

The use of CranioSacral therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Benefits from the viewpoints of parents, clients, and therapists

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Abstract

Objectives

The objectives of this preliminary study were to explore: the use of CranioSacral Therapy for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder, the demographics of participants, and the retrospective interpretation of reported changes related to the intervention. Participants included therapists, parents, and clients.

Methods

Recruitment of participants was conducted through electronic social and professional networks. Online questionnaire surveys were provided. Demographic questions were posed to understand both the extent of clinical use and the rationales for such treatment, and surveys were unique to each subject groups. All participants were given a 20-item functional behavior checklist as a means to measure their perception of change attributed to this intervention. Open-ended comments were also encouraged to explore perspectives from their experiential treatments. The Qualitative data collected was analyzed via Inductive Content Analysis. The data was stored on excel and analyzed manually and independently by all 3 authors.

Results

A total of 405 people responded to the recruitments and of the participants who completed surveys, 264 were therapists and 124 parents. Only a small sampling of clients responded. The demographics of professionals using CST for ASD, their level of CST training, and their qualifications to work with ASD were reflected. Demographics and referral sources of parents, and other details of their experiences, were surveyed. Perceived changes to the use of CST were explored through analysis of responses to both the Likert scale as well as the open comments.

Conclusions

This preliminary study introduces the concept of CranioSacral Therapy as a treatment option for symptoms associated with ASD. Its clinical use has been available for three decades but few empirical studies exist. The results of the survey suggest that CST is already being professionally recommended as a treatment. This study found that there were positive responses observed by all 3 targeted groups leading to the authors concluding that there is worthy cause to further investigate how CST benefits Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

[http://www.bodyworkmovementtherapies.com/article/S1360-8592\(16\)30098-5/abstract](http://www.bodyworkmovementtherapies.com/article/S1360-8592(16)30098-5/abstract)