




Adapting trust-based relational intervention for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A systematic qualitative review

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Abstract—This systematic qualitative literature review examines the adaptation of trust-based relational intervention in supporting and caring for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in educational settings. Fifteen peer-reviewed studies were identified and investigated using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis. Three interconnected themes emerged from the review: personalised corrective techniques based on emotional safety, sensory empowerment techniques to help regulate emotions, and relational connection strategies tailored for individuals with autism spectrum communication styles. These revealed a growing movement for trauma-informed relationship therapy for students with autism spectrum disorders and flexible, neurodiverse treatments beyond typical behavioural approaches. This synthesis highlights that students require compassionate learning environments that respect individual communication and sensory preferences. These learning settings further reflect cultural diversity, respectively. It is recommended that future studies examine the long-term benefits of adapting Trust-Based Relational Intervention by investigating culturally grounded applications in various settings with a greater understanding of teachers' lived experiences in implementing trauma-informed relational models. Ultimately, this study contributes to creating inclusive and fair environments where students with autism are recognised, valued, and supported.

Keywords: Autism spectrum disorder, Inclusive education, Neurodiversity, Sensory regulation, Trauma-informed care, Trust-based relational intervention

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I. INTRODUCTION

A NEURODEVELOPMENTAL condition characterised by complex behavioural patterns, sensory processing, and social interactions known as autism spectrum disorder (American Psychiatric Association[APA], 2022). On many occasions, especially in school settings, students on the autism spectrum often encounter challenges in managing situations that are insufficiently fit to meet their sensory, social, and emotional control needs (Green et al., 2020). These unmet demands increase their likelihood of trauma, including bullying, exclusion, and severe penalties, which not only aggravate their behaviour problems but also impede their learning and general well-being. Teachers and related professionals have responded to these realities by searching increasingly for trauma-informed, relationally responsive interventions that accept neurodiversity while addressing the several consequences of trauma (Kalisch et al., 2024).

Various support systems, as well as trauma-informed educational approaches, are progressively being maximised for students with autism spectrum disorder. Thus, it is imperative to closely examine how interventions such as Trust-Based Relational Intervention are implemented in different learning environments. Although many of these studies provide insightful analysis and viewpoints, a more comprehensive synthesis is needed to integrate the existing body of knowledge on trends in caregiving and identify areas that require further research. This study aims to address the gap by closely analysing and compiling existing research on applying Trust-Based Relational

Intervention in educational environments for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. By doing this, it hopes to facilitate culturally sensitive practice, impact future research, and be used to assist and establish safer, more compassionate learning settings, recognising both the trauma histories and neurodevelopmental needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

Research gap

Trauma-informed approaches, such as Trust-Based Relational Intervention, have demonstrated significant efficacy in meeting the intricate needs of students with trauma histories (Perry, 2006; van der Kolk, 2014) and are increasingly being implemented in special education settings (Faulkner et al., 2023; Pickett, 2023). Comprehensive qualitative research is necessary, especially regarding the adaptation of Trust-Based Relational Intervention for children with autism spectrum conditions. While qualitative studies document the lived experiences of teachers and professionals, which are relatively uncommon, previous research has primarily focused on quantitative outcomes or generalised trauma-sensitive strategies in the education and care of children with autism (Bruce & Nangle, 2021; Williams & Patel, 2020).

Research highlighting the importance of sensory-informed, neurodiverse, and relational safety practices in autism education has revealed a scarcity of methodically combined qualitative data on how these concepts intersect with the Trust-Based Relational Intervention framework when applied to neurodivergent students (Brown & Nguyen, 2021; Zhao & Zhang, 2023). This dearth of synthetic qualitative data leaves a significant void in guiding culturally sensitive, generally attuned, and neurodevelopmentally appropriate adaptations of Trust-Based Relational Intervention within autism-inclusive educational

