ABSTRACT

Distinguishing problem behaviours from deficits in skill behaviours precede planning or implementation of intervention programs for children with autism. This study seeks to examine the impact of a customised behavioural intervention on problem behaviours in children with autism, as distinguished from skill deficits. The investigation covers the distinction of skill behaviours from problem behaviours in autism and the relationship between both. It examines the reduction of problem behaviour with a consequent increase in skill behaviour. Associated strategies and methods are also discussed.

Behavioral interventions applied on children with autism cover two aspects: (a) acquisition, maintenance or enhancement of positive asset driven skill behaviours; and, (b) reduction, elimination or extinguishing of negative problem behaviours. This study examined both these aspects. The results highlight that with increase in skill behaviours, there is concurrent decrease in problem behaviour and vice-versa. The study also reiterates the fact that, behaviour therapy, or for that matter any therapy intending to improve a child with autism, should be customised or tailor-made according to each child’s need. No two children with autism are similar. Hence, the therapy goals and strategies for intervention cannot be the same. This thesis is written according to the format recommended by APA-6th version.