

## ABSTRACT

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Title: Culturally Responsive Evaluation And Diagnosis Of Asd In Children  
Ages Birth To Three  
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This project utilized an exploratory survey research design to gather a general consensus and understanding of practitioner's current knowledge and expertise in applying culturally responsive models when diagnosing autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in children from culturally and/or ethnically diverse backgrounds within the birth to three age demographic. The outcomes and information obtained from the survey were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively to identify common practice and differences in practices. The themes derived from the open-ended responses were used to provide additional explanation of the quantitative survey responses. It was anticipated that the data would inform relevant content for educational materials that could increase practitioners' cultural responsiveness when diagnosing, evaluating, and identifying autism spectrum disorders within children of culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds. The purpose of this study was to better understand practitioners' knowledge and implementation of behaviors that reflect a culturally responsive approach to diagnosis with their scope of practice and to begin to understand possible reason(s) for the delay in ASD diagnosis. Based on the literature, it was hypothesized that practitioners may be aware of cultural and ethnic differences, yet may not engage in culturally responsive actions to address these differences in a manner that can lead to equitable diagnosis of ASD in all children. Although our results supported this hypothesis because of the percentages we obtained from clinicians indicating that they considered cultural norms for social interaction, a dominant language other than English and other cultural factors in ASD diagnostics, this study is to be replicated with a larger sample size (n of at least 30 or more) in order to generalize findings.