environments (Anderson & Smith, 2024; Kalisch et al., 2024). Dealing with this disparity will help to ensure that trauma-informed therapies such as Trust-Based Relational Intervention can be greatly included in teaching and caring for students with autism spectrum disorder, in promoting both relational healing and educational participation for this very vulnerable student population.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on how trauma-informed techniques could support students with autism in the classroom are mounting. This is particularly true now since many of these students have complicated trauma histories that teachers know of. Trust-Based Relational Intervention is among the most widely utilised trauma-informed methods in various contexts. Initially designed for students from dysfunctional households who had gone through relational trauma, abuse, or neglect, it was a Trust-Based Relational Intervention that emphasises the necessity of connection, empowerment, and correction in fulfilling the social and behavioural needs of children who are at risk, such as those on the autism spectrum. Researchers have now begun investigating how Trust-Based Relational Intervention might assist students with ASD in both regular and special education environments. Examining how general education teachers applied Trust-Based Relational Intervention approaches with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Manuguid and Catama (2025) found that two of the most crucial topics were relational connection and sensory emancipation. Supporting this, Misevičė et al. (2024) emphasised that Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) is grounded in neurodevelopmental and attachment theories, has shown significant improvements in children's emotional regulation, attachment behaviours, and mental well-being, especially for those who have experienced early trauma.

Trust-Based Relational Intervention is a suitable framework, according to their qualitative findings, but it needs to be modified to meet the sensory and communication demands of neurodiverse students.

Pickett (2023) similarly examined the duration of Trust-Based Relational Intervention in two Australian child and family learning centers. He emphasised the need to be sent to several cultures and developed countries to ensure constant and effective intervention. Also, SAMSHA (2014) stressed that this TBRI recognises that trauma affects communities, families, groups, individuals, and organisations, so addressing this trauma requires a comprehensive and multi-level response tailored to context, culture, and specific needs.

The larger body of studies also emphasises the need for grounded experience with stress for students with autism. In-depth research by Bruce and Nangle (2021) and Hwang and Kearney (2017) revealed the two-way link between trauma and autism, therefore highlighting how symptoms overlap and how likely those with autism are to be harmed by interpersonal trauma. Methodically examining sensory control and trauma-sensitive teaching approaches, Cross et al. (2019) and Williams and Patel (2020) advocated treatments that consider the many ways that persons with autism view sensory data and help to lower the trauma triggers in the classroom.

Also, Schaaf et al. (2018) and Martinez and Greene (2019) found that sensory-informed environmental support suits students with ASD. This aligns with the empowerment principle of Trust-Based Relational Intervention, which suggests that students should be given choices and sensory inputs should be controlled to make them feel safe. Taylor and Graham (2022) similarly reported that integrating sensory regulation strategies, such as flexible seating, choice-driven activities, and visual support, significantly enhanced the engagement of students with ASD as well as their emotional safety and sense of autonomy in mainstream classrooms, therefore reinforcing the need for sensory-responsive and relational approaches.

Brown and Nguyen (2021) emphasised the importance of sensory-informed behaviour plans for students with autism who have experienced stress, noting that these plans help students better regulate

their behaviours and participate more effectively in class. Scholars noted the lack of relationally focused autism education interventions and models like Trust-Based Relational Intervention have potential but require modifications that respect neurodiversity (Kalisch et al., 2024; Faulkner et al., 2023). As Singer (2016) and Kapp et al. (2013) have noted, this call aligns with neurodiversity theories that advocate for trauma-informed, inclusive teaching methods, valuing neurodevelopmental differences rather than labeling them as disorders. Scholars suggested trauma-informed teaching methods that improve relational safety and trust-building in autism education (Zhao & Zhang, 2023; Lambert et al., 2021). These ideas directly align with the primary focus of Trust-Based Relational Intervention, which is to create a predictable relationship, and students with autism using trauma-informed regulation methods (Stevens et al., 2020). These strategies build on Trust-Based Relational Intervention's correct approach to addressing destructive behaviours through connectedness rather than punishment. Young and Roberts (2019) further underscore that trauma-informed reporting and sensory regulation support students with ASD to feel calmer, thereby reinforcing relational safety within trauma-informed educational settings.

