

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES AS PERCEIVED BY PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA

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Abstract *_Using an online questionnaire, this study investigated the Early intervention services as perceived by Parents of children with autism in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Two hundred and ninety-seven parents completed the online questionnaire, 194 from Saudi and 103 from Egypt. The results showed that there is a low level of parents Perception for early intervention services and a lack of early intervention services provided to children with autism in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and that there is an urgent need for more of these services. Research has shown that the time between birth and age 36 months is a critical developmental period in a child's life. These months offer a window of opportunity that will not be available later. Early intervention programs minimize and in some cases prevent delays in development of infants and toddlers with disabilities. They can decrease the need for special education and related services when a child enters school, and increase independence. Children whose special needs are identified and addressed during these crucial early years have a greater chance of reaching their full potential. In this sample of parents, we found low levels of perceptions of early intervention services for children with Autism in Saudi and Egypt. The findings of the present study also indicate that Saudi and Egyptian parents don't know the importance of early intervention for their children with Autism..*

Keywords: *Early Intervention services, Autism.*