Preliminary Analyses of the Social Participation Observation Tool (SPOT) For First and Second Graders

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Background

- Participation or “involvement in a life situation” (WHO, 2001) is an important outcome for children with and without disabilities.
- Environmental factors including school & physical environments, temporal organization & assistance can support or hinder participation.
- Hence, it is vital to assess environment together with participation.
- Currently very few observational tools available which combine the 2 elements.

Quantitative Results

Inter-rater Percent Agreement
- Participation without Qualifiers: 91.67%
- Participation with Qualifiers: 58.33%

Participation with Qualifiers: 58.33%
- Environmental Scores: 91.67%

Frequency of Environmental Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>54.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
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Qualitative Results

*Note: Insufficient responses for EM, N & O categories may be due to research being conducted in one setting.

Themes for Equal Participation
- High Level of Engagement
- Peer Interactions
- Active Rule Following
- Participates Despite Barrier
- Inactive Rule Following

Suggestions for Improvement

- Clear explanation about use of qualifiers may increase inter-rater agreement.
- Consultation with classroom teacher to understand expectations of the activity and to clarify questions, may improve accuracy of rating.
- Future research could include a larger sample and a variety of settings which may increase range of responses.
- Future research could also evaluate sensitivity of tool over time and discriminate validity.

Practical Utility

- Rationale for ratings provides self check for raters; makes tool user friendly.
- Observer’s reaction column on SPOT keeps the rater objective.
- Use of observable behaviors column on SPOT helps to arrive at an overall participation score.
- Barriers/supports helped with developing rationale for environmental ratings.
- Environmental rating helped to apply qualifiers to the participation rating.

Methods

Data Collection
- Convenience sample of 1st & 2nd grade students from one classroom.
- 6 Occupational Therapy Graduate students divided into 3 pairs conducted 4 observations each, at morning meeting, meal time or outside time.

Inter-rater percent agreement was evaluated using (# of matches)/(# of observations)*100
- Qualitative data were coded and analyzed for frequency; codes were grouped into themes.
- Equal participation qualifiers (E+/E/E) were analyzed to see how each rating fit into themes.
- Environmental ratings were analyzed for positive and negative words/phrases.
- Percentage of positive words per rating was identified.
- Feedback/comments were analyzed to evaluate utility and suggestions for improvement of the tool.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Participation Rating
- E+ rating is more highly associated with “high level of engagement” and “peer interactions.”
- E and E- are more highly associated with “active rule following.”
- E and E- rationale also include disqualifier themes for why an E+ was not given or why an E- was given.

Analysis of Environmental Rating

Percentage of Positive words/phrases:
- 5: 75%
- 4: 66%
- 3: 57%

Analysis of Participation Rating

References