



Pivotal Response Treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorders
A Research Proposal Submitted in Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Master of Psychological Sciences

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Abstract

An evidence-based behavioral intervention called pivotal response treatment (PRT) aims to address the fundamental deficiencies linked to autism spectrum disorder (ASD), such as difficulties with social interaction, behavior control, and communication. PRT, which has its roots in the ideas of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), stands out for emphasizing important developmental stages that are essential for more extensive gains in a variety of areas. In contrast to conventional methods, PRT makes use of child-initiated, naturalistic teaching techniques in everyday contexts, resulting in a more dynamic and captivating educational experience. PRT's main goal is to improve critical behaviors that are thought to be essential to a child's development, like .motivation, self-control, and social interaction

It is expected that enhancing these critical abilities will lead to improvements in the targeted areas as well as in other behaviors and abilities that are tangentially related. Because of its adaptability, PRT can be used in a variety of contexts, including the home, classroom, and clinical settings, making it a very scalable and flexible treatment. The active participation of instructors and caregivers, who have received training on how to apply the intervention techniques in natural environments, is essential to PRT. This is essential for the child's overall development since it guarantees that abilities learned in therapy .are transferable to many settings and relationships

With therapies that promote social communication and emotional control by rewarding and reinforcing desired actions in a realistic setting, PRT places a strong emphasis on the child's interests and drive. To sum up, one potential strategy for treating the main symptoms of autism spectrum disorder is pivotal response treatment. PRT has shown significant success in enhancing social interactions, communication, and adaptive behaviors through its emphasis on critical behaviors and the realistic, tailored delivery of therapies. The study's findings also highlight how crucial early and regular intervention is, along with

caregiver participation, to helping children with ASD make significant and long-lasting progress

Key Words:

Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) ,Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD),
.Communication challenge and Behavioral Intervention

:Introduction

One of the most crucial phases that a child goes through is early childhood. Gaining an inclusive development is crucial for a child's socialization and communication. If a child has deficiencies in any area of their basic development, it can negatively affect other areas of their growth and result in a variety of disorders and disabilities that interfere with the balanced development of their personality. The development of critical abilities that enable the kid to engage with the environment in a healthy and (adaptive) manner may be .impaired by these disturbances

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is one of the most well-known of these developmental disorders. A kid with ASD has a (severe impairment) in their social functional performance, which impacts their capacity to build relationships and participate in meaningful social activities. Other crucial developmental domains, such as communication, cognitive development, and the learning of adaptive abilities, are frequently hindered by these social deficiencies. It may be difficult for kids with ASD to acquire the skills they need to interact with people, react to social cues, and adapt to changes in their surroundings. The significance of focused interventions meant to enhance adaptive behavior in kids with ASD thus becomes evident. One of the main goals for improving adaptive behavior is to increase the practical, everyday abilities required to function .independently

The significance of focused therapies meant to enhance adaptive behavior in kids with ASD is thus made evident. One of the main areas of concentration for improving their capacity to deal with social and environmental problems is adaptive behavior, which refers to the useful, everyday abilities required to

function independently. In order to help children with autism communicate, interact with others, and interact with their environment more effectively, this .thesis will investigate positive intervention for enhancing adaptive behavior

One positive behavior intervention that uses motivation as a tool to improve desired behavior is called pivotal response treatment, or PRT.), PRT is founded on child-led developmental ٢٠١٥ According to Gengoux et al. (techniques and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) teaching strategies. The motivation and execution of services in the natural setting are the main goals of .this behavioral intervention

PRT has been demonstrated to enhance early cognitive capacities, adaptive). According to the ٢٠١٥ behavior, and social interactions (Gengoux et al., literature, PRT can increase motivation, interest, enthusiasm, and enjoyment as well as overall behavior and motivation, which can improve learning and speed .(٢٠٠١ up skill acquisition (R. Koegel, Koegel, & McNerney,

