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ABSTRACT

In this field-based study, functional behavior assessment was incorporated into the student assistance team (SAT) process. The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine whether team members could identify the correct function of behavior by selecting related interventions. Further, the extent to which FBA information collected at each stage of the SAT process contributed to the selection of interventions related to the verified function was evaluated. Participants from a rural, Midwestern elementary school rated potential interventions following each stage of a structured SAT and FBA process. The results were mixed but showed that SAT members were unable to consistently identify interventions related to verified behavior functions. While these results were consistent with those found by Myers and Holland, several factors such as FBA training, multiple functions of behavior and acceptability should be considered in future studies as key variables that influence the use of FBA within the SAT process. (Contains 32 references and 2 tables.) (GCP)

Running head: INCORPORATING FBA INTO STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAMS

Working Toward Improvements in the Student Assistance Team (SAT) Process: A Preliminary Investigation Incorporating Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) into a Structured Team Process

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Abstract

In this field-based study, functional behavior assessment was incorporated into the student assistance team (SAT) process. The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine whether team members could identify the correct function of behavior by selecting related interventions. Further, the extent to which FBA information collected at each stage of the SAT process contributed to the selection of interventions related to the verified function was evaluated. Participants from a rural, Midwestern elementary school rated potential interventions following each stage of a structured SAT and FBA process (Doggett, Edwards, Moore, Tingstrom & Wilczynski, 2001). The results were mixed but showed that SAT members were unable to consistently identify interventions related to verified behavior functions. While these results were consistent with those found by Myers and Holland (2000), several factors such as FBA training, multiple functions of behavior and acceptability should be considered in future studies as key variables that influence the use of FBA within the SAT process.

Working Toward Improvements in the Student Assistance Team Process: A Preliminary Investigation Incorporating FBA into a Structured Team Process

There are many names for teams of teachers and other staff members in schools that meet for the purpose of helping students. These teams have names such as Teacher Assistance Teams (Chalfant & Van Dusen Pysh & Moultrie, 1979), Intervention Assistance Teams (Graden, 1989), Child Study Teams (Eidle, Truscott, Meyers & Boyd, 1998), Pre-referral Intervention Teams (Graden, Casey & Christenson, 1985) and Student Assistance Teams (Lee & Boughtin, 1999). While it is true that the goals and composition of these teams do differ somewhat (Safran & Safran, 1996), they are all designed to help children and their teachers with goal of improving learning or the learning environment.

Prereferral Intervention Teams: Failed Promise?

The promise of the team process hinges on early detection of learning or behavior problems by the classroom teacher (Eidle, Truscott, Meyers & Boyd, 1998) and referral to the team. Then, a group of educators, a school psychologist and other professional staff use their pooled expertise in a group problem-solving and collaborative consultation format (Kruger, Struzziero, Watts & Vacca, 1995) to devise new and unique interventions for the referring teacher to use in the classroom. These interventions are frequently based on an ecological orientation and when consistently implemented by the teacher, may reduce or eliminate the learning or behavioral problem (Myers & Kline, 2001). In this way, the child would be helped in the regular classroom without introducing the stigma of special education involvement. Theoretically, children helped via the SAT would be placed back on a trajectory toward successful school attainment in accord with his/her capabilities. Further, hit rates for comprehensive evaluations would improve thereby increasing the efficiency of the comprehensive evaluation process (Chalfant & Van Dusen Pysh,

1989; Short & Talley, 1996) and reduce special education placement rates (Bahr, 1994). Some related effects proposed from the effective use of the team process include; 1) a prevention perspective designed to correct learning or behavior problems by early detection and referral to the team (Ross, 1995); 2) improvement in teachers' skills in problem solving (Flugum & Reschly, 1994); 3) better teacher attitudes toward the referred student (Nelson, Smith, Taylor, Dodd & Reavis, 1991); 4) teachers' feeling of support (Ross, 1995) and; 5) helping referring teachers to clarify their goals for the student (Logan, Hansen, Nieminen & Wright, 2001).

While the promise of teaming is clear (Cosden & Semmel, 1992), we know very little about its effectiveness. In fact, the research done to date has been based more on teacher satisfaction and special education placement rates (Chalfant & Psych, 1989) than on intervention outcomes (Welch, Brownell & Sheridan, 1999). Flugum and Reschly (1994) concluded that "Few prereferral interventions are being provided to students; and (b) those prereferral interventions that are being provided are poor in quality" (p. 12). The argument has been made that these teams have failed in their promise of secondary prevention for learning and behavioral problems (Eidle et al., 1998), teacher support (Logan et al., 2001) and reducing special education referrals (Flugum & Reschly, 1994).

