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SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' VIEW OF ONLINE EDUCATION DURING THE PANDEMIC PERIOD IN TÜRKİYE [1, 2]

PANDEMİ DÖNEMİNDE TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ÖZEL EĞİTİM ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN UZAKTAN EĞİTİME BAKIŞI

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to reveal the views of special education teachers on online education during the pandemic process. In this context, interviews were conducted with special education teachers using the phenomenology pattern. The data of the research was analyzed by using content analysis technique. According to the results of the research, most of the special education teachers think that online education is not suitable for special education. Special education teachers encounter problems in interpersonal relations in the online education process, try to cope with educational problems, and technological problems hinder their education processes. The special education teachers were caught unprepared for the online education process. Special education teachers state that the family has an effect on online education during the pandemic process. The majority of the special education teachers think that the online education process should continue after the pandemic. According to the last finding of the study, the special education teachers believe that the online education process can become more effective by providing training to families and teachers, adapting the technological tools.

Keywords: Special Education Teachers, Pandemic, Online Education

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin pandemi sürecinde çevrimiçi eğitime ilişkin görüşlerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Bu kapsamda özel eğitim öğretmenleri ile fenomenoloji deseni kullanılarak görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın verileri içerik analizi kullanılarak işlenmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre araştırmaya katılan özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin çoğu uzaktan eğitimin özel eğitim için uygun olmadığını düşünmektedir. Araştırmaya katılan özel eğitim öğretmenleri, uzaktan eğitim sürecinde kişilerarası ilişkilerde sorunlarla karşılaşmakta, eğitim sorunlarıyla baş etmeye çalışmakta ve teknolojik sorunlar eğitim süreçlerini aksatmaktadır. Araştırmaya katılan özel eğitim öğretmenleri uzaktan eğitim sürecine hazırlıksız yakalandıklarını ifade etmiştirler ve pandemi sürecinde ailenin uzaktan eğitime etkisinin olduğunu belirtmektedirler. Araştırmaya katılan özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin çoğunluğu pandemi sonrasında uzaktan eğitim sürecinin devam etmesi gerektiğini düşünmektedir. Araştırmanın son bulgusuna göre araştırmaya katılan özel eğitim öğretmenleri, ailelere ve öğretmenlere eğitim vererek, teknolojik araçları adapte ederek uzaktan eğitim sürecinin daha etkili hale gelebileceğine inanmaktadırlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Özel Eğitim Öğretmenleri, Pandemi, Uzaktan Eğitim

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Introduction

The coronavirus epidemic is a process that started in China in 2019-2020 and then spread to the whole world (WHO, 2020). Although it showed its greatest impact in the field of health, many educational tools and institutions, especially schools, were also affected by this epidemic. This situation necessitated the creation of a new order from social life to the progress of education (Sun, Tang and Zuo, 2020).

The coronavirus epidemic has adversely affected many areas around the world. One of the biggest wounds among these has been in the education field. Education has been disrupted at all levels (Onyeme et al., 2020). The situation in Turkey was not different from the world. After the first cases were seen, firstly higher education, then primary and secondary education was suspended and it was decided to switch to the online education system (Ministry of National Education, 2020). At this point, the online education process has been accepted for students with special needs as well as normal students. Since the needs of students with special needs will be different from those of other students, it is important to take necessary precautions and review (Can, 2020) and to investigate this issue.

Due to the fact that education is not face to face all over the world, the implementation of online education practices came up and accelerated the studies for this purpose. It is seen that the most important priorities of all countries, where the epidemic is seen, are taking care to prepare adequate infrastructure to continue their education systems uninterruptedly and continuously. In addition, countries will be at a higher level than desired in many areas of new methods, techniques and software on this system, knowing that there are training plans that they can use in all possible dangers and apply them in a systematic way by taking sufficient internet and online education programs to an advanced level (Chang & Satako, 2020). It also paved the way for them to be more experienced in intervening early in possible crises. With this situation, we have often heard the concept of online education or online education during the pandemic period.

Online education is the realization of education and training through virtual tools through internet / web-based software. Online learning has a structure that may differ according to the person, institution, region, city and teacher. Although it can be carried out in a mixed manner with face-to-face training, there are also methods that are carried out completely online (Christensen, Horn, & Staker, 2013). Sometimes it can be used synchronously and sometimes asynchronously. This may allow students to manage the process themselves and to progress according to their own learning situations. For these reasons, the structure of the traditional educational system has been changed and the principle of flexibility in education has taken. (Afrouz & Crisp, 2021).

According to Basham et al. (2016), this approach, with its uniqueness as a structure, is a structure that enables learning to take place in their own environment and in accordance with their individual learning speeds and proficiency. There are many definitions related to the concept of online education in the literature. These are planned, programmed, administrative and institutional arrangements that foresee the application of various teaching methods and techniques and the use of technology, with the course design and program determined by online education, without teachers and students in the same places (Moore & Kearsley, 2005). Online education is in accordance with the understanding of education everywhere, teacher and the learner are far from each other, and while doing this; it can provide education opportunity regardless of time, age and place (Basham et al., 2016; Sun et al, 2020). Online education is a useful option for educational institutions as it provides access to a wide area and allows working with many people at the same time (Jones, 2015). In addition, online education provides convenience for family members responsible for the care

of their children and students with intense responsibilities (McAuliffe, 2019). In addition, it seems to be effective for working in groups with special needs (Crisp, 2018).

