

Negev Bedouin Teachers' Attitudes Toward ADHD and Its Pharmacological Treatment

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Abstract

Little is known about the attitudes of Negev Bedouin toward attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and its pharmacological treatment. This study examines the perspectives of Negev Bedouin teachers on pharmacological treatment. Thirty-six teachers are asked to consider how their views influence the way they relate to pupils' parents. A grounded-theory analysis of semistructured interviews illuminates ambivalence in teachers' attitudes. Teachers, like the rest of their community, when asked about the implications of an ADHD evaluation for their children, respond that ADHD and its pharmacological treatment cause dishonor. When asked what ADHD means when it is their pupils who are diagnosed and treated, however, teachers, like the education establishment, accept the need for medication. However, they fail to communicate this need to parents because their attempts to do so show parents that they consider their children "flawed"-causing parents to oppose treatment even more lest they succumb to social stigma.