Proposed Improvements in Research and Practice

Based on the results to date, numerous investigators have proposed improvements in the design and implementation of prereferral teams that should improve the practice and allow for better research into the process. Flugum and Reschly (1994) argue that systematizing the intervention plans and implementing interventions with integrity will make it easier to study the outcomes from the team process. A clear problem-solving process with a facilitated discussion will likely result in improved decision-making (Short & Talley, 1996). There seems to be

uniform agreement that these teams should have strong administrative support (Myers & Kline, 2001; Kruger et al., 1995; Chalfant & Pysh, 1989 and; Cosden & Semmel,1992), clearly defined goals and objectives for the team, methods of evaluation and sufficient time and resources devoted to the team (Aksamit & Rankin, 1993 & Nelson et al., 1991).

Other needed improvements in the team process that are closely related to this study include clearer behavioral definitions of the target behavior, baseline measurement in the classroom setting, graphing of results, a comparison of the baseline to the intervention data (Flugum & Reschly, 1994) and inclusion of FBA within the team process (Doggett, Edwards, Moore, Tingstrom & Wilczynski, 2001). Team members should be volunteers (Kruger et al., 1995) and trained not only in the problem-solving procedures (Myers & Kline, 2001 & Aksamit & Rankin, 1993) but also in group facilitation processes (Cosden & Semmel, 1992). Training of team members should include the clarification of roles and responsibilities within the team and techniques to publicize or otherwise familiarize the school staff with the function of the team (Cosden & Semmel, 1992). Intervention ideas that result from team meetings should be socially valid (Bahr, 1994) and include planned assistance for implementation to the referring classroom teacher (Cosden & Semmel, 1992). In addition, the team should evaluate the acceptability of interventions that result from team meetings on a case by base basis and across the school (Bahr, 1994). Finally, Kratochwill, VanSomeren and Sheridan (1989) advance an argument for a standardization of the consultation process to ensure integrity. While all do not agree that a highly structured and behavioral process would be best (Safran & Safran, 1996), it would allow for a better understanding of the team processes resulting in improved outcomes for students. Further, clearer operational definitions resulting from the structured team processes will make them more amenable to study.

Research on the value of a structured problem-solving process (Gutkin & Curtis, 1999) and functional behavior assessment (Lewis & Sugai, 1996; Miller, Tansy & Hughes, 1998; Gresham, Watson & Skinner, 2001) have shown promise that these elements may enhance the team process and lead to better outcomes for students. The use of FBA allows for verification of the function of the behavior prior to implementation of intervention strategies. The verification of hypotheses related to the function (or lack thereof) leads to a greater likelihood of effective interventions and better outcomes for students or a recycling of the process that ultimately leads to identification of the correct function. But can teachers identify the correct function of behavior and select appropriate interventions when provided with a complete FBA? Myers and Holland (2000) found that teachers were unable to identify the correct function of behavior in their scenario-based study. However these questions have not been answered in field-based studies nor in teams of teachers with other professional staff where the analysis of information and decision-making are pooled in a small group process. The team process is undoubtedly influenced by variables such as norms for behavior, cohesiveness, roles, verbal and nonverbal communication, power, creativity (brainstorming) and conflict, to name few (Harris & Sherbolm, 2002).

In this field-based study, two questions were considered. When a structured functional behavior assessment is done within an SAT process, can team members identify the correct function of behavior by selecting related interventions? To what extent does FBA information collected at each stage contribute to the selection of interventions related to the verified function?

Method

Participants

Participants included seven members of a student assistance team in a rural, Midwestern elementary school. Participants were all female, ages 27-62 years old. A majority of team members were Caucasian (86%) with a 5 years of experience with student assistance teams on average (range = 0-7). Team members included a building principal, school psychologist, school social worker, kindergarten teacher, first grade teacher, second grade teacher, and referring teacher. In one of the cases the referring teacher was already a member of the team.

Measures

Intervention Ratings. The intervention rating measure included a list of 15 interventions, with three interventions based on each of the five behavior functions (see Table 1), including attention, power/control, escape/avoidance, sensory stimulation, skill deficit (Daly, Witt, Martens, & Dool, 1997; Witt, Daly, & Noell, 2000). Interventions were created by the second author and reviewed by, revised, and then unanimously endorsed by an expert panel of school psychology faculty. The panel unanimously agreed that each intervention was based on the specified function.

