



OPINIONS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT STUDENTS ON SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHING AND FACTORS AFFECTING ATTITUDES

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Çocuk Gelişimi Öğrencilerinin Özel Eğitim Öğretmenliğine Yönelik Görüşleri ve Tutumlarını Etkileyen Faktörler

ÖZ

Çocuk gelişimi alan mezunu öğrencilerin, mezuniyet sonrası çalışabilecekleri alanlardan biri özel eğitim alanıdır. Bu çalışmada, çocuk gelişimi öğrencilerinin özel eğitim öğretmenliğine yönelik görüşleri ve tutumlarını etkileyen faktörlerin belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Betimsel tarama modelindeki çalışmada, çalışma grubunu çevrimiçi olarak kendilerine ulaşılabilen Çocuk Gelişimi 106 lisans ve 77 önlisans öğrencisi olmak üzere toplam 177 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Verilerin toplanmasında bir anket formu ve Özel Eğitim Öğretmenlik Mesleğine Yönelik Tutum Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde frekans ve yüzde dağılımları ile sınıflama analizlerinden, t testi ve tek yönlü varyans analizi ile CHAID analizi kullanılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, öğrencilerin çoğunluğunun özel eğitim alanında çalışmak istemediği belirlenmiştir. Öğrenciler, özel eğitim alanında çalışma zorunda kalmaları durumunda hangi engel türüyle çalışacakları konusunda kararsız kalmış, ilk üç sırada öğrenme güçlüğü/zihinsel gerilik, otizm ve tüm engel gruplarıyla çalışabileceklerini belirtmişlerdir. Çalışmada, çocuk gelişimi öğrencilerinin özel eğitim öğretmenlik mesleğine yönelik tutumlarını etkileyen en önemli faktörün onların özel eğitim alanında staj yapma durumları olduğu, özel eğitim alan stajı yapan öğrencilerin özel eğitim öğretmenliğine yönelik tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu saptanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuk Gelişimci, Çocuk Gelişimi Bölümü, Özel Eğitim, Öğretmenlik Mesleği, Mesleki Tutum.

Opinions of Child Development Students on Special Education Teaching and Factors Affecting Attitudes

ABSTRACT

Students who are graduate from child development, One of the scopes where they can work after graduation is the scope of special education. In the present study, it is aimed to determine the factors affecting the opinions and attitudes of child development students towards special education teaching. In the study in the descriptive survey model, the study group consisted of a total of 177 Child Development students, 106 undergraduate and 77 associate degree students, who could be reached online. A questionnaire form and the Attitude Scale towards Special Education Teaching Profession were used to collect the data. In the analysis of the data, frequency and percentage distributions and classification analysis, t test and one-way analysis of variance and CHAID analysis were used. As a result, it was determined that the majority of the students did not want to work in the scope of special education. Students were undecided about which type of disability they would work with if they had to work in the scope of special education, and stated that they could work with learning disability/mental retardation, autism and all disability groups in the first three alignments. In the study, the most important factor affecting the attitudes of child development students towards the special education teaching profession is their internship status in the scope of special education, It has been determined that the attitudes of the students who do internship in special education towards special education teaching are more positive.

Keywords: Child Development Expert, Child Development Department, Special Education, Teaching Profession, Professional Attitude.

Introduction

Child development experts, from the birth of the child until the end of adolescence, in the areas of cognitive, language, motor, self-care, sociable and sentimental development, taking a role in child health follow-up by evaluating the child from a developmental point of view, providing services to the child, family, other experts working in the scope and the society with supportive and developmental programs, they are graduates working in the scopes of health and education. Associate degree child development graduates, who show normal development between the ages of 0-18 or They are the interface personnel trained in centers such as pre-school education institutions and special education schools that provide services to the child, family and society in this scope with education programs that support the development of children with special needs. Another area where child development undergraduate and associate degree graduates can work is the scope of special education and private education institutions. Special education schools; They are educational institutions opened by the state or private individuals for children who cannot benefit from educational opportunities due to their physical, mental and societal disabilities or characteristics (Citil and Atbasi, 2020). According to the regulation on Special Education Services of the Ministry of National Education (2001) in our country, special education teacher graduates as well as child development graduates can work with children who show different development.

