



STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENTS WITH ASD AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL CENTRE

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Resumen

El trastorno del espectro autista (TEA) se caracteriza por los déficits en la comunicación e interacción social en múltiples contextos (DSM-5, 2013). Es un trastorno de la infancia, por ello los niños afectados, comparten contextos sociales y educativos con compañeros neurotípicos, los cuales, según la literatura, suelen rechazarlos o ignorarlos (Humphrey y Symes, 2011). El objetivo general de este trabajo es estudiar las relaciones sociales de 3 clases de secundaria, en cada una de ellas se encuentra incluido 1 escolar con TEA. Los objetivos específicos son estudiar la evolución de la clasificación sociométrica a lo largo del curso académico de los niños con TEA y analizar el conocimiento del trastorno por parte de sus compañeros neurotípicos. Para ello, se utilizó una muestra de 83 estudiantes, 53 de ellos corresponden a dos grupos de 1º ESO y otro de 30 estudiantes de 3º ESO. Se escogió esta muestra al haberseles administrado un sociograma previamente a las sesiones de sensibilización. Tras 7 meses, se les administró un cuestionario para evaluar sus conocimientos sobre el TEA y un sociograma. Los datos se analizaron mediante el Sociomet y el SPSS, para realizar las comparaciones grupales. Los resultados muestran que los estatus sociales de las personas con TEA suelen ser más estables cuanto más convivencia hay y que suelen tener un estatus social bajo. Respecto a los resultados del cuestionario, no se encontraron diferencias significativas. En general, todos creen que las personas con TEA son afectuosos y capaces de trabajar en equipo. Lo peor juzgado es su capacidad para comprender frases con doble sentido y sus habilidades sociales. Los estudiantes rechazados son los que más de acuerdo están con que las personas con TEA tienen menos habilidades sociales. Por último, los conocimientos acerca del TEA se estabilizan para todos los tipos sociométricos en 3º ESO.

Palabras claves: TEA, tipos sociométricos, conocimientos sobre el TEA.

Abstract

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is characterized by deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts (DSM-5, 2013). Since it is a childhood disorder, children with an ASD share social and educative contexts with neurotypical partners, who usually reject or neglect them (Humphrey and Symes, 2011). The main object of this work is checking the relationships in the three secondary school groups, that in each one there is a student with an ASD (level 1). The specific objectives are: 1. Sociometric study of students with an ASD throughout the academic year and 2. Analyse the ASD's knowledge of neurotypical peers. For this, it was used a sample of 83 students, of which 53 students belongs to two groups of 1st of Secondary and 30 students belongs to a group of 3rd of Secondary. This sample was chosen because they did a sociogram before awareness sessions. They were administered a questionnaire for evaluate their knowledge of ASD and a sociogram seven months later. The data was analysed by the Sociomet and the SPSS to compare groups. The results show that the social status of people with ASD tend to be more stable when there is more coexistence and that they usually have low social status. Regarding questionnaire's results, it was not found any significant differences. In general, the students believe that people with an ASD are affectionate and they are capable of working in team. What they judge worse is their capacity for understand phrases with double meaning and their social skills. Rejected students agree more that the people with ASD have fewer social skills than neurotypical people. Last but not least, knowledge of ASD was stabilized by all sociometric types in 3rd of Secondary.

Key words: ASD, sociometric types, knowledge of ASD.

INTRODUCTION

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts. Moreover, it's characterized by the presence of repetitive patterns of behaviour and affected sensory patterns (DSM-5, 2013). Since it is childhood disorder, children with an ASD share social and educative contexts with neurotypical partners.

The literature of peer interaction shows negative social results (rejected or neglected) to students with an ASD (Humphrey y Symes, 2011). Furthermore, The lack of knowledge about this disorder produces a low level of acceptance and knowledge of difficulties by neurotypical partners.

The main objective of this work is checking the relationships in the three secondary school groups, that in each one there is a student with an ASD. The specific objectives are:

1. Sociometric study of students with an ASD throughout the academic year
2. Analyze the ASD's knowledge of neurotypical peers.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

Eighty-three students in an ordinary school whose age is in a range between 11 to 15 years old:

Group D: N=25 1st of Secondary (11/14) (girls/boys).

Group F: N=28 1st of Secondary (16/12).

Group C: N=30 3rd of Secondary (19/11).

There is a student with an ASD (level 1) in each group.