The list of interventions were scrambled using a random numbers generator (http://www.random.org/) to create four separate versions (i.e., rating one, rating two, rating three, rating four) to avoid order effects. Ratings for each intervention were made on a fifty-millimeter, visual-analog scale with anchors from "ineffective" to "very effective". The visual-analog was selected for its sensitivity and usefulness "for measuring phenomena before or after some intervening event" (DeVellis, 1991, p. 71).

Team Process Notes. Team process notes summarizing the interactions, discussion, analysis, steps in problem solving and conclusions were completed by a designated note taker during each meeting. These notes were copied and distributed to all SAT members and the referring teacher. These notes provided the information on each case and were used for analysis and conclusions drawn in the results section.

Procedure

Two separate cases were included in the study. The members of the SAT were consistent for both cases, with seven members present for each case. Core team members were selected by the building principal but participated on a voluntary basis. The entire building staff, including team members, had received one full day of training on the SAT process by the first author, and the team received consultation on the SAT process on an ongoing basis for the past two years. The training was consistent with a problem solving process defined in the literature and in practice (Gutkin & Curtis, 1999). For two years an SAT liaison (i.e., doctoral student in school psychology trained in FBA and consultation) has also been working with the team. The role of the SAT liaison included interviewing teachers and students, performing classroom observations, completing SAT paperwork, and facilitating team meetings.

Team process notes were taken at each meeting for each case and were distributed to all team members. Team members not present for one meeting per case were allowed to read the team notes and make ratings based on the information provided in the notes.

For the purpose of this study, the SAT process was divided into four stages (i.e., Referral stage, Descriptive stage, Interpretation stage, & Verification stage, see Table 2) that correspond to the problem-solving process and FBA assessment procedures (Gutkin & Curtis, 1999; Doggett

et al., 2001). Each case was discussed in a series of three team meetings, in which each team member rated the list of interventions using the visual analog scale.

All team meetings were videotaped. The tapes were examined by two school psychology graduate students who were trained by the second author on definitions of the team process. These students viewed practice tapes and achieved 100% agreement for the integrity of the problem solving process before viewing tapes of actual SAT meetings used in this study. One meeting for Case Two was unusable due to technical difficulties. The remaining meetings were assessed for the integrity of the process. Inter-rater reliability was 100% for both cases. Integrity on the degree to which the problem solving process steps were followed was 96% for Case One and 91% for Case Two.

Referral Stage. Each SAT member was provided with the Request for Assistance Form (i.e., brief form completed describing referral problem according to teacher). The SAT members completed the intervention ratings based on this initial information. These data were collected prior to the initial team meeting.

Descriptive Stage. The descriptive stage consisted of interviewing and gathering data from the referring teacher. Information gathered included an interview consistent with the problem solving process, permanent products (if available), and previous SAT records for the child (if available). The team then determined when the observations would occur and what would be observed. Upon completion of the meeting, the team made a second rating of the interventions.

Interpretation Stage. Observations and student interviews were conducted following the first team meeting. At least one 20 minute structured and one 20 minute unstructured observation

was conducted for each case. The unstructured observation form consisted of recording the target behavior or behaviors and possible antecedents and consequences for each behavior.

The structured observation form was a momentary time sampling procedure adapted from Stage, Cheney, Walker, & LaRocque (2002). On task and off task behavior was recorded on 15-second intervals, with off task behavior coded as looking around or not paying attention, out of seat or playing with objects at desk, or talking to other peers or themselves at inappropriate times. Teacher behavior was also coded for academic approval, social approval, academic disapproval, social disapproval, or teacher interaction without approval or disapproval. Interactions with peers were also coded for the target student, such as talking with the student or directing behavior to the student. The data was then converted into percentages to compare on/off task behavior and interactions. This approach was designed to illuminate possible functions for the target behavior.

A structured student interview was conducted for each case. Information was gathered on school interests, academic challenges, classroom routines, and other information that may have been relevant to the case (i.e., attentional concerns, social concerns). All observations and student interviews were conducted by the SAT liaison. These data were then reported back to the team at the second meeting by the SAT liaison and the referring teacher.

Information previously discussed (i.e., Reason for Referral, Problem Solving Teacher Interview) were reviewed at the start of this meeting. Information gathered by the SAT liaison was reported and interpreted to the team during this meeting. The SAT liaison also made recommendations for hypotheses regarding the function of the behavior and possible trial interventions. The SAT then generated possible hypotheses about the function of the behavior and selected a hypothesis to test based the data provided. The team then generated possible trial

interventions to be implemented to test their hypothesis and verify the function of the behavior. Specifics regarding the trial intervention and evaluation were then discussed and recorded. In each case, the meeting concluded with a third rating of the interventions.

