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#### Abstract

The purpose of the current study is to reveal the difficulties encountered by special education teachers who provide homeschooling services. The study employed the phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research designs. The study group of the current study was determined by using the convenience sampling method and consists of ten participants. In the study, data were collected through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. The collected data were analyzed by using the descriptive analysis technique. According to the findings of the study, homeschooling services has some advantages such as the establishment of teacher-student-parent communication, yet, has many disadvantages such as lack of educational planning, lack of materials, transportation problems, low student motivation, low wages and unsuitable physical environment. In the study, it was also concluded that for the improvement of homeschooling services, many public and private institutions should carry out joint work for homeschooling services, teachers should be aided in issues such as wages and transportation and families should be supported in terms of physical conditions and materials.

#### To cite this article:

Alpdoğan, Y., Omak, S., & Eldeniz-Cetin, M. (2023). Determination of the difficulties encountered by special education teachers carrying out homeschooling services. International e-Journal of Educational Studies, 7 (15), 436-452. https://doi.org/10.31458/iejes.1274032

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### **Research Article**

## Determination of the Difficulties Encountered by Special Education Teachers Carrying out Homeschooling Services \*

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#### Abstract

The purpose of the current study is to reveal the difficulties encountered by special education teachers who provide homeschooling services. The study employed the phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research designs. The study group of the current study was determined by using the convenience sampling method and consists of ten participants. In the study, data were collected through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. The collected data were analyzed by using the descriptive analysis technique. According to the findings of the study, homeschooling services has some advantages such as the establishment of teacher-student-parent communication, yet, has many disadvantages such as lack of educational planning, lack of materials, transportation problems, low student motivation, low wages and unsuitable physical environment. In the study, it was also concluded that for the improvement of homeschooling services, many public and private institutions should carry out joint work for homeschooling services should be aided in issues such as wages and transportation and families should be supported in terms of physical conditions and materials.

Keywords: Homeschooling services, special education, individuals with special needs

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of nurturing the human personality in the desired direction and the investment made in human capital, and it is about transferring the values, moral standards, knowledge and experiences of the society to new generations (Senemoğlu, 2018). Education, which is the process of creating behaviour in the desired direction, can be conducted in formal and informal ways. While informal education can be conducted anywhere such as the street, home, formal education is usually given in various types of schools, since it is a process of changing behaviour in the desired direction by adhering to a plan (Baykul, 1992). Some individuals who develop differently cannot benefit from the education given in schools due to various deficiencies or disorders. Regulations for individuals who cannot continue their education in formal education institutions due to various reasons are carried out by states on the basis of a social state approach (Kara, 2017). In Turkey, according to the Special Education Services Regulation of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the education of individuals who develop differently is provided in mainstream schools, special education centres, hospital-based environments or delivered in home-based settings (Cavkaytar, 2019). In addition, with the Regulation

 Received Date: 30/03/2023
 Accepted Date: 14/08/2023
 Publication Date: 21/10/2023

 \*To cite this article: Alpdoğan, Y., Omak, S., & Eldeniz-Çetin, M. (2023). Determination of the difficulties encountered by special education teachers carrying out homeschooling services. International e-Journal of Educational Studies, 7 (15), 436-452. https://doi.org/10.31458/iejes.1274032

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on Education Services at Home and Hospital, numbered 2629 and re-published in February 2010, the Ministry of National Education has made various arrangements for students who cannot continue their education at school for different reasons (https://orgm.meb.gov.tr). According to this regulation, homeschooling services is defined as the education carried out for the execution of education and training services at home for the individuals who cannot directly benefit from the formal education institutions that carry out any of the pre-school, primary or special education processes due to their health conditions (https://orgm.meb.gov.tr).

Homeschooling services are the education carried out in the house where individuals live (Heward, 2013). In other words, homeschooling services can be explained as the student' continuing his/her education at home instead of continuing at school. When the historical process of homeschooling services is examined, it can be said that it first emerged as an alternative education system to mainstream schools in the United States after the second half of the 1900s (Seo, 2009). It is seen that homeschooling services has started to become widespread in recent years around the world for religious, philosophical, cultural, academic, social and special educational reasons (Knuth, 2010). In Turkey, homeschooling services are mostly provided for students who need special education. In Turkey, when an individual is unable to leave the house for six months or more due to health problems, he/she can receive homeschooling services with a report to be received from a health board and to be approved by a guidance research centre. During homeschooling services, special education teachers go to the homes of individuals with disabilities and work with the family based on the needs of the child and family at home (Akgün-Akçamuş, 2016). It can be said that educational activities conducted in this form of education have benefits as they are conducted in the natural environment of the student and the family is a part of education (Birkan, 2002). The most serious disadvantage of homeschooling services is that it is against the principle of continuing education in the least restrictive environment, which is one of the basic principles of special education (Özyürek, 1983).