MATERIALS

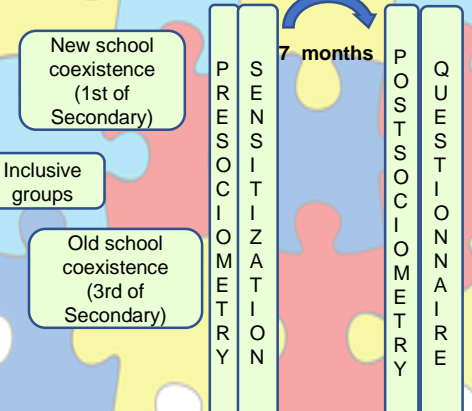
Sociomet (García-Bacete, & González, 2010).

Knowledge's questionnaire of ASD.

STATISTIC ANALYSIS

SPSS to compare groups.

PROCEDURES



RESULTS

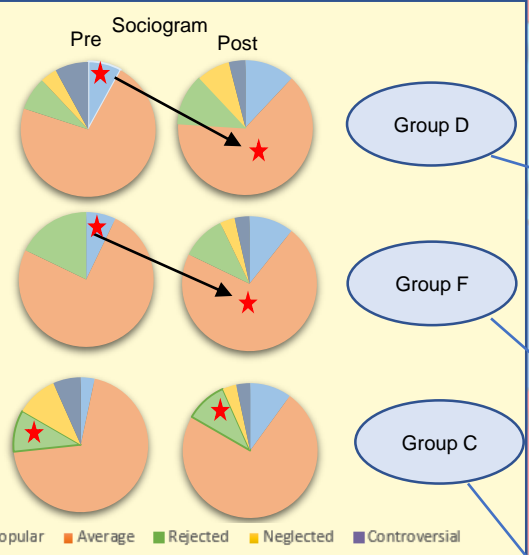


Figure 1. Evolution of the sociometric classification

Table 1. Averages and standard deviation of questionnaire's items.

Group	Team work	Affection	Comprehension	Social Skills
D (n=22)	2,54 (0,67)	2,73 (0,62)	3,61 (0,91)	3,16 (0,63)
F (n=24)	2,54 (0,69)	2,76 (0,78)	3,47 (0,72)	3,10 (0,50)
C (n=28)	2,88 (0,48)	2,74 (0,69)	3,35 (1,16)	3,21 (0,53)

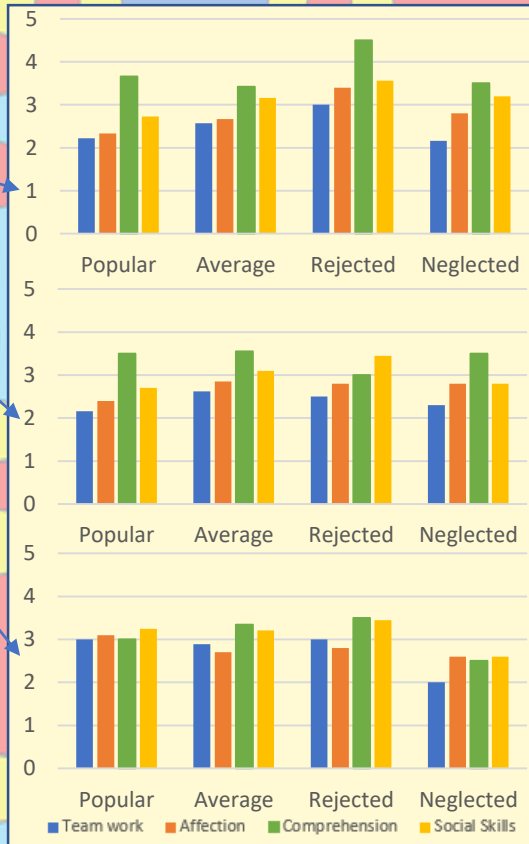


Figure 2. Questionnaire's results according to the sociometric type

DISCUSSION

The study of sociometric classification's evolution of students with and ASD (Figure 1) concluded that ignorance causes an instability of the status as it is checked in the two students with an ASD of 1st of Secondary. This study seems to show that more coexistence period time between students entails more stable social status. In addition, the social status of the students with an ASD tends to be rejected or neglected. This has been proved at the group C and it could be expected at groups D and F in the future. In fact, the social status of the two students with ASD of 1st of Secondary has changed significantly in the last seven months.

Regarding the questionnaire, the knowledge about people with an ASD is similar in the three groups (Table 1) and in the sociometric types (Figure 2) (without significant differences). Students believe people with an ASD can work in teams and they are affectionate. What they judge worse is the capacity of understand the double meanings and the jokes of the language, and social skills (make friends, dialogue, etc.). It should be said that rejected students agree more that the people with ASD have fewer social skills than neurotypical people. Moreover, the knowledge was stabilized in all sociometric types of the group C.

As limitations it should be noted that this work has been performed during daily teaching activity. This caused a quasi-experimental characteristics study. These results can not be generalized to any group of adolescents, since these students had received awareness sessions on ASD prior to results.

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