Verification Stage. Trial interventions were conducted by the referring teacher and the SAT liaison following the meeting. The trial interventions included a manipulation of antecedents, consequences or both to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis. The same observations used in the Interpretive Stage were conducted during the trial interventions and reported back to the team in the final meeting by the SAT liaison and referring teacher.

All previously gathered information regarding the case was reviewed at the start this meeting. Information from the trial interventions developed in the previous stage were presented to the team by the SAT liaison through pictorial representation (i.e., bar graph of percent accuracy of work, on/off task) and interpreted verbally. The team discussed whether or not the data confirmed their hypotheses and then came to consensus on function verification. The team then made a final rating of the interventions.

Analyses

Analyses were conducted by case, which included background information, a summary of interactions and discussions of data at each stage, and a statistical analysis. To evaluate research question number one, mean intervention ratings for all functions were compared at rating four. The Friedman two-way ANOVA test with follow-up planned comparisons was used to examine the differences between the verified function and other functions at the final intervention rating, with a total of four follow-up comparisons for each case. To evaluate question number two, a Friedman ANOVA was conducted for each case and each function across rating times (i.e., two cases, five functions, four rating times). Friedman follow-up

comparisons were conducted for the verified function to examine effects found across groups to determine which rating times were statistically different.

Friedman two-way ANOVA by ranks was chosen to evaluate our hypotheses in each case. The Friedman test was conducted to obtain the best possible power efficiency from the small sample size. In addition, it provides an overall significance test across groups without requiring that assumptions of parametric repeated measures ANOVA be met. All follow-up comparisons were planned, using an adjusted alpha at $p < .05$, in order to control for Type I error.

Results

Case One: CJ

Background and Referral Stage

CJ was a seven year old, Caucasian girl in the second grade referred to the SAT by her second grade teacher. The Request for Assistance Form completed by the teacher indicated that CJ had lapses in learning, difficulty focusing on a task, following directions, and following rules (i.e., talking at inappropriate times). Of these problems, her teacher regarded the lapses in learning or confusions as the priority problem. CJ's teacher indicated a short-term goal of reaching a mid0second grade reading level and a long-term goal of maintaining on grade level reading consistently. CJ had not been previously referred to the SAT.

Descriptive Stage

Following a teacher interview by the SAT, the team in conjunction with the referring teacher decided that CJ's distractibility was the highest priority, this included talking to peers during work time and looking around. CJ's teacher reported that her daydreaming (looking around) seemed to be worse on Mondays and better during structured activities. Her teacher

wanted to see CJ initiating and completing tasks on her own, keeping her eyes on the task, and not talking to peers during work time. The SAT liaison planned to collect data on CJ's on task/off task behavior.

Interpretive Stage

At the beginning of this meeting, the SAT liaison presented data from the student interview that CJ confirmed the daydreaming and talking problem. She reported that it is difficult to pay attention because people talk to her and she tries to ignore them. Anecdotal observations revealed that CJ often talked with peers during work time and that peers talked to her. Following a discussion of data from observations and the student interview, the team brainstormed hypotheses and concluded that CJ's behavior was maintained by peer attention, especially when peers are in proximity to her. A trial intervention manipulating antecedent conditions (i.e., working alone, with peers, isolated) during a writing activity was developed. Increased on task rates and fewer instances of inappropriate talking during alone or isolation conditions were identified as data for function verification.

Verification Stage

A brief review of information from previous meetings was discussed. A pictorial representation of the trial interventions showed that CJ was on task more frequently during the isolation condition (80%) compared to the peer condition (50%) or working alone condition (55%). Observations also revealed that a majority of CJ's off task behavior involved talking with peers, both initiating and reciprocating conversation in the peer condition (25%) compared to the alone (10%) and isolation conditions (0%).

The team concluded that CJ's behavior was maintained by peer attention and was worse when peers were in close proximity. On the basis of consensus opinion, the team verified attention as the function of CJ's behavior.