Homeschooling services are becoming increasingly widespread both in the world (Isenberg, 2007) and in Turkey. While one of the important reasons for homeschooling services to be prevalent in other countries is the existence of problems experienced by families regarding their children's institutional education (Kaya, 2015), the main reason for homeschooling services in Turkey is the health problems hindering some children from attending formal education institutions. Homeschooling services is an effective method for individuals who have health problems and cannot attend formal education institutions for them to show a similar development to their peers, participate in daily life activities and eliminate the disadvantages of being at home. Along with these advantages, it is known that there are certain difficulties in the implementation of homeschooling programs. Financial problems, the quality of the education given to the child and the constant questioning of their own competences by the families are the main problems mentioned in the literature in the process of conducting homeschooling services as an alternative to the formal education system (Tösten & Elcicek, 2013). When the studies on homeschooling services, which have become widespread in recent years for different reasons, are examined, it is seen that the studies are limited (Arslan, 2015; Susam, 2019; Yıldırım, et al., 2015) and that there is no study focused on the investigation of the difficulties experienced in the homeschooling process (Atbaşı & Pürsün, 2021). For this reason, it was considered important to conduct such a study. Accordingly, the general purpose of the current study is to reveal the difficulties encountered by special education teachers who provide homeschooling services. In line with this general purpose, answers to the following research questions were sought:

- a) How do teachers plan and structure homeschooling services?
- b) What are the difficulties of homeschooling services from teachers' perspectives?

### 2. METHOD

In this part of the study, there is information about the research model, the study group, the data collection tool and process, the analysis of the data and the ethics of the study.

#### 2.1. Research Model

The current study was carried out through the phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research methods, to determine the difficulties encountered by special education teachers who provide homeschooling services. The phenomenological design examines the study group's experiences in depth about a problem situation and helps to reveal the meaning of their lives and experiences on the basis of the thoughts of the study group (Smith & Fowler, 2009).

#### 2.2. Study Group

In line with the purpose of the study, the participants were determined from among the teachers who carry out homeschooling services. The study was carried out in the city of Bolu in Turkey. In order to determine the participants of the study, firstly, a total of 13 teachers residing in the central district of Bolu and conducting homeschooling services were contacted. Then, they were talked about the study and 10 of them wanted to volunteer to participate in the study. Thus, a total of 10 teachers constituted the study group. The teachers in the study group were coded as P1, P2, P3,... and P10. Demographic information of the study group is presented in Table 1.

Participant Code	Gender	Age	Education Level	Department Graduated	Length of Service
P1	Female	40	Bachelor's degree	Primary teaching	17 years
P2	Female	28	Bachelor's degree	Special teaching	6 years
P3	Female	33	Bachelor's degree	Primary teaching	10 years
P4	Male	33	Bachelor's degree	Primary teaching	11 years
P5	Female	41	Bachelor's degree	Special teaching	20 years
P6	Male	38	Bachelor's degree	Special teaching	15 years
P7	Female	29	Bachelor's degree	Primary teaching	4 years
P8	Female	31	Bachelor's degree	Primary teaching	6 years
P9	Female	30	Bachelor's degree	Primary teaching	9 years
P10	Female	32	Master's degree	Primary teaching	5 years

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 8 of the participants are female and 2 are male. It is seen on the table that the ages of the participants are between 28 and 41. While 7 of the participants graduated from the department of primary teaching, 3 of them graduated from the program of special education teaching and one participant who graduated from the department of primary teaching holds a master's degree. All of the participants who graduated from the department of primary teaching in the current study received certificates from various courses related to the field of special education and switched to the field of special education. It is seen that the professional experience of the participants is between 5 and 20 years.

### 2.3. Data Collection

In qualitative studies, data are obtained mostly by using the interview technique in studies employing the phenomenological design (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2018). In this study, which was carried out with a phenomenological design, data were obtained by using a semi-structured interview form from the teachers who provide homeschooling services. A semi-structured interview form consisting of 13 open-ended questions was used to obtain data in the study. While preparing the interview form, the literature was reviewed and the opinions of three faculty members and a special education teacher who were experts in the field of special education and had studies on education of individuals with special needs were sought. On the basis of the feedback from the experts, the questions in the

interview form were corrected and finalized. Interviews were conducted face-to-face with the teachers who provide homeschooling services. A voice recorder was used during the interview, and the answers of the teachers were recorded on the voice recorder. During the interview, the participants were told that the data obtained would not be used for any other purpose anywhere else, and would only be used within the framework of this study. In the research, the data were collected based on the questions (Appendix-1) in the interview form used as a result of the research.

#### 2.4. Data Analysis

In the current study, the analysis of the collected data was conducted through descriptive analysis, which is one of the qualitative analysis methods. In the study, the transcription of the data collected by means of the interview form and recorded on the voice recorder was performed by the second author. After the second author performed all the transcriptions, the third author took samples randomly from records and checked them. After the research data were transcribed and then read in detail by the second and third authors, categories and sub-categories were formed by adhering to the research questions. As a result of this categorization, the research findings were presented under thirteen categories.