In addition to all these benefits, the pandemic, which is the reason why online education has become widespread all over the world, forces students, educators and parents to solve problems, interact, cooperate, think about the importance of technology and use it actively. existing systems, be realistic and think. Solution-oriented and solution-oriented thinker. be critical, creative and active (Anderson, 2020). Not only the internet, socio-economic level and geographical locations, but also parents do not have enough literacy to help their children with digital literacy and to ensure active and effective participation in online classes seems to reason inequalities in education (Can, 2020). According to Anderson (2020), there are many different ways of learning online. Because school is not the only place for learning. Socialization and student-teacher interaction can be provided in the online environment. It offers students and teachers a social space outside of school when it is difficult to carry out the education-teaching processes and when inequalities in access to education are seen among students. Considering what online education brings to the educational life, the fact that it is the center of attention all over the world has once again emphasized the importance of technology in education.

Eripek (2005) said that when we look at the definition of special education, the opportunities provided to individuals who differ with many characteristics from individuals who develop normally, individual education programs and educational services aimed at raising the level of individual living on their own without needing anyone to the appropriate level are called "special education". According to the National Disability Database (2020), there are approximately 2.5 million people with disabilities. These individuals are people who need education. The ratio of these numerical data to the general population is 12.9%. The fact that every individual born into the world is different from the others is accepted by everyone. It is not even possible for anyone to be the same mentally, physically, psychologically, physiologically, emotionally and socially. In all societies, unlike others, there are individuals who cannot walk, hear, see, or think like others. These differences due to prenatal or postnatal conditions have brought different disability groups with them. Ensuring that individuals with disabilities receive a quality education and facilitating their daily functions are among the requirements of being a society in the modern age (Öngöz & Şanal, 2017).

It is seen that individuals with special needs need programs and applications developed in line with their own needs in order to benefit from the online education process. It is thought that online education will be beneficial for individuals with special needs in order to continue their education with their peers or to participate in the education-teaching process more effectively (Crisp, 2018; Rose, Hasselbring, Stahl & Zabala, 2005). With the increase in the need for assistive technologies, the use of traditional methods in the field of special education has been insufficient to generalize what the student has learned and in many subjects. In order for the education given over time to contribute to the development of individuals, the use of assistive technologies has emerged in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of education. Thus, using technology, it gave the student the opportunity to apply information interactively to improve himself (Ohene-Djan & Sen, 2007). According to Chang, Chen and Huang (2011) it is a very effective method in determining the motivation of students with physical disorders, developing their abilities and finding suitable method techniques for the student. Luo and Lei (2012) stated that the use of digital in the education and training process has facilitated the interaction with the media and teaching materials in addition to increasing the efficient interaction between the teacher and the

student. However, the use of online education and the above-mentioned technological tools was not widespread until the pandemic process in Türkiye. For this reason, it is important to evaluate the experiences of students and teachers who suddenly switch to online education.

It is not possible to think of today's education separately from technology. We can say that the use of assistive technologies in the field of special education provides support to students in many areas (Sani-Bozkurt, 2017; Rose, Hasselbring, Stahl, & Zabala, 2005; Kutlu, Schreglmann & Cinisli). 2018). However, it is seen that technological tools are not used frequently in the field of special education in our country until the pandemic process (Çay, Yıkmış & Sola Özgüç, 2020). No study has been found in which online education has been tried or used. For this reason, it is important to determine the problems experienced by teachers who have to deal with online education all of a sudden. When the literature is examined, although there are studies that deal with the problems experienced by special education teachers in the field of online education during the pandemic process (Akbayrak et al, 2021; Can, 2020), there is no study that deals with online education. It is expected that this study will contribute to the literature on this subject. The aim of this research is to reveal the views of special education teachers on online education during the pandemic process. For this purpose, some questions were asked to special education teachers and qualitative analysis /content analysis was carried out in line with the answers given. The extent to which special education individuals and special education teachers are affected by this development in online education and to what extent online education can be benefited from will determine the course of the research.

Method

Research Design

In the research, interviews held in order to examine the perspective of special education teachers about online education thoroughly during the pandemic period and to gather information about the causes of the problems encountered. Phenomenology design used in the research. Phenomenological studies are studies aimed at making sense of the experiences, lives or events of the individuals participating in the interview (Chapman & Smith, 2002). The important phenomenon in the research is the factors affecting special education teachers in online education and the perspectives of special education teachers on online education. Creswell and Tashakkori (2007) lists the aims of the studies to be conducted as follows with the phenomenological design. First of all, a first case is found, in the next step reviewed the literature research about the case and considered on it. Then, the phenomenon is defined. Phenomenology is a process that gives information about experiences and experiences as well as a definition. In the research, interview used as a data collection technique in the Phenomenology design. The interview technique is a technique in which questions are prepared in advance and the participant answers these questions (Kuş, 2003). In this research, semi-structured interview technique was used. The reason for choosing the semi-structured interview technique is that it is desired to obtain thoroughly and online education-specific information of the teacher in accordance with the subject of the research. Before starting the interview process, the interviewer informed participants about the process and their answers to the interview questions kept confidential. The answers of the participants carefully recorded by the voice recorder and then transferred to the text. In the following step, the transcripts were read several times independently. In the last step, the researchers' transcripts interpreted and their main themes extracted.

