

This study explores how school-based professionals detect autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children and examines how their perceptions may be influenced by the child's ethnic background. It focuses on the role of school mentors and teachers in identifying ASD symptoms early in children's development. The research compares how often children from ethnic minority groups, such as those with Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds in the Netherlands, are diagnosed with ASD compared to children from the majority Dutch population. The findings show that school mentors and teachers frequently identify ASD symptoms, especially during primary and secondary school years. However, children from ethnic minority backgrounds receive ASD diagnoses less often than those from the majority Dutch population. This difference suggests there may be biases or cultural misunderstandings affecting the assessment process. The study emphasizes the importance of using structured assessment tools and culturally sensitive approaches to improve the accuracy and fairness of ASD diagnoses across diverse populations. By addressing these disparities, healthcare and educational professionals can ensure that all children with ASD, regardless of their cultural background, receive timely access to intervention and support services. The research recommends ongoing training and standardized protocols in educational settings to enhance professionals' ability to effectively detect and support children with ASD.