

Controversial Aspects of Eligibility Criteria in Accessing Social Assistance and Services for People with Disabilities in Turkey: A Study on Parental Views and Experiences

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Abstract:

Social assistance and services for people with disabilities can serve as fundamental social policy tools that strengthen their participation in social life and reduce their economic and structural disadvantages. Fair and rights-based access to these social assistance and services significantly indicates social justice and equal opportunities.

On the other hand, people with disabilities' eligibility for social assistance and services in Turkey is subject to various conditions. The disability rate and dependency level specified in a temporary or permanent medical disability report are among these conditions and play a decisive role in determining eligibility. Since the disability rate and dependency level stated in the medical disability report have become key to eligibility, individuals may hope to obtain medical reports with the highest possible disability rates and dependency levels. However, viewing disability as a measurable and provable means reduces people's life experiences and needs to numerical data, which can put pressure on families and individuals.

In this research, parents' views and experiences were included to assess the consequences of this current eligibility approach. As a result, the current approach has been identified as quite controversial, specifically in some cases and has been examined from a critical perspective.

Keywords:

Dependency level, Disability rate, Disability report, Eligibility, People with disabilities, Social policy, Social assistance, Social services, Turkey.