Participants

Purpose sampling was used in the creation of the working group. Purposeful sampling is also prepared by taking a few sub-sections as examples for the purposes of the study. In other words, it means making the part of the universe most suitable for the problem as the subject of observation (Sencer & Irmak 1989). Among the teachers working in special education subclasses and special education schools in Battalgazi, the central district of Malatya province, ten of them were selected considering their availability and the fact that they have students with online education in line with the purposes of the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Teacher Interview Forms:

The interview forms used in the research were created by considering Patton's (2005) views. Topics determined in advance and questions prepared in advance in this approach. In the preparation of the questions, a literature review was made on the view of special education teachers towards online education. And qualitative analysis results examined. In addition, this means that the researcher has the right to ask questions at the end when needed, without going beyond the subject area. The questions asked the questions used to obtain more detailed information about the subject. In light of this information, the researcher made the interview taking into account the predetermined issue, but were direct unexpected questions to the participants at the end of the interview. Semi-structured forms finalized after the necessary expert opinions are received and pilot applications are performed. Feedback received from 4 academicians (2 assistant professor in special education, 1 assistant professor in psychological counseling and 1 assistant professor in the field of assessment and evaluation in education) and special education teachers who are experts in their fields. Correspondingly, the questionnaire organized and finalized and pilot applied to the participants who continued to work in the profession before they were applied. There was no change in the form after the pilot application. Then the interview form finalized and the form were applied to the participants.

Data collection

In order to carry out the research, research ethics committee approval obtained. After the permission was obtained, an application made from the Malatya Provincial Directorate of National Education so that it could be applied to teachers in schools. Researchers get the permissions granted in the following process after that the interview form applied. During the collection of qualitative data, which made by interview method, some of the interviews conducted face-to-face and some online due to the recent pandemic threat. Participating interviewers informed about the process and consent form and permission obtained to interview. Participants informed about audio recording and ethical issues before the interview.

The days and hours that were suitable for the participants determined and if it held within the school, the days when the teachers were at school selected and interviews held. The interviews applied to the participant last approximately 20-30 minutes. Each participant was informed that an audio recording taken before the interviews.

Data Analysis

Age restriction applied to special education teachers without a certain seniority**.** It was performed online and took audio recording to ensure reliability. Then, the interviews applied transformed to text and transferred to the computer. After reading a few times, content

analysis used in data analysis. Content analysis is a method we use to reveal, analyze and report the main themes of data (Patton, 2014). The analysis process includes organizing the data obtained in the research, scanning the literature, making coding and creating themes (Creswell and Poth 2016). While analyzing the written data, coding done by considering similar expressions. While determining the codes, the data made meaningful by open coding. Then, by making focus coding the focus codes were determined from common codes. Codes were organized under themes and presented theoretically.

Explaining the results by making direct quotations from the individuals interviewed in the research is one of the most important situations that increase the validity of the study (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). For this reason, direct quotations were used from the views of the participants in the study. During the interview, the codes were used instead of the participants' real names.

In the qualitative analysis phase of the research, the data coded by the two of the researchers at different times in order to ensure the reliability of the encoder. Encoder reliability ensured in this way (Miles & Huberman, 2016). A 15-day break was planned between coding the data twice. Formula developed by Miles and Huberman (2016) used. The formula is as followed:

Reliability=Number of Consensus / (Total Consensus + Number of Disagreements)

A total of 102 codes were created by the researchers. These codes are gathered under 14 themes. When the 8 expressions are examined by the researchers after the determined time, they placed in different categories. Accordingly, P = (48/(48+6)=88%) determined. Reliability is ensured in cases where the percentage of agreement regarding the evaluation made by the expert and the researcher for reliability in qualitative research is 70% or more (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Secondly, in order to increase reliability with encoder variation, 3 people, 1 of whom was the researcher himself, were re-coded. In order to increase reliability, researcher triangulation used. The participation of more than one expert in the research in the analysis and interpretation part of the data is called the researcher triangulation technique (Houser, 2015). The coefficient of agreement between encoders was calculated by the Fleiss Cappa method and .68 it was obtained. It can be said that reliability is ensured since the coefficient of agreement was above .61 after everyone coding. A Kappa coefficient between .61 and .80 means that there is a substantial agreement between the raters (Landis & Koch, 1977). Finally, the rich-dense description validity strategy used, that is, the data taken from the interview transcripts in the same way (Creswell, 2014). Total transcripts are planned to take an estimated 50 pages and 250 minutes. When transferring the data to the analysis program, Times New Roman font and 11 points selected. Then the analysis done.

