Examining the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education

Examinando as opiniões dos administradores escolares sobre educação inclusiva

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Abstract
The aim of the research is to examine the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education. It was designed with one of the qualitative research methods, namely, the semi-structured interview method. 20 school administrators working in schools in Türkiye where inclusive education is implemented participated in the research. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed through the descriptive analysis technique. According to the results of the research, school administrators stated that support education services should be used and individualized education programs (IEPs) should be implemented properly in order to carry out inclusive education in an effective way. While it was pointed out that students with special needs are partially socially accepted by their peers, it was also revealed that there are students with special needs who face peer bullying. In addition, although school administrators considered the legal regulations regarding inclusive education as adequate, they found the teacher training on these regulations inadequate. Hence, it was observed that there has been a need for teacher professional training on inclusive education. Accordingly, what could be suggested is a special education teacher who would be supported in every school where inclusive education is provided.

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Keywords: School Administrators. Inclusive Education. Students with Special Needs. Special Education.

Resumo
O objetivo da pesquisa é examinar as opiniões dos administradores escolares sobre a educação inclusiva. Ele foi elaborado com um dos métodos de pesquisa qualitativa, o método de entrevista semiestruturada. 20 administradores escolares que trabalham em escolas em Türkiye, onde a educação inclusiva é implementada, participaram da pesquisa. Os dados obtidos dos participantes foram analisados pela técnica de análise descritiva. De acordo com os resultados da investigação, os administradores escolares declararam que os serviços de apoio à educação devem ser utilizados e os programas de educação individualizada (PEI) devem ser implementados de forma adequada, a fim de realizar a educação inclusiva de forma eficaz. Embora tenha sido apontado que estudantes com necessidades especiais são parcialmente aceitos socialmente por seus colegas, também foi revelado que há estudantes com necessidades especiais que enfrentam bullying entre colegas. Além disso, embora os administradores escolares considerassem adequadas as normas legais relativas à educação inclusiva, consideraram inadequada a formação dos professores sobre estas normas. Por conseguinte, observou-se a necessidade de formação profissional de professores sobre educação inclusiva. Assim, o que poderia ser sugerido é um professor de educação especial que seria apoiado em todas as escolas onde a educação inclusiva é fornecida.


Introduction

The adaptation process of individuals with special needs to society as productive individuals depends on the provision of effective educational practices. To this respect, the development of students with special needs has been the focus of educational reforms. At the core of current problems is the move from a segregated environment where students with special needs are grouped together to a more inclusive environment where they integrate with their typically developing peers. This movement is named as the inclusive education initiative (Bunch et al., 2005; Valeo, 2008).
Inclusive education, which is defined as the least restrictive educational environment, is among the educational practices that aim to provide the highest level of benefit to individuals with special needs (Gözün & Yıkmış, 2004). With inclusive education offered together with supportive education practices, individuals with special needs are educated in the same environment as their peers and develop academically, socially, and emotionally (Karaca, 2018).

Inclusive education allows typically developing children and children with special needs to receive education together and in the same environment, without being separated. It is acknowledged as a requirement of human rights that every individual takes part in equal educational environments and benefits from equal opportunities. For this reason, inclusive education is supported for individuals with special needs to socialize and become independent individuals by participating in social life (Değer, 2018).

Inclusive education practices in Türkiye started in the 1980s. In the following years, inclusive education has developed rapidly. In particular, the development of professional competencies of school personnel regarding inclusive education and the preparation of the school environment for inclusive education increase the quality of inclusive education (Karaca, 2018).

It might not be possible to succeed if the individuals involved in inclusion practices do not fulfil their duties and responsibilities. For this reason, it is deemed important for everyone involved in the inclusion practice (school administrator, teacher, parent, student, etc.) to fulfil their duties and responsibilities (Aykara, 2011; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2010; Diken & Batu, 2013; Sarı et al., 2019). One of the most influential figures involved in this process is school administrators (İra, 2015).

Various paradigms such as globalization and multiculturalism, transparency, accountability, student-centred approach in the information society, which is the modern management approach, have also updated the axis of educational management. It seems that the need for flexible applications and functions that could adapt to the structure of the new school environment and changing conditions has become inevitable (Aslanargun & Bozkurt, 2012). For this reason, the evaluation of the events by the school administration and the practices and understandings developed for teachers or students are essential in schools where inclusive practices take place. At this point, the school administration's perspectives on practices are deemed crucial (Çobanoğlu & Gökalp, 2015; Özaydınlik, 2019).

