

The Effects of a Neurodiversity-Affirming Education Program for Mandarin-Speaking Caregivers of Autistic Children



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Introduction

Caregivers of autistic children often face significant stress when navigating diagnosis and treatment decisions^{4,5}. For Mandarin-speaking immigrant families, cultural stigma surrounding disability and language barriers further limit access to accurate information and appropriate services. Although parent education programs have been shown to improve caregiver knowledge, confidence, and stress^{6,7}, neurodiversity-affirming and culturally responsive interventions for Mandarin-speaking caregivers remain limited.

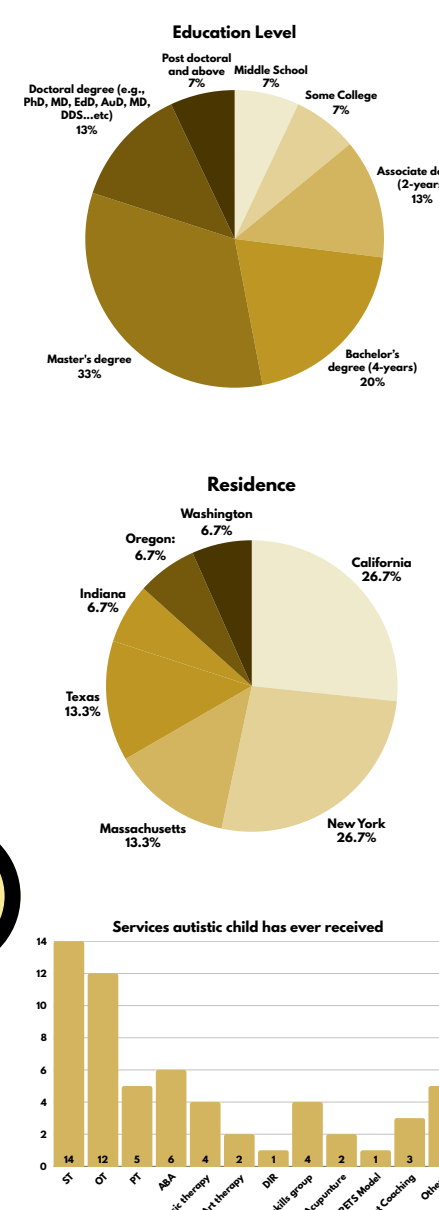
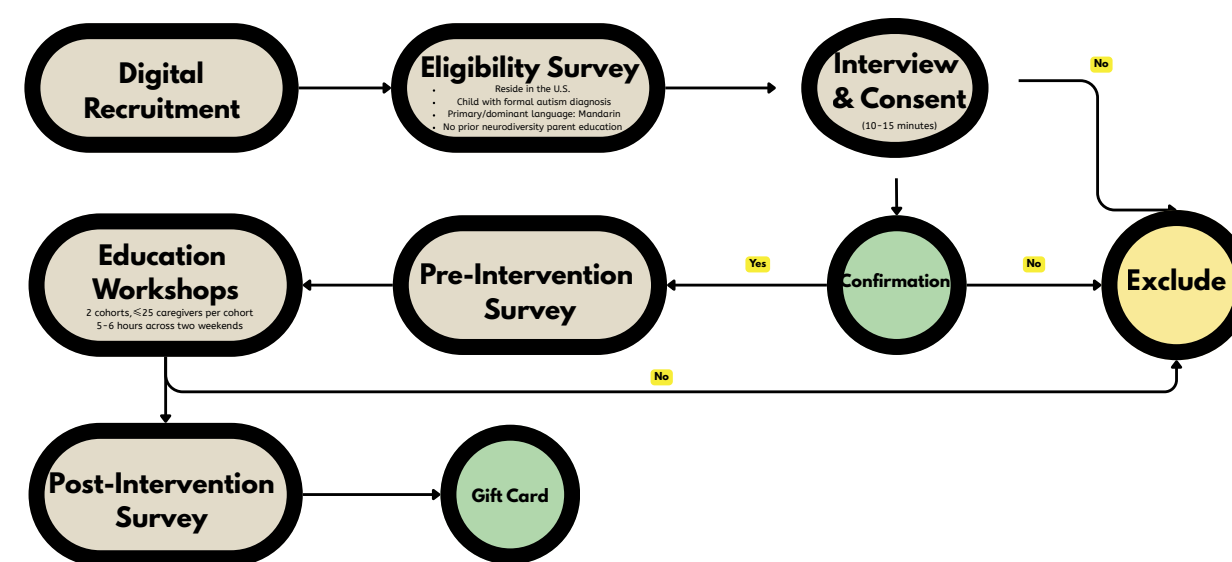
Objective

