Experiences of Paraeducators Supporting Individuals who use AAC – Preliminary Results
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INTRODUCTION

Paraeducators play an integral role in the education of students with severe disabilities. In the context of Pennsylvania’s paraeducator certification requirements, trainings are offered for those paraeducators who work with children who have severe disabilities. This study aimed to investigate the training experiences of paraeducators in the area of AAC in the school environment.

METHOD

Survey Development:
A survey was designed to capture the experiences of paraeducators in the area of AAC. The survey included questions about the frequency of training and the potential impact on the students who benefit from these experiences.

Survey Administration:
The survey was administered online to paraeducators in Pennsylvania.

Participants:
A total of 40 paraeducators completed the survey. Participants were primarily female (95%), and the majority had completed some college (85%).

RESULTS

FREQUENCY OF THE PROVIDER OF INSTRUCTION/TRAINING:

- No majority of paraeducators reported that they performed all the areas of instruction/training, with the exception of AAC system learning and use.
- Most common area to receive a demonstration of the strategy was in the area of literacy instruction.
- Least common area to receive a demonstration of the strategy was in the area of feedback.

DISCUSSION

- Paraeducators have received minimal training to provide feedback on performance.
- Increased feedback on performance should be stated that they felt training, including education, demonstrations, and provision of packages included description of practice, modeling, and provision of performance feedback.

CONCLUSIONS/ViTRURE RESEARCH

- Despite providing a range of supports to individuals who use AAC, many paraeducators have received minimal training to provide feedback on performance.

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REFERENCES

- Gerstein et al. (1997) argued that without specific feedback, learners will not evidence.
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