

# **AN EVALUATION OF MODIFIED TEACHING METHODOLOGIES AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)**

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## **Overview of Research**

This action research study was carried out on a small sample of pupils with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in a special school in Leinster. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effects of applying modifications to a physical classroom environment and applying flexible and varied teaching methodologies designed to suit the learning styles of the sample of students who were experiencing difficulties with engagement in learning and social interaction with peers.

## **Literature Review and Methodology**

The literature review has two sections. The first traces the history and prevalence of ADHD, its aetiology and characteristics, its inclusion in 1994 in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM - IV), associated behaviours and the various interpretations of same. The second section reviews intervention approaches and classroom management and teaching strategies employed to deal with ADHD as well as the role of parents and family in the management of ADHD.

An action research approach was adopted for the case study conducted in a special school catering for children with mild general learning disability. The research involved three students, two girls and one boy, each of whom had been diagnosed with ADHD and was experiencing difficulties in school. All elements of the intervention were applied as an integral part of everyday teaching activities the intention being to create a classroom community which was conducive to minimum distraction, maximum engagement with learning, and supportive of the personal and social needs of all the students. The interventions included modifications to the physical classroom environment, differentiated subject timetables and teaching methodologies as well as information sessions for parents and staff. Data collection included pre- and post-intervention records of academic achievement and behaviour, student diaries, informal interviews with parents, observational notes and behaviour analysis summaries. The study involved the collaborative involvement of pupils,

parents, teachers and support services. Consideration was given to ethical issues in accordance with the guidelines of the university.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

The results of the study are presented in tests of attainment, profiling of behaviour and observational notes from participants. The results suggest improvement in students' attainments and behaviour as rated on particular instruments. While the small scale of the study may be borne in mind as a factor of note, the research contributes to an understanding of ADHD and highlights approaches that might be adopted by teachers to assist students with ADHD to engage with learning.