

Parent-teacher Collaboration in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Limpopo Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT This study employed a qualitative approach, using phenomenology, to explore the in-depth perceptions of parents and teachers with regard to parent-teacher collaboration when educating children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in South Africa. This paper seeks to inform both teachers and policymakers on the importance of collaboration in teaching children with ASD. A purposive sample of five parents and three teachers selected from a public special needs school in Limpopo Province was utilised. Data collection was through individual semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Results indicated that barriers to effective parent-teacher collaboration included quality and quantity of communication, teacher perceptions about parents, parents' expectations and parents' perceptions of teachers, cultural perceptions, school related constraints and constrained school policies. The aforementioned barriers and associated challenges were found to negatively impact parents and teachers' self-confidence and role construction, which are likely to detract from the educational and psychosocial development of the child.