The duties of the child development expert in the scope of special education are "to cooperate with the BEP development unit in the preparation of the individualized education program (BEP), To make practices and evaluations related to the field in BEP, Taking into account the educational performance and kind of inadequacy of the disabled individuals, to prepare the necessary materials related to the scope to be used during their education" is included in the regulation. In the researches which made, it has been found that pre-service teachers who have experience of courses, courses or internships related to special education students during their university education have more favorable attitudes towards special education teaching than those who have no course, course or internship experience (Gozun ve Yikmis, 2004; Gürsel, 2006; Orel vd., 2004).

Nowadays, in order to train teachers for the education of children with special needs, departments of teaching for the mentally handicapped, teaching for the hearing and visually impaired keep it up to accept students (OSYM, 2021). At the same time, it is known that special education lectures and internship practices are included in the undergraduate and associate degree programs of child development in the Faculties of Health Sciences and colleges of universities. From this point of view, the students of the child development department can be considered as teacher candidates who will work in special education institutions. The teacher is perhaps the most important factor of the education system (Gurkan, 1993). For this reason, pre-service teachers need to feel ready socially and emotionally as well as their knowledge, skills and practical experience when beginning the profession (Karagozoglu, 1996).

Teacher candidates approaches to the teaching profession consist of the education they received at the university and the students they encountered when they first began the profession (Jordan vd., 2009). However, the prevalence of negative attitudes of teachers working in the scope of special education due to the difficulty of their profession and working conditions shows that teacher candidates do not graduate with the skills and equipment to teach effectively (Gao and Mager, 2011). In a study conducted by Karasu and Mutlu (2014), it was concluded that pre-service teachers who

graduated from special education departments begin their profession without having sufficient knowledge, practice and desire, causing problems for both teachers and students. Due to the scope they serve, special education teachers are faced with negative situations such as professional burnout and emotional depersonalization, which is a known and feared situation among teachers and teacher applicants (Girgin ve Baysal 2006, Arslan ve Aslan, 2014). According to the study of Afat and Çiçek (2019), the majority of special education teaching department students choose the department with tangible external motivations such as money or abstract motivations such as praise.

This situation causes teachers to experience professional burnout and depersonalization in a short time towards their profession, this may cause them to fail (Bayrakdar, 2016, Terzi ve Tezci, 2007). When we look at the literature, it is seen that people who choose teaching with intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation are more successful in their profession (Eggen ve Kauchak 1997'den akt., Yazıcı, 2009). The success of future generations is related to teachers who educate, develop and support them. In order to be teacher is a profession that plays a role in the personality development of the individual and transfers science and art to the individual with feelings and thoughts (Celikten vd., 2005). As in all professions, in the scope of special education, teachers should be able to leave positive traces in the lives of their students when they begin their profession, Students have expectations such as establishing positive relationships with their families and co-workers, and reaching professional satisfaction through the support provided to them in their teaching life (Cokluk, 2001). However, the teaching profession, which is considered among the most stressful professions, becomes even more stressful when it comes to the education of children with special needs, and teachers' perspectives on the profession may change over time. It is stated that due to the intensity of direct contact with students, special education teachers are more likely to experience professional burnout compared to other teachers (Weiskopf, 1980). It can be said that special education teaching differs from other teaching scopes in many aspects since the student period.

