

Examining the Needs of Public Schools for Special Education

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Abstract. The study aims to determine the needs of Public Schools for Special Education. It was carried out in a special education school in Istanbul in the 2020-2021 academic year. The data was collected with a Semi-Structured Interview Form in the Case Study design of the qualitative research method. The interviews, conducted on a voluntary basis, were analyzed using the Content Analysis method. The needs of the special education school were evaluated according to the opinions of the participants. The findings were classified under several headings such as special education teachers' professional competence and personal rights, students' educational needs and services offered to them, the location and structural condition of the school, the budget and financial needs of the school, the relations between the school and the family, the school and environment, and the school and the counseling and research centers (CRCs), the relations between the schools and the ministry regarding the needs of the school, and the expectations of the students' parents. Based on the findings obtained with the participation of not only special education teachers, but also school management and student parents who are supportive in the process; the needs of the special education school in terms of how a special education school should be in an education period, the needs of teachers and their professional gains, the necessity of school, classroom, equipment and material support suitable for students with special needs, transportation and shuttle services, expectations of student parents, meeting school expenses, school-family, school-environment and school-RAM Relationships were revealed in this research.

Keywords: Education, Needs of Special Education Schools, Special Education, Special Education Schools, Special Education Students

1. Introduction

Changes in educational needs over the last hundred years have changed the direction of quality expectations. Important steps are being taken to improve special education practices. Identifying the problems of private and public institutions providing education as private education will bring suggestions for determining their needs. The management process is as important as the process in which education is transformed into production. In this respect, the opinions of the management staff, teachers and parents of children with special needs, who are active and effective in the process, are thought to facilitate and contribute to the determination of needs within the scope of the findings to be obtained in the research, and it is considered important to contribute to the literature in the academic field.

1.1. Problem Statement

Individuals who show significant differences from their peers in terms of their individual characteristics and educational qualifications are individuals with special education needs. It is necessary for these individuals to benefit from special education programmes, which are defined as all of the individually planned, systematically applied, carefully evaluated educational services aimed at maximising their independent living skills, and it is necessary to ensure that these individuals become independent and integrate into the society (Uzunboylu & Ozcan, 2019). Schools should be considered as a whole in providing full-fledged education

for individuals in need of special education. Meeting all the needs of special children in the school environment will support their integration into society. In this context, with the research carried out in this context, it is aimed to determine the needs of special education schools and to shed light on policy makers and literature.

1.2. Related Research

The role of education is to create a model of society that includes equality of opportunity. This can only be achieved through the elimination of inequalities and through the fair distribution of educational opportunities. "Even if kids who wend their way from different backyards and different paths are mixed with the same education, schools produce different consequences. Even if the paths are a matter of preference, the systematic size of the product shows the influence of other factors" (Collins et al, 2000).

The concepts of 'difference' and 'inequality' are intertwined in Sociology of Education, but difference cannot be described as inequality. Inequality is a problem, whereas difference is not a problem. Within the scope of the problems that are encountered in inequality, the concept of difference should be explained on the basis of basic values and assumptions (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Individuals begin their educational journey with their differences, so it is important to plan education in accordance with these differences. External factors of differences are related to how different groups have connection with the school, while internal factors are related to the way in which the school establishes a relation with different groups. The external factor approach, focusing on educability, underlines the importance of individuals' responding to education. According to external factors, compensatory tendencies related to education are determined, and schools undertake the task of eliminating deficiencies. However, the challenges of organizing the education system according to class differentiations are the main problems of internal factors (Moore, 2004).

According to Article 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, "No one can be deprived of the right of education and learning." Additionally, the Decree with Force of Law numbered 573 about Special Education Services and the regulation of Special Education Services states that "special education should be maintained in the environments appropriate for the deficiencies and characteristics of individuals in order to meet their educational needs by using specially developed educational programs and methods provided by specially trained staff" (MEB, 2018). The role of education is to create a society model that includes equal opportunities. It is necessary for individuals with special needs to receive education like normal students, to provide an educational environment considering the needs of individuals with special needs and to meet their educational needs. The role of administrators is critical in meeting the aforementioned needs of students in need of special education and in the success of educational practices, according to Risen, Tripses, and Risen's (2015) case study on the role of administrators in special education institutions, the ideal organisational model includes a school principal, director(s), and special education director (or other special education administrator) who are knowledgeable about both the requirements of the law and the pedagogy of teaching children with disabilities. The special education administrator should lead and coordinate regular education and special education staff and administrators in the process of identifying, developing and implementing programmes for students with disabilities. According to Sun and Xin's (2020) research on the knowledge, skills and leadership roles of school principals in providing services and support to students with special needs, it shows that principals have limited knowledge about special education and are not fully involved in special education in their leadership practices. Along with administrators, teachers' expertise in the field of special education is also an important factor in the development of students with special needs. As a teaching process, special education refers to the teaching process. It refers to the determination, sharing and planning of duties and responsibilities with the answers to the questions of who will teach the process, to whom, where, how and what (Heward, Kimball, Heckaman, & Dunne, 2021). Since there are limited studies based on the opinions of school administrators, teachers and parents in special education schools in Turkey, this research is

important in terms of contributing to the field. The views of school stakeholders were sought in order to consider schools as a whole with a system approach.