#### 2.5. Validity and Reliability

One of the strengths of qualitative studies is to reveal whether the findings obtained are correct when validity is evaluated from the perspective of the sample, reader and researcher. From this point of view, some situations should be taken into consideration to ensure validity while conducting qualitative studies (Creswell, 2017; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In order to ensure validity in this study; while creating semi-structured interview questions, the opinions of three faculty members and a special education teacher who are experts in the field of special education and have studies related to the education of individuals requiring special education were consulted.

When qualitative researchers are carried out, it is recommended to write the steps of the processes in order to ensure the consistency or stability of their research (Creswell, 2017). In this study, in order to ensure reliability, the researchers acted in line with the recommendations specified for qualitative research. For this purpose, in the analysis phase, the data obtained through the interview form and recorded on the voice recorder were transcribed by the second author. After the second author performed all the transcriptions, six randomly selected transcripts were checked by the third author. After the research data were transcribed and read in detail by the second and third authors, categories and subcategories were formed based on the research questions. Then, the contents of the themes were printed out and the theme and content consistency was checked by all three authors. Thus, the qualitative consistency of the research data was ensured. On the other hand, in order to increase the reliability of the research data, a quantitative reliability calculation was made. As a result of this reliability study, inter-coder reliability was calculated as 98% with the formula "Reliability = Agreement/ (Agreement + Disagreement) x 100" suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) (Baltacı, 2017).

### **3. FINDINGS**

Findings of the current study, conducted to determine the difficulties encountered by special education teachers who provide homeschooling services are presented under thirteen main categories in line with the interview questions of the study. The findings are presented in tables consisting of different sub-categories under each category accompanied by interpretations of the data in each table with the support of quotations from the participants.

### 3.1. Findings on How Special Education Teachers Plan for Homeschooling Services

In order to obtain the findings for the first research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "How do you plan for homeschooling?" The sub-categories reflecting the answers of the research participants to this question are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Opinions of the special education teachers on how they plan for homeschooling se	ervices

Sub-categories	f
I always prepare a plan just as in school	5
I plan as daily teaching sessions	2
I do not make any extra planning for homeschooling	1
I make a plan according to the conditions of the home environment	1
The education level of the family is an important variable	1
I make a plan by considering all the variables for the target skill	1

As seen in Table 2, the participants' answers given to the question of how they plan for homeschooling are gathered under six sub-categories; I always prepare a plan just as in school, I plan as daily teaching sessions, I do not make any extra planning for homeschooling, I make a plan according to the conditions of the home environment, the education level of the family is an important variable and I make a plan by considering all the variables for the target skill. Half of the participants (50%) stated that they always make a plan just as in school. In this regard, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P4: "As in school, we make individual education planning in advance. We print out the individual syllabus, obtain the materials we will use, and go home and start teaching." P7: "I always prepare by taking into consideration the objectives that the child needs to accomplish." Some of the participants (20%) stated that they carry out their homeschooling by making plans as daily teaching sessions. In this regard, one participant expressed his/her opinion as follows; P5: "I plan in the form of daily teaching sessions according to the homeschooling plan, the characteristics of the lesson to be taught that day, and the characteristics of the objectives to be accomplished." Moreover, one of the participants (10%) stated that he/she does not make any extra planning for homeschooling and another participant (10%) stated that he/she makes plans considering the education level of the family. One of the participants on the other hand stated that he/she makes a plan according to the conditions of the home environment and another participant stated that he/she makes a plan by considering all the variables for the target skill. In this sub-categories, some of the participants expressed their opinions as follows; P1: "I do not have a special plan for homeschooling" P8: "In order to plan homeschooling, to get to know the student, I research the family and the education they have received; I learn the thoughts of the family. After meeting with the previous teachers and the school and getting to know the student, I determine the appropriate objectives and teaching techniques and make my plan. In short, I consider all the variables for the target skill."

# **3.2.** Findings regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on Homeschooling Services

In order to obtain the findings for the second research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "What would you like to say about homeschooling, about its advantages and disadvantages?" The sub-categories reflecting the answers of the research participants to this question are presented in Table 3.

Sub-category	f
It is advantageous for students who cannot come to school	4
It has more disadvantages	3
It is not as efficient as the school environment	2
There is a discipline problem	2
The education level of the family is an important variable	1

Table 3. Opinions of the special education teachers on homeschooling services

As seen in Table 3, the participants' opinions about homeschooling services are gathered under five sub-categories. It is seen that some of the participants (40%) emphasized that homeschooling services is advantageous for students who cannot come to school. In this regard, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P9: "The positive side of homeschooling is that the student, who has no opportunity to complete his/her education at school, completes his/her education in this way." P2: "There are advantages for students; I think it is an advantage for students who cannot come to school. For us as teachers, it is a great pleasure to help them." Some participants (30%) on the other hand stated that homeschooling services has more negative sides. In this regard, one participant expressed his/her opinion as follows; P1: "I think it has more disadvantages because it is in the home environment anyway. You do not establish a silent classroom environment that the child needs. No matter how many materials you bring with you, you may not have the materials you can reach at school..." While some participants (20%) stated that homeschooling services is not as efficient as the education given in the school environment, some participants (20%) stated that they have discipline problems in homeschooling services. In addition, one participant (10%) stated that the education level of the family is an important variable. In these sub-categories, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P3: "It's not like a school environment. It's a problem that parents come in and out every now and then..." P4: "It depends on the house you're going to. The most important point here is the education level of the family." P9: "A very important problem I see in homeschooling is the problem of establishing discipline."