Findings

"What do you think about online education in special education?" Analysis Results of the Question

The main theme, codes and frequencies of the codes created according to the results of the analysis are given in Figure 1.

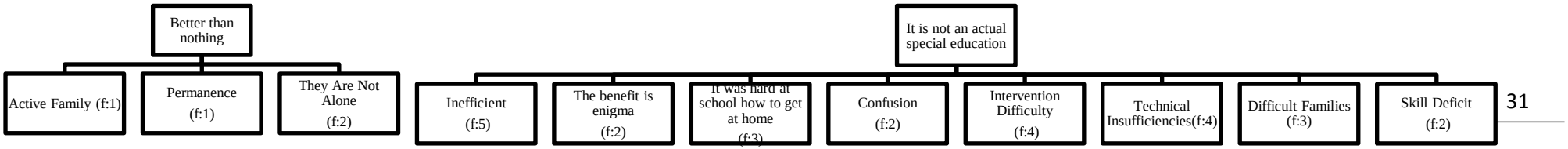

Figure 1- Views on Online Education in Special Education

According to the majority of the participants, the online education tools and online education process used in special education are inefficient. Teachers who state that they have difficulty in continuing the education process of the students even when they are face to face with the student in the classroom environment, state that the education and training process sometimes gets out of control because it is difficult to intervene with their students from home. T2 expresses this with the following words:

"So, while our children with special needs can hardly hold them in the classroom, it is much more difficult to restrain them in front of the computer. We can't intervene anyway, it's losing. The family takes care of it. We study together in the same house. So it's very, very difficult."

In other words, the online education process is an open wound for special educators. In addition to these, the fact that the family reflects their negative feelings to the process and that they do not fulfill their responsibilities also complicates the work of teachers. T3 describes this situation as follows:

"*We had a lot of difficulty in communicating with the children diagnosed with moderate to severe mental retardation, we learned our lesson by getting support from the parents during the live lesson, which inevitably caused the parents to reveal their negative attitudes."*

Despite all the difficulties and sometimes the inadequacies of their students in using technological devices, another difficulty faced by teachers who try to continue the teaching process is technical inadequacies. T9 says:

"Unfortunately, one of the biggest problems was the lack of technology. My students also have other siblings who go to school. More than one sibling in the family goes to school, but they only have a phone or a tablet that they can connect to online education. Some do not have the internet. The biggest difficulty was that the student could not connect to online education.

But a few of the teachers state that, the online education process is not that bad despite all the confusion. They also draw attention to the positive aspects of online education, with their students being by their side no matter what and their conscious family involvement in the process, thus increasing permanence in teaching. In light of this information, two themes were created. These are the themes of "It is not an actual special education" and "It's Better Than Nothing".

T1 *"It is an educational process that requires multi-faceted work, individual differences are more important than ever, and teacher and student activity is more important than ever. From this point of view, the fact that the only tangible link between these children, who have a lot of sensory and mental disadvantages compared to children with normal development, is a computer screen, affects the acquisition, permanence, fluency and generalization of the gains in the educational process to a great extent. It is extremely important that this process is left behind with as few problems as possible, with the support of educators and the awareness and attention of families. Because even children with normal development progressing the education process from a online causes many productivity problems, and since these children cannot solve the limitations that may arise from this situation on their own, the process should be completed with the least amount of trouble."* states that students who need special education cannot benefit from online education. T2 said that:

"Online education in special education is an open wound for us right now. We are undergoing a very difficult process. In other words, it was difficult not to open the school in the pandemi process. It is much more difficult for us to continue education with online education. In other words, we cannot get the efficiency we get in face-to-face education in online education." mentions the difficulties of the online education process.

T5 said, "Online education in special education is difficult but not impossible. Of course, there are many negative aspects, but I would like to talk about their contributions first. I think it is useful in the process of integrating the family into the lesson. Since families are more active, they have a greater role in the education of the student and become aware of many issues." the words emphasizes that the online education process should not be handled completely negatively. Similarly in T8, It also draws attention to the positive aspects of the online education process: *"In other words, during this disease process, children communicate with their teachers so that they do not feel alone at home either."*

The teachers participating in the research tried to benefit from different technological resources in order to continue the education process. For this, they use applications such as SAP and May BOS and try to stay in touch with families.

"What difficulties did you have in online education during the pandemic period?" Analysis Results of the Question

The main themes, codes and frequencies of the codes created according to the results of the analysis are given in Figure 2.