During inclusive education, school administrators have various responsibilities, especially heading the IEP unit. While fulfilling all these responsibilities, it might play a
prominent role in understanding the current situation regarding the practice of inclusive education. It is crucial to prepare inclusive education environments and to reveal the opinions and perceptions of school administrators, who have the opportunity to provide support during the practice process, on inclusive education (Bateman & Bateman, 2001), as administrators are at the forefront of the factors that affect the quality of groups and interpersonal relations and the atmosphere of the school environment (Şahin, 2013). The views of any leader could seriously disrupt or promote positive development of institutions containing individuals with special needs (Smith et al., 2010). School management is one of the factors that significantly affects the success of inclusion practices. School administrators are the first experts that children with special needs and their family meet in inclusive education. The inclusion of students with special needs in inclusive practices and the opinions of school administrators who lead the educational practice processes on inclusion are of great importance (Uzun, 2009).

It is known that the knowledge, skills, and behaviours of school administrators have an impact on other individuals in the school environment, especially teachers (Çobanoğlu, 2021). For this reason, it is crucial for school administrators to express positive opinions on inclusive education, to accept and respect the rights of students with special needs to be educated in inclusive education environments, and to see inclusive education as a useful practice (Varol, 2010). Otherwise, school administrators’ perspectives of adequacy or inadequacy towards inclusion practices, lack of adequate training in inclusion, inadequate cooperation with families, difficulties in accepting inclusive students by peers, and inadequacies in legal regulations bring along various issues (Balo, 2015). Therefore, in this study, the aim is to reveal the opinions of the administrators of schools with inclusive practices on the following points:

1. The social acceptance of children with special needs by children with typical development in inclusive classrooms,
2. Legal regulations regarding inclusive education in Türkiye
3. Education and training processes in schools regarding inclusive education
4. Professional competencies of experts responsible for inclusive education.

Although there are studies examining teacher attitudes and opinions on inclusive education (De Boer et al., 2011; Nel et al., 2011; Sari et al., 2019; Zelina, 2020; Zeybek, 2015), examining inclusive students, teachers with inclusive students at different educational levels, and difficulties in inclusive practice (Aktan et al., 2019; Balo, 2015; Batmaz & Çermik, 2019; Fırat & Koyuncu, 2019; Güzel, 2014; İra & Ayan, 2016), and the needs of school administrators in inclusive education (Bai & Martin, 2015), there is limited research on the
opinions of school administrators on inclusive education (Bolat & Ata, 2017; Erdoğan et al., 2022; Topçu, 2021; Uzun, 2009). With this research, the aim is to reveal the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education and to contribute to the field through the most recent findings.

Methodology

In this section of the research, explanations about the research model, research group, data collection tool, data analysis process, and how validity and reliability were ensured are included.

2.1 Research Model

Qualitative research is one of the knowledge production tools developed by people to explore the depths of social systems shaped by their own efforts and to solve their own secrets (Özdemir, 2010). This research, which aims to reveal the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education, was designed with one of the qualitative research approaches, namely, the phenomenology approach. Phenomenology aims to reveal the experiences and the meanings they attribute to these experiences by determining the in-depth experiences and thoughts of participants in research on a subject (Smith & Fowler, 2009). In this research, the phenomenology design was used to reveal the views and experiences of school administrators on inclusion in depth.

2.2 Research Group

Criterion sampling was used to determine the research group. It could be defined as a type of sampling in which criteria are determined based on predetermined and important characteristics for the purpose and situations that meet these criteria are selected (Merriam, 2013). In the study, the criterion for determining school administrators was administrators working in schools where inclusive students were educated. Accordingly, 20 school administrators working in inclusive schools in different provinces and at different school levels in Türkiye were contacted through semi-structured interview forms. The demographic information of the research group is demonstrated in Table 1.
### Table 1: Demographic information of the research group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Information</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 years and above</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate education status</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of teaching an inclusive student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors

### 2.3 Data Collection Tool

In the current study, data were collected using a semi-structured interview technique, which is one of the qualitative research methods. In this technique, the researcher prepares the interview questions by planning them in advance. Depending on the flow of the interview, different sides or sub-questions could be added by the researcher. The participants were asked to express and elaborate their responses in more detail (Türnüklü, 2000). There were four questions in the semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers. The responses provided for each question were asked to be explained along with their reasons. Table 2 demonstrates the steps followed in the development of the semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>A draft form was developed by examining the research and sources in the literature regarding the semi-structured interview form.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>While developing the semi-structured interview form questions, the researchers came together and continued to develop the form, and it was decided to include the determined topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>For expert opinions regarding the evaluation of the interview form, the form was developed by taking the opinions of two faculty members who work in the field of special education and have qualitative research experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>Pilot interviews were held with two school administrators who were not included in the research group and feedback was received. Following the necessary final corrections made after the pilot interview, the expressions in the items of the interview were reviewed and demographic information was added.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The steps taken in the process of developing the interview form

Source: Authors
2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

20 school administrators were interviewed to reveal their opinions on inclusive practices. All interviews were held face to face, lasting 18 to 35 minutes, in the school administrators' rooms and at times convenient for them. Necessary approval and permissions were received from the participants for the research and the interviews were recorded with the help of a voice recorder. The obtained data was converted into written form. Descriptive analysis technique was used to analyse the data obtained in the research. This technique was used as it allows the data to be organized according to the themes that emerged in line with the research questions and to present the responses directly by considering the questions or dimensions expressed by the researchers during the interview (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). At first, the data converted into written form were grouped within the framework of the interview questions. However, due to the nature of semi-structured interviews, it was possible for the researcher to obtain in-depth information through detailed questions during the interview.

The data obtained through in-depth questions were subjected to a re-analysis process with an inductive approach so as not to miss any details. Accordingly, in this research, a framework for data analysis was developed based on the research questions and dimensions included in the interview. Analyzing the data, the findings were defined, and the findings were interpreted. The data obtained from each of the 20 school administrators who participated in the interview were examined one by one without making any changes. The analysis of the data obtained through semi-structured interview forms is provided in the findings section in detail.

2.5 Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, validity is to ensure the invariance of the findings from the perspective of the reader, participant, and researcher. When conducting qualitative research, some issues must be taken into consideration to ensure validity (Creswell, 2007; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). While preparing the interview questions to ensure validity in this research, opinions were received from two experts who have research in the field of special education and qualitative research methods. The construct validity of the research was ensured in two ways. Firstly, participant diversity was ensured by collecting data from school administrators working at different educational levels. Secondly, after the data was reported, it was read by two school administrators from whom the data was collected, and their opinions were
received. In order to ensure the reliability of the research, all the processes of the research were written in detail. The data collection process in the study was spread over time. In the meantime, the primary researcher met school administrators in the schools to have the interviews, ensuring that the participants developed a positive attitude towards the researcher. With that, an attempt was made to contribute to the credibility of the research.

Qualitative researchers should reveal the steps of their research process as much as possible for the consistency or stability of their research (Creswell, 2007). Accordingly, in this research, researchers reported the preparation stages of data collection tools, their practice, data collection processes, and analysis processes and steps in detail. Additionally, in the research, after the written transcripts of the data were completed, three interview transcripts were randomly selected and the interview contents were compared by both researchers. Thus, consistency between researchers and the consistency of qualitative data was ensured. Besides, in order to make the findings in the tables clearer and more understandable, some notable direct quotes from the interviews were included. Within the scope of external reliability, for data reliability, all voice recordings and transcripts were kept in a way that could not be accessed by anyone other than the researchers. Participant E information was presented in detail, keeping the real identities of the participants confidential. By carrying out these processes, the researchers aimed to contribute to the validity and reliability of the research.

**Results**

In this section, findings regarding school administrators' opinions on inclusion practices were included. The analysis of the data obtained within the scope of the research was done with the descriptive analysis technique. Twenty-one sub-themes belonging to 4 main themes, namely social acceptance, legal regulations, education, and professional competence, were reached. The data related to the theme and sub-theme are demonstrated in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Acceptance</td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer bullying</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher attitudes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Regulations</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Should be improved</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examining the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education

Table 3: Main themes and sub-themes obtained from the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education
Source: Authors

When Table 3 was examined, it was seen that six sub-themes belonging to the main themes of social acceptance and education, five sub-themes belonging to the main theme of legal regulations, and four sub-themes belonging to the main theme of professional competence have been obtained. Considering the sub-themes, it was revealed that school administrators mostly express their opinions on the sub-themes of IEP and support educational services. As a result of the analysis of the interviews with school administrators, it was unveiled that fewer opinions on the sub-themes of effort, planning, knowing the student, special education field knowledge, and the need for special education teachers were expressed.