3.3. Findings on How the Special Education Teachers Structure the Teaching Phase in Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the third research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "How do you structure the teaching phase in homeschooling, what are the difficulties and conveniences you experience?" The sub-categories reflecting the answers of the participants to this question are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Opinions of the special education teachers on how they structure the teaching phase in homeschooling and the difficulties and conveniences they experience

Sub-category	f	
I have a hard time structuring homeschooling	4	
I structure it according to the child's level and objectives	3	
I structure it by prioritizing self-care skills		
I structure it considering the home environment		
I structure it on the basis of teaching techniques in special education		

On Table 4, it is seen that the opinions of the participants on how they structure the teaching phase in homeschooling are basically gathered under five sub-categories. It is seen that a significant part of the participants (40%) stated that they have difficulties in structuring homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P10: "I have difficulties in homeschooling or in structuring and planning teaching..." It is seen that some participants (30%) consider the level of the student and the characteristics of the objectives while structuring homeschooling. One of the participants expressed his/her opinion on this issue as follows; P7: "By evaluating the situation of the child I will teach, determining the objectives he/she needs and making the necessary preparations ... These preparations include the planning of the teaching, finding the suitable materials and informing the family about the process. In other words, I structure it considering the level of the students and objectives to be accomplished." One of the participating teachers (10%) stated that he/she focuses on self-care skills while planning the education while another participant stated that he/she structures homeschooling considering the home environment. Moreover, another participant stated that he/she plans homeschooling on the basis of teaching techniques in special education. In these sub-categories, some participants expressed their opinions as

follows; P1: "The skills that I will focus on during the teaching phase are self-care skills because in the school environment, we have difficulty in making students acquire self-care skills. They are difficult to teach in the school environment. Same is true for daily life skills such as washing hands, brushing teeth, dressing up, yet, they are relatively easy to teach in the home environment. I usually prioritize self-care skills when planning homeschooling." P8: "I draw attention of the student by saying that we will learn this with you today in order to accomplish the objective I have determined in advance in the teaching phase. I'm trying to find out what he/she knows about the subject with questions ... I find pictures, cards, on the subject or videos from the internet ... techniques such as improvisation, narration, demonstration, question and answer ... it takes a lot of repetition, he/she forgets very quickly, you can't get many answers to the questions, that's the problem ... In short, I structure it on the basis of teaching techniques."

# **3.4.** Findings regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on How the Home Environment Affects Their Education

In order to obtain the findings for the fourth research problem, the participants were asked, "Does the home environment affect your education, and if so, how?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 5.

 Table 5. Opinions of the special education teachers on how the home environment affects their education

Sub-category	f
It affects education negatively	7
The home environment is an important variable	2
The home environment contains some risks	1

As seen in Table 5, the opinions of the participants about how the home environment affects their education in homeschooling are basically gathered under three sub-categories. The majority of the participants (70%) think that the home environment affects their education negatively in homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P6: *"environment obviously affects education. When it is homeschooling, physical conditions, individuals living at home, our intervention in the child's own area; these all affect negatively."* While some of the participants (20%) stated that the home environment is an important variable, one participant stated that the home environment contains risks. In this regard, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P5: *"of course it affects. In normal education, there is education five days a week. But in homeschooling, duration of the education varies depending on how long you travel to arrive home and where the house is located, etc. This indicates that the home environment is an important variable."* P2: *"Some students do not have a family atmosphere, do not have a mother or a father or some other issues. Commuting home can be risky for us. It is somehow possible to go after communicating with the parent."* 

# **3.5.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on the Time Allocated to Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the fifth research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "What would you say about the time allocated to homeschooling?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 6. **Table 6. Opinions of the special education teachers on the time allocated to homeschooling** 

Sub-category	f
The time allocated to homeschooling is sufficient	6
The time allocated to homeschooling is too long	2
The time allocated to homeschooling is too short	1
It is necessary to make a good planning for the time allocated to homeschooling	1

As seen in Table 6, the opinions of the participants regarding the time allocated to homeschooling are basically gathered under four sub-categories. It is seen that a significant part of the participants (60%) emphasized that the time allocated to homeschooling is sufficient. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P3: *"I think the time allocated to homeschooling is enough, I even think that 6 hours is too much. I think that it is enough for the children who are educated at home to get 3 or 4 hours of education."* While some participants (20%) stated that the time is too long, one participant stated that the time allocated to homeschooling. In these sub-categories, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P10: *"The time allocated to homeschooling is too much in my opinion because studying in the home environment is not like teaching in the classroom environment. In planning the time, it is important to think of the teacher as much as we think of the student and to keep his/her motivation alive."* P5: *"the time is too little in homeschooling. Not enough time to teach the student enough skills"* 