The aim of this study was to ascertain whether PRT helps students with autism develop their skills. Preferred stimuli, child choice, task variation, reinforcing tries, natural surroundings, and natural reinforcers were the main .PRT components that were incorporated into this intervention

Problem Statement

A complex developmental disorder known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is distinguished by a variety of difficulties with social communication, behavioral management, and repetitive patterns of behavior. These difficulties frequently lead to severe limitations in day-to-day functioning, impacting the person's capacity to participate in social, familial, and academic activities. There has never been a more pressing need for efficient, evidence-based therapies .due to the rising incidence of ASD worldwide

One captivating approach to get around some of these restrictions is pivotal response treatment, or PRT. PRT aims to improve (pivotal behaviors) like social engagement, self-regulation, and motivation because these are thought to have a wide-ranging effect on other developmental domains. This

child-centered, naturalistic approach highlights the value of leveraging a child's interests to support learning in authentic settings, which may result in more widespread and long-lasting gains. Even while PRT is becoming more and more supported by research, there are still concerns about its general efficacy, long-term effects, and realistic application in a variety of contexts

Therefore, evaluating the efficacy of pivotal response treatment for children with autism spectrum disorder, assessing its practical application in clinical and home settings, and investigating the opportunities and challenges related to its implementation constitute the main issues this study attempts to address. By looking into these problems, the study hopes to advance knowledge of how PRT might be best used to help kids with ASD achieve significant, long-lasting gains in their adaptive, social, and communication skills

Importance of the Study

A significant advance in the field of therapies for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is pivotal response treatment, or PRT. Families, educators, and clinicians are under enormous strain to find and implement long-lasting, effective therapies that target the underlying deficiencies of ASD, especially in social interaction, communication, and behavioral regulation, given the disorder's rising prevalence. Treatment strategies that are both evidence-based and adaptable enough to meet the needs of each patient are desperately needed, given the complexity and heterogeneity of ASD

Furthermore, PRT has important real-world applications. Its focus on naturalistic instruction and the active participation of caregivers ensures that skills acquired in treatment have a higher chance of applying to everyday circumstances. This raises the chances of long-term success in a number of contexts, such as the community, school, and home. An extensive range of children with ASD can benefit from PRT since it provides a scalable approach that can be applied in various circumstances and centers on encouraging parents and educators to take an active role in the treatment process

Objectives of the study

Assess Pivotal Response Treatment's (PRT) Effectiveness to evaluate how PRT affects the primary hallmarks of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), such as behavioral issues, social interaction problems, and communication impairments. This requires looking at improvements in social reciprocity, verbal and nonverbal communication, and the decline in problematic behaviors

Analyze PRT's Effect on Motivation to look at how PRT's emphasis on key behaviors—like motivation—affects kids with ASD's overall developmental growth

The study specifically seeks to ascertain if enhancing these fundamental behaviors results in more extensive enhancements in other areas. Evaluate the ability to generalize skills across contexts. to investigate the degree to which PART-learned abilities transfer to various contexts, including the home, classroom, and community. The purpose of the study is to see whether children consistently show progress outside of the treatment context

LITERATURE REVIEW

An Overview of Autism Experts who work with autistic children agreed that early intervention is crucial since the number of people with autism spectrum disorder is still increasing and there is a higher need for care than there is supply, according to data from trained professionals. Since Kanner's initial , there have been multiple changes to clinical ١٩٤٣ description of autism in definitions and conceptualizations of the condition. In recent years, the .diagnostic criteria have been expanded, improved, and changed

).Limited and/or ٢٠٠٠ According to the American Psychiatric Association (repetitive interests and activities, difficulties with qualitative communication, and inadequacies in reciprocal social engagement are the hallmarks of autism, a of ٨ neurodevelopmental disorder that initially appears in early childhood. Criteria the DSM-IV-TR stipulates that delays or aberrant functioning must be observed in at least one of the following areas prior to the age of three, in addition to these three basic categories: (a) interacting with others, (b) using language to communicate with others, or (c) playing with symbols or imagination (American

