

Taiwanese Families' Perspectives: Promoting Foundations of Self-Determination Skills for Young Children with Special Needs

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Abstract : Self-determination has been particularly influential in obtaining a better quality of life through successful transition processes for students with disabilities. The development of self-determination through learning has raised attention at an early age. This study used a survey questionnaire to construct the understanding of the self-determination in Taiwan, learn the perspectives about the environmental and situational contexts where the respondents expect children to display self-determination skills in different cultures. Specifically, the research questions are: (a) What are Taiwanese families' general perspectives about the development of foundations of self-determination for young children with special needs? and (b) how does families' demographic background (i.e., income level, educational background) and child characteristics (i.e., age, emotional or behavior problems) impact Taiwanese families' perspectives on the foundations of self-determination across three critical components (i.e., choice-making and problem-solving, self-regulation, and engagement) for young children with special needs? Data from 125 participants were gathered and analyzed. The findings suggested that Taiwanese families showed very positive attitudes toward promoting a foundation of self-determination for young children with special needs. Families' income level and child's severity of emotional/behavioral problems were two variables that were found to impact families' views on their child's foundational self-determination skills. Implications for future research and practice in supporting families to promote foundations of self-determination for young children with special needs will be provided.

Keywords : disabilities, self-determination, Taiwan, young children

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