# **3.6.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of Special Education Teachers on the Materials Used in Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the sixth research problem of the study, the participants were asked the question, "What would you say about the materials used in homeschooling? What kind of deficiencies do they have, if they have?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants on this question are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Opinions of the special education teachers on the materials used in homeschooling			
Sub-category	f		
There is a great shortage of teaching materials in homeschooling	7		
I provide the teaching materials myself in homeschooling	4		
In homeschooling, I obtain teaching materials from the school	3		
I do not have any problems with teaching materials in homeschooling	1		

As seen in Table 7, the opinions of the participants about the materials used in schooling are gathered under four sub-categories. Most of the participants (70%) stated that there is a great shortage of teaching materials in homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P3: "We usually provide the materials for homeschooling ourselves. Or we get them from the school. There are serious problems in this regard; we have a shortage of materials." Moreover, it is seen that a significant part of the participants (40%) stated that they themselves provide the teaching materials in homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P8: "There is no budget provided by the National Education for homeschooling. If the teacher can convince the Principal of the school, then he/she may get some materials. Apart from that, the family can buy materials but this is no very likely. Therefore, we are experiencing a great shortage of materials. Some of the participants (30%) stated that they obtain the teaching materials from the school for homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P2: "Families are often not in a position to provide materials. We provide them ourselves, and sometimes we can get them from the school." It is seen that one participant of the study stated that he/she does not have any problems with teaching materials in homeschooling. In this regard, one participant expressed his/her opinion as follows; P5: "I do not have any problems with materials in homeschooling. I use almost everything we see at home in education."

**3.7.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on Transportation Required for Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the seventh research problem of the study, the participants were asked "What would you say about transportation required for homeschooling?" The sub-

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categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 8.

Sub-category	f
Transportation is a big problem in homeschooling	4
Transportation is not a big problem	2
The location of the student's home is an important variable in transportation	2
Whether the teacher has a car or not is an important variable in transportation	2

 Table 8.Opinions of the special education teachers on transportation required for homeschooling

As seen in Table 8, the opinions of the participants on the transportation required for homeschooling are gathered under four sub-categories. A significant part of the participants (40%) stated that transportation is a very big problem in homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P9: "*The cost of the transportation must be met by the teacher himself/herself and I think this is a very big problem and at least some of the transportation fee should be paid to the teacher. Some students live in villages outside the centre."* While some participants (20%) stated that transportation is not a big problem, some others (20%) stated that the location of the student's home is an important variable in transportation. On the other hand, some participants (20%) stated that whether the teacher has a car or not is an important variable in transportation. In these sub-categories, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P8: "*My student's house was close, I didn't have any problems, but it's okay because I go to school by car, anyway.*" P6: "*It is very easy for those who have a car, but it is very difficult for those who do not have a car and have to go to a distant place.*"

# **3.8.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on Student Motivation in Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the eighth research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "What would you like to say about student motivation in homeschooling, what do you do in this regard?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 9.

Sub-category	f
I motivate them with reinforcers	4
Student motivation in homeschooling is very low	3
I motivate by making a good planning	2
It is difficult to motivate the student in homeschooling	1
I motivate through cooperation with the family	1

Table 9 C	)ninions of	f the snecial	education	teachers on	student	motivation	in homeschooling
1 able 3. U	phinons of	i the special	euucation	teachers on	Student	mouvation	in nomeschooling

As seen in Table 9, the opinions of the participants on student motivation in homeschooling are gathered under five sub-categories. A significant part of the participants (40%) stated that they motivate the student with reinforcers in homeschooling. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P2: "We can often use small reinforcers to motivate the student, such as bringing small presents or taking him/her to the park if he/she can leave the house." While some participants (30%) stated that student motivation is low in homeschooling, some other participants (20%) stated that they make a good planning to motivate students in homeschooling. In these sub-categories, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P2: "The motivation of the student is very low. Since education is at home, he/she sees himself/herself as the leader of the home and it is very difficult for him/her to see you as an authority. For example, when there is a problem, he/she tends to go to his/her mother. It is very difficult for us to discipline him/her because he/she

thinks that he/she can do whatever he/she wants, that he/she can go out and walk around during the lesson. It is easier to set rules for them in the classroom environment. Apart from that, I set rules and clearly explain that he/she will be rewarded if he/she obeys the rules. I pay great attention to using variety of activities. I try to keep the activity period of the child short, especially if he/she is moderately and severely disabled, by changing activities frequently at regular intervals. Then the motivation gets better." P7: "...very important. Having the student participate in the lesson also increases the quality of the education provided. I attach great importance to motivation. I am making a good planning." While one participant stated that it is difficult to motivate the student in homeschooling, another participant stated that he/she cooperates with the family to motivate the student in homeschooling.