As a result of the analysis of the data, six sub-themes belonging to the main theme of social acceptance were obtained: acceptance, adoption, empathy, orientation, peer bullying, and teacher attitudes. These subthemes are demonstrated in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Sub-themes of the opinions on social acceptance](Source: Authors)
When the opinions of school administrators on the social acceptance of children with special needs by children with typical development were examined, it was realized that school administrators mostly expressed their opinions on acceptance (6:30%) and peer bullying (6:30%). While the school administrators pointed out the importance of acceptance, teacher attitudes, and orientation training in the success of inclusion practices, they also expressed their views on emotional processes such as empathy and adoption that might contribute to the success of the process. In addition, the participants also emphasized the inhibiting effect of peer bullying on the social acceptance process in inclusion practices. The opinions of the school administrators who participated in the research are extracted as follows:

“They are accepted when the teacher accepts them. The responsibility is all on the school administration and classroom teachers” (OY11).

“Students are generally inclusive and possessive, and the attitude and attitude of teachers towards the students can affect them” (OY1).

“When the necessary orientation is done, it is easier for students to accept. We had problems with very few of our students. These problems are usually caused by problem behaviours” (OY3).

“If the proficiency of the primary school teacher is full, the social acceptance of the other children in their class is positive and much more harmonious” (OY12).

“They are socially ostracizing inclusive students among the other children. This is why the inclusive students turn in on themselves” (OY5).

“Some of the students can be cruel about this, or the inclusive student has difficulty in communicating” (OY8).

“Inclusive students in primary education are not accepted by normal students because their level of development is not enough to understand this” (OY7).

“If the teacher motivates the student in the classroom and encourages normally developing students to adopt the student, the student can be successful” (OY2).

“There is generally acceptance, empathy and support for these children today” (OY14).

As a result of the interviews with school administrators, five sub-themes belonging to the main theme of Legal Regulations were obtained: adequate, inadequate, should be improved lack of knowledge and effort. These sub-themes are demonstrated in Figure 2.
When the opinions of school administrators on the legal regulations regarding inclusive education were examined, it was unwrapped that some of the school administrators found the legal regulations adequate (6:30%), some stated that they were inadequate (4:20%), and some suggested that they needed to be improved (5:25%). On the other hand, some school administrators pointed out that they were not informed about the legal regulations on this subject (2:10%). The opinions of the school administrators who participated in the research are extracted as follows:

“I think there are deficiencies in the evaluation part of the legal regulations. Not every child is evaluated well. Legal regulations in this regard need to be increased” (OY3).

“Legal regulations are adequate. The shadow teacher system may also be of use for inclusive students” (OY9).

“I don't know enough about the legal regulations to criticize them” (OY8).

“I find them inadequate, especially the issue of gifted students is problematic” (OY14).

“With new legal regulations, education can become more qualified” (OY6).

“Legal regulations are adequate, but training is occasional” (OY12).

As a result of the data analysis, six sub-themes were obtained under the main theme of education and training: instructional adaptations, physical arrangements, supportive education, IEP, class size, and the need for special education teachers. These subthemes are demonstrated in Figure 3.

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**Figure 2: Sub-themes of the opinions on legal regulations**

*Source: Authors*
When the opinions on the education and training processes in schools related to inclusive education were examined, it was found out that the views belonging to the IEP sub-theme were expressed to a large extent (8:40%). In the IEP sub-theme, school administrators drew more attention to the stages of IEP preparation, practice, and evaluation. However, school administrators mostly expressed their opinions on the sub-theme of support education services (7:35%). In this sub-theme, they touched upon the importance, necessity, and functionality of supportive education. Most of the school administrators expressed the necessity of instructional adaptations (6:30%) and physical arrangements (5:25%) in inclusion practices. Very few of the school administrators (2:10%) stated the overcrowding of the classroom and the inadequacy of special education teachers (1:5%) as the negative effects of inclusive practices. The opinions of the school administrators who participated in the research are extracted as follows;

“……… Even supportive education cannot be provided fully in many schools” (OY12).

