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ABSTRACT

Introduction Empirical support regarding effective interventions for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) within a postsecondary community is limited. Video modeling, an empirically supported intervention for children and adolescents with ASD, may prove effective in addressing the needs of individuals with ASD in higher education. Objective: This study evaluated the effects of video modeling without additional treatment components to improve social-communicative skills, specifically, eye contact, facial expression, and conversational turn taking in college students with ASD.

Method This study utilized a multiple baseline single-case design across behaviors for two post-secondary students with ASD to evaluate the effects of the video modeling intervention. Results: Large effect sizes and statistically significant change across all targeted skills for one participant and eye contact and turn taking for the other participant were obtained.

Conclusion The use of video modeling without additional intervention may increase the social skills of post-secondary students with ASD. Implications for future research are discussed.

SUMMARY

Purpose of Study

> To test whether video modeling is an effective tool in the teaching of social skills in college students on the autism spectrum. They focused on the targeted skills of eye contact, facial expressions, and turn taking to two students with Asperger's.

Framework

> a. Video modeling has been used as an effective treatment for younger people, ages 6-17, with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to teach social skills.
> b. Video models provide instruction on social skills by modeling how to do a specific social skill effectively and then have the participate replicate the skill.

c. Although there are available accommodations that cater to college students' academic needs, there is a gap in accommodations to address assistance with social skill development to ensure these students succeed in college.
d. Social skills are one of the biggest stumbling blocks for college students with ASD.
e. Many students with ASD come to college with undeveloped social skills that n make it challenging to communicate effectively with their peers, professors, and other student affair officials.
f. Thus, when their social skills are underdeveloped, students with ASD encounter problems that span across multiple spheres of their lives.

Population and Sample

a. Two College students with Asperger's Syndrome (AS)
b. The two participants were students from a large southern university where they registered via the disability services office as having AS (a high functioning form of ASD.
c. The participants were recommended by the university's disability services office for the study.
d. Caleb was a 26-year-old Caucasian male with little social interaction; he had been working on BA since he was 18.
e. Sam was a 19-year-old Hispanic male in his freshman year who self-reported fewer deficits of social skills.

Overview of Methods

a. Autism Social Skills Profiles were filled out by the disability services staff, and was used as baseline data to determine social skill deficits among the participants
b. The Autism Social Skills Profile is typically used for 6-17-year-olds, the data collected was only used to provide general idea of baseline information.
c. The Autism Social Skills Profile included 49 questions in the form of likert scales. The observer completed the social skill profile for both participants.
d. The study lasted for five-weeks with two 50 min sessions a week.
e. Sessions were held in an on-campus classroom equipped with the technology for the videos.
f. Video models were made with each target skill in mind. The video models displayed a person in a mock conversation displaying the skill. After the video, the researcher gave both participants explicit instructions, both written

and spoken, about the skill. After the videos, participant engaged in conversation with each other and the conversation facilitators which is when the skills were measured.

    g. After the intervention, skill maintenance was monitored via scores completed by the observer.

i. Variables or Broad Topics

    a. Independent – video modeling sessions

    b. Dependent – three social skills: eye contact, facial expressions, and turn taking

    c. Control – sharing emotions and other information; not covered in video

        1. Dependent and control were measured in measured with Likert scales

ii. Findings/Results

    a. Statistical analysis was implemented for rate of improvement.

    b. Caleb - There was an improvement for all skills that were covered in the video modeling sessions (eye contact, facial expressions, and turn taking) There was additional growth observed in the maintenance data that was gathered after video modeling. The maintenance data revealed that the video model was more of a tool of long term effects rather than a temporary correction.

    c. Sam - The baseline levels for each skill were much higher than Caleb's baseline of mastery in social skills. However, Caleb displayed improvement in all three skill sets. These results reveal that the intervention of video modeling is effective for individuals at various levels of social skill development.

    d. Additionally, the control skill of shared emotion also improved which could be due to the increase in the other skills or in the social interaction that the sessions provided.

iii. Implications

This study was adequate in collecting fundamental knowledge on potential interventions to address development of social skills for college students with AS.

CRITIQUES AND LIMITATIONS

Conceptual

Mason, R. A., Rispoli, M., Ganz, J. B., Boles, M. B., & Orr, K. (2012). Effects of video modeling on communicative social skills of college students with asperger syndrome. *Developmental Neurorehabilitation, 15*(6), 425-434.

The study used AS and ASD interchangeably without acknowledging potential differences between the two groups.

Data

i.   The sample size of 2 was not a large enough sample to generalize the results to a larger population.
ii. Also, limitation as both participants were male.

Analysis

Both the profile used for baseline and the data collection used likert scales. Likert scales can be a subjective way of measuring data as they filter information through the view, ideas, perceptions of who is completing the scale and this can easily skew data. Also, the baseline data of social skills was based on researcher observations.

Interpretation

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Application

The reality of implementing this form of intervention may not be immediately possible due to institutional disability service offices lacking man power to administer such intense training.

FOLLOW-UP

Little Questions

How well would this generalize to other skills that weren't tested? Did the small size of only two students per intervention meeting impact the extent to which students were able to develop their social skills?

Big Questions

The use of video modeling, could this be implement with the College Autism Network (CAN)? CAN is involved developing trainings on various topics. Therefore, should CAN include student trainings like social skills modeling videos? Or, should we be working with student groups in order to facilitate the creation of these videos and help organize group sessions for implementation?

Next Steps

Mason, R. A., Rispoli, M., Ganz, J. B., Boles, M. B., & Orr, K. (2012). Effects of video modeling on communicative social skills of college students with asperger syndrome. *Developmental Neurorehabilitation, 15*(6), 425-434.

a. More research with a larger sample and a greater variety of skills is needed. The larger sample should include females and those with other gender identities as well as males, and just generally more people to ensure the results aren't due to chance. It is possible that other social skills are not so easily taught through video modeling and would thus need further investigation on the best methods to convey the development of those social skills.

b. The implementation of social skills within colleges and universities can be an ongoing treatment similar to a regular accommodation, but would involve more individual effort as well as group sessions.