

# Training Needs and Perceived Knowledge about Applied Behavior Analysis of Health and Education Professionals in Puerto Rico.

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## Objective

Develop and administer a survey to quantify and describe the current knowledge and perceptions of health professionals in Puerto Rico about Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA).

## Methods

The instrument used in the research was The Skills and Needs Inventories in Functional Behavior Assessments and Intervention (SNI-FBAI). This instrument gathers information on demographics, current skill level in ABA, and needs of ABA training. The instrument was translated to Spanish and adapted to fit within a web-based platform (Survey Monkey®). The survey was submitted to a pool of 123 current and past trainees. The survey was first sent via Survey Monkey®. Researchers then contacted all participants (123) via phone to prompt a response.

## Results

Forty-one participants completed the survey online independently before or after the phone prompt.

**Current Skill Level.** The average percentage across the premises rated "3" which meant *able to apply and perform this skill in all situations without assistance and are capable of coaching others in the application of this skill* was 37.75%. The average percentage rated "2" was 31.62% which meant *able to apply this skill to situations occasionally while needing minimum guidance to perform it successfully*. The average percentage rated "1" was 19.76% which meant *able to understand and discuss the terminology, concepts, principles and issues related to the skill but cannot apply it to situations* and 10.87% rated a "0" which meant *not sure what this statement means*.

**Need for training.** The average percentage across premises rated a "2" was 72.38% which meant *this is an essential training need to make me effective while working with students with special needs that engage in challenging behaviors*, 20.5% were rated a "1" which meant *this is an optional training need to make me effective while working with students with special needs that engage in challenging behaviors*, 1.67% were rated a "0: which meant *I do not think this is needed for training to make me effective while working with students with special needs that engage in challenging behaviors* and 5.44% rated NA which meant *not sure what this statement means*.

## Conclusions

This study obtained a 33% participation rate suggesting high interest in the subject of ABA. A large majority of the ratings on training needs (72.38%) suggested that training in functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plans (BIP) was essential to be effective while working with students with special needs that engage in challenging behaviors. Participants' ratings of their skills suggested that the majority of them needed some guidance to complete FBAs and BIPs. Most participant choices (68.38%) suggested that they could not implement the skills fully independently. Future studies will assess Puerto Rico trainees' actual knowledge to further assess training needs.