# **3.9.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on the Wage They Receive for Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the ninth research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "What would you like to say about the wage you receive in homeschooling?" The subcategories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Opinions of the special education teachers on the wage they receive for homeschooling

Sub-category	f
Wage is very low as homeschooling requires extra effort	7
Wage received is the same as the wage received at school	3

As seen in Table 10, the opinions of the participants about the wages they receive in homeschooling are gathered under two sub-categories. The majority of the participants (70%) stated that the wages they receive are very low because homeschooling requires extra intensive labour and effort. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P7: "So far, we have talked about the pros and cons of homeschooling. Although I do not say good or bad for the wage, I think that the wage can be increased a bit because of the multitude of negative factors involved in homeschooling; teachers make a serious extra effort. I think the wage is important for teacher motivation and job satisfaction."

Some of the participants (30%) stated that the wage they receive in homeschooling is the same as the wage they receive at school and that this wage is sufficient. In this regard, one participant stated his/her opinion as follows; *"The wage is enough, I think, our profession is a profession of sacrifice."* 

# **3.10.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on the Physical Conditions of the Setting in which they Provide Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the tenth research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "What would you like to say about the physical conditions of the setting where you provide homeschooling?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 11.

# Table 11. Opinions of the special education teachers on the physical conditions of the setting in which they provide homeschooling

Sub-category	f
Definitely negative.	5
The financial situation of the family is an important variable.	4
The home environment has a great impact on education	1

As seen in Table 11, the opinions of the participants about the physical conditions of the setting in which they provide homeschooling are gathered under three sub-categories. Half of the participants (50%) stated that the physical conditions of the setting in which they provide homeschooling are

definitely negative. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P9: "They negatively affect. Unfortunately, many families with these children do not even have a separate room because their financial situation is bad. For example, I teach the lessons in the living room. The living room is also used to sleep during the winter months. I run into big problems when I go in the morning." While a significant part (40%) of the research participants stated that the financial situation of the family of the student they are teaching at home is an important variable, one participant stated that the home environment is very influential on education. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows: P7: "The physical conditions of the environment may not be suitable, but we try to make the environment as unaffected by external factors as possible. Every home and family environment is different, and since their socioeconomic status also differs, I design them in a way that would be closest to the ideal."

# **3.11.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on How They Structure the Learning Environment in Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the eleventh research problem of the study, the participants were asked the question, "How do you structure the learning environment during homeschooling?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Opinions of the special education teachers on how they structure the learning
environment in homeschooling

Sub-category	f
I identify an unused room and turn that room into a classroom	4
I teach in a room given to me and I take all the unnecessary items out of the room	3
I do not interfere with the home environment	3
I teach in an environment that the child likes	1

As seen in Table 12, the opinions of the participants of the study on how they structure the learning environment during homeschooling are gathered under four sub-categories. A significant part of the participants (40%) stated that they identify an unused room at home and convert it into a classroom. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P1: "When I first go, I usually ask the family which room is their least used room in order to prepare the learning environment. Or, I ask whether the child has his/her own room. Mostly he/she may not have his/her own room, so I want the least used room. I also hang a card on the door stating that there is a lesson to prevent any interference during the lesson. I also set an alarm for the mother and ask her not to enter the room until she hears the sound of the alarm. I take care not to have too many items in the room." While some of the participants (30%) stated that they take out the unused items in the room allocated to them and structure it as an educational environment, some participants (30%) stated that they do not interfere in the home environment during homeschooling. In these sub-categories, some of the participants expressed their opinions as follows; P3: "We structure the learning environment according to the characteristics of the learning objective and the physical conditions of the house." P5: "I do not interfere too much with the home environment." One participant stated that he/she teaches in an environment which the student likes.

**3.12.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on Teacher-Student-Parent Communication in Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the twelfth research problem of the study, the participants were asked, "What would you say about teacher-student-parent communication in homeschooling?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 13.

Sub-category	f
There is a constant interruption of the lesson	5
It is positive in terms of communication and cooperation with the family	4
It is sometimes a problem for male teachers to go to homeschooling.	1
The child stays away from peers	1
The home environment can have its own drawbacks	1
It is difficult to establish authority and class control	1

 Table 13. Opinions of the special education teachers on teacher-student-parent communication

 in homeschooling

As seen in Table 13, the opinions of the special education teachers on teacher-student-parent communication in homeschooling are gathered under six sub-categories. Half of the participants (50%) stated that the lesson is constantly interrupted. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P10: "I think one of the most important issues in homeschooling is this question you have asked. In homeschooling, the lesson is constantly interrupted. The student's parents, siblings or guests..." A significant part of the participants (40%) stated that homeschooling is positive in terms of communication and cooperation with the family. Other opinions expressed by participants are that it is sometimes a problem for male teachers to go to homeschooling (10%), that the child stays away from peers (10%), that the home environment has its own drawbacks and that it is difficult to establish authority and class control (10%). In these sub-categories, some participants expressed their opinions as follows; P4: "The best side of it is that the teacher knows the parent and the student. Of course, it can be more advantageous and better to contact the parent and proceed accordingly." P9: "...I have trouble establishing authority and classroom control in homeschooling."