Finally, recent studies gave clinical and educational suggestions for incorporating trauma-informed care into autism services (Goodall et al., 2025; Anderson & Smith, 2024). They emphasised the need for flexible, culturally sensitive treatments, such as Trust-Based Relational Intervention. Their work demonstrates the importance of conducting qualitative, situation-specific research, such as systematic qualitative reviews, to understand the complex experiences of teachers, doctors, and families, thereby improving intervention models as needed. Collectively, these studies show why it is essential to carefully look over the qualitative evidence on how to change Trust-Based Relational Intervention for students with ASD. This can help teachers use evidence-based, trauma-informed methods that meet the emotional and physical needs of neurodiverse students.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study highlights and identifies obstacles in implementing Trust-Based Relational Intervention and successful relationship-building strategies that provide valuable assistance to teachers and caregivers responsible for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

IV. METHODS

This study employed a systematic qualitative literature review design since it focused on exploring the application of TBRI and related trauma-informed relational care models tailored for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Also, guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines for qualitative evidence synthesis, it aimed to identify, appraise, and thematically analyse qualitative, mixed-methods, and systematically reviewed studies published in peer-reviewed journals. The review aimed to synthesise how these intervention models have been adapted, implemented, and evaluated within educational and caregiving contexts involving students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Research design

This study employed a systematic qualitative literature review design guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines for qualitative evidence synthesis (Page et al., 2021). The PRISMA framework was employed to ensure a transparent, comprehensive, and replicable review process, encompassing the development of the search strategy, study selection, data extraction, and synthesis. The design prioritised capturing rich, contextualised narratives and experiential insights to inform culturally sensitive and trauma-informed educational practices.

Search strategies

An exhaustive search was conducted across four primary academic

databases, PsycINFO, ERIC, PubMed, and Scopus, supplemented by a manual search in Google Scholar to identify relevant grey literature and unpublished works, ensuring a comprehensive and balanced evidence base. The search strategy combined controlled vocabulary and free-text keywords, including "Trust-Based Relational Intervention," "TBRI," "trauma-informed care," "trauma-informed intervention," "Autism Spectrum Disorder," "ASD," "special education," "inclusive education," and "relational intervention." Boolean operators (AND/OR) and truncation symbols were employed to refine the search and enhance sensitivity and specificity across databases. The search covered studies published from January 2013 to May 2025, capturing the most recent developments in trauma-informed relational care models for individuals with ASD. Grey literature sources identified through Google Scholar were screened using the same eligibility criteria applied to peer-reviewed studies to minimise publication bias and ensure the inclusion of diverse, valuable perspectives beyond those found in indexed journals.

Eligibility criteria

The research was limited to publications released between 2018 and 2025 to ensure the inclusion of relevant and current research in this growing multidisciplinary field. Research studies fit the following criteria if they a) used a qualitative method, mixed-methods, or systematic review designs, b) investigated the use or adaptation of Trust-Based Relational Intervention or other trauma-informed relational care approaches for individuals with ASD in educational, clinical, or home environments and c) reported data related to relational, regulatory, or empowering strategies aligned with Trust-Based Relational Intervention's fundamental principles. Studies were rejected if they employed solely quantitative designs, were non-peer-reviewed reports, were theoretical pieces lacking empirical data, or omitted reference to trauma-informed relational care frameworks or participants with ASD.

Selection process

The selection process for eligible studies was conducted by the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). As a single reviewer independently undertook this systematic review, all titles and abstracts identified through the database search were initially screened for relevance based on predefined eligibility criteria. A total of 40 records were retrieved from four primary academic databases, PsycINFO, ERIC, PubMed, and Scopus, alongside an additional 10 records from Google Scholar to capture relevant gray literature. Fifteen studies met the inclusion criteria after removing duplicates and applying the eligibility framework during title, abstract, and full-text screening. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram detailing the systematic identification, screening, and selection process.