The purpose of the special education course taken by the teachers who will work with individuals with special needs during their student years; "Using the basic theories in special education appropriately, evaluating the development of students with special needs, preparing individual education programs and applying the inclusion process correctly, knowing the characteristics of their students' inadequacies and raising individuals who recognize the educational approaches of students with disabilities and can make arrangements for these students in their classrooms (YOK, 2019). Due to the differences of individuals with special needs, they spend more time with their students and patiently respond to the expectations and needs of families in this process, The special education teacher (Aydın & Tekneci, 2013) who prepares an individualized education program for each student plays a major role in helping the individual gain an independent life (Erguven, 2019). Looking at the literature, there are various studies examining the professional self-efficacy levels of special education teachers (Akmese ve Kayhan, 2017; Kaner, 2007; Karahan ve Uyanik-Balat, 2011). In these studies, teachers who work with children with atypical development require more professional knowledge, skills, experience and patience than teachers working with children with typical development; It has been emphasized that professional burnout is higher in special education teachers than in other field teachers. Low self-efficacy and motivation of teachers and high level of burnout is a situation that negatively affects the teaching profession, especially in the field of special education.

This situation confirms that teachers with low self-efficacy perception and motivation, which emerged in Bandura's (1981) study, experience burnout in a short time in the education of students

with special needs when faced with difficulties in the educational environment. Therefore, it is extremely important for teachers, who are responsible for the effective execution of special education practices, to develop positive thoughts about special education and gain experiences such as internship and practice before beginning their working life.

Because applicants with working status in special education, Their first perceptions about special education are formed from the moment they start taking this course and they are reinforced with internships and practices (Vuran, 2013). Child Development students also when take courses in the scope of special education during their studies and they graduate after doing internships, They are among those who will work with children with special needs in special education institutions. According to the Special Education Services Regulation, child development graduated people in private education institutions; They are involved in tasks such as preparing an individualized education program for children with special needs, making applications and evaluations in the program, evaluating disabled individuals in terms of physical, mental and social development, supporting their age-appropriate development, and guiding families (RG, 07.07.2018/30471). Associate degree child development graduates, on the other hand, have the opportunity to work as a assistant education personnel in special education centers, but they cannot attend classes by proxy and cannot sign (Sadan ve Çıkılı, 2021). For this reason, in this study, it is aimed to comparatively examine the views of Child Development undergraduate and associate degree students about working in the scope of special education. In this context, it has been tried to reveal the factors affecting the students' opinions. Answers were sought to the following questions:

- What are the views of child development undergraduate and associate degree students about working in the scope of special education?
- •Do students attitudes towards the special education teaching profession differ according to the schedule, class, opinions about the profession and the status of doing special education field internship?
- •What are the factors affecting the views of child development undergraduate and associate degree students about special education teaching?

METHOD

Type

The study is in the descriptive survey model and an existing situation has been tried to be revealed as it exists. In descriptive scanning, the data obtained are summarized according to predetermined themes and interpreted in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım ve Simsek, 2011).

Working group

The study group of the research consists of a total of 177 students, 106 undergraduate and 77 associate degree students, who can be reached online with easily accessible sampling method. Some personal informations about the study group is presented in Table 1.

Chart 1. Some personal information of the working group

gender	f	%	Programme	f	%
Female	168	94,9	Associate degree	71	40,1
Male	9	5,1	Bachelor	106	59,9
Grade	Reason of selecting the department				

Grade 1	35	19,8	8 Result of exam system		21,5
Grade 2	67 37,9 Same field as high school		63	35,6	
Grade 3	14 7,9 Ease of finding a job		22	12,4	
Grade 4	61	34,5	Own interest/will	54	30,5
Obtaining information about the Opinion		Opinion about the profession			
profession					
Yes/got it	116	65,5	Positive/I can find a job	91	51,4
Partially	48	27,1	Partly positive	66	37,3
No/ I didn't receive information	13	7,3	Negative/I can't find a job	20	11,3
The area want to work	he area want to work Doing Special education internship		Doing Special education internship		
	80	45,2	Yes/ did	72	40,7
Child development					
Pre-school education	53	29,9	No/ didn't	105	59,3
Special education	39	22,0			
A different field	5	2,8			

