

DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLINICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE SPECIAL NEEDS REPORT FOR CHILDREN (COZGER): A 3-MONTH RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATION

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: This study aimed to characterize the demographic, psychiatric, and medical profiles of children referred to the Outpatient Clinic for the Special Needs Report for Children (COZGER) and to examine the distribution of special needs levels, as well as to assess the implications of the COZGER process for child and adolescent psychiatric practice.

METHODS: (Ethics Committee Approval must be obtained and the number should be specified). This retrospective descriptive study analyzed hospital records of 444 children aged 0–18 years who applied to the COZGER outpatient clinic of İzmir City Hospital Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department between August 15 and November 15, 2025. Cases with forensic reports, incomplete data, or unfinished COZGER processes were excluded. Demographic characteristics, psychiatric diagnoses, and special needs levels were evaluated overall.

RESULTS: The median age of the cases was 8 years, and 67.6% were male. At least one psychiatric diagnosis was identified in 76% of the children, with the most common diagnoses being Intellectual Disability (29%), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (19%), and

Specific Learning Disorder (16.9%). Regarding levels of special needs, 75.9% of cases were classified as having “special needs,” with 34.5% categorized as Special Needs (ÖGV) and 13.1% as Severe Special Needs (ÖKGV). Among children with ASD, 48.8% were evaluated at the Moderate Special Needs level and 51.2% at the Severe Special Needs level. Notably, approximately half of the cases (48.7%) with a special needs level of at least ÖGV had received their diagnosis for the first time. Ethical approval was obtained from the İzmir City Hospital Ethics Committee on December 3, 2025, under protocol number 2025/624.

CONCLUSIONS: This study shows that the COZGER system effectively differentiates children’s developmental and psychiatric support needs and provides consistent classification, particularly for ASD. However, the retrospective single-center design limits generalizability, indicating the need for multicenter studies to standardize COZGER practices and strengthen early intervention processes overall future.

Keywords: COZGER, multidisciplinary approach, rehabilitation, special needs