). Autism, or autistic disorder, is one of the range ٢٠٠٠ Psychiatric Association, of developmental disorders referred to as widespread developmental conditions (PDDs). Other conditions that are included in the PDD umbrella include Asperger's syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder–Not Otherwise .(Specified (PDD–NOS

Prevalence

Due to variations in diagnostic standards and social circumstances, the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has fluctuated. Diagnoses have , expanded ٢٠١٣, which was released in ٢٠١٣, has been more consistent since the DSM– the definition of ASD to include a variety of behaviors and decreased the number of subtypes. Diagnostic norms, cultural considerations, and family resistance to seeking or disclosing a diagnosis, however, continue to cause variations in prevalence. Furthermore, statistics vary by nation and are impacted by social acceptability, awareness, and the impact of ASD. Because of these factors, quoted numbers could not accurately reflect the actual prevalence of ASD in particular communities. Due mostly to differences in diagnostic procedures, societal norms, and other factors, the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the Arab world is not as thoroughly studied as in .certain other locations

Due in large part to differences in diagnosis procedures, social stigma, and a lack of awareness in some places, the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the Arab world is not as well–documented as in some other regions. Disparities in diagnosis standards, public perceptions of autism, and resource accessibility all contribute to these rates. In many Arab countries, the stigma associated with developmental abnormalities may also result in underreporting, which would impact overall prevalence rates. But thanks to initiatives to enhance early diagnosis, support services, and public awareness, there is an increasing awareness of ASD in the area. According to earlier research, the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has been gradually

increasing globally, the researcher indicates. Better diagnostic techniques are partly to blame for this growth

Diagnosis

Research shows that a diagnosis of ASD at age two can be very trustworthy, despite psychiatrists' previous reluctance to diagnose the disorder in (). By ٢٠٠٦; Lord et al., ٢٠٠٠ children under three (e.g., Charman et al., considering impairments as levels, it is easier to explain the behavior of individuals whose social problems fall short of what is required for a full (). ٢٠٠٦; Ronald et al. ٢٠٠٠ diagnosis (Constantino, Przybeck, Friesen, & Todd, It normally becomes easier to recognize ASD signs as kids become older and (٢٠٠٨ their symptoms become more apparent (Bishop, Luyster, Richler, & Lord,) devised a dual-level approach to assessment. All ١٩٩٩ Filipek et al. (children at risk for developmental delay must first be screened for characteristics associated with ASD. If they do not pass the initial screening, they must next undergo extensive diagnostic testing and evaluation. More recently, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released guidelines emphasizing the importance of ongoing developmental monitoring of all children during preventative care visits and recommending routine screening for autism at the (). The significance ٢٠٠٧-month well-baby visits (Johnson & Myers, ٢٤- and ١٨ of primary care doctors in detecting risk factors is also emphasized in the AAP .guidelines

The diagnostic evaluation depends on a whole evaluation process rather than the results of a single test or measurement. When possible, Ozonoff, () recommended that the diagnostic ٢٠٠٠ Goodlin-Jones, and Solomon (assessment of ASD be interdisciplinary and integrate information from various sources and situations. Because ASD is complicated, collaboration between specialists, parents, and educators is necessary for an effective diagnostic .process

Characteristics of Autism

Communication and behavioral difficulties are among the most important traits of autism. The American Psychiatric Association states that the three main traits of autism are "communication problems, difficulty with relating to and interacting with people, and repetitive body movements or behaviors" (Benson, , Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder). People who have autism ٢٠١٦ may also have sensitivities, learning disabilities, behavior issues, and trouble .reading facial expressions

This research study will concentrate on social skills, repetitive behaviors, and communication difficulties. These traits are important because they have a direct connection to boosting socialization and encouraging peer interaction in .autistic students