1.3. Research Objectives

Recently, a continuous increase has been observed in private and public special education schools for students who need special education. However, the increase in their number may not give us clear results in terms of quality. The study aimed to determine the needs that would help eliminate the inadequacies of the institutions and examine the requirements for the improvement of the qualifications. The sub-objectives of the study were formed in line with the views of the stakeholders of the special education. Determining the problems of private and public institutions that provide special education will offer suggestions for determining their needs. The sub-objectives of the study are given below:

What are the views;

- 1- on the needs related to "Special Education Teachers' Professional Development and Personal Rights" in the Public School for Special Education?
- 2- on the needs related to the education process of the students and the student services in the education process of the Public School for Special Education?
- 3- on the needs related to topics such as "technological infrastructure, school budget and financial needs" of the Public School for Special Education?
- 4- on the problems about the relations between the school and the family, the school and the environment and the school and the CRC and on the development of relations in the Public School for Special Education Public?
- 5- on the relations between the Public School for Special Education and the Ministry and on communicating and meeting their needs?

2. Theoretical Framework

The efforts to keep up with the changing and developing global world educational practices regarding the similarities and differences of individuals are not only valid for the educational needs of individuals with similarities, but also for the educational needs of individuals with differences.

2.1. Definition of Special Education

Special education is the organization of educational variables with the aim of reducing, preventing or eliminating significant defects and deficiencies in terms of movement, communication and adaptation (Özsoy et al., 2002, p.7). Special education is the education given to individuals who cannot benefit from regular education due to the characteristics of emotional, communicative, physical, mental and social development, by using a special curriculum, different methods and special educational materials with a teamwork of specially trained staff (Dunn, 1968: 3-7).

2.2. Comprehensive Education

Comprehensive education is the simplest way to describe public education of students with disabilities according to accommodations that suit their individual needs. For comprehensive education to succeed, schools require conditions of high-quality services, well-trained teachers, supportive staff and financial resources (Bouillet, 2013; Curski, 2008). The No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2001) has contributed to consideration of co-teaching by emphasizing students' need to Access the public-education curriculum with all schools meeting all students' comprehensive educational needs and all students having access to effective learning, including those with disabilities (Friends, 2017).

2.3. Special Education Schools in Turkey

In Turkey, special education services are provided in special education schools programmed for children and young people in five main disability groups: the visually, hearing, intellectually and orthopedically disabled, as well as individuals with long-term illnesses. Children in these

disability groups who are eligible are included in full-time mainstreaming education in "Least Restrictive Educational Environments" with their peers in regular schools and classes, and are provided with supportive education in special education classes and benefit from educational services. On the contrary, those whose situation is not suitable are mostly educated in separate special education schools and classes in "Restrictive Educational Environments" According to the amendment made to the Regulation on Special Education Services in 2012, the Education Application School and Autistic Children Education Center and Job Training Center were merged under the name of Special Education Application Center. With the transition to the 4+4+4 education system; primary school part: Special Education Application Center (I. Stage); Secondary School Part: Special Education Application Center (Second Stage); Work Education Part: Special Education Practice Center (III. Tier); and vocational schools were reorganized as Special Education Vocational Training Centers.

The challenge of organizing the education system according to student characteristics, needs and problems is the main problems of education (Moore, 2004). Although several solutions have been proposed for the problems of disabled students, the effectiveness of these solutions have not been analyzed sufficiently.

A detailed analysis of literature reveals that studies related to special education tend to focus on two main themes such as development of special education teachers and analysis of specific problems of disabled students. For example, Alsolami (2022) suggested the use of Assistive Technology in special education as a way of improving professional development of teachers. Farley et al. (2022) investigated how special education teachers can share information with parents. Hord & DeJarnette (2022) described how professors can work with teachers and administrators to create and implement a tutoring program designed for students with disabilities. Gilson & Etscheidt (2022) underlined various dimensions of effective administrators of special education. Jackson (2023) analyzed perceived leadership styles of school leaders in special education schools and general education schools. Zhansulu et al (2022) determined the professional competencies of primary school teachers to support inclusion students with special education needs.

On the other hand, McKittrick et al. (2022) outlined the challenges of special education during the COVID 19 pandemic and offered recommendations to reshape the education for disabled students. Lichte & Scheef (2022) explored the needs necessary for professionals to support students with disabilities. Hu (2022) identified the challenges and opportunities facing education for people with visual impairments. Wu et al. (2022) investigated the philosophy of special education to enhance the learning outcomes of students with disabilities. Farra et al (2022) analyzed how parental tutoring to improve oral reading fluency of students with disabilities in rural settings. Özler & Akçamete found that video modeling is effective in teaching computer skills to students with intellectual disabilities.

Although these studies differ in terms of their focal point, they offer solutions for the betterment of education for students with specific needs. Therefore, the study aimed to examine the solutions in terms of whether they are sufficient to meet the educational needs of individuals who differ perceptibly from their peers who are defined as normal in terms of their developmental characteristics and educational qualifications.

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

This research was conducted as a case study based on qualitative research method. In qualitative data, the subject is not measured; instead, there are definitions, opinions and ideas (Creswell, 2012). The study, designed to collect opinions of the management staff, special education teachers and the parents of students with special needs, aimed to detect the basic needs and secondary needs to obtain complete and clear information by using the convenience sampling technique.

3.2. Participant/Respondent

Since there is only one special education school in the region where the research was conducted, this school was selected. Because case studies require a long-term process and an efficient process cannot be operated in terms of accessibility, different regions were excluded from the scope. The data collection process was carried out with the administrators working at the school, teachers and parents who approved voluntary participation in the research. The interviews were held with 3 management staff consisting of the school principal and the vice- principals, 4 special education teachers and 4 parents. In order for the interviewees to answer the questions sincerely, codes such as H (1-3), T (1-4) and P (1-4) were used to stand for headmasters, teachers and parents respectively.

Table 1 presents demographic information about the school management staff and teachers, and Table 2 presents demographic information about the students' parents. According to Table 1, all of the teachers were women, and the management staff were composed of 2 female and 1 male senior fellows. They were from different age groups. All of the teachers except the management staff are special education teachers.