Results for Case 1: CJ

Figure 1 shows the mean rating of interventions for all functions by rating for Case one. The Friedman ANOVA indicated a significant difference among functions at rating four, $F_r(4) = 9.871$. $p = .043$. In order to determine if the verified function (attention) interventions were rated higher than other functions, planned follow-up comparisons were conducted for the verified function. Attention interventions were rated higher than escape with a 14 point difference (significant at $p < .05$), sensory stimulation with a three point difference and skills with a four point difference (nonsignificant at $p < .05$), and were rated lower than power (nonsignificant at $p < .05$) with a two point difference.

A Friedman ANOVA indicated a significant change in intervention ratings over time for both attention, $F_r(3) = 9.686$. $p = .021$, and for skills, $F_r(3) = 8.478$. $p = .037$. No other intervention ratings showed significant changes across ratings. Planned comparisons for the verified (attention) function were conducted and revealed no significant differences between rating times.

Case Two: RL

Background and Referral Stage

RL was a seven-year-old Caucasian, girl in the first grade referred to the SAT by her first grade teacher. The teacher completed the Request for Assistance Form, indicating that RL followed her around the room, constantly talked and sought attention from the teacher, and spent much time off task and distracted others. According to the teacher, her behaviors were worse

during unstructured times, after the weekends, and when particular students were seated near her. RL had not been previously referred to the SAT.

Descriptive Stage

Following a teacher interview by the SAT, the team decided to focus on the attention seeking behaviors, which included physical contact with the teacher (i.e., kissing, playing with hair) and following the teacher around during work time. A discussion of antecedents and consequences revealed that behaviors often occurred during transition periods and that her behaviors sometimes resulted in being ignored, being redirected (i.e., attention), or escalated to more severe behaviors or outbursts. The teacher reported that positive reinforcement seemed to make it better while unstructured activities make the behaviors worse. The SAT and teacher identified goals for RL which included RL respecting personal space (i.e., having a conversation 2-3 times per day with an adult without making physical contact). The SAT liaison planned to collect data on these attention-seeking behaviors and report back to the team.

Interpretive Stage

At the beginning of meeting two, the SAT liaison presented data on anecdotal observations which indicated that RL asked multiple questions during a short work period, was often out of her seat following around the teacher, and made physical contact with the teacher several time during story time. Observations also indicated that RL often received attention (positive and negative) following these behaviors. Structured observations indicated that RL was off task about 40% of the time and over half that time off task was spent talking to herself or her peers. The SAT liaison also reported data from the student interview in which RL reported that she likes to give her teacher hugs, that she doesn't get hugs at home, and that it hurts her feelings when other kids don't want to hug her. The team generated a hypothesis that adult attention was

maintaining RL's inappropriate attention seeking behaviors. A trial intervention was designed such that attention was contingent upon appropriate behavior. Specifically, RL would have one-on-one time with her teacher and receive a hug from her if she worked quietly at her desk and did not ask questions or follow the teacher. During this period, RL was ignored following inappropriate attention-seeking behaviors. The data for time off task (i.e., out of seat, talking) were planned to be collected to evaluate the trial intervention.

Verification Stage

A brief review of information from previous meetings was presented at the beginning of this meeting. A pictorial representation of the trial interventions showed that RL was on task more (77%) when followed by a hug and time with teacher than when no reward was present (approximately 55%). RL also had fewer distractions and out of seat (following the teacher) behavior during the reward condition. Following a discussion of the intervention trial results, the team agreed with 100% consensus that the adult attention hypothesis was verified.

Results for Case Two: RL

Figure 1 shows the mean rating of the interventions for all functions by rating for Case two. The Friedman ANOVA indicated a significant difference among functions at rating 4, $\underline{F}_r(4) = 16.343$. $\underline{p} = .003$. In order to determine if the verified function (attention) interventions were rated higher than other functions, planned follow-up comparisons were conducted for the verified function. Attention interventions were rated higher than escape interventions with a sixteen point difference (significant at $p < .05$), higher than sensory stimulation with a six point difference and skills with an eleven point difference (nonsignificant at $p < .05$). Attention interventions were rated lower than power interventions with a seven point difference (nonsignificant at $p < .05$).

The Friedman ANOVA indicated a significant change in intervention ratings over time for power, $F_r(3) = 13.696$. $p = .003$ and skills $F_r(3) = 7.971$. $p = .047$. No other intervention ratings showed significant changes across time. Planned comparisons were not conducted because the verified function (attention) was not significant.

Discussion

Question one examined whether or not SAT members were able to identify the correct function of behavior by selecting appropriate interventions related to behavior function in two separate cases. Consistent with Meyers and Holland (2000) SAT members were unable to conclusively identify correct function of behavior in either case. Specifically, team members rated power interventions highest even though attention was the verified function in both cases.

