

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF IMPLEMENTING EVIDENCE BASED INTERVENTIONS FOR PRESCHOOLERS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

STUDENT: GANIAH I. AIN

DEGREE: Doctorate of Education in Special Education

COLLEGE: Teachers College

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Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that leads to critical behavioral, communication, and social difficulties. U.S. legislation requires educators to implement evidence based interventions (EBIs) when teaching children with disabilities. Certain EBIs have been identified as the most effective early intervention techniques to use when teaching social communication skills to preschool children with disabilities. In this study, the social communication skill set needed by preschool children with ASD is reviewed, along with a description of the key EBIs used to teach social communication skills to preschoolers with ASD. The purpose of this study was to identify the extent to which the teachers of preschool children with ASD were trained to implement current EBIs for supporting the development of social communication skills in this population. The study also examined the extent to which these teachers were implementing these EBIs, their perceptions of their competence in implementing such interventions, and the barriers they encountered along the way.

Keywords: autism spectrum disorder, ASD, social communication skills, evidence based interventions, EBIs.