According to Table 2, two mothers and two fathers were from different education levels and age groups. Each parent had minimum wage. A child had an orthopedic disability and a genetic developmental disorder, two children had mental and physical disability, while a child had autism. The information about the teachers and the management staff is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information related to the study group

Participant code	Age range	Professional field	Years of seniority	Years of seniority in the school	Gender
T1	26-30	SPT	6-10	6-10	F
T2	25 years and below	SPT	1-5	1-5	F
T3	26-30	SPT	6-10	6-10	F
T4	26-30	SPT	6-10	6-10	F
H1	40 Years and above	Management Staff	15 Years and above	11-15	F
H2	36-40	Management Staff	11-15	11-15	F
H3	40 Years and above	Management Staff	11-15	0-5	M

Participant codes: F (female), H (Headmaster), M (Male), Management Staff (the headmaster and the deputy headmasters of the school), SPT (Special Education Teacher), T (teacher), 1-4 (numbers of the participants), The information about the students' parents in the study group is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Information about the students' parents in the study group

Participant code	Age range	Educational background	Level of Income	Disability status of the child	Gender
P1	36-50	Secondary school	Minimum wage	Physically disabled	M
P2	36-50	High school	Minimum wage	Physically and mentally disabled	M

P3	20-35	High school	Minimum wage	Orthopedic disability and a genetic developmental disorder	F
P4	36-50	Primary school	Minimum wage	Autism	F

Participant codes: F (Female), M (Male), P (Parent), 1-4 (numbers of the participants).

3.3. Data Collection

Interview technique was utilised in the data collection process. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants of the study. The interview questions were developed according to the sub-objectives to determine the educational needs of special education teachers, the school and the students. The participants were informed that the audio recordings and personal information would be kept confidential and that the data would only be used for the study. In the data collection process, the interviews were made face-to-face. If it wasn't possible to conduct face-to-face interviews due to the Covid-19 pandemic process, online or phone call interviews were used. In all cases, the interviews were audiotaped, and they were converted into texts.

3.4. Data Analysis

The content analysis technique was used for similar or different opinions regarding the answers of the participants. The written and oral data obtained from semi-structured interviews are systematically analyzed according to content analysis, which is a qualitative method, and the data are digitized with coding. All the data were examined in order to find keywords having the characteristics of codes. These words were divided into categories, and main themes and sub-themes were formed.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

The interview forms applied to administrators, teachers and parents were developed based on the literature. A total of 12 interview questions were initially developed for administrators, 12 questions for teachers and 7 questions for parents. The probing questions for each question were also removed. Within the scope of the validity study, the interview forms were presented to 3 experts separately. According to the feedback from the experts, the interview questions for administrators and teachers were reduced to 6 questions about demographic information and a total of 10 questions about the sub-objective, and the interview questions for parents were reduced to 5 questions about demographic information and 4 questions about the sub-objective. A pilot study was conducted with the finalized interview forms. The interview forms, which were revised again for clarity and completeness of meaning, were applied to the main study group. The findings based on the data obtained were shared with the study group and confirmed. It was concluded that the data were effective in terms of validity and reliability. Interviews with administrators and teachers lasted 60 minutes on average, while interviews with parents lasted 45 minutes on average. The reliability and validity of the research were ensured by giving clear and explicit examples of the participants' opinions from the direct quotations in the texts and by citing views on similar and different aspects of similar studies in the theoretical framework.

3.6. Ethical Procedures

The research was approved by Anadolu University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee with the decision of the Ethics Committee on 27.04.2021 with the document registration date of 15.04.2021 and protocol number of 60927.

4. Findings

As a result of the study, 11 themes were divided into sub-themes in tables. The participants' important opinions are given below the table belonging to each theme.

4.1. Findings Regarding Professional Development of Special Education Teachers

The sub-themes and codes about "things that have been done for special education teachers to gain and develop their professional competence" are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Professional Development of Special Education Teachers

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
Things done for special education teachers to gain and improve their professional competence	Activities to gain professional competence	Providing specialization training	FT2, FH2
		Providing in-service training	FT1, FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		80-hour standard training program	MH3
	Activities to develop professional competence	Conducting trainings via Zoom	FT1, FH2, MH3
		Supporting teachers for courses, seminars and certificates	FT2, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Holding group meetings	FT3, FT4, FH2, MH3
		Personal preferences (master degree etc.), training with academicians by the Ministry	MH3
		Communicating with the relevant institutions	FH1

According to Table 3, the majority of the participants expect in-service trainings to improve themselves. Courses, seminars, certificates and group meetings are among the activities to support the teachers.

FT1 *"In our school, in-service trainings are given from time to time on the acquisition and development of professional competences, and we should participate in zoom meetings about our department."*

FH1 *"In terms of teachers' self-development, participating in seminars and being in dialogue with other relevant institutions will contribute to their development."*

MH3 *"The Ministry has an 80-hour standard training program for paid teachers. Those who don't get it can't get the job."*

When the statements of the teachers participating in the research are examined, it can be said that participation in in-service trainings has an important effect on the acquisition of teachers' professional competencies; seminars, courses, department meetings and certificate programs provide positive support to their professional gains; from this point of view, it can be said that these trainings are considered sufficient in the development of professional competencies. Supporting their professional development can be considered that the management acts with a focus on specialization.