**3.13.** Findings Regarding the Opinions of the Special Education Teachers on Their Own Performance in Homeschooling

In order to obtain the findings for the thirteenth research problem of the study, the participants were asked the question, "What would you say when you evaluate your own performance in homeschooling?" The sub-categories containing the opinions of the research participants regarding this question are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Opinions of the special education teachers on their own performance in homeschooling

Sub-category	f
It is motivating to help a child who can't come to school	6
I think I am good although not as good as in the classroom environment	4
Homeschooling negatively affects my performance	2

As seen in able 14, the opinions of the participants about their own performance in homeschooling are gathered under three sub-categories. The majority of the participants (60%) stated that it is motivating to help a child who cannot come to school. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P2: "I can express the following about our own performance: both the child and the family are happy because the child does not come to school. The child is also happy as he/she sees another person and we are happy as we can help someone. Thus, it is a good project..." Again, a significant part of the participants (40%) stated that their performance is good although not as good as in the classroom environment. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P8: "It was my first experience and I think it was good because the family would want me for the next year ... I'm learning too, it's a different feeling, I have learned to be more patient ... I have learned that it is necessary to repeat a lot, when he/she smiles, I become happier...". Some of the participants (20%) stated that homeschooling negatively affects their performance. In this regard, one of the participants expressed his/her opinion as follows; P1: "I meaning too, it's a follows; P6: "When I evaluate my own performance, I can say that I am better in the school environment. I feel restricted at home. I think I

am more challenged here. Working with children is easy for us, but interference from other people negatively affects."

### 4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

In the current study, some results were obtained regarding the difficulties experienced by special education teachers who provide homeschooling services. When the results obtained on how special education teachers plan for homeschooling are examined, it is seen that they always make plans just as in the school environment, make plans as daily teaching sessions, do not make any extra planning for homeschooling, make plans according to the conditions of the home environment, make their plans by taking into account the education level of the family and make plans considering all the variables for the target skill. Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021) stated that it is important to make arrangements regarding the individual's needs, environment and materials while planning for individuals who require special education. Otherwise, it is known that the level of effectiveness of the program on the individual will be low. Considering the data obtained as a result of the current study, it is seen that special education teachers do not follow a certain systematic and do not make general arrangements for homeschooling. When the relevant literature is considered, it can be said that it is difficult for existing applications to reach their goals. In addition, the opinion expressed by participants "homeschooling is not very effective" may be related to this.

Another result obtained in the current study is related to what special education teachers think about education in the home environment. The opinions expressed by the special education teachers about education in the home environment revealed that the teachers think that homeschooling services is advantageous for students who cannot come to school, that homeschooling services has more disadvantages, that homeschooling services is not as efficient as the school environment, that there is a discipline problem in homeschooling services and that the education level of the family is an important variable. These findings of the current study are similar to the findings reported by Taşdemir and Bulut (2015). Taşdemir and Bulut (2015) reported that parents find homeschooling activities useful, that homeschooling plays a role in the development of children and that teachers have problems with materials to be used in homeschooling.

Another result of the current study is related to how special education teachers structure the teaching phase in homeschooling. As a result of the study, it was seen that the special education teachers have difficulties in structuring homeschooling that they consider the level of the student and the characteristics of the objectives when structuring homeschooling that they focus on self-care skills when planning homeschooling and that they plan homeschooling considering the home environment. Similarly, when the results obtained from the opinions of the special education teachers about the effects of homeschooling on their education were examined, it was found that they think that the home environment negatively affects their education in homeschooling, that the home environment where the education is given is an important variable and that the home environment has risks. These results of this research coincide with the results of Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021). Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021) also emphasized in their study that home environment is an important variable in homeschooling services.

Another result obtained in the current study is related to the opinions of the special education teachers about the time allocated to homeschooling. When the opinions expressed in this category were examined, it was seen that some teachers think that the time allocated to homeschooling is sufficient; some think that the time is too long and some others think that the time too short. Findings related to the fact that the time allocated for homeschooling service is very small Yıldırım et al. (2015) is consistent with the results of their study. Yıldırım et al. (2015) also comes to the fore in the study of increasing the duration of lessons in homeschooling services.

Another result of the current study is related to the opinions of the special education teachers about the materials used in homeschooling. Based on the opinions expressed in this category, it can be

said that there is a great shortage of teaching materials in homeschooling, that teachers themselves provide the teaching materials in homeschooling and that they obtain some of the teaching materials in homeschooling from the school. The results obtained in this part of the study support the results of the studies conducted by Arslan (2015) and Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021). Arslan (2015) stated that one of the important shortcomings that teachers see regarding home education is the inadequacy of materials and the difficulty of accessing materials. Similarly, Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021) stated that among the disadvantages expressed by teachers regarding homeschooling services, there is the difficulty in obtaining materials. In addition, as found in the current study, Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021) found that a significant part of the material supply in homeschooling services is provided by teachers themselves.

