

Sensory integration therapy in a sample of Egyptian children with autism spectrum disorder: A prospective interventional study

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Statement of the Problem: Sensory processing disturbances have been noticed since the first descriptions of autism spectrum disorders (ASD), yet it is only the Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders 5th edition (DSM-5) that includes sensory problems as the core symptom and a diagnostic criterion. Sensory integration therapy (SIT) implies an active participation in multisensory environment sensory rooms. It was found that it helps to reduce behavioural problems in many individuals with a developmental disability including ASD, thus, decreasing functioning impairment. However, the neurobiology of atypical sensory processing in ASD have been less addressed in the literature, also use of SIT in ASD was less studied in Egyptian children. The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of SIT on the severity of symptoms and signs of ASD and in improving sensory processing modalities in a sample of Egyptian children, also to search for possible socio-demographic or clinical variables that may be associated with better outcome. **Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** A prospective interventional study performing a 12 week sensory integration program to 30 children (3 to 10 years) diagnosed with ASD using Schedule for Affective disorders and Schizophrenia for School-Age Children- Present and Lifetime Version (K-SADS-PL) and with IQ above 60 using Stanford Binet intelligence scale with different socio-demographic and clinical variability. Assessment and comparison of outcomes before and after intervention by Sensory profile caregiver questionnaire and Childhood autism rating scale (CARS). **Findings:** Sensory profile caregiver questionnaire and CARS scores were decreased after intervention mainly in mild to moderate ASD, especially in Emotional reactivity, Inattention and distractibility, body position and movement including stereotypic movements, visual processing and activity level. Using multimodal approach proved better outcomes. **Conclusion & Significance:** Sensory integration therapy is effective in improving severity of symptoms and signs of ASD and multimodal approach was associated with better outcome for multisensory processing abnormalities.

Biography

Rahaf Mohamed AbdelRahman is an Egyptian specialist neuropsychiatrist received Bachelor degree in Medicine and Surgery (MBSc), Master degree(MSc) in Neuropsychiatry faculty of medicine Ain Shams university, currently student of Medical Doctorate of Psychiatry studying sensory integration therapy. Worked as resident in department of neurology and psychiatry at Ain shams university hospitals for 3 years .Works as assistant lecturer of psychiatry for 2 and half years till present, at Okasha institute of psychiatry, Ain shams university hospitals dealing with Adult and Child psychiatric and Addiction units, working in emergency rooms, inpatient wards, outpatient units and sensory rooms in the institute. Choice of child psychiatry speciality due to the idea that targeting them improves quality of life and functioning of more adults in future. Being a college staff member in a leading university in the Middle East, research for future studies and implements is the main passion and goal of her work.

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