As seen in Table 1, 94.9% of the participants are women, 59.9% are going on their undergraduate program, 27.9% are 2nd year and 34.5% are 4th year students. 35.6% of the students preferred the department of child development because it was the same field as high school education and 30.5% of them in line with their own interest and desire. 65.5% of the students stated that they had previously learned about their profession, and 51.4% of them stated that they had a positive opinion about their profession. 80% of the students stated that they wanted to work in child development, 29% in pre-school education, 22% in special education and 2.8% in a different field; While 40.7% of them did internship in the scope of special education, 59.3% did not.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, in collecting data, The questionnaire form created for the purposes of the study and the "Attitude Scale Towards Special Education Teaching Profession" were used to determine their attitudes towards the disabled. In the first part of the questionnaire, it includes students' age, gender, the program which they studied, There are questions about the class they are currently in, the reasons for choosing the child development department, their thoughts about the department, the scope they want to work in after graduation, and the ideal profession concepts. Attitude Scale towards Special Education Teaching Profession, developed by Küçüközyiğit (2017), it consists of 5-point Likert type, 3 factors and 19 items. Of the scale items scored between Completely Agree (5)- İn no way Disagree (1), 15 are positive, 4 are negative, and negative items are scored as a reverse. Obtaining The high score states that the attitude towards to special education teachers are positive. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was found .88, and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found. 89. In this study which made, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was determined as 0.864.

Data Collection and Analysis

Before the data were collected, ethical permission was obtained with the decision of the Social and Humane Sciences Research Ethics Committee of Karabuk University, dated 10/11/2021 and numbered 2021/10-3. Data collection tools and consent form were delivered to the participants via Google forms. Participants were asked to answer the questions after they confirmed the study participation consent form. The obtained data were transferred to the computer statistics program. The frequencies and percentages of the questionnaire questions in which the opinions of the participants about the special education teachers were questioned were given. The normality

divisionis of the data was examined with the Kolmogorow Smirnov Test and it was seen that the significance value was above 0.5, and the kurtosis and skewness values were in the range of ±2.

According to this, independent sample t-test from parametric tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to look into the difference between variables and scale scores. CHAID analysis, one of the classification analyzes, was used to determine the personal variables that affect the scores of the Attitudes towards the Special Education Teaching Profession Scale.

RESULTS

In this section, first of all, the frequencies and percentages of students' opinions about special education teachers are given in Table 2. The attitudes of the students according to the program they attend are given in Table 3, their attitudes according to the class level are given in Table 4, their attitudes according to their opinions about the profession are given in Table 5, and their attitudes according to their special education internship are given in Table 6. And then, the tree structure showing the result of CHAID analysis is presented in Figure 1. Regarding the students' views on working in the scope of special education, it was asked whether they wanted to work in the field of special education and what type of disability they could work with, and the findings are given in Table 2

Table 2. Students' Opinions about Working in the scope of Special Education

Willing to work in the field of special education	f	%
	1	
Yes /I work	61	34,5
No /I don't work	100	56,5
Type of disability to work		
Learning disability/ mental retardation	41	23,2
Autism	24	13,6
Hearing impaired	14	7,9
Motor speech disorders	9	5,1
Physically handicapped	6	3,4
Visually disabled	6	3,4
Attention deficit disorder	3	1,7
Can be all	22	12,4
Neutral	52	29,4

As seen in Table 2, 34.5% of the students remarked that they could work in the scope of special education also 56.5% of them remarked that they do not want to work. Acording the type of disability they can work with, 23.2% of the students have learning disability/mental retardation, 13.6% autism, 7.9% hearing impaired, 5.1% language and speech disorder, 3.4% of them are physically disabled, 3.4% of them are visually impaired, 1.7% of them have attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (DHEB), 12.4% of them stated that they could be all disability groups, while 29.4% of them remarked that they are undecided.

Table 3. Attitude Scale Scores towards Special Education Teaching Profession According to Program t-Test Results

Programme	n	avaraga	S	t	n
Tiogramme	11	average	ט	ι	Ρ
Associate	71	75,39	8,69	-0,870	0,385
degree					
Bachelor	106	76,55	8,71		

As seen in Table 3, the difference between the scores of the Attitude Scale towards Special Education Teaching Profession according to the program the students attend is not meaningful (p>0.05).

