

DEVELOPING SENSORY INTEGRATION EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**Carolyn R. Mahinay**
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This study was conducted to determine the development of a sensory integration (SI) education program for parents who are having children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The respondents were composed of (15) parents with children diagnosed with ASD and (5) pediatric SI experts. The study utilized descriptive developmental research method. Researcher-made questionnaire was the main tool in gathering data. Weighted mean was the statistical tool used for analysis and interpretation of results. Data analysis revealed these findings: 1. Respondents displayed a high-level satisfaction among respondents with the SI program (overall weighted mean: 3.15). 2. Respondents identified gaps in the comprehensive integration program, categorizing these issues as serious problems (overall weighted mean: 3.23). 3. Respondents agreed with the recommendations to address the gaps in the comprehensive SI program (overall weighted mean: 3.38). 4. Respondents exhibited high level of general acceptability of the comprehensive SI program (overall weighted mean: 3.35). The following conclusions were drawn, (1) Parents play a vital role in their child's behavior, encompassing improvements in attention, reduced sensory sensitivities, enhanced social interactions, and adaptive skills. (2) The primary challenge identified by respondents emphasizes the potential sensory overload experienced by children with ASD outside the therapy setting. (3) The respondents' recommendations on addressing the gaps in the comprehensive SI education program received a high level of support. (4) The respondents emphasize the importance of recognizing the uniqueness of each child with ASD and acknowledging diverse sensory needs and responses to interventions. To develop this kind of education program for parents, active involvement of parents, continuous professional development, close healthcare professional collaboration, increase program availability can significantly enhance the programs level of satisfaction, and acceptability. This study is believed to be a beneficial reference in developing an enhanced SI education program for parents of children with ASD.

Keywords: Sensory Integration, Parent Education Program, Autism Spectrum Disorder