Following the initial screening, a full-text review of potentially relevant articles assessed eligibility based on study design, target population, intervention focus, and reported outcomes. Reasons for exclusion were carefully documented at each stage to maintain transparency and methodological rigor. While conducting the review independently, this single-reviewer approach is acknowledged as a limitation, as it lacks the inter-reviewer reliability typically found in multi-reviewer designs. Nevertheless, strict adherence to the eligibility criteria and thorough documentation of all decisions helped minimise potential selection bias and uphold the integrity of the review process.

Data extraction and management

The initial selection of published research yielded a total of 50 research papers. Each paper was scrutinised through its title, abstract, and entire content before being methodically evaluated against the preselected eligibility criteria. After screening, fifteen research publications were qualified for careful data extraction and synthesis. These studies were carefully assessed for methodological quality, relevance to Trust-Based Relational Intervention changes, and focus on ASD populations. From the selected research papers, important information on authorship, year of publication, study design, participant characteristics, and primary results regarding Trust-Based

Relational Intervention approaches or trauma-informed relational care practices for individuals with ASD was obtained.

Data extraction was conducted independently by the sole reviewer using a structured data extraction form developed in alignment with the objectives of this review. Key information from each included study was manually extracted and documented, including authorship, publication year, study location, study design, sample characteristics, type of intervention, outcomes assessed, and key findings relevant to the research question.

To ensure consistency, a pilot extraction was initially performed on a subset of studies to refine the data fields and extraction approach. Although the absence of a second reviewer limits the potential for cross-validation, meticulous attention was applied to maintain accuracy and integrity during the data extraction process. The author reviewed all extracted data multiple times to check for completeness and consistency.