On questions two, the results were mixed. Although ratings for the verified function (i.e., attention) in Case 1 significantly increased across rating times, it is unclear how much information or at what stage the information influenced these ratings. In Case 2, there were no significant increases in the selection of attention related interventions were observed across rating times or stages.

The results of this exploratory study provided information regarding the SAT and FBA process, feedback on intervention selection, and future directions for research. This study addressed proposed improvements in the SAT process. Specifically, FBA was implemented within a team process (Miller et al., 1998; Quinn et al., 2001; Crone & Horner, 2000), structured procedures were followed (Kratochwill et al., 1989), interventions were implemented with integrity (Flugum & Reschly, 1994), behavioral definitions were specified for the problem (Flugum & Reschly, 1994), administration support was evident (Myers & Kline, 2001; Kruger et al., 1995), and results from the trial intervention were graphed (Flugum & Reschly, 1994). It was

expected that these improvements in the process would also improve intervention selection (i.e., identify appropriate interventions) and student outcomes (Kratochwill et al., 1989). Although results from the intervention ratings did not indicate that SAT members could select interventions related to the behavior function, information provided from process notes and video tapes suggest that the team was able to follow the SAT/FBA process with integrity and develop trial interventions based on the hypothesized behavior function. In both cases, the team unanimously agreed on the verified function (i.e., attention), however, intervention ratings did not reflect attention as the clear function in either case. This suggests that the team may have made ratings based on variables other than case information and behavior function.

Thus, team members may have made ratings based on the acceptability of the interventions rather than behavior function. Had interventions that were deemed to be acceptable to the team prior to the study been included this may have elicited different results. While the team had received training in the problem solving process and had been provided with on going consultation (Crone & Horner, 2000; Quinn, et al., 2001;) the past two years, the team received no formal training in FBA. Training in the purpose and procedures of FBA may have enhanced the integrity of the FBA process (Kratochwill et al., 1989) and lead to intervention selection based on the behavior function. It is possible that when multiple functions are influencing the behavior of a student (Nelson, Roberts & Smith, 1998), SAT members may be unable to identify appropriate interventions. In this case, team members may have been constrained by the structured FBA process requiring them to identify one function for the problem behavior.

The small number of cases makes generalizing the findings difficult. However, this study was designed as a pilot to begin studying the inclusion of FBA into the SAT process. The measure used for intervention ratings was created by the authors and does not have traditional

reliability and validity evidence. However, interventions used in this study were classified by function based on consensus of an expert panel of school psychology faculty. Ratings of the interventions suggest that team members rated interventions based on variables other than behavior function. These variables at a minimum include acceptability of interventions, possible multiple functions of behavior and lack of training in the FBA process. On the latter point, specific training in FBA may increase the team's ability to better use data for decision-making.

Future Directions for Research

While data from this pilot study do not provide conclusive evidence regarding the FBA process or intervention selection, it does provide a starting point for future research. Future studies should concentrate on the influence of acceptability on intervention selection and implementation. In addition, studies on the impact of training in the FBA process should focus on the degree to which this training influences intervention selection. Finally and most importantly, investigations are needed that link the use of FBA in SAT to better academic and behavioral outcomes for children.

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Table 1

Interventions Developed Related to Behavior Function

Interventions for a *Skills* Function

1. Teach student additional or new strategies to learn previously taught material or skill.
2. The student will be given additional instruction in area of skill deficit. For example, the teacher will check on the student following instruction to review skill and do practice item together.
3. The student will work with a peer tutor several times throughout the week on specific skills he or she is having difficulty with.

Interventions for an *Attention* Function

1. A response cost system will be implemented.
2. The student will lose a token for inappropriate attention seeking behaviors and will turn in left over tokens for a reward. The teacher will provide the student with bonus points (which can be used to gain a desired activity) throughout the day when the child is not eliciting inappropriate attention seeking behaviors.
3. Attend to only positive attention seeking behaviors (i.e., raising hand, working hard) using descriptive praise and nonverbal acknowledgement.

Interventions for an *Escape* Function

1. The student will earn "get out of work free" cards for working hard on difficult tasks or behaviors.
2. The child will receive positive reinforcement (i.e., earn free time, candy, time with adult, etc) for working on difficult tasks and behaviors.

Table 1 (continued)

Interventions Developed Related to Behavior Function

3. Following noncompliance, the student and teacher will engaged in problem solving with maximum input from the student to determine appropriate behaviors and consequences.

