

Assessing Social Validity of Educational Interventions for Children with Autism

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Abstract

Autism affects an estimated one in thirty-six children in the US. This highlights the importance of conducting research pertaining to effective instrumental practices with the intention of bringing an increased focus to this subject field. The project at hand conducts a scoping review of the social validity relevant to ASD intervention studies. As such, the research project will undergo four stages of a scoping review, including identification, screening, eligibility, and a quantitative synthesis. Many evidence-based instructional strategies have been proven helpful, but ultimately, these interventions are only useful if consumers are willing to use them and are socially valid. Consumers can include educators, caregivers, and the children themselves. The reason for social validity assessments is to anticipate if an intervention is going to be rejected before it is used. This study aims to determine what proportion of studies include social validity assessments, what methods researchers use to assess social validity, and whose perspectives are represented in the social validity assessments. The results of this research project are currently ongoing as we conduct the data extraction process.

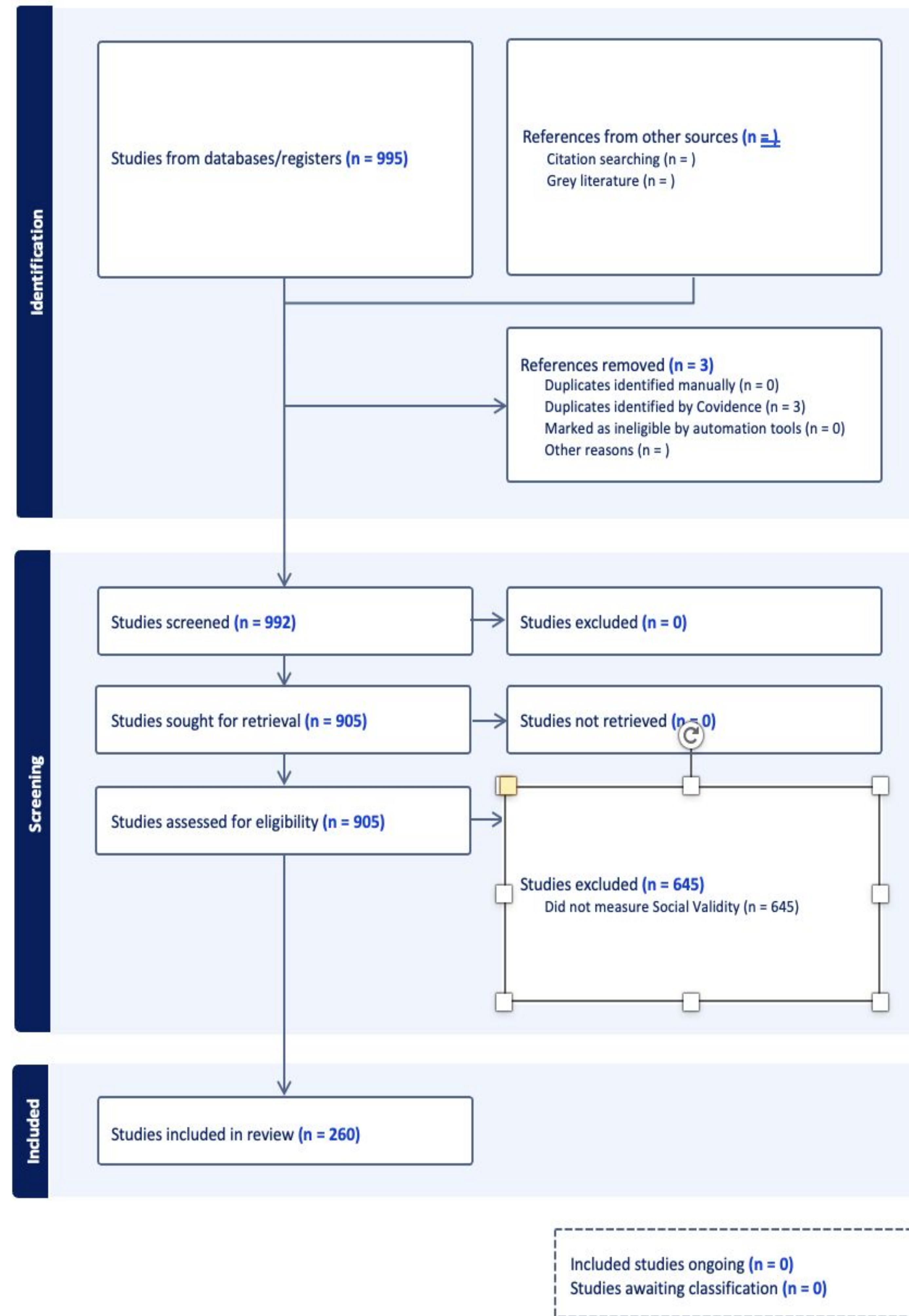
Methods

- First, we downloaded PDFs of the articles detailing the Evidence-Based Practices for children, youth, and young adults with autism in the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence & Practice (NCAEP) report. These were put into a Zotero library.
- Next, we moved into the screening & eligibility of the scoping review. All of the PDF's were transferred into the review software Covidence for full text screening. We screened each article and assessed if social validity was measured in the article.
- We searched the methods section for a social validity section, and looked for key words such as “social validity, socially valid, survey, interview, and Likert.” We only included EBPs that measured social validity.
- Next, we began the data extraction step. This involves using a coding manual to look for specific data within the included articles. That date we are extracting includes year of publication, participant age, interventionist, setting, social validity measure, purpose of assessment, and informant.

Results

- Out of almost 1000 articles that we screened, only about 300 of them tested for social validity
- This is the PRISMA flow chart that shows our progress so far.

UROOP Social Validity of Autism EBPs Project



Discussion

- We have begun the data extraction step, and quantitative synthesis will begin afterwards. Since such a small percentage of the articles in the Evidence-Based Report included social validity, around 30%, this shows how a majority of researchers who conduct studies with interventions do not include the assessment of social validity.
- Social validity is very important to test, as it demonstrates whether or not the intervention is socially valid and if the consumers are willing to use them and are accepted. Our preliminary data shows a low percentage of studies assessing social validity.
- We hope that future researchers conducting interventions will begin to assess social validity more often.

References

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