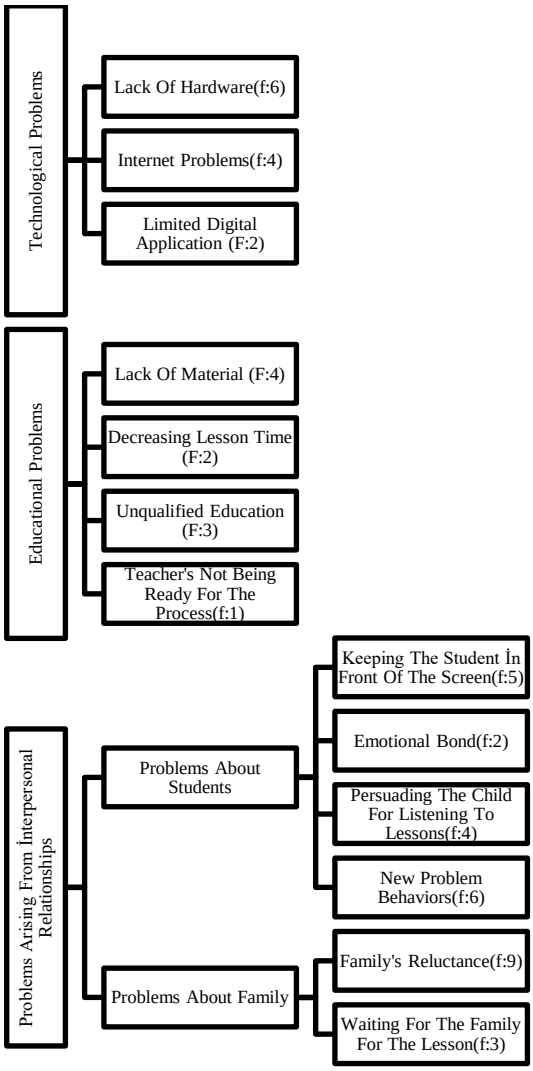

Figure 2. Problems Having in the Online Education Process

Participants state that they had systemic *technological problems, educational problems* and problems arising from *interpersonal relations* during the pandemic period. These expressions are also themes. Although teachers want to carry out the online education process, the limited opportunities of the family and the limitation of the technological infrastructure are the main problems they encounter. T4 expresses this situation as follows:

"The digital applications that we can use in online education in special education are very limited and they are not suitable for every student level. In this process, we try to present it to our students by trying to simplify it by playing on ourselves, but this can be very difficult sometimes."

T6 explains the similar problems with the following words:

"Firstly, I had hardware problems. My student, who does not have a computer, could not attend the class or participate by phone. This made things even more difficult. In the following period, I had an internet problem."

Another problem area is educational problems. Teachers state that they have to change the content of education due to the decrease in lesson times and attention problems of their students, which negatively affects the learning process and the quality of education. In

addition, the lack of materials also puts a strain on teachers. T7 describes this situation as follows:

"Look, I was working with my students on the skills that they could improve themselves, but right now, our education is mostly in the form of activities, games and family information. I don't think this is very effective in the process. In other words, I do not think that there is a very efficient and permanent education in terms of education."

On the other hand, T8 states that they were caught unprepared for the process as teachers:

"We did not have any information on how to carry out the online education process as a teacher. I*t was a situation that we were not experienced in, at first we had a hard time getting used to this situation. Accordingly, which resources we can use in online education, how we process the lessons will be more efficient. How can we carry out the online education process in special education? We struggled with his questions, it was a complex and worrying process for us. We were challenged by the limited resources and applications for the skills we will teach our students."*

Afterwards, T8 continued to talk by addressing the following problems:

"The digital applications that we can use in online education in special education are very limited and they are not suitable for every student level. In this process, we try to present it to our students by trying to simplify it by playing on ourselves, but sometimes this can be very difficult. Insufficient materials can also cause the lessons to be unproductive."

Finally, the teachers have problems about communication with the students and families.Waiting for the appropriate hours of the family to have study with students, the families' search for excuses not to do the lessons, while the reluctance of the families in the process of participating in online education constitutes one dimension of this problem; keeping students with communication problems in front of the screen, convincing them to listen to the lecture, establishing emotional bonds and coping with new behavior problems challenge teachers in the online education process. T5 summarizes the situation with the following statements:

"You have to plan the lessons checking the availability of the family. Since families are entering this process for the first time, families who are not interested in their children can make excuses not to take lessons all the time. Of course, your chances of making up are less. You may find it difficult to convey worksheets to the student. Because we couldn't go through a book like other students, I found the solution by preparing a notebook with the worksheet I prepared in accordance with the achievements I determined and delivering it to the parents. Although it gets a little easier, sometimes when you want to add something, you have difficulty because you can't deliver it instantly. If there is only one opportunity for students with more than one child, our students are the first to be sacrificed in order to participate in the lesson."

T2 summarizes the student resources problems as follows:

"Another issue is that children's problem behaviors and serious problem behaviors in children have increased. I mean, when I was in the classroom, I established an authority on children. They were listening to me, so I mean authority is not discipline, of course. I mean, it's not like disciplinary punishments or punishments, but at least the kids could listen to me there. It was a very full time, even at that time, I wished we could have done more. I wonder if

I am not enough. I wish I could do half of what I did then. Frankly, I was looking for those times. Children do not stand in front of the screen, they run away."

"What do you think the limitations of online education in special education?" Analysis Results of the Question

The main theme, codes and frequencies of the codes created according to the results of the analysis are given in Figure 3.

