Self-Monitoring Behaviors in Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Abstract

Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder have difficulties with on-task behavior skills. The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of self-monitoring checklists to improve student behavioral outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Managing behaviors can be one of the biggest challenges faced by educators. Students with ADHD are more likely to encounter difficulties controlling their impulsivities than their non-disabled peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). One student's behavior can impact an entire classroom. These behaviors may affect how much and how well students learn and often impedes students' engagement in the learning process. They tend to encounter difficulties with task initiation and completion and often produce low quality work.

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to explore whether self-monitoring strategies can decrease non-conforming behaviors in students with ADHD. Self-monitoring interventions may have the potential to help students assume responsibility and become more active participants in their learning. Students exhibiting off-task behaviors should be held accountable for self-regulating their own behavior. The following research

question will be investigated: How effective is self-monitoring in improving behavior in students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?

Literature Review

Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are often characterized as having difficulties with executive functioning skills (Graham-Day, Garner, & Hsin, 2010). Executive functioning is a comprehensive term that is used as an umbrella to describe a set of cognitive abilities that control an individual's actions. Oftentimes, students with ADHD exhibit difficulties following instructions and maintaining on-task behavior. Their inability to control their impulses and self-regulate predisposes them to interpersonal conflicts and often creates challenges within the learning environment.

The ability to self-regulate and understand behavior is a critical component in child development and learning (Harris, Friedlander, & Saddler, 2005). Studies indicate that on-task behavior can be effectively increased through self-management procedures. Self-management is a "personal application of behavior change tactics that produces a desired change in behavior" (Graham-Day et al., 2010, p.206). Proper implementation of these strategies increases the probability of achieving desired behavioral outcomes (Graham-Day et al., 2010).

Studies have indicated that self-monitoring is an effective intervention tool for behavior modification. Holifield, Goodman, Hazelkorn, and Heflin (2014) state that, "self-monitoring procedures have been found to be effective in increasing attention, academic productivity and accuracy, reading comprehension, and on-task behavior in students with learning disabilities and behavioral disorders" (p.230). These procedures

increase pro-social behaviors and actively engage students in the learning process by requiring them to be held accountable for their actions.

In conclusion, the majority of the research reviewed in the literature indicated that self-monitoring including reinforcement conditions were significantly effective in increasing on-task behaviors in students with ADHD. Self-management procedures bring awareness and assist in adapting behavior. Furthermore, it promotes autonomy and teaches students to engage in positive behaviors that can improve academic performance.

Research Methodology

The action research will take place in a 2nd – 5th grade ESE resource room during English Language Arts in a charter school located in Miami-Dade County. Five students identified as having ADHD will participate in this study. Three of the students in the study are male (two in 3rd grade and one in 5th grade) and two are female (one in 3rd grade and one in 4th grade). Of the five students, three are medicated and two are not. All of the participants are Hispanic. The special education teacher will be responsible for the implementation and collection of data.

Data will be collected on the following variables: (a) Number of problem behaviors displayed before the implementation of the intervention. (b) Number of problem behaviors displayed post intervention. (c) number of times the student exhibited the appropriate behavior. (d) feedback given by the student regarding the intervention.

Results

After completing my research, I anticipate that students with ADHD will improve on-task behavior skills and academic achievement using a self-monitoring checklist.

Data and analysis will take place from January 4, 2016 to March 1, 2016. Research findings will be available in time for the conference and will be presented.

Implications

Impulsivity and lack of on-task behavior skills has implications for students with ADHD. These students tend to become easily distracted. Self-monitoring checklists may be an intervention educators can use to enhance student performance. These strategies require students to be active participants in the intervention.

At times, teachers lack the necessary knowledge and resources needed to implement strategies to help increase on-task behavior skills in students with ADHD. Through my research, I hope to assist teachers implement self-monitoring techniques that lead to increased pro-social behaviors and desired outcomes. Furthermore, I would like to create a support structure to help these students improve their academic performance through collaborative efforts.

References

Graham-Day, K. J., Gardner, R. I., & Hsin, Y. (2010). Increasing on-task behaviors of high school students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Is it enough?. *Education & Treatment of Children (ETC)*, *33*(2), 205-221.

Harris, K. R., Friedlander, B. D., & Saddler, B. (2005). Self-monitoring of attention versus self-monitoring of academic performance: Effects among students with ADHD in the general education classroom. *Journal Of Special Education, 39*(3), 145-156.

Holifield, C., Goodman, J., Hazelkorn, M., & Heflin, L. (2010). Using self-monitoring to increase attending to task and academic accuracy in children with autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 25*(4)230-238.