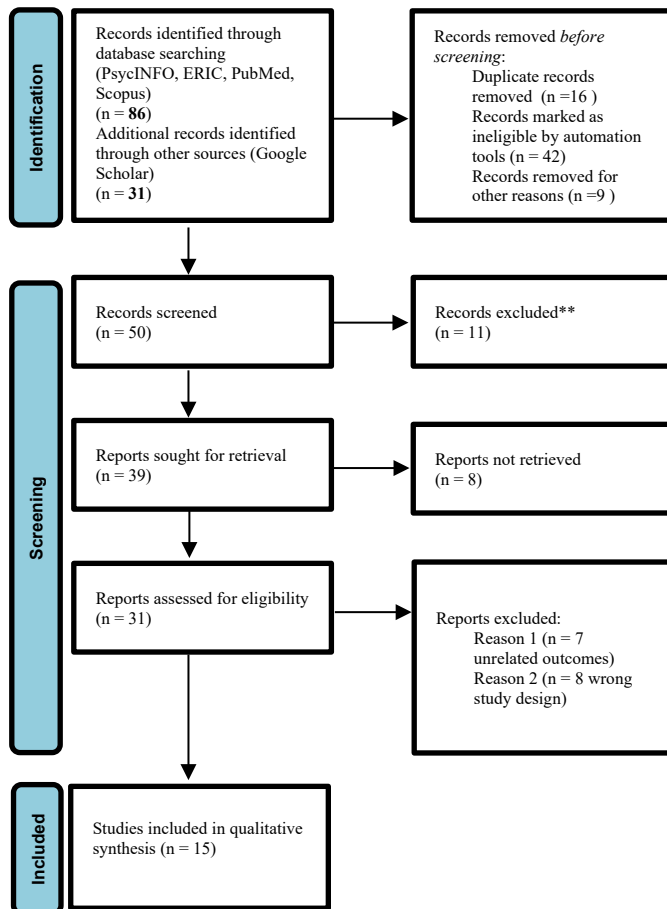
Data synthesis

Following an in-depth and systematic literature review process, fifteen studies comprising qualitative research, mixed-methods inquiries, and systematic reviews met the established inclusion criteria. These studies explored the application and adaptation of TBRI and related trauma-informed relational care approaches for students on the autism spectrum in both educational and home care settings. The included studies were first organised into a tabular summary detailing the authors' names, publication years, study designs, particular characteristics, and key findings relevant to TBRI adaptations to facilitate a structured synthesis. The studies were arranged alphabetically by the first author's last name to enhance accessibility and clarity. Data synthesis was performed through a combined approach of thematic analysis, meta-aggregation, and narrative synthesis. Thematic analysis was applied to inductively identify recurring concepts, patterns, and relational care strategies across the included studies. These emergent themes were then meta-aggregated to consolidate common findings, ensuring that the synthesised results reflected the convergence and nuance of individual study outcomes. A narrative synthesis further contextualised these themes, weaving together descriptive accounts and methodological insights to produce an integrative understanding of how TBRI-informed practices are tailored to support autistic learners. This multilayered synthesis approach enabled a rigorous, transparent, and comprehensive interpretation of the available qualitative evidence, providing thematic depth and practical implications for trauma-informed interventions in autism care.

Quality appraisal

The methodological quality of each included study was appraised solely by the reviewer using an adapted version of the critical appraisal skills programme qualitative checklist and the mixed methods appraisal tool for mixed-methods studies. Each study was independently assessed for clarity of research aims, methodology appropriateness, data collection and analysis rigor, ethical considerations, and the credibility of findings. Since a single reviewer conducted this review, inter-rater reliability could not be established. To mitigate this limitation, the reviewer applied appraisal criteria uniformly and documented justifications for each rating assigned to maintain transparency and methodological accountability. The quality appraisal outcomes informed the interpretation of the results but were not used to exclude studies.

Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram showing the systematic selection process for studies included in the review



Note: The sole reviewer conducted the study selection process independently, and a PRISMA 2020 flow diagram template was adapted for this systematic review.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data from the selected studies were analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2021) reflexive thematic analysis framework. This method allowed for inductive coding, ensuring patterns and themes emerged directly from the data rather than imposed by pre-existing assumptions. The qualitative synthesis identified three overarching domains that captured how trauma-informed relational care, particularly Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), has been adapted for students on the autism spectrum. These domains included (a) relational connection strategies, (b) sensory empowerment adaptations, and (c) corrective approaches tailored for autism-specific behavioural and emotional needs within trauma-informed educational and caregiving contexts. This analytical approach preserved the authenticity of caregivers', teachers', and practitioners' lived experiences, ensuring that the emergent themes remained grounded in the realities of supporting neurodivergent learners. From the analysis of fifteen included studies, three core themes consistently emerged regarding the application of TBRI principles for students with autism. First, relational connection strategies highlighted modifications to foster trust and meaningful communication in ways responsive to the unique social interaction patterns of individuals with ASD. Second, sensory empowerment adaptations addressed environmental and relational adjustments to support sensory regulation, reduce overstimulation, and promote emotional safety. Lastly, individualised corrective approaches emphasised gentle, supportive responses to challenging behaviours, prioritising safety and

emotional stability over punitive measures. These findings offer valuable insight into how TBRI can be thoughtfully adapted within autism-supportive settings, informing relational practices, sensory support systems, and individualised caregiving strategies to enhance well-being and learning outcomes.

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of all included studies, including author names, publication year, study design, participant sample, and key conclusions regarding TBRI adaptations in educational or home care settings for individuals with ASD.

Relational connection strategies tailored to autism communication styles

Many of these studies highlighted the importance of adjusting relational connection methods to accommodate the unique social and communicative preferences of students with autism. Instead of relying solely on traditional verbal interactions or eye contact, educators and caregivers have found success using alternative approaches, such as parallel play, visual supports, co-regulation through physical proximity, and sensory-based activities, to establish trust (Green et al., 2020; Ranjbar et al., 2023).

Manuguid and Catama (2025) found that general education teachers achieved better connection outcomes when incorporating students' sensory preferences, such as fidget toys and light-touch alternatives. Kelley et al. (2020) also found that students responded favorably when connecting operations, respected their demand for stability, and lessened too strong social constraints. This theme emphasises the importance of a teacher or caregiver recognising that relational safety necessitates flexibility in neurodiverse communication styles (Faulkner et al., 2023; Lambert et al., 2021). Furthermore, the theme emphasises the importance of adapting relational connection approaches to accommodate the diverse communication preferences of students with ASD. This includes moving beyond the typical and conventional verbal and eye contact-based interactions to adopt more flexible, sensory-friendly methods, such as parallel play, visual supports, and co-regulation through proximity.