Interventions for a *Power* Function

1. The teacher will use direct requests with specific consequences following if the request is not followed within a designated time period (5-10 seconds) when faced with power struggles and noncompliance with classroom rules.
2. The student will be given more opportunities to make choices for reward (i.e., seating, assignments, etc.) based on compliance with classroom rules and procedures.
3. Following compliance with work completion (i.e., a specified amount or time period), the student will be allowed to choose a fun activity, which covers the same material, to do instead of the typical assignment.

Interventions for a *Sensory Stimulation* Function

1. Give student an alternative sensory stimulation activity that is not disruptive and is acceptable in the classroom.
2. Provide a nonverbal cue to alert the child to stop self-stimulating behaviors to avoid an aversive consequence (i.e., loss of free time, time out).
3. Take away any opportunity (i.e., object or means) for self-stimulation from the student in order to decrease the behaviors.

Table 2

Overview of the Stages and Steps of Problem Solving used in the Student Assistance Team Process

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Referral Stage

- Completion of referral form based on the problem solving process (includes a list of problems, problem definitions, frequency, duration, previously tried interventions, goals for change and preliminary ideas for interventions).

Descriptive Stage

- Problem Solving Teacher Interview conducted by the SAT. (including a review and discussion of the list of problems, identification of the highest priority problem with a behavioral definition, frequency and duration of occurrence, ecobehavioral antecedents and consequences, and interventions previously tried).
- Plan for data collection (including classroom observations, student interviews and an evaluation of permanent products).

Interpretive Stage

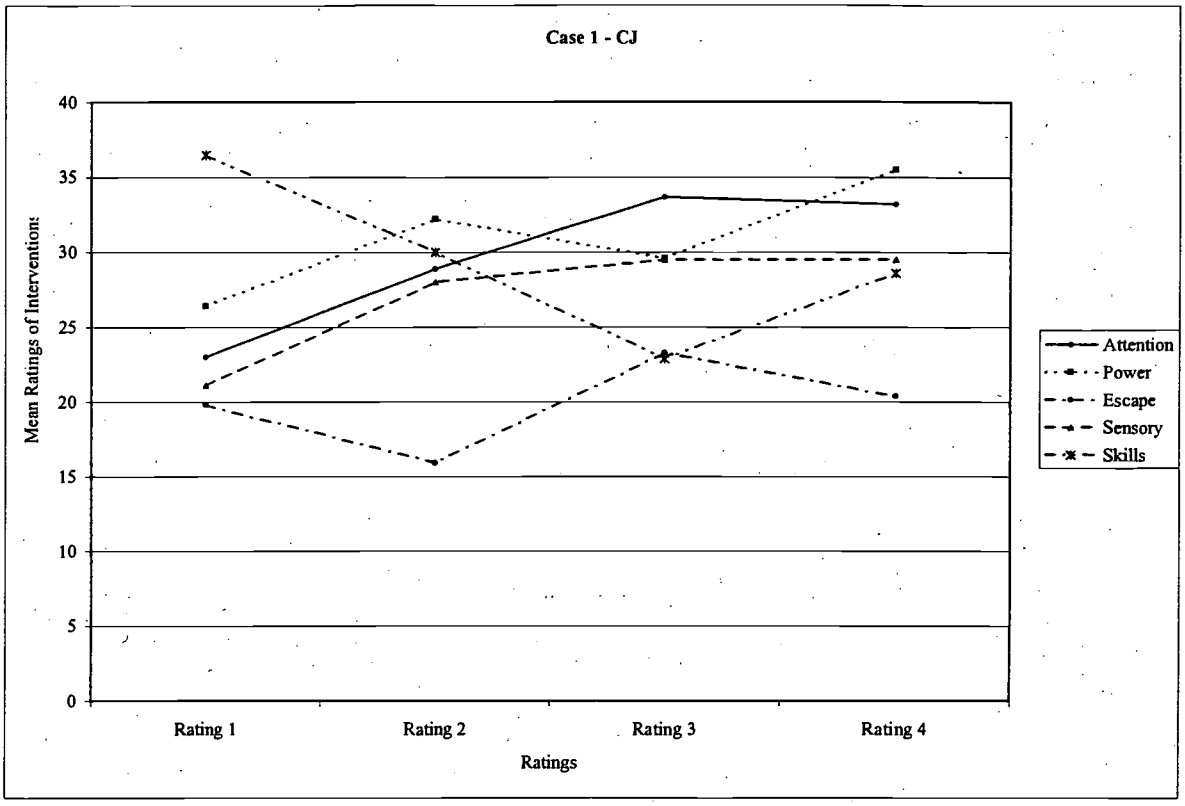
- Review of reason for referral and teacher interview from previous stage.
- Feedback on data gathered (including structured observations-on task, anecdotal observations, child interviews, FBA teacher checklist and, additional information from teacher).
- Hypothesis generation (including brainstorming of possible hypotheses regarding function of behavior or performance, selecting a hypothesis to be tested and, brainstorming possible trial/test interventions.
- Development of a trial intervention plan (including the steps of trial intervention and who will implement the intervention).