4.2. Findings Regarding Personal Rights of Special Education Teachers

The sub-themes and codes about “problems encountered about appointment of special education teachers and the protection of their personal rights” are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Problems encountered about appointment of special education teachers and the protection of their personal rights

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
Problems about the appointment of special education teachers and the protection of their personal rights	The problems about appointment of special education teachers	Having fewer appointments	FT1, FT3, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Working as a paid teacher	FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Keeping special education teacher appointments within regular teacher appointments	FT3, FH2, MH3
		Preventing the new teachers from entering the work force	FT2
		Fewer numbers of graduates, the graduates' transferring to Rehabilitation Centers	MH3
		Special Education Teachers' not being appointed appropriately to their departments, employing teachers from other departments	FH1
		Increased numbers of special education schools	FH1, MH3
	The problems about protection of the teachers' personal rights	Unsatisfactory wages, problems related to social security	FT1, FT3, FT4
		Having heavier work load than other teachers	FT1, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Having inadequate benefits in their personal rights	FT1, FT2
		The rights and salaries of the paid teachers are different from those of the permanent teachers	FT3, FT4

The majority of the participants state they have fewer appointments and they work as paid teachers in the school. Keeping special education teacher appointments within regular teacher appointments and increased numbers of special education schools are the other issues related to the topic. The participants also state that the teachers have heavier work load than other teachers but get unsatisfactory wages.

FT3 *“Very few special education teachers are appointed, so we mostly work as paid special education teachers. Appointments of special education teachers can be kept separate from regular teacher appointments.”*

FH1 *“Our special education teachers are paid teachers. Appointments are not made in accordance with their departments, and teachers from other departments can also work in the school. The number of special education schools has increased in the last ten years, but the number of appointments remains low. The work load of special education teachers is higher than that of the other teachers.”*

When Table 4 and the statements of FT3 and FH1 were analyzed, it was found that the limited number of teacher appointments meant that the majority were forced to work as paid teachers. This situation can also be interpreted as a negative impact on collegial solidarity as it brings about differences in personal rights between permanent and paid teachers. In terms of organizational belonging and organizational justice, it can be said that there is a need for the teachers to be employed.

4.3. Findings Regarding Educational Services of Special Education Students

The sub-themes and codes about "activities done to improve the current situation of the special education students" are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. activities done to improve the current situation of the special education students

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
Activities done to improve the current situation of the special education students	Activities done with the family	Cooperation with the family	FT1, FT2, MP1, FP3, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Preparing a program to be applied at home and doing homework	FH1
	Activities done within the school	Following and reporting developments regularly, preparing 6-month development performances	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Preparing a program for their individual needs, preparing an Individual Education Plan (IEP)	FT1, FT2, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Including studies mentioned in the CRC reports	FT2, FH2, MH3
		Acquiring academic and social life skills	FT3, FH1, FH2, MH3
		1+1 Practice House	MH3
		Conducting tests for 0-6 years and 6 years and above	FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3

According to Table 5, the majority of the participants expect activities to be done with the family and within the school for the students' development. Having a cooperation with the family, following the students' developments regularly, reporting their developments, and preparing 6-month development performances are also emphasized. Preparing a program for their individual needs and preparing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) are the other important subjects related to the activities done within the school for the students' development. The most notable activities done with the family and within the school for the students' development are 1+1 Practice House, preparing a program for the family to apply at home and giving homework.

FT2 "Studies are carried out on the students' needs and requirements. Of course, we carry out the studies by getting information from the family."

FH2 "It is important to act together with the family. We prepare programs according to the students' needs and the teachers' fields. The development of children is constantly monitored and regular tests are carried out. The CRC reports also guide us to plan training for their development."

MH3 "We have a practice house with a 1+1 plan, a new practice in our school. The daily life of the student is practiced there. We are trying to prepare training programs in this direction. It is important to carry out studies in accordance with the CRC reports, to monitor the students' development regularly, to conduct tests for our students and to do all these things in cooperation with the family."

According to Table 5 and the statements of FT2, FH2 and MH3, it is seen that school-family cooperation will be beneficial in terms of providing family support, however, practices such as regular follow-up of the development of students with special needs, reporting and Individual Education Plan (IEP) according to their individual needs are implemented as existing educational services within the school and attention is drawn to improve and develop them.

4.4. Findings Regarding the Student Services for the Special Education Students

The sub-themes and codes about "the problems encountered during transportation" are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. the problems encountered during transportation

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The problems encountered while transporting the students with special education needs to the school and delivering them to their homes	The problems related to transporting the students	Having traffic problem	FT1, FT4
		Having problems with the parents	FT1, FT3, FT4
		Lack of suitable streets and sidewalks for the students with special needs	FH1, FH2, MH3
	The problems related to the school bus	Conflicts among school bus drivers,	FT2, FT4
		Disagreements on the school bus route	
		Keeping the school bus waiting, The students' having to wait in the school bus	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FH1
		The parents' having to come with the student	FH1

According to Table 6, keeping the school bus waiting is the most important problem related to transportation. Lack of suitable streets and sidewalks for the students with special needs, the parents' not being ready for the school bus are the other important subjects related to transportation.

FH1 "It is not easy to get a special education child out of the house. We don't have suitable sidewalks. We have problems when helping the students get in and get out of the school bus. Our children can wait in the bus sometimes due to traffic."

MH3 "Because our students have special needs, the sidewalks are not suitable for taking them from the school or home and helping them get in the school bus because the sidewalks are all concrete. They can be arranged as tartan surfaces."

When Table 6 and the statements of FH1 and MH3 are analyzed, it is seen that although the view that there is no problem in terms of transportation is dominant, most of the participants think that the problems encountered in terms of transportation are actually experienced. In addition, the lack of arrangement of streets and sidewalks suitable for students with special needs is seen as an important problem that needs attention. Parents expect students to be transported to school safely.