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a neurodiversity-affirming parent education program for Mandarin-speaking caregivers of autistic children. Using a pretest-posttest design, the study examines changes in caregiver knowledge, parental stress, and confidence following participation. This study also aims to contribute culturally and linguistically responsive evidence to support Mandarin-speaking families and inform future community-based interventions.

Participants & Method

Cohort 1 Participants (N = 15)

- Gender: 1 male (7%), 14 female (93%)
- Age (years): 26–40 (n = 4, 27%), 41–60 (n = 11, 73%)
- Home language use: Mandarin (87%), English (13%)
- Child's age at workshop: Most participants were in the 11–15 age group (40%), followed by 6–10 years (33%) and 0–5 years (27%).
- Supplemental Information: Please scan the QR code for a detailed breakdown of participant demographics and the education program.



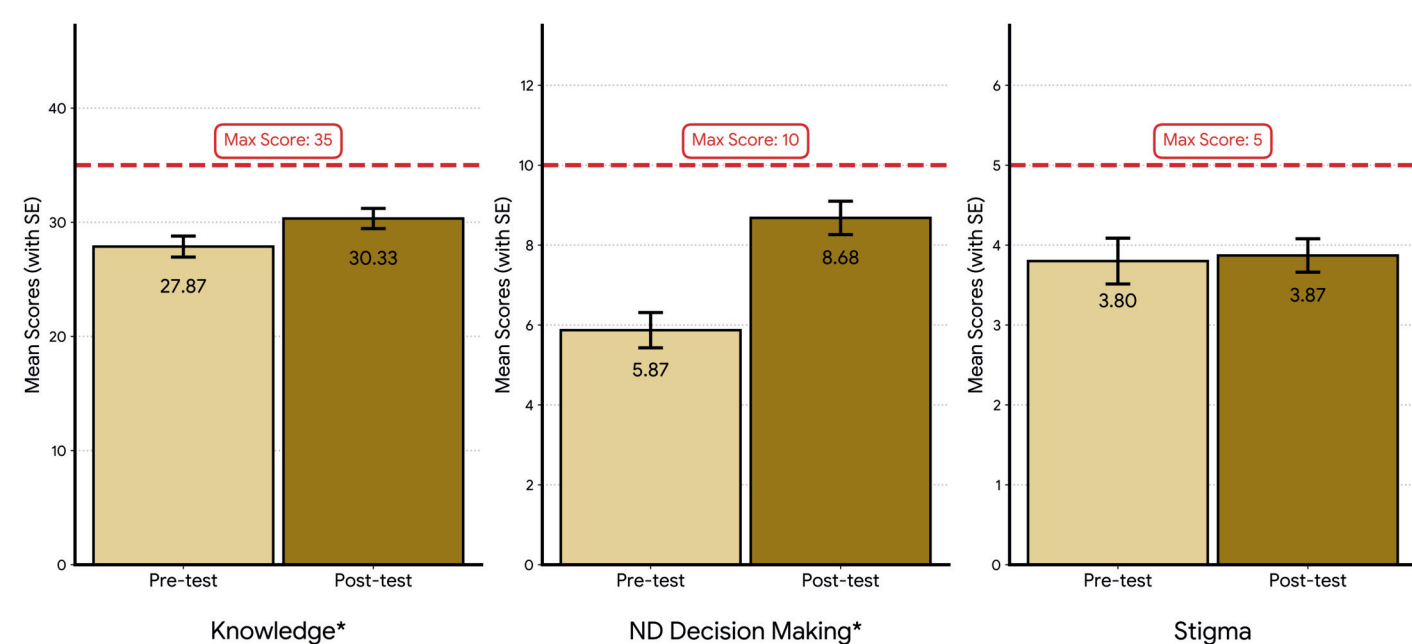
Implication & Discussion

Preliminary results from the initial cohort demonstrate that the intervention effectively bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and clinical application. Significant concurrent increases were observed in objective ratings for Knowledge ($p=0.016$) and neurodiversity-affirming Decision Making ($p<0.001$), mirrored by a significant rise in subjective Confidence and Knowledge ($p=0.014$). These findings suggest a robust development of competency mastery, indicating that participants do not merely acquire information but gain the self-assurance required for effective implementation.