Repetitive Behaviors

Children with autism frequently exhibit repetitive activities, as they tend to thrive in environments that are structured and routine. Changes in habit might cause some children to become unhappy, so it's important to teach them how to), they may have ٢٠٠٤ handle these situations. According to Johnson (compulsive hobbies and frequently play with objects repetitively or not in the way it was intended. People with autism may find it difficult to see the primary .idea and the big picture due to their obsession with specific details

Social Skills

Children with autism frequently have a variety of social skill deficiencies as a result of the aforementioned difficulties. Social problems can be attributed to sensitivities, sensory integration abnormalities, repetitive habits, communication) asserts that as autistic ٢٠٠٤ difficulties, and learning disabilities. Johnson (children do not share interests with their peers, they frequently choose to play alone. They could shy away from touch and find it hard to read other people's), the most notable social ١٩٩٣ feelings. According to R. Koegel and Erva (impairments in children with autism include nonverbal cues that are irrelevant, improper facial expressions during conversation, loss of eye contact, and

inability to react to verbal cues. The techniques of modeling and initiation can be used to target these behaviors and teach suitable behaviors

Motivation

It seems that children with autism are less inclined to socialize with others. The drive to react to stimuli and to seek out engagement is known as motivation. It is defined as reaction, willingness, enthusiasm, desire in completing a task, and participation in the social interaction. The rise in response numbers and fall in latency are indicators of motivation (R. Koegel, 1999). Children with autism tend to react less to environmental cues and exhibit little motivation to participate, according to R. Koegel and Carter (1999). Children with autism exhibit lower levels of motivation because they believe the engagement offers less benefit. Disinterested behaviors in children include avoidance, lack of responsiveness, lack of motivation to continue an activity, and children with autism exhibit lower levels of motivation because they believe the engagement offers less benefit. Poor behaviors and a lack of desire to interact with others can be caused by a child's disinterests, which include noninvolvement, avoidance, lack of responsiveness, discontent, and a lack of desire to continue an activity (Dunlap & Koegel, 1990). It has been determined that antecedent variables—such as child choice, task variation, task maintenance, reinforcement of response attempts, and natural reinforcers—can improve responsiveness and reduce disruptive behavior (R. Koegel et al., 2001).

Early intervention goals

To help children with ASD acquire new abilities and get over a variety of developmental challenges, there are a number of therapies available. These therapies do not aim to treat ASD. Instead, they improve your child's ability to play and interact with others, perform well in school, and be independent in their daily lives by teaching them adaptive skills. We came to the conclusion that, when intervention starts sooner, between the ages of two and four, children with autism benefit more than older children receiving the same therapies, including

those with other neurodevelopmental disorders. Evidence from more recent studies suggests that earlier and more extensive treatment leads to better results. PRT corresponds to ABA guidelines and is a play-based approach. Instead than emphasizing specific behaviors, PRT concentrates on broader areas including motivation, self-management, reacting to different stimuli, and forming social connections. By focusing on these crucial areas, PRT helps kids with communication, general social skills, and adaptive gains. During a session, a therapist can place the child's favorite item out of reach but still .within easy sight

The child is encouraged to speak up and ask for the item in this kind of s and applied in both group ١٩٧٠ environment. PRT has been studied since the and one-on-one contexts. According to research, it might help kids become .more proficient communicators

Pivotal Response Treatment

؟ What is PRT

Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) is a type of positive behavior support that aims to improve functionality by focusing on key behavioral areas (Skokut e (٢٠٠٨al.,

), motivation, responsiveness to various ١٩٩٩ According to R. Koegel etal(. cues, self-initiations, and self-management are the primary key behaviors.