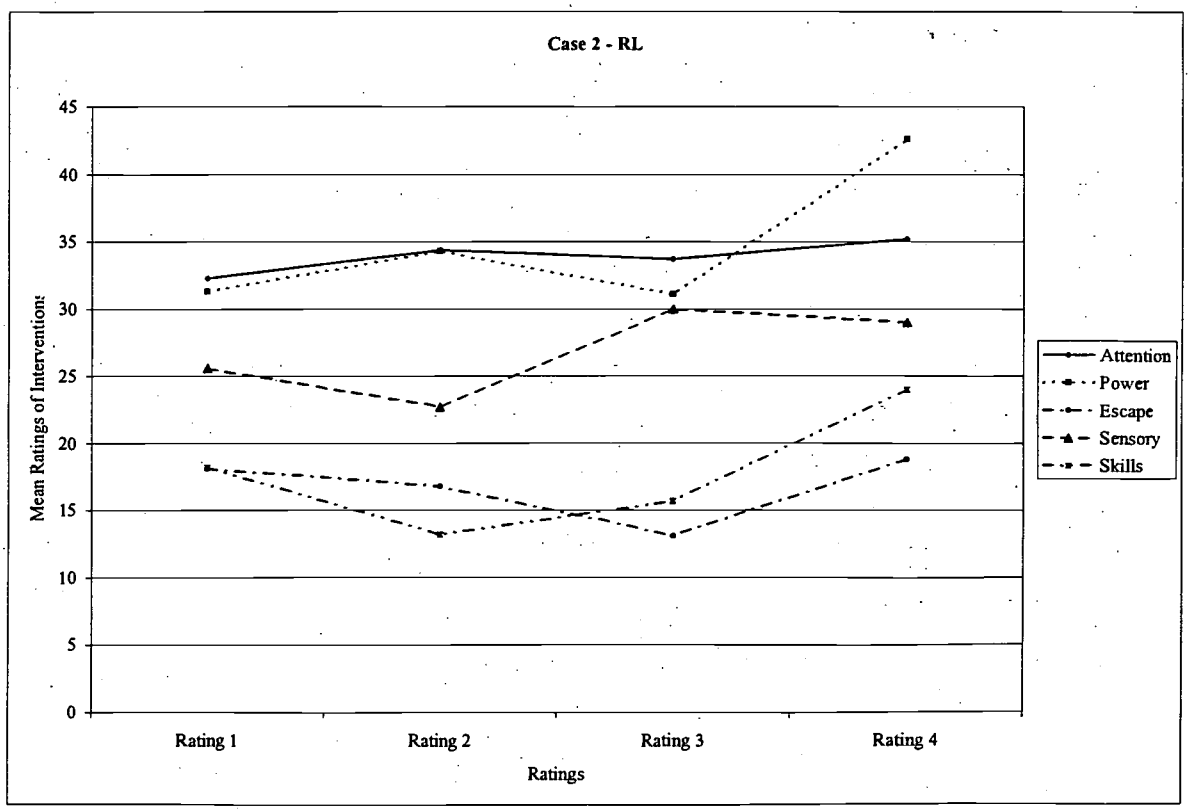
Verification Stage

- Intervention evaluation (including a review of previous decisions and steps, a pictorial representation of trial intervention results, a discussion of results and a consensus decision to retain or reject the selected hypothesis).

Figure 1

Figure 1. Mean ratings for interventions related to behavior function over time (ratings) for Cases 1 & 2.


Case 1 - CJ
Mean Ratings of Interventions
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Rating 1
Rating 2
Rating 3
Rating 4
Ratings
Attention
Power
Escape
Sensory
Skills


Case 2 - RL
Mean Ratings of Interventions
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Rating 1
Rating 2
Rating 3
Rating 4
Ratings
Attention
Power
Escape
Sensory
Skills

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