

Educational Diagnosis and Evaluation Processes of Disabled Preschoolers in Turkey: Family Opinions

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Abstract : It is thought that it is important for disabled children to have the opportunity to benefit preschool education that smoothens transition process to formal education, and for the constitution of a precondition for their success. Within this context, it is important for the disabled in Turkey to be evaluated medically firstly and then educational-wise in order for them to benefit early inclusive education. Thus, disabled people are both diagnosed in hospitals and at Guidance and Research Centers (GRC) attached to Ministry of Education educational-wise. It is seen that standard evaluation tools are used and evaluations are done by special education teachers (SET) in order for educational diagnosis and evaluation (EDAE) to be realized. The literature emphasizes the importance of informal evaluation tools as well as formal ones. According to this, it is thought that another party, besides students in EDAE process and SETs, is family, because families are primary care takers for their children, and that the most correct and real information can be obtained via families beside results of educational evaluation processes (EEP). It is thought that obtaining opinions of families during EEP is important to be able to exhibit the present EDAE activities in Turkey, materialize any existing problems, and increase quality of the process. Within this context, the purpose of this study is to exhibit experiences regarding EDAE processes of 10 families having preschool children with hearing loss (CHL). The process of research is designed to be descriptive based on qualitative research paradigms. Data were collected via semi-structured interview questions, and the themes were obtained. As a result, it is seen that families, after they realize the hearing loss of their children, do not have any information regarding the subject, and that they consult to an ear-nose-throat doctor or an audiologist for support. It is seen that families go to hospitals for medical evaluation which is a pre-requisite for benefiting early education opportunities. However, during this process, as some families do not have any experience of having a CHL, it is seen that they are late for medical evaluation and hearing aids. Moreover, families stated that they were directed to GRC via audiologists for educational evaluation. Families stated that their children were evaluated regarding language, academic and psychological development in proportion with their ages in GRC after they were diagnosed medically. However, families stated that EEP realized in GRC was superficial, short and lacked detail. It is seen that many families were not included in EEP process, whereas some families stated that they were asked questions because their children are too small to answer. Regarding the benefits of EEP for themselves and their children, families stated that GRC had to give a report to them for benefiting the free support of Special Education and Rehabilitation Center, and that families had to be directed to inclusive education. As a result, it is seen that opinions of families regarding EDAE processes at GRC indicate inefficiency of the process as it is short and superficial, regardless being to the point.

Keywords : children with hearing loss, educational diagnosis and evaluation, guidance and research center, inclusion

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