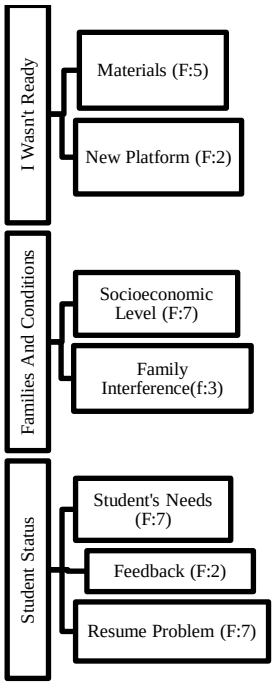

Figure3. Limitations of Online Education

The special education teachers participating in the research state that their first limitation in the online education process is actually themselves. The participants face their second limitation, the socioeconomic level of the family, after completing their own learning in time. They stated that parents who try to be unconsciously involved in the process affect the learning process negatively. In addition, the biggest limitation of teachers is that families cannot adapt to the online education process and students cannot attend the lesson. Disruption of teachers' feedback processes, the fact that the teaching platforms currently used do not meet the needs of students with special needs, and the needs of students due to their diagnoses are the limitations of teachers in the online education process. In line with these statements, 3 themes were reached. These were determined as "*I was not ready*", "*Families and Conditions"* and "*Student Status*".

T10 expresses this situation as follows:

"There was a sudden transition to the online education process. Since I had no experience with this before, I felt bad about the materials and the tools used. I was not ready for online education."

T5 explains the ineffectiveness of families with the following words:

"Of course, the family could have done some skills as we were models, but families don't pay attention to the order of skills."

T6 similarly states:

"Family's insufficient knowledge about special education, lack of platforms that will enable mutual interaction with online education (for example, lack of applications to make students active during concept teaching) .... I think the biggest limitations of this process were."

T9 explains the limitations caused by the students as follows:

"When students exhibit problem behavior, not being in the same environment with the student brings great limitations in finding the cause of the problem behavior. When the student exhibited a problem behavior in the classroom or school environment, we had the opportunity to immediately find the cause of the problem behavior, and we had the opportunity to eliminate that reason and give the student an alternative behavior. Online education poses great limitations to all of these."

"How do you think the family element of students with special needs during the pandemic period affects the learning life of individuals?" Analysis Results of the Question

The main theme, codes and frequencies of the codes created according to the results of the analysis are given in Figure 4.

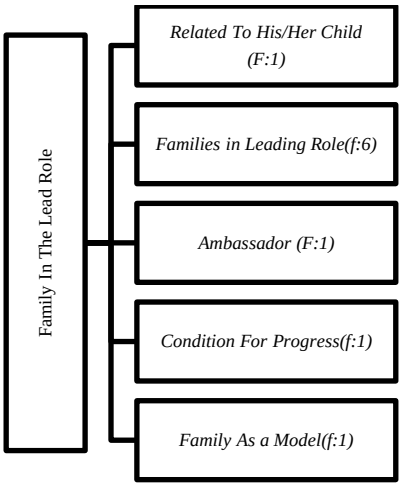

Figure4. The Effect of the Family on Online Education

Special education teachers participating in the research state that the family is at the heart of the online education process during the pandemic period. In the online education process, both the teacher and the family do their best, but in this process, families who have the opportunity to follow their child's development one-on-one play the leading role. T1 says:

"Family should be the leading role in many important issues such as knowing what the child has gained so far, making them review regularly, taking the guidance of an educator and expert, dealing with the child in this direction, and how to approach the behavior problems that may arise in most of the children who are exposed to house arrest for a long time. And it has become the most effective element in overcoming this disadvantageous process with the least damage; family."

Teachers see themselves as ambassadors. They state that it is important for the family to be related to their child and that the family should set an example for their children as a model. T8 says:

"In terms of example, but if it was bad rather than good, I would probably grow up imitating their movements. This is the case with our children."

T9, on the other hand, expresses the importance of the family's attention with the following words:

Since our students with special needs do not have the skills of class hours, starting the lesson and connecting to the lesson, more families are attached to the lessons The fact that the family cares to their child and can continue their education without interruption comes into play at this time. We see that families who are more interested in their students attend the online education courses without interruption."

Teachers believe that only in this case progress can be achieved. T2 expresses it as follows:

"Looking at now, I proceed in the same way with children. They are at the same level, my children are all mild. We are progressing in the same issue as all of them at mild level of autism. When the school closed, we were studying on problems with addition We got to the problems. Now, those family children who are not interested in me are at the same level as the last subject we dealt with. So there is no progress in the child. When his reading started face-to-face education, I saw that his intermediate reading regressed. After that, I saw him forgot a few things. That boy slipped just one click behind where I left off."

At this point, it has been reached a theme; '*Family in the leading role.'*

"Do you think online education should be made an active use outside of formal education in special education levels?" Analysis Results of the Question

The main theme, codes and frequencies of the codes created according to the results of the analysis are given in Figure 5.