Table 1: Synopsis of Included Research on Trust-Based Relational Intervention Adaptations for Students With ASD

Author (s) Year	Research design	Sample	Important discoveries or findings on TBRI Adaptations for ASD
Bowers & Cox (2021)	Mixed Methods	ASD focused behavioural therapists	This research found that sensory empowerment activities in Trust-Based Relational Intervention applications raised ASD students' preparedness for relational connection.
Bruce & Nangle (2021)	Mixed Methods	Special educators and students with ASD	This research found that trust-relational intervention's connection and correction strategies can help teachers and other caregivers match the processing styles of students with ASD.
Cross et al. (2019)	Mixed Methods	Students with trauma histories, including ASD	This research highlighted the importance of customised behavioural modification consistent with neurodiversity concepts.
Faulkner et al. (2023)	Qualitative	Trauma-Informed Schools Implementing Trust-Based Relational	This research emphasised the need for relational safety for students with ASD with trauma histories

		Intervention	in corrective programmes.				and modifications for individuals with ASD.
Green, Sawyer, & Cooper (2020)	Qualitative	ASD classroom teachers	This research reported good results using Trust-Based Relational Intervention's corrective procedures, which were supplemented with visual assistance and predictable routines.	Schaaf et al. (2018)	Systematic Review	Occupational therapists serving patients with ASD	This research strongly supported the adaptation of sensory-based empowerment techniques.
Kelley et al. (2020)	Qualitative	School counselors applying trauma-informed treatment	This research reported that students with ASD responded favorably to trust-based relational intervention-inspired approaches, which emphasise co-regulation and relational safety.	Stevens et al. (2020)	Systematic Review	Teachers supporting students with ASD.	This research identified the lack of specific training in Trust-Based Relational Intervention as a barrier and recommended trauma-informed professional development.
Lambert et al. (2021)	Systematic Review	Trauma-informed care methods applied in Autism Spectrum Disorder Education	This research validated the connection between trust-based relational intervention and trauma-informed education that supports neurodiversity, advocating for customised implementation plans.	<p><i>Note.</i> The table summarises 15 qualitative, mixed-methods systematic review studies examining the application of TBRI or comparable trauma-informed relational care techniques specifically for ASD populations in home care, clinical, and classroom settings. These results affirmed the necessity of implementing as well as respecting the neurodiverse trauma-informed relational therapies (Faulkner et al., 2023). Practically speaking, teachers must learn that every student with autism spectrum disorder has different ways of connecting and that actions occasionally viewed as "withdrawn" or "disengaged" actions reflect communication choices rather than deficiencies as often perceived. The modifications of teachers and caregivers based on trust-based relational intervention must be personally customised and locally relevant. This is demonstrated in the documentation of sensory modifications in classrooms by Manuguid and Catama (2025), which shows how environmental and cultural factors interact with the demands of students with autism spectrum disorder. The emphasis on relationship-building as fundamental and requiring empathy, respect, and attunement to the sensory and communicative reality of the student on the spectrum is a complex understanding that complements the recently evolved techniques in this trauma-informed education perspective (Lambert et al., 2021).</p>			
Manuguid & Catama (2025)	Qualitative	General education teachers with ASD students	This research emphasised sensory regulation within empowerment, adapting relational connections to respect the social preferences of ASD.	<p>Sensory empowerment adaptations to support regulation</p> <p>Adapted to concentrate on sensory control for children with ASD, Trust-Based Relational Intervention emphasises the need to feel safe both emotionally and physically in their surroundings. Eleven studies underscore the need to incorporate sensory diets, quiet rooms, visual calendars, and proprioceptive activities to help students regulate their emotions and become ready for involvement (Bowers & Cox, 2021; Manuguid & Catama, 2025; Martinez & Greene, 2019).</p>			
Martinez & Greene (2019)	Qualitative	Families implementing Trust-Based Relational Intervention at home for ASD children	This research noted better parent-child interactions and fewer meltdowns using connection routines and sensory-based empowerment.	<p>Cross et al. (2019) and Oliveras et al. (2022) further found that sensory predictability was described as basic to relational safety for children with ASD. Teachers successfully used weighted lap cushions, relaxing places, and tactile sensory packages as preparatory tools before beginning emotional coaching or remedial strategies. These findings support earlier studies showing that for students with ASD (Schaaf et al., 2018; Stevens et al., 2020), sensory-based empowerment inside trauma-informed treatment is necessary.</p>			
Maynard et al. (2022)	Qualitative	School-based mental health professionals	This research emphasised the possibilities of Relational Intervention in regular classrooms and the need for trauma-informed treatment for children with ASD.	<p>This theme emphasises sensory empowerment as a necessary component in establishing safety and supporting involvement among students with autism. This entails incorporating sensory control techniques, such as visual timetables, quiet areas, and sensory diets, into the classroom to help reduce overwhelm and facilitate complex preparation for relational engagement and learning (Schaaf et al., 2018). Sensory dysregulation can aggravate trauma reactions, so the integration of sensory supports directly relates to the empowerment principle of Trust-Based Relational Intervention, which aims to restore physiological and environmental safety (Stevens et al., 2020). According to the data, sensual predictability lessens anxiety and behavioural problems and generates the emotional bandwidth required for students on the spectrum to gain from relational and corrective interventions (Cross et al., 2019). This theme, therefore, emphasises the need to teach teachers sensory science and control methods, which are still</p>			
Oliveras et al. (2022)	Qualitative	Families with children with ASD, undergoing Trust-Based Relational Intervention	This research emphasised family-oriented adjustments at home and in the classroom and sensory-friendly empowerment activities.				
Ranjbar et al. (2023)	Qualitative	Special education teachers	This research advocated connection approaches honoring ASD communication styles and sensory requirements.				
Sanders et al. (2023)	Qualitative	Special education administrators	This research highlights the role of school leadership in supporting Trust-based Relational Intervention training				

