

How teachers perceive their role in the treatment of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

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In order to increase the efficacy of an intervention program, the specialist needs to expand the therapeutic environment with the active participation of anyone who is involved in the child's upbringing. However, the progress of an intervention program is strongly affected by the beliefs of the participants in that. The present study aimed to examine how teachers perceive their role in the treatment of Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD). Participants were 193 teachers, 55 (29%) male and 138 (71%) female (mean age: 35.5 years, mean teaching experience: 10.1 years). None of the teachers had any training or experience on special education. Teachers were asked to complete an inventory regarding their beliefs about AD/HD, which presented a vignette i.e. a short description of typical AD/HD behaviors. According to our results, teachers perceived themselves as more competent to deal with the problem compared to child psychologists or pediatricians. In addition, teachers' feelings of self-efficacy were significantly negatively correlated with their perceptions regarding the severity and the effects of the disorder on the child's life, and significantly positively correlated with their perceptions about its prevalence as well as years of teaching experience. Moreover, male teachers were shown to feel more efficient than female teachers in coping with the problem. These results suggest that in-service teacher training should focus on informing teachers about AD/HD and clarify their role in the diagnosis and treatment of the disorder.