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Sensory over responsivity in children of 3-5 years: a descriptive, analytical study

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Rationale: Sensory over responsivity (SOR) is frequently diagnosed by occupational therapists, and can negatively impact many areas of occupational performance, such as sleeping, eating, dressing, hygiene, socialisation and concentration. The causes of SOR are unclear. This study set out to determine possible predictors of SOR.

Objectives:

- To determine the prevalence of SOR in children born by vaginal birth and Caesarean Section
- To establish if there is a statistically significant difference in SOR between the two groups
- To establish if other variables (for example, birth weight, gestational age, birth complications) are predictive of SOR

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional analytical study was conducted with a sample of 146 children between the ages of 3 years 0 months and 4 years 11 months, half born by vaginal delivery and half by Caesarean Section. Caregivers of each child completed the Short Sensory Profile 2 questionnaire as well as a demographic information questionnaire. Each variable in the demographic sample was tested for the statistical differences between the two groups. The variables showing a significant difference between the two groups were then further analysed.

Results: The demographics of the sample and descriptive statistics of the outcomes were presented for the two birthing method groups. The significant differences in variables between the two groups were discussed.

Conclusion: Preventative sensory strategies can be developed for caregivers' of infants born by CS during the first thousand days of life to mitigate against the development of SOR.