“Support education is a very important part of inclusive education. It is an important part that completes school education” (OY6).

“In my opinion, supportive education is a promising application, but it also has negative aspects, as it is understood by the peers that the student participating in the support education is a student with special needs” (OY5).

“Support education services are provided in schools, but parents cannot help the school because they do not have enough information” (OY7).
“Instructional adaptations are about the interest, knowledge, dedication, and conscience of the classroom teacher. Many teachers do not want to continue their education with these children without the direction or request of the administration because the responsibilities of teachers are increasing” (OY9).

“I don't think inclusive practices are fully sufficient. The quality of inclusive education needs to be increased. Material support needs to be increased and buildings need to be rearranged within the framework of universal design principles for the disabled” (OY3).

“Although teachers are competent, class sizes are a hindering factor in this regard” (OY7).

“Guidance teachers and special education teachers need to support classroom teachers regarding IEP. The IEP team should actively work together” (OY9).

“The preparation and evaluation part of IEPs is partially carried out, but there are serious problems in the practice process” (OY12).

“A sufficient number of expert special education teachers need to be assigned to schools. The number of special education teachers should be increased in each school” (OY3).

“There should be an expert special education teacher in every school” (OY2).

As a result of the analysis of the research data, four sub-themes of the main theme of professional competence were reached: knowing the student, professional training, planning and special education content knowledge. These subthemes are demonstrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Sub-themes of the opinions on professional competence
Source: Authors

When the opinions on the professional competencies of the experts responsible for inclusive education were examined, it was disclosed that school administrators suggested professional training (3:15%). They indicated that supporting teachers with practical seminars
and in-service training was of great importance for inclusive practices. In addition, they mentioned that teachers' planning skills (1:5%), knowing the student (1:5%), and special education field knowledge (1:5%) were also necessary. The opinions of the school administrators who participated in the research are extracted as follows:

“Teachers should know students well and be able to plan and implement their specific IEP properly” (OY1).

“The classroom teacher is important. S/he must know the student well. The teacher leads the entire process” (OY4).

“Practical seminars should be given to teachers regularly in schools” (OY15).

“Every school should have an expert special education teacher who can provide special education field knowledge support” (OY2).

“The special education teacher in our school constantly and regularly educates us, the parents and the children. In terms of professional competence, I think it is very good in today's conditions” (OY3).

**Discussion, Conclusion, and Suggestions**

As a result of the research, it was revealed that inclusion practices were successful, but there were inadequate aspects. It was stated that individuals with special needs should be more socially accepted in order for inclusive education to be implemented much more effectively. When the studies conducted in Türkiye were reviewed, it was found out that the social acceptance levels of the students making typical progress towards inclusive students at the primary school level were high (Aktan et al., 2019). However, in the research conducted at the high school level, it was observed that while high school students preferred to study in the same school and class with individuals with intellectual disabilities or autism, they did not prefer to be desk mates or work in the same group (Fırat & Koyuncu, 2018). This implies that the social acceptance levels of typically developing students towards inclusive students may vary. Accordingly, the provision of training that could contribute to the positive development of typically developing students' attitudes towards students with special needs, whose social acceptance levels towards individuals with special needs are low, could be suggested. In particular, the research findings drew attention to orientation training that would raise awareness about the characteristics of students with special needs at the beginning of the academic year. It was reckoned that this type of training would positively affect the social acceptance levels of typically developing students towards students with special needs.
As a result of the research, it was unveiled that a significant part of school administrators found the legal regulations adequate. However, it enunciated that more descriptive, practical, and guiding training on legal regulations should be provided for everyone who is directly or indirectly related to inclusive education. Bateman and Bateman (2001) emphasized that in order to maintain more qualified inclusive education practices, teachers, school administrators, support staff and families should be aware of the laws and regulations regarding inclusive education. What was suggested about inclusive education in Türkiye is as follows: IEP must be prepared by the IEP Development Unit. In inclusion practices, individuals with special needs should receive education in the same environment as their peers. Class size should be determined according to the number of students with special needs. In addition, students with special needs might benefit from the support education classes in a way that does not exceed 40% of the total course hours (General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services, 2018). However, in the research findings of Akcan (2013), Güzels (2014) and Zeybek (2015), it was indicated that although the regulations made in the laws were adequate, there might be situations that were not reflected in the practice and that there might be problems in the practice process. Apart from all those, there were also school administrators who did not consider that the legal regulations regarding inclusive education were adequate and believed that they needed to be improved. Legal regulations including more educational rights were requested, especially in order to provide more effective education for gifted students in inclusive education and to meet their individual needs.