underrepresented in many programmes for preparing teachers for the workforce. Furthermore, it implies that basic components of trauma-informed treatment for ASD populations, environmental changes, and sensory adaptations should have top priority in school regulations (Martinez & Greene, 2019).

Individualised correction approaches promoting safety and emotional regulation

Correcting the most complex idea in Trust-Based Relational Intervention was typically revised to emphasise emotional control and safety over conformity. Eight studies showed that conventional behaviour management techniques can aggravate anxiety in children with autism; hence, teachers developed alternative punishment techniques, such as predictability, choice, and sensory co-regulation (Maynard et al., 2022; Sanders et al., 2023).

Bruce and Nangle (2021) demonstrated that incorporating visual aids or movement breaks enhances the effectiveness of corrective dialogues. In their 2023 paper, Faulkner et al. emphasised the necessity of co-regulated breathing and reconciliation opportunities to mend relational fractures. Manuguid and Catama (2025) observed the effective utilisation of social stories and emotional charts that respect students' communication preferences and processing durations. The positive endorsement of Trust-Based Relational Intervention is seen in the increasing shift towards relationally responsive and neurodiverse-affirming disciplinary techniques (Lambert et al., 2021; Ranjbar et al., 2023).

This theme recounts the adaptation of correction strategies prioritising relational safety and emotional control over compliance and punishment. Conventional approaches to behaviour control can ignore the sensory sensitivity and communication problems faced by students with ASD, therefore increasing their anxiety and weakening their confidence (Bruce & Nangle, 2021). With an emphasis on relationship repair over disciplinary consequences, successful correction involves predictability, choice, and co-regulation (Faulkner et al., 2023).