4.5. Findings Regarding Special Education Students' Needs for Classroom and Activity Space

The sub-themes and codes created with the information obtained about "problems about the organization and development of special education classes and activity areas" are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Problems about the organization and development of special education classes and activity areas

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The problems about the organization and development of special education classrooms and activity areas	Problems about the students' conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needing the assistant teachers, • Having to observe the students 	FT1, MP2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having students with different types of special needs • Demanding tasks of classroom arrangement • Having to arrange the classrooms and activity areas suitable for the diagnosis types of the students 	FT1, FT2, MP2, MH3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of the activity areas and hours for the development of the students. 	FT1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The necessity of skill practice areas for social and daily life • inadequacy of activity areas for group works • sustainable classroom and activity area requirement for older children 	FT4, MP1, MP2, FP4, FH2, MH3
		Problems about the equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The necessity of materials that appeal to technology • The requirement for frequent equipment changes • The old materials' causing troubles during the lesson.
	Problems about the school building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for extra protection for the equipment • Putting too many materials in the classrooms 	FT1, FH1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient materials in group works • Not putting the equipment back • Not meeting the needs on time 	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of material diversity • Necessity of producing materials suitable for special education • Inadequacy of academic studies that will provide materials • Lack of materials that will challenge the students 	FT3, FH1, FH2, MH3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuitable physical conditions, • Construction of the school buildings according to normal school conditions 	FT3, FH2, MH3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to move to the schoolyard 	FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3

According to Table 7, there should be skill practice areas for social and daily life. Having to arrange the classrooms and activity areas suitable for the diagnosis types of the students, lack of material diversity, inadequacy of academic studies that will provide materials are among the other opinions. The school building is another problem.

FT2 *“Each class can be arranged according to the type of diagnosis. For example, Class A can only be used for the lessons of students with autism.”*

FH1 *“There are a lot of materials on the market, but there are not many varieties for students with special needs, so new materials must be produced by the sector. There should be materials suitable for the child's needs. More challenging materials and equipment are required.”*

MH3 *“Special materials need to be diversified according to special students. A great burden falls on the manufacturing companies in this regard, perhaps our university students can be given project assignments for material diversification studies. It is very important for many of our students to use the practice house, so having more than one practice house, such as the one in our school, will help the students' social and daily life skills. We would like a garden environment in our school building. Unfortunately, our school was built like a normal school.”*

When Table 5 and the opinions of FT2, FH1 and MH3 are examined, it is emphasized that the organization of classroom and activity areas is effective in meeting the needs of students and that the equipment needs should be provided in this direction. It is seen that the participants who drew attention to physical needs emphasized that both the physical arrangements in special schools should be more suitable for individuals with special needs and the equipment used should be ergonomic.

4.6. Findings Regarding Special Education Students' Needs for Method, Technique and Material

The sub-themes and codes about “the solutions about the problems of the provision and use of educational materials, methods, tools and techniques” are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. The solutions about the problems of the provision and use of educational materials, methods, tools and techniques

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The solutions about the problems of the provision and use of educational materials, methods, tools and techniques		Reporting to the administration	FT1, FT3, FT4
	Solutions about the provision of the educational materials, methods, tools and techniques	Using class money, benefitting from volunteer parents, applying for individual opportunities	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4
	Solutions about the use of the educational materials, methods, tools and techniques	Searching for solutions on the internet, Using EBA, source books and videos	FT1, FT4, FP3, FH1, FH2, MH3
	Solutions about the use of the educational materials, methods, tools and techniques	The use of materials, tools, methods and techniques to enable the student to improve in the direction of her/his deficiency	FT2, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Consulting the administration and the other teachers	FT3

Demanding for application training MH3

According to Table 8, the majority of the participants search for solutions on the internet and use EBA, source books and videos. They use materials, tools, methods and techniques to enable the students to improve in the direction of their deficiency. They report to the administration when there is a lack of material.

FP3 *"He learned sounds very well from EBA. I sat for hours beside him and made him write. For example, he couldn't write A, but I had him write it. Then he saw E in EBA and learned E. Our contribution is greater, but EBA also has a contribution."*

MH3 *"It is necessary to increase the practical trainings about this subject; we have demands for this. EBA is helping our teachers in this respect."*

When the findings were examined, the majority of the opinions were that seeking solutions from the internet environment, EBA, resource books and related videos were effective in providing and using educational materials, methods, tools and techniques, and that it is important to use materials, tools, methods and techniques that will improve the student.

4.7. Findings Regarding Special Education School's Needs for Technological Infrastructure

The information about the problems with the technical infrastructure, location and structural condition of the school building is shown in Table 9.

Table 9. The problems with the technical infrastructure, location and structural condition of the school building

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The problems about the technical infrastructure, location and structural condition of the school building	The problems about the technical infrastructure of the school building	Internet connection problem	FT1
		an old building	FT2
		Heating problem, Requiring sound and heat insulation	FT1, FT2, FT4
	The problems about the location of the school building	a heavy traffic area, transportation problems for the parents living far from the school	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		an earthquake zone	FT2, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		a location intertwined with nature	FH1
	The problems about the structural condition of the school building	a reinforced concrete building	FT2, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Not suitable for special education, inadequate classrooms and activity areas	FT1, FT3, FT4
		problems about the dining hall	FT2, FT4, FH2, MH3
		Requirement for contemporary projects, lack of tartan surface	FH1, MH3
		Lack of green space and playgrounds in the schoolyard	FH1, FH2, MH3

According to Table 9, there is heavy traffic at the district and the parents living far from the school have transportation problems. The majority of the participants think that the school is located in the earthquake zone and that it is a reinforced concrete building. A large dining hall is needed. It is also necessary to be in touch with nature in the schoolyard and in the playgrounds and to construct contemporary projects and a tartan surface.