Table 4. ANOVA Results of Attitude Scale Scores Towards Special Education Teaching Profession by Class Level

Grade	n	Average	S	F	р
Grade 1	35	77,65	8,32	0,625	0,600
Grade 2	67	75,19	8,41		
Grade 3	14	76,57	10,64		
Grade 4	61	76,06	8,83		

As seen in Table 4, the difference between the scores of the Attitude Scale towards Special Education Teaching Profession according to the class level of the students is not meaningful (p>0.05).

Table 5. ANOVA Results of Attitude Scale Scores Towards Special Education Teaching Profession According to Opinions About Profession

Opinion of the profession	n	Average	S	F	p
Positive/I can find a work	91	76,25	8,88	0,161	0,852
Partly positive	66	76,18	8,64		
Negative/ I can't find a work	20	75,09	8,41		

As seen in Table 5, the difference between the scores of the Attitude Scale towards Special Education Teaching Profession is not meaningful according to the students' opinions about the profession (p>0.05).

Table 6. t-Test Results of Attitude Scale Scores Towards Special Education Teaching Profession According to Special Education Internship Status

	n	Average	S	t	p
Special education field internship					
Did	72	77,90	9,45	2,323	0,021*
Didn't do	105	74,84	7,95		

In Table 6, the difference between the scores of the Attitude Scale towards Special Education Teaching Profession according to the special education internship status of the students is meaningful (t=2.323; p=0.021). The scale score (Av.: 77.90) of the students who do internship who receive special education is higher than the score of those who do not do internship (Av.: 74.84). As a result of the CHAID analyzes carried out to determine the factors affecting students' attitudes towards the special education profession, the maximum tree depth was 3, the minimum value at the top node was 100, and the minimum value at the bottom node was 50. In the CHAID analysis, the scale total score as a dependent variable; participants' gender, department which study, class, reason for choosing the department, whether they have professional knowledge, their opinions about the profession, the scope they want to work in, the profession they think is ideal for them, and whether or not to have a special education internship was assigned as an independent variable. As a result, a tree structure consisting of two degrees and three nodes has showed up.

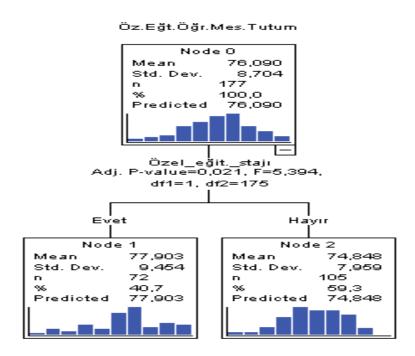


Figure 1. Decision Tree Structure Regarding the Variables Affecting Students' Attitudes Towards Special Education Teaching Profession

As can be seen in Figure 1, the most important variable affecting students' attitudes towards the special education teaching profession is whether they do special education internships or not. As a result of the analysis, the meaningful difference between the scores of attitudes towards the special education teaching profession according to the special education scope internship status in Table 5 overlaps with the findings.

As a result of the CHAID analysis, students' attitudes towards special education teaching differ significantly according to their internship status in special education (F=5.394; p=0.021). In the CHAID analysis, students were divided into two groups as those who had special education internships (40.7%) and those who did not (59.3%). The scale score of those who do special education internship is 77,903 and the score of those who do not do special education internship is 74,848. As a result, the most important factor affecting the attitudes of child development students attending an associate or undergraduate program towards the special education teaching profession is their internship status in the scope of special education and the attitudes of the students who do internship in special education scope towards special education teaching are more positive.

