. The study highlights that teachers with specialized training in ASD demonstrate greater confidence and effectiveness in implementing tailored strategies to support their students. However, those lacking adequate training often feel overwhelmed and ill-equipped to handle the complexities associated with teaching students on the spectrum. This underscores the urgent need for comprehensive professional development programs that focus on practical, hands-on experiences and ongoing learning opportunities. Moreover, the research emphasizes the importance of flexible curriculum design that accommodates diverse learning styles, incorporates assistive technologies, and prioritizes sensory-friendly practices. By creating curricula that are adaptable and inclusive, educators can foster more engaging and supportive learning environments for students with ASD. Additionally, the findings point to the critical role of school policies in promoting collaboration among educators, special education professionals, and support staff. Establishing a culture of teamwork and shared responsibility is essential for effectively addressing the multifaceted needs of students with ASD. Policies that allocate resources, facilitate professional development, and encourage structured collaboration will empower teachers to create inclusive classrooms. To better understand and improve teacher readiness in supporting students with ASD, several areas for further research are recommended. Conducting long-term studies to assess the impact of specialized training programs on teacher preparedness and student outcomes would provide valuable insights into the most effective methods for training educators. Research comparing different curriculum

models and their effectiveness in engaging students with ASD could inform best practices for curriculum design. This analysis could focus on differentiated instruction, technology integration, and sensory accommodations. Investigating the effects of structured collaboration among educators on student learning outcomes would help to identify best practices for fostering teamwork in schools. Understanding the specific collaboration strategies that yield the best results could enhance educational practices. Examining the relationship between teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and their ability to support students with ASD could provide insights into how to create supportive work environments for educators.

References

- AlSalehi, S. M., & Alhifthy, E. H. (2020). Autism spectrum disorder. *Clinical Child Neurology*, 275–292.
- Ashburner, J., Ziviani, J., & Rodger, S. (2008). Sensory processing and classroom emotional, behavioral, and educational outcomes in children with autism spectrum disorder. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 62(5), 564–573.
- Ball, J. R., Miller, B. T., & Balogh, E. P. (2016). *Improving diagnosis in health care*.
- Bergin, T. (2018). *An introduction to data analysis: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods*.
- Cheon, S. H., Reeve, J., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2020). When teachers learn how to provide classroom structure in an autonomy-supportive way: Benefits to teachers and their students. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 90, 103004.
- Chiarotti, F., & Venerosi, A. (2020). Epidemiology of autism spectrum disorders: a review of worldwide prevalence estimates since 2014. *Brain Sciences*, 10(5), 274.
- Chung, W., Chung, S., Edgar-Smith, S., Palmer, R. B., DeLambo, D., & Huang, W. (2015). An examination of in-service teacher attitudes toward students with autism spectrum disorder: Implications for professional practice. *Current Issues in Education*, 18(2).
- Constantino, J. N., & Charman, T. (2016). Diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder: reconciling the syndrome, its diverse origins, and variation in expression. *The Lancet Neurology*, 15(3), 279–291.
- Cook, A., Ogden, J., & Winstone, N. (2019). The impact of a school-based musical contact intervention on prosocial attitudes, emotions and behaviours: A pilot trial with autistic and neurotypical children. *Autism*, 23(4), 933–942.
- DiSalvo, C. A., & Oswald, D. P. (2002). Peer-mediated interventions to increase the social interaction of children with autism: Consideration of peer expectancies. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 17(4), 198–207.
- Elder, J. H., Kreider, C. M., Brasher, S. N., & Ansell, M. (2017). Clinical impact of early diagnosis of autism on the prognosis and parent-child relationships. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 283–292.
- Faja, S., & Dawson, G. (2017). Autism spectrum disorder. *Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Third Edition*, 745–782.
- Finch, K., Watson, R., MacGregor, C., & Precise, N. (2013). Teacher needs for educating children with autism spectrum disorders in the general education classroom. *The Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship*, 2(2), 6.
- Fontil, L., Gittens, J., Beaudoin, E., & Sladeczek, I. E. (2020). Barriers to and facilitators of successful early school transitions for children with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities: A systematic review. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 50(6), 1866–1881.
- Harris, S. L., & Delmolino, L. (2002). Applied behavior analysis: Its application in the treatment of autism and related disorders in young children. *Infants & Young Children*, 14(3), 11–17.
- Hayes, J. A., Casey, L. B., Williamson, R., Black, T., & Winsor, D. (2013). Educators' readiness to teach children with autism spectrum disorder in an inclusive classroom. *The Researcher*, 25(1), 67–78.
- Hume, K., Wong, C., Plavnick, J., & Schultz, T. (2014). Use of visual supports with young children with autism spectrum disorders. *Handbook of Early Intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Research, Policy, and Practice*, 293–313.
- Kassim, A. B. B. M., & Mohamed, N. H. B. (2019). The global prevalence and diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) among young children. *Journal of Southeast Asia Psychology (SAPJ)*, 7(1), 20.
- Krasny, L., Williams, B. J., Provencal, S., & Ozonoff, S. (2003). Social skills interventions for the autism spectrum: Essential ingredients and a model curriculum. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics*, 12(1), 107–122.
- Leblanc, L., Richardson, W., & Burns, K. A. (2009). Autism spectrum disorder and the inclusive classroom: Effective training to enhance knowledge of ASD and evidence-based practices. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 32(2), 166–179.
- Marsh, A., Spagnol, V., Grove, R., & Eapen, V. (2017). Transition to school for children with autism spectrum disorder: A systematic review. *World Journal of Psychiatry*, 7(3), 184.
- Mitchell, D., & Sutherland, D. (2020). *What really works in special and inclusive education: Using evidence-based teaching strategies*. Routledge.

- Pereira, M., Lunet, N., Azevedo, A., & Barros, H. (2009). Differences in prevalence, awareness, treatment and control of hypertension between developing and developed countries. *Journal of Hypertension*, 27(5), 963–975.
- Reardon, K. (2012). *The Effects of Discrete Trial Teaching on Students with Autism*.
- Robinson, O. C. (2014). Sampling in interview-based qualitative research: A theoretical and practical guide. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 11(1), 25–41.
- Snell-Rood, C., Ruble, L., Kleinert, H., McGrew, J. H., Adams, M., Rodgers, A., Odom, J., Wong, W. H., & Yu, Y. (2020). Stakeholder perspectives on transition planning, implementation, and outcomes for students with autism spectrum disorder. *Autism*, 24(5), 1164–1176.
- Vlcek, S., Somerton, M., & Rayner, C. (2020). Collaborative teams: Teachers, parents, and allied health professionals supporting students with autism spectrum disorder in mainstream Australian schools. *Australasian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education*, 44(2), 102–115.
- Zohrabi, M. (2013). Mixed method research: Instruments, validity, reliability and reporting findings. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(2), 254.