

The embodied view of autism

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Abstract

In the past decades, research has firmly established that Autism Spectrum Disorder is a multicausal, multilevel phenomenon. With this multidimensional approach, theoretical viewpoints informing empirical research have also become more pluralized. In this paper, we describe a turn towards a meta-theoretical shift in cognitive science labeled as "embodiment" and its application to theories and research on autism. We show how the premises of the embodied view of cognition: the relational-embodied nature of the mind and the interconnectedness of action, perception, thought, and affect lead to an approach to autism that is different from previous cognitivist approaches. In this framework, we discuss the role of sensorimotor and perception-action processes, as well as intersubjectivity in creating autistic developmental pathways. Autism is understood as rooted in a developmental cascade in which interdependent processes dynamically influence each other.

Keywords

autistic spectrum disorder, embodied view of autism, sensorimotor development in autism, intersubjectivity in autism, developmental cascade models

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