

Summary of Research Findings

Teacher rating of academic skills and academic enablers of children on the autism spectrum

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Overview

- We asked teachers to rate the children's academic skills and factors which may contribute to academic outcomes for students on the autism spectrum.
- We found (a) better language comprehension skills, (b) attending an inclusive school setting, (c) higher levels of student motivation and (c) lower ratings on student's interpersonal skills predicted better academic skill outcomes.
- It is important to understand how different factors may support and hinder academic skills to better support academic achievement in children on the autism spectrum.

Why did we do this study?

- Research has found children on the autism spectrum are underperforming at school. This has long term effects and can impact on the child's future work opportunities.

What did we do?

- Teachers who had a student on the autism spectrum in the LASA project were invited to participate in this project.
- We had 113 teachers complete a measure rating the student's academic skills and factors that may relate to academic skills.

What did we find?

- A number of factors predicted academic skills. These included attending an inclusive education setting, children with higher levels of language comprehension, higher levels of self-motivation, and children with poorer social interaction skills.
- Poorer social interaction skills predicted better maths and critical thinking skills.

What does this mean?

- Factors that support academic achievement in children on the autism spectrum may be different to non-autistic children.
- We need to better understand how social interaction skills at school impact on specific areas of academic outcomes.
- We need to explore other factors which may be supporting or hindering children's participation and engagement at school.
- Once we know more specific information about what and how factors impact on children's academic outcomes, we can develop better support strategies and interventions that could be implemented

Where are we sharing this study?

This research has been published in the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* and is available by putting "<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1881626>" into google.