

TRANSCRIPT

Introduction

Welcome to Part 03 of the Understanding Autism module created for PGA Learn.

Parts 01 and 02 built the appropriate interpretive foundation. They explained what Autism represents, how sensory and regulatory variation shapes experience, and why behaviour cannot be read as a reliable indicator of Autistic internal state.

Where parts 01 and 02 dealt with mechanisms and effects, part 03 moves into what Autistic adults reported from their own observations and experiences and is designed to give you the necessary information to be able to dive into the research report that you will find in the resources.

The study asked Autistic adults to reflect on golf as a sensory, social, and organised environment. Their responses formed the evidence base of the analysis.

The research was conducted as a final project for the BSc course Civic Engagement module. Research skills were a significant part of the BSc in preparation for the task.

The report was well received and was subsequently published in the GAP Good Autism Practice peer reviewed journal aimed at professional practitioners.

The PGA felt it was appropriate to address the topic of Autism constructively and bring the professional golf environment up to speed with current research.

This overall work is an example of what the BSc top-up course can help to contribute to the profession.

3.1. - How the Research Was Designed

Phrase 01: Open Question Format and Participant Voice

The study used open questions rather than sequenced or closed response formats. Open questions allow participants to define their own terms of engagement. They do not direct the participant toward a predetermined answer.

This helps to remove inferences and matters because the aim was to understand how Autistic adults interpreted golf in their own terms and understanding.

Phrase 02: Participant Autonomy Within the Research Design

Participant autonomy was central to the research design. Questions were sequenced to move from general perception toward personal reflection, allowing each participant to engage at their own cognitive rhythm. This allowed meaning to emerge from within Autistic experience rather than being shaped by external frameworks. The accounts that resulted reflect how participants genuinely interpret golf, which is the foundation on which the research findings rest.

Phrase 03: Design Decisions and a Neurodiversity Affirming Approach

The neurodiversity affirming approach treats Autistic experience as a valid and distinct way of engaging with the world. The research design prioritised participant autonomy, allowing accounts to remain within that interpretive position throughout.

3.2. - What the Findings Represent

Phrase 01: Lived Experience as the Primary Reference

The findings reflect how individual Autistic adults described their experience of golf. Each response was taken on its own terms regardless of golf experience.

Lived experience is the reference point throughout, rather than performance, behaviour, or clinical profile. Experience in the context of the research referred to either direct personal experience or perception of the activity. This approach meant that a broader relational understanding could emerge while maintaining the same primary reference of lived experience.

Phrase 02: Variation Across Participants as Expected and Meaningful

Participants described golf differently. Some found aspects of the environment regulating. Others found the same aspects difficult or exclusionary. This variation reflects the spectrum of neurological profiles that shape experience as described in Part 02. Granting space for interpretative variation across participants reveals the scope of how golf is perceived across the Autistic population.

Phrase 03: Expression Shaped by Individual Context

No two participants described the same experience in the same way. What one participant found calming differed from others. What one participant valued about participation, another found opaque or inaccessible.

This reflects the interaction between individual regulatory profiles and environmental conditions that Part 02 established as the basis for Autistic participation. Again, this reflects the Autism spectrum in that each experience is unique, however, by using thematic analysis, common themes are identifiable. The main point is that there are no absolute consistencies, but there are commonalities within the disclosures.

3.3. - How to Read the Report

Phrase 01: Apply the Regulatory and Sensory Framework from Part 02

The concepts introduced in Parts 01 and 02 are the lens through which the research findings should be read. Sensory processing, regulatory capacity, masking, and the distinction between accessibility and inclusion all apply directly to what participants described. Keeping those aspects in your minds eye will help you identify what is being addressed in the correct way.

Phrase 02: Participant Language

Participants described their experiences in their own words. Those words were taken directly as stated. Where a participant described something as calming, it is recorded as calming. Where something was described as exclusionary, it is recorded as exclusionary.

The language in the research reflects participant meaning without interpretation distortion.

Phrase 03: Findings Are Evidence for Interpretation

The research provides a set of described experiences that can be interpreted through the framework already established. That framework is what allows the report to be read accurately.

3.4. - The Report, Reuse, and Questions

Phrase 01: Access the Report

The report is available for your reference as published by the GAP journal in the available download materials.

Phrase 02: Copyright

Please be mindful of copyright, and if you do want to use any part of the document you can contact me on the stated email address to request permission. Equally, if you have any questions, please feel free to email me.

Phrase 03: Close

This Autism Understanding module was delivered in 3 parts to support the broader professional attitude towards Autism in golf. Further modules are being discussed to build a more comprehensive approach relevant to the golf setting and PGA members in their club management and coaching roles and responsibilities. This rollout will occur gradually, as there is a fair amount of ground to cover, and as with most development things, your feedback is of the utmost importance.

Personally, I would like to express my thanks to PGA staff and management for their support to realise this module for PGA Learn.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to hearing from you. Bye for now.