FH1 *“A location more intertwined with nature should be preferred. Having a completely reinforced concrete building creates some troubles. There should be more hobby gardens and outdoor areas. We want contemporary projects in which new ideas are applied. Traffic is the biggest problem, and we are in a risky area in terms of earthquake.”*

MH3 *“Our school is in a district with high traffic. We do not have a problem in terms of location, but we are in the earthquake zone. There is a sports hall and a practice house with enough space. A larger and a more equipped dining hall can be designed. There may be playgrounds in the schoolyard. Playgrounds and living spaces that are intertwined with nature can be built. Tartan surface would be an important practice for schools like us.”*

According to the data obtained from these interviews, the problems of the special education school regarding the technological infrastructure and structural needs of the school were highlighted as being in an area with heavy traffic, the building being reinforced concrete and being located in an earthquake zone; however, the lack of garden, green areas and playgrounds were emphasized. In addition, the need for a well-equipped and spacious cafeteria was identified as another important need.

4.8. Findings Regarding Special Education School's Needs for School Budget and Financing

The information about the problems in meeting school expenses, establishing financial resources and providing funding is shown in Table 10.

Table 10. The problems in meeting school expenses, establishing financial resources and providing funding

Theme	Sub- themes	Codes	Participant
Problems about establishing financial resources and providing funding within the context of the school expenses	Problems about establishing financial resources	Insufficient budget	FT1, FT2
		Having different special education needs, Being in need of donations	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Being in need of more funding than regular schools	FT1, FT3, FT4, FH2
	Problems about providing funding	Not having the funding on time due to high demands	FT3, FT4, FH2
		The necessity of transferring the funding to the right sources	FH1
	Problems experienced in other special education schools	Having financial needs in other private special education schools	FT4, FH1, FH2

According to Table 10, the majority of the participants think they need more funding than regular schools. It is difficult for them to financially support special education in private schools.

FH1 *“Our students with special needs may have different needs, and this requires more financial resources. Private institutions for special education may experience difficulties in this sense. But this is not very common in our public schools.”*

MH3 *“We don't have a problem with bill payments or stationery because we have a special application support. Of course, since the needs of special education schools differ from those of the other schools, they require more financing.”*

When Table 10 and the statements of FH1 and MH3 are analyzed, it is seen that the economic needs are adequately met. Regarding the problems encountered within the scope of establishing the financing sources of school expenses and providing appropriations, there is an increase due to the different needs of special education; however, private education provides sufficient financial support to public schools.

4.9. Findings Regarding Special Education School's Relations between the School and the Family, the School and the Environment and the School and the CRC

The information about protecting and improving relations between the school and the family, the school and the environment and the school and the CRC is shown in Table 11.

Table 11.

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The activities done within the scope of protecting and improving relations between the school and the family, the school and the environment and the school and the CRC	The activities for protecting and improving relations between the school and the family	Sharing information with the family	FT1, FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Holding IEP board meetings with the parents of the students, Participating in the special education services board with the parents	FT2, MH3
		The students' parents should be supported, the students' needs should be met and they should be safe	FT1, MP1, FP3, MH3
	The activities for protecting and improving relations between the school and the environment	the environment should be sensitive	FT1
		Maintaining the students' sense of security, ensuring that the students are social and comfortable	FT2, MP1, FP3, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Publishing the activities on the school's webpage	FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
		Organizing school-environment activity trips	FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3
	The activities done within the scope of protecting and improving relations between the school and the CRC	Keeping in touch with the CRC, having interviews with the CRC.	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FH1, FH2, MH3

According to Table 11, the majority of the participants want to keep in touch with the CRC. They want the school to share information about the developments of the students, maintain the students' sense of security, ensure the students' socialization and comfort, organize school-environment activity trips and publish the activities on the school's webpage. The school should hold the IEP board meetings with the parents and ensure a sensitive environment for the children.

FT1 "School-family cooperation is very important for us. We provide regular information about the developmental conditions of the children and receive information from them about their conditions. We are trying to provide psychological support to make the family feel that we understand them. We have regular meetings with the CRC about the developmental conditions of the students."

MH3 "Relations with the environment are generally weak. Unfortunately, an unsettled opinion prevails in our country. We plan out-of-school activities to improve our children's social life skills. It is important to us that children are comfortable and safe at these events. We publish the events on our school's webpage on social media. Every parent is personally involved in decisions about children. Most of the students are brought from home. They receive their training for a certain number of hours at the school, so we are intensively involved with 87 students."

Within the scope of protecting and improving school-family, school-environment and CRC relations, it was determined that school and family communication and mutual information sharing would contribute to student development; protecting the social safety and comfort of the student and acting jointly in cooperation with the CRC were among the issues considered important as practices.

4.10. Findings Regarding Conveying and Meeting the Special Education School's Needs

The information about the problems in communicating the needs to the District Directorate of National Education and meeting the needs is shown in Table 12.

Table 12.

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The problems encountered in communicating the needs to the District Directorate of National Education (DDNE) and meeting the needs	The authorization problems about communicating the needs to the DDNE	Falling within the remit of the school	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4
	The problems about meeting the needs by the DDNE	Failure to provide a response to the requests on time, failure to provide a response to every need.	FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4
		Limiting the budget with the other schools' requests	FT1
		Requiring diversity and continuity according to the students' needs	MP1, MP2, FP3, FH1, FH2, MH3

According to Table 12, the majority of the participants want diversity and continuity according to the students' needs. They also think communicating the needs falls within the remit of the school, the school fails to provide a response to the requests on time and for every need.

FT3 "We report the needs to the administration, and they are organized by the administration. There may be difficulties in meeting the needs on time."

FP3 "The school does not have enough support for educational materials, and we try to meet them with our own means. Our biggest need is about the problems related to orthopedic materials, for they require continuity. Still, we don't expect much."