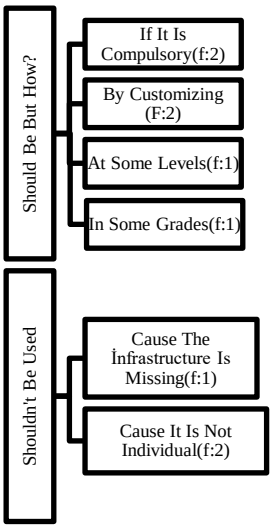

Figure5. Opinions on the Continuation of Online Education in Special Education

The most of the special education teachers participating in the research state that the online education process should exist after the pandemic. They believe that online education will only be effective under certain conditions. Some state that it is appropriate to use it in case of *necessity*, some with *customized programs*, and some for some courses *at some levels.*

T1 states that: *"If there is a compulsory online education system, there is no other more suitable solution for these children, and we have the principle of equal opportunity in education, yes, this process should be activated in all special education levels."*

On the other hand, T3 looks from a different point of view:

"In addition, an artificial intelligence application that will be realized for our children should be designed and an application that will help our children to start communication at home, end socialization and gain social skills, and in this application, the time spent by our children and their functionality should be kept under control with the cooperation of teachers and parents. With such applications, independent education can be provided in special education, online education or home electronic environment. Of course, this application that I recommend may not cover every student, but if a special application is designed for each diagnosis, its scope will be expanded."

But some teachers say that the online education process should not continue after the pandemic. Because they believe that the online education process is insufficient to meet the individual needs of the students and the technological platforms used are not sufficient.

T4 opposes the continuity of the online education process with the following statements:

"As I mentioned at the beginning, I think that online education in special education is not effective and efficient. Therefore, online education should not be used actively in special education levels." And T4 continues:

"Because we understood this clearly when the schools were opened. Our students used to come to school on a rotating basis and we had the opportunity to work with all of them individually. Although it was a short process, we got much more efficiency from online education. Because we were able to work with each student in accordance with their performance level. Evaluation of the teaching process was also healthier. Therefore, I think that online education should not be activated in special education."

Within this framework, two themes were reached. These are "Should but how" and "Not to be used".

"What do you think can be done to make online education more effective in special education?" Analysis Results of the Question

The main theme, codes and frequencies of the codes created according to the results of the analysis are given in Figure 6.

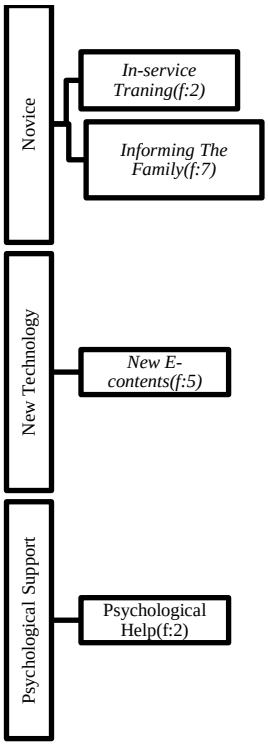

Figure 6. Views on the Efficiency of Online Education

The teachers who participated in the research believe that the most important element to make the online education process more effective is to inform the family. The family's use of technology and their inadequacy in access, as well as their despair about the effectiveness of the online education process affect the online education process negatively. T1 describes this situation as follows:

"Online learning sessions should be organized for families as well. Because it is essential to raise awareness and inform the primary caregivers of our children and all family members about the situation and what needs to be done. If the child cannot come to school due to the process and the only education he can get is on the screen, it is up to the family to solve the problem, as I mentioned, and the family also needs to have information about the process. In addition, in this process, the number of problems and questions increased even more for families who had too many problems and questions to be answered under normal conditions. Solving these problems at regular intervals and answering the questions will be a big step that will make the online education process in special education more efficient. Just as it is necessary to inform the family and to include the family in education in the normal education process, it should be considered and approached in the same way in this process."

However, the inadequacy of the applications and tools used in the online education system for students with special needs is one of the negativities. At this point, it was stated by the teachers that new e-contents could be created. T9 says:

"More content that can be used with students with special needs can be uploaded to the Eba application. The content can be simplified so that students and families can connect to the lessons more easily."

T9 says:

"E-content should be increased in special education. Projects and online platforms can be established to address each level of disability and to increase interaction."

It has been stated that teachers feel inadequate with their rapid entry into the process and that in-service training can be given to teachers for the effectiveness of the online education process. T4 says:

"We were very unfamiliar with this process. How can we teach a skill to students with special needs through online education, how can we manage the process, we were very inexperienced. We set on a journey we never knew existed. And it was very difficult in the beginning. We can still face situations where we feel inadequate. Therefore, if we have to continue online education, in-service trainings should be organized to support teachers in this sense and teachers should be enlightened about the management of this process."

Finally, most of the teachers expressed the necessity of receiving psychological support for both the effectiveness of special education and the adaptation of teachers, students and parents to the new situation during and after the pandemic. T4 says:

"Unless the family provides support, we are only putting forward a planned program. In order for it to be more effective and efficient, families must be involved in the process. In fact, families are also very worn out in this process, we think they are right, but they have to continue to make sacrifices. Maybe it would be beneficial to support families psychologically as well."

Within this framework, three themes were reached. These were found as "Novice", "New Technology" and "Psychological Support".

When the findings are considered in general, it can be said that online education in the pandemic process caught special education teachers unprepared. In the process, they stated that they had difficulties in carrying out educational activities due to both the family and the situation of the student. At this point, they state that both technological and psychological support are necessary for them.