Modifications in these critical domains will result in improvements in the behaviors displayed by autistic children. PRT has its foundation on child-led .(٢٠١٥ development and ABA teaching techniques (Gengoux et al.,

The provision of services in the natural environment and motivation are the main goals of this naturalist behavioral intervention increase inspire A number of particular, research-backed techniques have been created for use in teaching sessions, including offering students a choice in the materials they use, alternating between new and previously acquired activities, varying up the tasks, employing natural rewards, and rewarding attempts at the activity

PRT'S MOTIVATIONAL ELEMENTS

Establishing Attention

Getting the child's attention and giving them clear instructions are crucial to). It will be ١٩٩٥ giving them opportunity to succeed (Koegel & Koegel, confirmed that the youngster understands that they are expected to accomplish the goal behavior if you make sure they are attending before giving them a learning opportunity and engaging in activities the child chooses or show interest). A child is more ٢٠٠٣ toward will typically increase attention (Koegel et al., likely to exhibit the appropriate target behavior and gain reinforcement when the prompt is given clearly while capturing their attention. This improves the child's (١٩٨٨ motivate to maintain working (Koegel et al.,

Providing Choices

In other words, a person will be better if he has some choice over the resources that are used in the learning environment. Numerous research works have demonstrated the significance of choice in enhancing performance in various domains, like (but not restricted to) first word learning), ٢٠٠١), language structure acquisition (Carter, ١٩٩٥ Koegel & Koegel,), articulation and ٢٠٠٢ playtime with toys (Reinhartsen, Garfinkle, & Wolery, (١٩٩٨ speech intelligibility (Koegel, Camarata, Koegel, Ben-Tall, & Smith,

Additionally useful in decreasing disruptive behaviors include child choice). A child's ١٩٩٨) and disruption (Moes, ١٩٩٧ (Morrison & Rosales-Ruiz, choice can be established by observing the toys she plays with, asking her what she would like to play with, and/or keeping an eye out for her when she approaches an activity

Intersperse Tasks

Studies reveal that learning occurs more quickly, disruptive behavior is reduced, and affect is better when previously learned, or maintenance, tasks are). When the ١٩٨٤ interspersed with the target, or acquisition, tasks (Dunlap, majority of children activities are simple, they progress more on the remaining, more difficult tasks on and behave less disruptively. It's possible hat this

circumstance generates behavioral growth or that, in general, success improves performance for everyone

Task variation

Repeatedly performing the same work can become boring, repetitious, and frustrating. As special educators, we frequently feel pressure to complete tasks as quickly as possible, which leads us to repeatedly concentrate on the same activity. However, when the work is changed, the results are better. That is, toddlers behave better and pick things up faster when a target job is given less often than usual. Rather than working repeatedly on a single target behavior, the trainer might, for instance, choose five activities to work on and present each new task no more than twice in a succession (Winterling, Dunlap, & O'Neill, 1987)

It has been demonstrated that task variation increases motivation According to R. Koegel et al. (2001), teaching new skills should start with previously acquired skills. In a same a direction, but switch up easier tasks with harder ones. A child is more likely to react to a new activity when they have completed a previously taught task well. Performance is frequently enhanced by adjusting task size and pace (R. Koegel et al., 1999). Changes in tasks lead to heightened enthusiasm and interest, which in turn raises motivation

Natural Rewards

We have a lot more engaged and enthusiastic learner when we listen to what the child chooses and then naturally provide that preferred object or activity. Research revealed that even more enhanced learning occurred when the reward was more closely linked to the child's respond to. (Williams, Koegel, & Egel, 1981)

If we are teaching a youngster how to open a lunch box, for instance, the child can be directly rewarded for his or her actions in addition to receiving a reward that is temporally closer to the activity when the candy is placed inside the lunch box. The child's actions naturally lead to the reward

Reward Attempts

Giving praise for any effort made is crucial to raising motivation

Practitioners and scholars felt that children with autism needed feedback that was very clear and simple early on in the history of therapies for ASD. Research showed that children learned to communicate verbally more quickly when they were rewarded for making a clear attempt, regardless of whether they pronounced words correctly or provided an adequate response compared to their prior attempt (Koegel, O'Dell, & Dunlap, 1988)