FH1 "We do not have many problems in meeting the needs. The needs of students with special needs are different due to their situation. These are important needs to be met in terms of materials, stationery and other necessities."

As can be seen from the statements, the fact that the needs of special education students require diversity and continuity according to their needs is an issue that should be emphasized meticulously within the scope of meeting the needs.

4.11. Findings Regarding the Expectations of the Special Education Students' Parents for Their Needs from the School

The information about the expectations of the special education students' parents for their needs from the school is shown in Table 13.

Table 13. The expectations of the special education students' parents for their needs from the school

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Participant
The expectations of the special education students' parents for their needs from the school	Expectations from the school about the continuity of their children's education at home	Continuing the lessons and activities at home	MP1, FP3, FP4
		Having individual lessons with the guidance teachers	MP2
		Increasing lesson hours or days	FP3, FP4
		Increasing literacy lessons	
		Providing computer support	MP2, FP3
	Expectations from the teachers	Emphasis on students with high level of special needs, showing sensitivity to them, taking care of every child during the live lessons	FP3
		Making the lessons enjoyable	MP2, FP3
	Expectations about their relations with the environment to support their social development	Ensuring that the child feels comfortable	MP1, MP2, FP4
		Increasing the social living spaces, organizing activities and designing social inclusive environments	MP1, MP2, FP4
		Organizing joint works with the municipality	MP1
		Socialization	FP4
	Expectations about psychological support	Providing comprehensive psychological support	MP1, MP2, FP3, FP4
	Expectations for the future	Planning their future education, Providing good opportunities for their future	FP4

Expectations about meeting the students' physiological needs	Providing supports for low-income families, providing additional supports for insured families, the school's standing behind the family on financial support	MP1, MP2, FP3
	Seminars and practical trainings to families on their children's education	FP4

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version) According to Table 13, the majority of the participants think the school should provide comprehensive psychological support for all members of the family. They also want the school to support the social development of the students with special education needs, to ensure the child's comfort, to move lessons and activities to the home environment and to provide supports for low-income families in order to meet their physiological needs. Additionally, they are worried about their children's future.

MP2 *"The school wants us to focus on our children's education after class. They have to organize social activities like establishing friendships... We families need support both financially and morally. We would like to have more psychological support."*

FP3 *"The psychological support provided by the school is not enough. Especially my normal son is depressed. He is fed up with the words like don't push it, don't touch it, don't speak, don't play; we have had to do this. I have ignored my healthy child. I don't know if there is anything the school can do. I don't think the support given by the Ministry is sufficient. Maybe they can give us additional support."*

FP4 *"Our lesson hours are insufficient, so additional activities to the lessons would be good. We need support so that our children are not excluded. As all mothers and fathers, we are going through a difficult time. A comprehensive psychological support should be given. As a family, we fail to satisfy our children's needs in terms of education, so a practical training can be given to the families so that we can be helpful. We would like them to provide better opportunities for our children's future and to plan their education."*

According to the views of the participants, it is important to provide psychological support for the whole family, to increase social spaces for children in need of special education, to organize social cohesion environments, and to protect the child's environment of trust in these environments. In addition, the majority of the participants believe that the family's desire to carry lessons and activities to the home environment and providing financial support to low-income families constitute the majority views that should be emphasized regarding the expectations of parents of special education students from the school.

5. Discussion

Since a comparison with the results of the other studies will be more appropriate to ensure integrity with the results of the present study, the data on similar and different features between this study and the other studies in the literature were compared to show the results related to the needs. While some of the results of the present study match with the ones in literature, some others don't match with them.

5.1. Special education teachers' professional qualifications and personal rights

The teachers are supported with seminars and courses to improve their professional competencies, and they are even open to different directions. On the other hand, there are some problems about their personal rights: the teachers work mostly as paid teachers in special education schools, the number of appointments is not sufficient and they are appointed within regular teacher appointments. There are differences between permanent special education

teachers and paid teachers in terms of salaries, additional wages and other rights. Celep's (2019) study gives similar ideas about the expectations of special education vocational school teachers on the need to improve themselves and to get to know the students. Besides, it also has similar statements to the present study within the scope of expanding employment areas. The present study differs from Celep's study because the descriptive analysis was used in the analysis of the findings. In Yazgan's (2015) study, which has a similar feature to the present study in terms of being conducted in MEB Public Special Education schools, similar issues are emphasized in terms of the professional characteristics of the administrators and teachers in the school. In Norman's (2020) study, similar factors are emphasized within the scope of the acquisition and improvement of professional competencies related to having strong communication skills and revealing the potential of students.

5.2. Education-training process of special education students and student services

The findings show the school should do practices in terms of cooperation with the family, monitoring and reporting the students' developments regularly, and making an Individual Education Plan (IEP) according to their individual needs. It was stated in Celep's study (2019) that teachers should know the students and cooperate with the parents. Both studies have similarities in terms of improving the physical conditions, meeting the needs for materials, offering diversity and continuity in materials according to the needs of the students, and using the materials that appeal to time and technology in order to improve the students' conditions. A similar result was reported by Alan (2019) within the scope of examining the validity and reliability of the IEP, which shows that it is an important practice carried out in special education schools. Tos (1994) emphasizes that teachable classroom environments for mentally handicapped children should be made multi-purpose in accordance with special education needs, and the interior equipment should be adapted to the students' needs.

Because special education schools are built in the status of a normal school, their physical conditions are not suitable for the classroom space, so classrooms and activity areas should be organized according to students' deficiencies and diagnosis types. The results obtained from the present study shows similar characteristics with the results of Tos's study regarding the inadequacies of classroom spaces.

