

# Honors Classroom Practice in 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: A Case Study

Soykan Uysal

Selçuk University, Turkey

## Abstract

We know that students are separated in many ways in the education system until the higher education. One of these separation methods is the ability grouping/tracking or streaming practice. The separation of the students into different groups is one of the most debated and ancient practices in primary, secondary and high schools. Also it is found useful for many school teachers and administrators and also parents.

In this study, ability grouping practices have been examined based on students' opinions, who are studying in a high school which has one an honors' class and two mixed level classes. The sample of the study includes totally 72 11th class students of which 23 students in the elite class, 25 students in the first mixed class and 24 students in the second mixed class. The sample of the study includes totally 72 students of which 22 students (Female: 12 Male: 10) in the elite class, 26 students (Female: 15 Male: 11) in the first mixed class and 24 students (Female: 14 Male: 10) in the second mixed class. In the study, Perceptions of students were gathered by an interview conducted through semi-structured forms, on the form of classes, their perception of satisfaction, views on practice process, opinions of their families' perceptions, perceptions about the level classrooms and friendship relations has been tried to be determined. The data have been obtained via interviews were analyzed with content analysis and was expressed by the number, percentage and frequency tables.

Referring briefly to the results, almost all of the students in the elite class stated that the separation is made through an objective criteria and nearly half of the students in the mixed classes agreed on the idea. More than half of the students think that the practice is fair; two thirds of the students involved in mixed classrooms mentioned that this practice negatively affects the friendship relations. Almost all of the students stated that the teachers conducting the courses have no different attitudes in different classes. It is seen that students' opinions differ according to the ability groups. It is seen that when the students were asked to make an assessment of the practices in terms of psychological variables, especially the students in the mixed classes indicated that the ability grouping practices affect them in a negative way because of the teachers' different attitudes in different classes and they are considered as lazy. When we consider the interview findings, it is seen that the students in the elite class evaluate the practice in an academic way and they think that the practice affect them positively because of the feeling of being hardworking and studying hard. When the opinions of the families were analyzed according to the students' perceptions, it is determined that the opinions of the families' change based on the classroom in which their students are. Overall, it is said that the students who perceive themselves as successful has a satisfaction with the practice and want the practice continue, the students who perceive themselves as unsuccessful recommend the ability grouping/tracking practice to be ended.

**Keywords:** Honors classroom, High School Education, Students' perception