As a result of the research, it was also pointed out that the IEP preparation, practice, and evaluation stages should be carried out more effectively in the inclusive education process and the IEP team should work actively. In the same vein, putting emphasis on the significance of IEP in meeting the educational needs of students with special needs in inclusive education, İra and Ayan (2016) regarded the participation and support of especially expert personnel in the preparation and practice of the IEP process as crucial for the success of students with special needs. For this reason, Bolat and Ata (2017) suggested teacher training regarding IEP preparation in their research.

As a result of the research, the significance of supportive education in schools with inclusive education was highlighted. It was realized that support education classes were not used functionally enough. It was also signified that the number of students in some classes with special needs students were high and that situation affected inclusive education negatively. In addition, it was stated that physical arrangements should be made in the
classrooms where inclusive education is provided, taking into account the educational needs of children with special needs. It was also suggested that educational materials should be prepared for students with special needs. Batmaz and Çermik (2019) implied that the support education classes should be used more actively in the research they conducted in Türkiye and that the physical equipment in some schools with inclusive education should be suitable for students with special needs. For that reason, support education classes should be organized to meet the educational needs of students with special needs in schools with inclusive education and they should be used actively. While providing educational support to inclusive students in support education classes, teachers who are experts in the field of special education should be used. Moreover, the physical arrangements and instructional materials of the classes where inclusive students are included should be prepared taking into account the needs of students with special needs.

As a result of the research, employment of auxiliary support personnel was requested. In the study conducted by Chiner and Cardona (2013), it was observed that teachers' thoughts about inclusion were not related to teachers' financial resources or teaching skills, while it was revealed that whether teachers were supported by expert personnel was largely decisive. Likewise, İra and Ayran (2016) also underlined the needs of teachers in this regard in their research.

As a result of the research, it was disclosed that professional training related to inclusive education has been provided in schools offering inclusive education in Türkiye. However, some school administrators addressed that professional training content for teachers has been presented in a theoretical manner. In Türkiye, students are placed in education faculties through a central exam. With such an implementation, it could be said that the main reason why students choose and settle in education faculties is the scores they receive in the exam rather than their professional aptitude. This situation reduces the motivation of prospective teachers towards the profession (Şişman, 2009). Besides that, despite the positive changes made in the curriculum of education faculties recently, teacher candidates studying in education faculties have difficulty in understanding the relationship between theory and practice due to the lack of cooperation between the university and the school (Toy & Duru, 2016). In this respect, it could be implied that it is necessary to increase the teaching practice hours that could provide professional competence related to special education and inclusion for teacher candidates studying at education faculties.

Eker (2014) emphasizes that teachers' professional competencies should be high. The scholar correlates teacher’s professional competence with the development of technological
tools, which makes it easier for teachers to access various resources and for teachers to easily share among themselves. Recently, in direct proportion to the developing information technologies, internet addresses related to education have increased and access has been facilitated. It is now possible for teachers to get support by organizing events and exchanging information with virtual groups. In this way, in inclusive practices, teachers could be provided with support from their colleagues on any subject in which they considered themselves as inadequate, and their professional competence beliefs could be improved. In addition, it is necessary to carry out application-based educational activities about inclusive education for teachers by making use of video content visuals and technology.

The fact that this research was designed only with the interview method, one of the qualitative research methods, constitutes a limited aspect of it. The opinions of school administrators on inclusion might be carried out together with experimental studies. Additionally, the opinions of school administrators regarding the professional competence of the teachers to be observed, social acceptance, legal regulations, and the education-training process might be obtained by using different valid and reliable data collection tools. Comparative studies might also be included by obtaining opinions on inclusive education from teachers, who are a prominent part of inclusive education, and typically developing peers. What is more, further studies including cross-country comparisons might be made by obtaining the opinions of the administrators in schools with inclusive education in different countries.

**References**


Examining the opinions of school administrators on inclusive education. Mustafa Kemal University Faculty of Education Journal, 6(10), 231-246. https://doi.org/10.56677/mkuefder.1206638


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Submetido em: 13.10.2023

Aceito em: 14.11.2023