**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Individual and Organizational Factors that Affect Implementation of Evidence-based Practices for Children with Autism in Public Schools: A Cross-Sectional Observational Study

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 01 Nov 2018

**Reviewer:** Amanda Beacom

**Reviewer's report:**

**General Comments**

This paper describes a study of the implementation of evidence-based practices for the behavioral management of students with autism spectrum disorder in public school classrooms in the United States. Its results should be useful to both scholars and practitioners. The last two paragraphs of the Background provide good justification for the need for the study, and the Discussion section offers an excellent interpretation of results and summary of its contributions and limitations. The manuscript could be improved with clarification of a number of points detailed below.

**Throughout Manuscript**

Since Implementation Science has an international audience, suggest editing the manuscript text to make clear that the context of this study is American, especially in Abstract and Background sections, and to explain contextual factors that non-Americans may not understand.

**Abstract**

Background: "Children with autism receive most of their care in public schools…": Clarify what you mean by "care."

First two sentences of Results section refer to methods, so would move them into the Methods section.

Make clear in Results section that divergence and appeal are individual factors, and that there were no significant findings for any EBP other than DTT. Also since divergence was one of only two significant findings, you may wish to elaborate briefly in the Abstract on what divergence means, particularly since it does not seem intuitively to be an attitude, and this may cause confusion for some readers.
Conclusions: "Future implementation efforts ought to consider the type of EBP…": Why? Explain so that the reader understands how you are drawing this conclusion from the results listed above.

Background

In the first two paragraphs of this section, explain the context of the literature you are citing. Which of these studies are focusing on school-based autism EBPs versus EBPs in other contexts?

p. 6: What is the difference between implementation climate (characterized as easier to change) and organizational climate (characterized as difficult to change)?

Current Study

p.7: How is "greater use of autism EBPs" distinct from "intensity of use of EBPs"? In the same sentence, I don't understand the distinction you seem to be making between how individual and organizational factors will affect the former versus the latter. In particular, can you be more specific about what you hypothesize in terms of how the individual and organizational factors will affect intensity of use? Separate, more formalized statements of each hypothesis may help to clarify them for the reader.

Participants

What is the difference between teachers and staff in terms of their classroom roles and how they may have been trained in EBPs and in how they were expected to implement EBPs? Why did you choose to include both types of practitioners in the study?

Explain why there are more staff than teachers.

Why detail the demographic characteristics of the teachers in the text, but not the staff’s? Suggest treating both sets of demographics similarly.

Procedure

Did all schools and classrooms within the targeted study population agree to participate in the study? This information needs to be included, and if some schools and classrooms declined, the numbers of targeted versus declined schools and classrooms should be reported.

Similarly, what was the response rate of the teachers and staff to the survey?
Is there anything unique about this school district that would limit generalizability of the results to other U.S. school districts?

Measures

p. 10: "A research assistant visited each classroom monthly to assess intensity of EBP": Why was this done and how was the RA’s assessment of intensity reconciled with the teacher’s assessment? Why were classroom staff’s assessments not used?

p. 10: What is the ILS and the ICS? Please spell out at first use.

p. 10: Please provide definitions for appeal, requirements, openness, and divergence.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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