Questions:

To what extent does Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) help children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) develop their social communication skills

What effects does pivotal response treatment have over the long run on the course of a child's development if they have autism spectrum disorder

Do children with ASD benefit significantly from Pivotal Response Treatment in terms of behavioral outcomes like fewer repetitive behaviors and more functional play

Hypotheses:

Compared to children who get typical therapy procedures, children with autism spectrum disorder who receive Pivotal Response Treatment will have a stronger improvement in their social communication skills

Children with autism spectrum disorder will exhibit fewer repetitive and restricted behaviors when receiving pivotal response treatment

Children with autism spectrum disorder will have long-lasting changes in their social outcomes as a result of Pivotal Response Treatment

Methodology and procedures

procedures in light of the study's aims and questions

First: The methodological design of the study

After achieving homogeneity among the children in terms of mental age, chronological age, and economic and social level, the study sample of children with autism spectrum disorder underwent pre and post measurements using the

quasi-experimental approach, which is based on a single-experimental group design appropriate for the study's goals and questions

The quasi-experimental approach was used, which relies on a single-experimental group design appropriate to the nature of the aim, questions of the study, pre and post measurements were conducted on the study sample of children with Autism spectrum disorder after achieving homogeneity among the children in terms of the following variables: mental age, chronological age and economic and social level

Second: Study sample

Ten youngsters with autism spectrum disorder who were enrolled in the Kayan Tifl Association's New Vision organization made up the sample. Their years, and all of the ages in the Beheira Governorate varied from youngsters in the sample had the same values for the aforementioned characteristics

Requirements for choosing the research sample:

To choose the study sample and give information, the researcher went through a number of steps before putting the program into action. This is what it is: A report on the severity was among the documents the researcher examined from the autistic children's files

This was carried out at the Kayan Tifl Association's New Vision organization in the Beheira Governorate, with the help of each school's psychologist and specialist. Forty youngsters made up the entire sample that was counted from those schools. The researcher used a chronological age degrees to establish the ٨٠ and ٧٠ years and an IQ between ٨-٤ range of youngsters ١٠ study sample, which included

Sample selection stage

Forty children with autism spectrum disorder who relied on the test of exclusion made up the original community. Twelve youngsters were disqualified since they did not meet the requirements for the experimental sample's chronological and mental ages. Three kids were left out since they had

additional disabilities. Due to their irregular attendance at program sessions, two children were excluded. Because several parents disagreed with their children's kids since their reliance on the exclusion test, five children were eliminated. – .adaptive behavior scale ratings were really high. pre-calculation

The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale was one of the study's instruments and sample. matches for sociability and communication based on the findings of earlier research. The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition– ; Appendix B) was Survey Interview Form (Vineland–II; Sparrow et al., used to measure adaptive behavior. The Vineland–II is a structured interview that : motor skills, evaluates adaptive behavior in four areas from birth to age socializing, everyday living abilities, and communication. A brief description of the domains and their subdomains can be found in To evaluate adaptive functioning in one or more domains, examiners can administer a single domain, any combination of domains, or all domains necessary at a particular age to .provide an adaptive behavior composite score. for this study's objectives

Since the Vineland–II's motor skill domain was not intended for use with children older than six, only the communication, everyday living skills, and (socializing domains were taken into consideration (Sparrow et al.,

A researcher-prepared program.

based on the crucial response therapy strategy to enhance adaptive .behavior in a sample of kids with autism spectrum disorder

assesses adaptive behavior in a number of areas: The Vineland– Interaction. comprises subdomains such as Written (writing), Expressive .((speaking), and Receptive (understanding

Skills for Everyday Living. includes subdomains including Community (social .(and safety skills), Domestic (home chores), and Personal (self-care

socialization. includes subdomains such as coping skills, play and leisure, and interpersonal relationships. motor abilities. evaluated using subdomains such as gross motor and fine motor skills

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