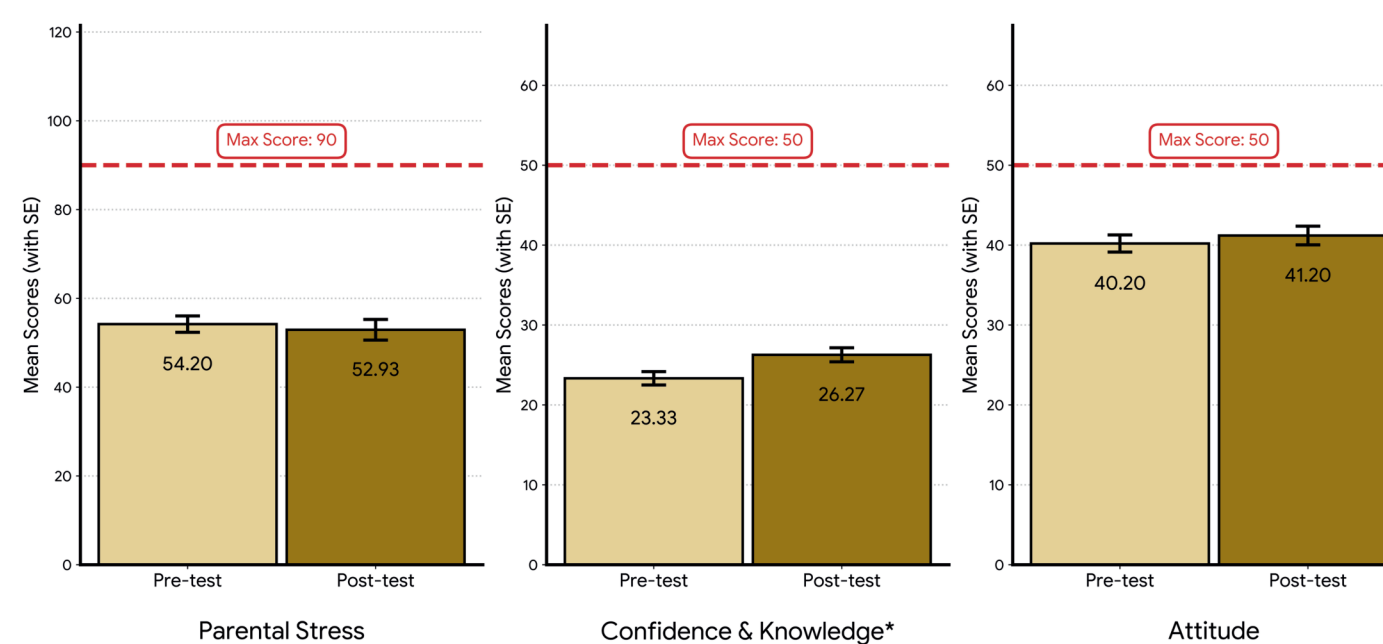
Conversely, several variables did not reach statistical significance, including Objective Stigma ($p=0.789$), Parental Stress ($p=0.672$), and Attitude ($p=0.528$). This may be attributed to the limited sensitivity of modified survey tools for short-term comparison. Furthermore, the stigma assessment contained only five items, potentially reducing the granularity needed to detect subtle changes. The stability of these scores may also reflect a ceiling effect, as participants entered the study with high baseline scores in neurodiversity-affirming attitudes.

Preliminary Results

Objective Rating Results: Pre- vs Post Intervention Comparison



Subjective Rating Results: Pre- vs Post Intervention Comparison



Conclusion

The intervention successfully increases caregiver knowledge and confidence, translating complex neurodiversity-affirming concepts into practical caregiving strategies. Ongoing data collection with a second cohort will enhance statistical power to better evaluate shifts in parental stress and stigma.

These findings highlight the necessity of culturally and linguistically tailored resources for the Mandarin-speaking population. By addressing existing service gaps, this program empowers families with evidence-based tools, reducing healthcare disparities and ensuring culturally resonant support for neurodivergent individuals within their primary support systems.

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