

Abstract

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is a common and often highly debilitating neurodevelopmental condition. Individuals with ASD have a distinctive atypical pattern of visual perception and information processing. Before, many of students with ASD were placed in special settings. This is no longer the case. Today, these students are in mainstream schools under Integrated Education (IE) as advocated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. This study used the Rey-Osterreith Complex Figure (ROCF) to examine the organization and planning processes of students with ASD and typically developing controls (TD). Twenty-four students aged 13-18 years (average 15.5 with 15 boys and 9 girls) with 12 students with ASD and 12 TD controls were recruited in the study. Results showed no significant difference in overall performance on the ROCF between ASD and TD students except for the Organization scores in Junior Forms. The findings define a developmental pattern in which strategy formation and planning abilities have not yet been acquired in the students with ASD until they reached Senior Forms. Students with ASD in Junior Forms may need more attention and teachers are suggested to provided tailor-made teaching materials in order to assist the learning of these students.

Keywords: autism; organization; planning; ROCF; integrated education