The "1+1 Practice House" and the preparation of programs that the family will implement with their child will contribute to the acquisition of daily life, social life and academic skills. The parents expect the school to increase social areas, and organize activities and social cohesion environments. When the effects of the educational environment of inclusive and special education schools on self-concept are compared, the general and lower self-concepts of special education students are higher than those of inclusive students (Öztürk, 2006). The present study determined that special education schools have similar characteristics because they carry out practices to provide educational opportunities.

Since the streets and the pavements are not organized according to the needs of the students with special needs, the students have to wait in the school bus because of the traffic. Kazel (2008) emphasizes a new optimization issue focusing on developing a mathematical model that includes a route model and a lesson schedule in order to minimize the time students spend in the vehicle.

5.3. The school's needs for technological infrastructure, budget and financing

The school is located in a heavy traffic and earthquake zone, and it has a reinforced concrete building, so it does not have sufficient green areas in the schoolyard, and it requires a better equipped cafeteria. The arrangements within the school should be made according to the diagnosis types of the students. There is a lack of equipment and materials that are suitable for special education students. The academic studies and the markets to provide materials fail to satisfy the needs.

The school building and schoolyard arrangements are insufficient to transfer the classroom and the activity areas to the schoolyard. Öktem's (2009) study, emphasizing emotional zoning and the positioning of some areas, shows that children can play in the schoolyard, grow flowers

and vegetables in a simple, flexible and secure Special Education School. The similar features were also mentioned in the present study.

It was determined that there is no problem in meeting the necessary financing needs, yet there is a need for a financing source only because the special education needs are different.

5.4. Relations between the school and the family, the school and the environment and the school and the CRC

There is a need to share information with the family about the developmental status of the students. Activities are carried out to protect the students' feeling of safety, to organize social activity trips and to publish them on the school's webpage. The school should be in cooperation with the CRC. In Kayaaltı's (2005) study, similar services are mentioned and some conclusions are reached on the problems experienced in special education schools.

The parents have different expectations from the school in terms of reintegration of their children into society and social life, activity and cohesion environments, providing comprehensive psychological support and providing support to low-income families. Celep (2019) emphasizes that regulations should be made in Disabled Public Personnel Selection Examination (DPPSE) and there should be a cooperation between private sector and government institutions for the employment of disabled persons. On the other hand, the teachers stated that the students' parents should have realistic expectations and they should be in cooperation with the school. It is observed that similar results are aimed in terms of responding to the solutions.

5.5. Relations with the Ministry about the needs of the school

Aydın's (2017) study has similar characteristics to the present study in terms of method and data collection tool because the data were collected with a semi-structured interview. The present study discussed questions under fourteen sub-headings within the scope of five sub-headings. The questions in Aydın's study were aimed at the problems, whereas the questions in the present study were developed within the scope of the needs. It is emphasized in this study that there are many problem situations in the school and some problems can be solved by higher authorities. The sub-objectives of our study reveal that there are problems related to communicating the needs to the District Directorate of National Education and meeting the needs. This responsibility falls into the school administration's area of responsibility.

6. Conclusion

The results were evaluated under the subheadings. It was found that special education school, special education students and families, and even the social environment factor should be considered as a whole. In-service trainings are sufficient in terms of their professional gains. However, there are differences between permanent special education teachers and paid teachers in terms of salaries, additional wages and other rights. The findings show the school should do practices in terms of cooperation with the family, monitoring and reporting the students' developments regularly, and making an Individual Education Plan (IEP) according to their individual needs. Because special education schools are built according to the regulations of a normal school, their physical conditions are not suitable for the classroom space. Since the streets and the pavements are not organized according to the needs of the students with special needs, the students have to wait in the school bus because of the traffic. The school does not have sufficient green areas in the schoolyard, and it requires a better equipped cafeteria. There is a lack of equipment and materials that are suitable for special education students. The academic studies and the markets to provide materials fail to satisfy the needs. There is a need to share information with the family about the developmental status of the students. The parents have different expectations from the school in terms of reintegration of their children into society and social life, activity and cohesion environments, providing comprehensive psychological support and providing support to low-income families. On the other hand, the teachers stated that the students' parents should have realistic expectations and they should be in cooperation with the school.

It is emphasized in this study that there are many problem situations in the school and some problems can be solved by higher authorities.

Limitations

This study is limited to a small group of participants from a special education school in Istanbul. Due to the page limitation of the journal, the process of the study was kept short.

Recommendation

Recommendations for Practitioners

Living spaces such as "1+1 Practice Houses" should be implemented in schools to observe the daily life of the students from morning to night. Practical educational programs should be arranged to make it easy for families to meet the needs of the child. Parents should be integrated to the exercises in the practice house for their psychological relief and acceptance of the child's situation. The classroom and activity areas of special education students should be arranged and materials suitable for the students' needs should be used. The market and the academicians should develop solutions and projects for the needs of the students.

Recommendations for the Ministry of National Education

The Ministry of National Education should employ permanent teachers to improve the special education teachers' motivation and competencies and should arrange teacher appointments and current working conditions according to this situation. The schools can be designed to improve the conditions of special education schools according to the needs of children with disabilities. The studies carried out with the Ministry of National Education should be increased to raise awareness about environmental conditions of the schools. Special education programs should be prepared for elderly people with special needs. Various regulations should be made for children with special needs in order to secure their family's future concerns. The conditions of private special education schools and their teachers should be regulated.

Recommendations for Researchers

Similar studies can be conducted in larger groups in different districts by using different research methods and doing in-depth analyses with long-term observations.

The studies can also be conducted by including families of special education students and guidance teachers about the attitudes towards special education. Also, more studies can be conducted about the architectural design of the schools.

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Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest in this study.

Statement of Responsibility

All of the authors contributed to the study equally.

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