



Too Anxious to Achieve? A Quantitative Investigation of Anxiety and Academic Achievement in Autistic Students

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Autistic children are known to be at significantly increased risk for developing impairing levels of anxiety, with anxiety prevalence rates of approximately 40% amongst autistic children, compared to approximately 10 – 15% for non-autistic children. Autistic children have also demonstrated a tendency to underperform academically, with particular weaknesses in areas including reading comprehension, written expression, and problem solving. In the non-autistic population, a relationship has been established between anxiety and academic outcomes, with increased anxiety predicting higher rates of below-grade-level academic performance, higher rates of school failure, and higher rates of academic skill impairment.

This research project has investigated anxiety and academic achievement in a sample of autistic students, with the primary aim of identifying any association that exists between these factors. This presentation will present data from the research project, including data regarding autistic students' experiences of anxious symptomatology as reported by the students and their parents, as well as data regarding the students' academic achievement.

This research project will increase our understanding of the extent, severity, and impact of anxious symptomatology experienced by autistic students, which may assist future efforts to prevent and treat anxiety. The project will also add to our knowledge around academic achievement in autistic students, which may facilitate efforts to better support these students academically.