Based on what the special education teachers who participated in the study expressed about transportation required for homeschooling, it can be said that the transportation problem in homeschooling is a big problem, that the teachers themselves solve the transportation problem in homeschooling, that the location of the student's house is important for transportation in homeschooling. The teacher' having his/her own car is important for transportation in homeschooling. The results obtained in this sub-category of the study concur with the results of the study conducted by Susam et al. (2019). Susam et al. (2019) stated that transportation in homeschooling services is an important problem and that solutions should be found for this problem.

The following results were obtained from the statements of the special education teachers about student motivation in homeschooling: teachers try to motivate students with reinforcements in homeschooling, student motivation is low in homeschooling, it is necessary to make a good plan in order to motivate students in homeschooling and it is difficult to motivate students in homeschooling. The results obtained in the study regarding the low level of student motivation in homeschooling services coincide with one of the results emphasized by Berkant and Atılgan (2020). In a finding of Berkant and Atılgan (2020) research, it was seen that homeschooling could not be carried out adequately and effectively, and one of the reasons for this was student reluctance and low motivation.

Another result of the current study is related to the opinions of the special education teachers about the wages they receive in homeschooling. Based on the opinions expressed on wages, it can be said that the majority of the teachers think that the wage they receive are very low because homeschooling requires extra intensive labour and effort. This finding is supported by the study of Atbaşı and Pürsün (2021). On the other hand, some of the participants think that the wage they receive in homeschooling is the same as the wage they receive at school and this wage is sufficient.

The following results were obtained based on the statements of the special education teachers participating in the study about the physical conditions of the environment in which they provide education at home: the physical conditions of the environment in which they provide education at home are definitely negative, the financial situation of the family of the student they teach at home is an important variable and the home environment has a significant influence on education. These results are similar to the results of Peker and Taş, (2017). Peker and Taş (2017) stated that the students remained passive and their motivation was low due to reasons such as the teacher-centred education in homeschooling services and the inability of the student to interact and communicate with his/her peers.

Another result of the current study is related to how special education teachers structure the environment in which lessons are taught during homeschooling. Based on the opinions expressed by the teaches in this category, it was concluded that teachers identify an unused room at home and turn it into a classroom environment, that they remove the unused items in the room allocated to homeschooling and structure it as an educational environment, that they do not interfere with the home environment in homeschooling and that the lessons are taught in an environment that the student likes.

Based on the opinions expressed by the special education teachers about teacher-student-parent communication in homeschooling, the following results were obtained: the lesson in homeschooling is constantly interrupted, it has positive results in terms of communication and cooperation with the

family, when male teachers go to homeschooling, this may sometimes cause problems, the home environment can have its own drawbacks and the authority and classroom control cannot be established.

The results obtained on the basis of the opinions expressed by the teachers on their own performance in homeschooling are as follows; it is motivating for them to help students who cannot come to school, their performance at home education is good even though it is not as good as it is in the classroom environment and homeschooling negatively affects their performance. Susam et al. (2019) stated that variables such as transportation, materials, technological infrastructure, strict curriculum etc. affect the motivation of teachers in the homeschooling process and that R&D studies should be carried out to increase teacher motivation in homeschooling.

In light of the findings of the current study, the following suggestions can be made:

a) With the joint work of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and Universities, studies on planning for homeschooling services should be carried out and shared with teachers.

b) With the support of organizations such as Ministry of Family and Social Services, MoNE, foundations, NGOs, municipalities, universities, it is necessary to create a classroom in the home environment for individuals who have a report proving that they need homeschooling and have financial problems and the necessary material support should be provided.

c) It is recommended to focus on studies on structuring the teaching phase in homeschooling services in the special education departments of universities.

d) It is recommended to support teachers in transportation to home and to make improvements in their wages.

e) It is recommended to get support from guidance and counselling specialists to inform families about what should they do during the lesson at home.

### Ethics Committee Decision

Ethical approval and written permission for this study were obtained from the Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Kırşehir Ahi Evran University with the decision dated 21/04/2022 and numbered 2022/03/37.

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### **Appendix-1: Interview Questions**

- 1. How do you plan for homeschooling?
- 2. What would you like to say about homeschooling, about its advantages and disadvantages?
- 3. How do you structure the teaching phase in homeschooling, what are the difficulties and conveniences you experience?
- 4. Does the home environment affect your education, and if so, how?
- 5. What would you say about the time allocated to homeschooling?
- 6. What would you say about the materials used in homeschooling? What kind of deficiencies do they have, if they have?
- 7. What would you say about transportation required for homeschooling?
- 8. What would you like to say about student motivation in homeschooling, what do you do in this regard?
- 9. What would you like to say about the wage you receive for homeschooling?
- 10. What would you like to say about the physical conditions of the setting where you provide homeschooling?
- 11. How do you structure the learning environment during homeschooling?
- 12. What would you say about teacher-student-parent communication in homeschooling?
- 13. What would you say when you evaluate your own performance in homeschooling?

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