The techniques, including "do-overs," visual aids, and social narratives, help autistic students process and recover from dysregulation in ways that respect their processing needs and communication styles (Manuguid & Catama, 2025). This shift toward relatively grounded correction reflects broader advancements in special education, challenging behaviourist paradigms, endorsing trauma-informed techniques, and the neurodiverse paradigm shift and neurodiverse approaches (Lambert et al., 2021; Ranjbar et al., 2023). It also underscores the need for teachers and caregivers to consistently undergo professional development to enhance their emotional coaching techniques and trauma-sensitive discipline.

VI. CONCLUSION

Through customised strategies for building connections, intense sensory experiences, and specific approaches to issue resolution, this systematic review of the literature shows how Trust-Based Relational Intervention could be significantly enhanced for students with ASD. Examining 15 studies reveals that for implementation to be successful, it must be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse communication styles and sensory needs of students with ASD. It must also utilise relatively responsive correction procedures that prioritise emotional safety and control over compliance.

These results emphasise the need to see trauma-informed treatment from the standpoint of neurodiversity affirmation. This acknowledges the reality that teaching students with autism is a complex endeavor. Its center specialises in building trust, allowing them to learn how to control their emotions. This then requires special, sensory based, culturally sensitive techniques. Although further study is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of Trust-Based Relational Intervention adaptations over time and their potential applications in other institutions, this systematic review already presents some strong data. Ultimately, incorporating Trust-Based Relational Intervention concepts into inclusive education practices helps strengthen the safety and

learning capacity of students with ASD, fostering more equitable and motivating school environments.

This study highlighted and emphasised the importance of sensory control and flexible communication skills. As evident in the reviews, it is a requirement for teachers to engage in active participation in continuous professional development focused on trauma-informed relational therapies tailored to neurodiverse students. While teachers are encouraged to apply tailored strategies aimed at predictability, choice, and emotional control instead of punishment, they should also use customised variations of Trust-Based Relational Intervention, acknowledging students' specific sensory and communicative demands.

Regarding the efficacy and cultural sensitivity of Trust-Based Relational Intervention adaptation, including training for consistency and implementation strategies, teachers and researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal and experimental investigations to establish the legitimacy of trauma-informed strategies further. Additionally, promoting sensory-friendly facilities, providing resources for professional development, and supporting collaboration among teachers, families, and clinicians will help school leaders prioritise embedding trauma-informed relational care at the policy level. These combined efforts can help build learning environments that foster trust, safety, and empowerment for individuals in facilities and schools serving students with ASD.

VII. FURTHER DIRECTION

Many limitations must be accepted, even though this evaluation presents a remarkable overview of the body of information. Although this systematic review is rich in contextual and experiential knowledge, most of the included research employed qualitative or mixed methods approaches, which, by nature, restrict the generalisability of their findings to more general populations. This methodological focus highlights a critical need for rigorous experimental and longitudinal research to thoroughly evaluate the Trust-Based Relational Intervention's efficacy, sustainability, and scalability within ASD settings.

Moreover, the present corpus of research on the use of Trust-Based Relational Intervention for people with ASD is still somewhat rare. This disparity highlights the need for further research, particularly studies that modify and test Trust-Based Relational Intervention forms tailored to diverse cultures. Because students come from diverse social backgrounds, future research should investigate how cultural settings impact the use and outcomes of Trust-Based Relational Intervention. This will ensure that it is both valuable and practical in a wide range of school settings. Future studies may also be beneficial in investigating what factors contribute to the effectiveness of trust-based relational intervention in educational settings. As part of this, we will also examine teacher training programmes, assess the consistency of interventions, and carefully study how Trust-Based Relational Intervention affects students' academic, social, and behavioural outcomes. More research needs to be done in these areas so that best practices and policy suggestions can be made for trauma-informed, relational-driven treatments that meet the needs of students with autism.

VIII. FUNDING

I have not received any funding, grants, or other financial support from any organisation or entity that should be perceived as influencing the results or interpretation of this study.

IX. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest in this study. Furthermore, I declare that I have no personal relationships, professional affiliations, or competing financial interests that could compromise the objectivity of this work. I have reviewed and approved this statement.

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