Discussion and Conclusion

According to the results of the research, it was concluded that most of the special education teachers who participated in the research thought that online education was not suitable for special education. There are studies in the literature that support this situation. For example, Akbayrak, Vural and Ağar's (2021) study concluded that special education teachers have problems with online education. There may be reasons such as the unprepared catching of the process with many teachers on the basis of the result reached in this study. However, a few teachers believe that it is better than nothing. The reason for this may be that online systems should be useful for students who do not have the opportunity to access education and training services. Kalaç, Telli, and Erönal (2020) include teachers' statements that online education is beneficial. According to this study, although teachers have difficulties, they state that online education is sometimes beneficial.

Another conclusion of the study is that the special education teachers who participated in the study encounter some problems in interpersonal relations during the online education process, try to cope with educational problems and technological problems hinder their education processes. Similar results were obtained in different studies (Jeste et al., 2020; Parmigiani et al., 2020).

Another conclusion of the study is that the special education teachers who participated in the study were caught unprepared for the online education process.They deal with problem s caused by families and students. Studies supporting this result have been found in the

literature (Akbayrak et al. 2021; Ünay, Erdem, & Çakıroğlu, 2021; Kalaç et al. 2020). In these studies, they stated that they could not get efficiency from online education due to the difficulties of families in using the application and the physical and health conditions of children (such as lack of attention). For this reason, they may not be willing to learn online.

In the study, it was concluded that special education teachers stated that the family had an effect on the online education process. Education of children with special needs is challenging even in the face-to-face process. At this point, the primary source of support for teachers is families. In addition, the support of parents and participation in education is essential for students to reflect and perpetual what they have learned during the school process in their lives (Cahapay, 2020; Pacheco et al., 2020). At this point, the role of families can be expected to increase with the participation of children in education from their families during the pandemic process in which education is moved to homes. For this reason, the special education teachers participating in the study may think that the role of families has increased and come to the fore in order for the education process to continue effectively.

According to another result of the research, the majority of the special education teachers who participated in the private study think that the online education process should continue after the pandemic. This may be because the continuity for skill gain in special needs students is greater than in other student groups. Indeed, Akbayrak et al. (2021) also reached results supporting this situation in their studies. Therefore, teachers may want online education to continue. Special education teachers may want the online education process to continue, as it provides the element of continuity by sharing the burden in the teaching process and providing the opportunity to enroll. Xie and Yang (2020) state in their research that online education is an effective way and provides equal accessibility in education and training. For this reason, teachers want online education. Again, Kalaç et al. (2020) concluded that special education teachers found online education useful in their study. A few of the special education teachers who participated in the study stated that they do not want the online education process to continue. A few of the special education teachers who participated in the study stated that they did not want the online education process to continue. Similar results are found in the literature. According to Akbayrak et al. (2021), according to the results of the research, the teachers could not get the efficiency they got in face-to-face education in online education. For this reason, teachers may want to switch to face-to-face education. Again, Rasmitadilla et al. (2020) stated in their research that normal students are bored with online education and it is difficult to keep them on the screen. Similarly, the difficulty of keeping special education students in front of the screen for a long time due to attention problems may have caused teachers to want face-to-face education.

According to the last finding of the study, it was concluded that the special education teachers who participated in the study believed that the online education process could be made more effective by providing training to families and teachers, adapting the technological tools used for students with special needs, and psychological support. When the literature is examined, research results supporting these findings have been reached. In their research, Arora and Srinivasan (2020) state that one of the main sources of the problems experienced in the online education process is the inadequacy of online education tools. Similarly, the source of the problems in the field of special education may be the inadequacy of these tools. In his research, Barnum and Bryan (2020) states that families of children with special needs take on more responsibility in the online education process and have difficulties in this regard. Similarly, the inadequacy of families in the process in this study may have caused teachers to ask for more support in this regard. Rice and Dykmen (2018), on the other hand, emphasize the necessity of pre-training teachers for online education of students with special needs. They also draw attention to the psychological problems that may arise during the online education

process. Accordingly, it can be expected that special education teachers seek psychological support for adjustment problems and do not feel ready.

Suggestions

Based on the results, suggestions can be listed as follows:

1-This research was carried out with special education teachers working in Malatya province. It can be repeated with special education teachers in different provinces.

2- Information seminars on online education tools such as in-service training can be planned for special education teachers.

3- The role of families can be increased with the participation of their families in education.

4- The opinion that the online education process should continue after the pandemic was found as a result of the study. Support programs can be offered by creating more comprehensive content on this subject.

5-Special education teachers' support resources can be informed about the needs of special education teachers through in-service training.

6-As the special education teachers state, studies can be carried out in the relevant fields for the production of e-contents that can be used by special needs students.

7-Special education teachers state that the importance of psychological support. In this context, the effectiveness of the group guidance program developed can be examined and arrangements can be made in the future researches.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

There is no conflict of interest between researchers. There is no institution, source or person with a conflict of interest in the study.

Before the study, the participants were given explanations about the audio recording, the purpose of the study and ethical responsibilities. The study has ethical committee approval. (İnönü University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Ethics Committee, 27.01.2021/3)

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