DISCUSSION, RESULT AND SUGGESTIONS

In the study conducted to determine the attitudes of child development students towards the special education teaching profession, 34.5% of the child development students remarked that they could work in the scope of special education and 56.5% did not want to work. When we look at the special education perspective studies with classroom teachers and pre-school teacher candidates, it is seen that both classroom teachers and preschool teachers have a negative attitude towards working in

special education (Temel, 2000; Üstün ve Yılan, 2003; Varlıer ve Vuran, 2006). Working with children with special educational needs have many difficulties due to their special circumstances. Especially for personal reasons such as lack of knowledge about the subject or emotional sensitivity, the students may have remarked that they do not want to work with children with special needs after graduation. One of the reasons for this situation may be the absence of a special education area in their planning for after graduate study areas. However, after graduation, the situation may happen in different directions, and for economic or other reasons, child development graduates may have to work in the scope of special education. In a survey study conducted with child development graduate students, it was seen that the majority of graduates work in private education institutions (https://sbf.karabuk.edu.tr/icerikGoster.aspx?K=S&id=2083&BA=cocuk-gelisimi, 2021).

In the study, while 23.2% of the students remarked that they could work with learning disability/mental retardation, 13.6% autism and 12.4% all disability groups, the rate of working with other disability types remained low. Again, 29.4% of the students remarked that they were undecided about which type of disability they could work with. In the study conducted by Ergül, Baydık, and Demir (2013), it was seen that the teaching of academic skills, classroom management, acquisition of language and speaking skills, and autism are the subjects that teachers find themselves inadequate and need education. In order to ensure both teachers' professional satisfaction and students' efficiency, teachers or prospective teachers should have interpersonal skills, academic knowledge and professional equipment according to the difficulty of the student they work with (Bataineh, Dababneh ve Baniabdelrahman, 2010). Because of that, it is extremely important for them to decide on the scope they can work in as a result of their internship and practical experience before they graduate. In the study, it was determined that there was no significant difference according to the attitudes of the child development students towards the special education teaching profession and their views on the program, grade level and profession. It has been determined that the most important factor affecting the attitudes of students towards special education teaching is their internship status in the scope of special education, and the attitudes of students who receive special education internships towards special education teaching are more positive. This situation is in parallel with the study conducted by Sari, Celikoz and Secer in 2009, in which they concluded that the lessons taken related to special education and the practices related to special education affect attitudes.

Teacher candidates both taking special education lessons theoretically and children with special needs, It is very important for them to participate in practices where they can observe different types of disabilities in special education classes and inclusive classes (Küçük-Doğaroğlu ve Bapoğlu-Dümenci, 2015). In the studies carried out, extending and disseminating the duration of teaching practices and making the lessons much more practical are among the most recommended ones by the teachers (Ergül, Baydık ve Demir, 2013). Students need environments where they can be together with children who need special education. Students who experience educational activities with different special needs children, follow and participate in educational approaches and care practices, and enjoy contributing to the practices will be more likely to develop a more positive attitude. Considering that people are generally afraid of what they do not know, scope internships, which offer the opportunity to see more closely the approaches of children with special needs, their families and educators, are expected being effective in gaining a positive perspective on the special education teaching profession of child development students. Furthermore, the possibility of developing a negative attitude should be considered in cases such as some negative situations experienced and the

internship practices not meeting the expectations. Child development students have the possibility to work in special education schools after graduation. The results of this study indicate that indecision and negativity are dominant in the attitudes of child development graduates towards the special education teaching profession. It is clear that the lack of special education internship has an effect on this situation. It can be said that it is important to equip child development students, who are likely to work with children with special needs, with sufficient knowledge and skills before graduation. With a qualified education, it may be possible to increase students' awareness about children with special education needs and the special education teaching profession. Child development graduates will encounter special needs children and their families, even if they work in hospitals or other institutions and organizations that provide public health services. At this stage, the fact that they have more experience during the student period will help them to perform their profession at a good level. This research is a conducted only on associate and undergraduate child development candidates. Metaphor studies on special education or similar topics related to this concept can be done with mothers, fathers, administrators, students and other branch teachers. Considering the possibility of prospective teachers in all branches to work with mainstreaming students; In order to learn the perspectives on special education, teaching courses in different fields such as applied special education in teacher education programs, program development in special education, inclusive education can be given.

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