

From the Editor...

Dear Readers,

We are with you again with the Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences Journal of Special Education's last issue, June 2023, Volume 24, Issue 2. As always has been, I would like to thank here those who contributed as our authors, reviewers, readers, our Academic Advisory Board, and our Editorial Board. I would like to indicate that as the Editorial Board, we put forth the effort to move our journal to a higher level both quantitatively and qualitatively in the forthcoming process.

In this issue of our Journal, there are eight research articles. I would like to briefly introduce them to our readers. The first research article in the current issue includes a study of *Hale ÇOTUK* and *Selda ÖZDEMİR* namely "*Theory of Mind and Reactions to Emotional Responses in Children with Visual Impairments: A Comparison with Sighted Children.*" The purpose of this research's was to investigate the relationships between the children's theory of mind (ToM) scores and their responses to emotional expressions. The study consisted of 20 children with low vision, 19 children with severe visual impairments, and 20 sighted children, who were between the ages of 48 and 72 months and did not have additional disabilities or developmental delays. Participants were initially assessed with the ToM, first order false belief, unexpected location, and unexpected content tasks. In the second stage, the researcher played with each child for about 20 minutes to assess the participants' reactions to emotional responses. The researchers created emotional social scenarios implemented within a play dyad through which the researcher would display happy and sad feelings. Children's reactions to emotional responses were coded and analyzed. The study findings showed that children with severe visual impairments received lower scores on the ToM tasks than children with low vision and sighted children. Additionally, results indicated that children with low vision and severe visual impairments displayed increased ignorance toward the researcher's emotional expressions compared to sighted children. The current study found that children with severe visual impairments and sighted children's ToM scores were related to their reactions to emotional responses. Findings from the current study suggest that children with severe visual impairments may display emotional reaction difficulties while participating in various emotional and social situations. Based on the study results, suggestions for future research and early intervention practices were provided.

The second study namely "*Experiences of Mothers of Multiple Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Study*" was conducted by *Hatice ŞENGÜL-ERDEM*. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of mothers of multiple children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Nine mothers of multiple children with ASD participated in the research, designed as an interpretative phenomenological analysis study, and data were collected through semi-structured interviews. In the data analysis, the interpretative phenomenological analysis method was employed to reveal the mothers' personal statements and emotional reflections in depth. *As a result of the analysis, three main themes were reached, the center of life: Being a mother of two children with autism, gradually increasing isolation, and empowerment attempts.* In line with the findings, mothers continue their lives by putting their children with ASD at the center, and they become increasingly lonely in social life. Mothers experience difficulty in maintaining their daily lives, have intense worries about the future, think that they lack the support resources they need, and feel that having multiple children with ASD causes transformations in their relationships with their spouses and their social networks, which will increase their loneliness. Furthermore, mothers develop various strategies to empower themselves. These strategies have emerged as religious beliefs, comparing their children with each other or with children with more severe disabilities, and focusing on the minor achievements of their children. There are few studies on the subject, and the experiences of mothers of multiple children with ASD are similar to the findings of research investigating the experiences of mothers of multiple children with disabilities or mothers of a child with ASD. Whereas mothers of multiple children with ASD experience intense social isolation and put the "motherhood role" at the center of their lives, on the one side, they feel obliged to empower themselves and develop some strategies to this end, on the other side. According to the study findings, it is suggested that arrangements are needed to facilitate the lives of mothers of multiple children with ASD and the experiences of mothers should be examined with studies to be performed with a larger number of participants.

The third research article in this issue is authored by *Halil SAROL*, *Kübra DURMUŞ*, and *Rıfat Kerem GÜRKAN* namely "*Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Participation in Physical Activity of Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder: The True-Life Experiences of Parents.*" The purpose of the research was to investigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the participation in physical activity of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) from the perspective of their parents. Ten parents (6 mothers and 4 fathers) with children diagnosed with ASD constituted the sample group for the research designed by the phenomenological qualitative research method. A semi-structured interview form and a personal information form were used as data collection tools. The data analysis was performed using the content analysis method. In the direction of the findings obtained from the research, four inclusive themes were determined. These are a) the effects of the pandemic on life; b) the difficulties

encountered during the period of the pandemic; c) the necessity of physical activity; and d) the changing events. Under these themes, there are 12 sub-themes in total. The parents expressed that the practices performed for the sake of decreasing the propagation rate of the virus had negatively affected especially the education, parent relationships, and active lifestyles of children with ASD. According to the parents, the physical activity habits of children with ASD significantly changed, and usually, home-based events were performed during the restrictions. The parents specified that they had understood how extremely important the participation in physical activity of children with ASD was during the period of the pandemic.

Adnan ARI, Emine ERATAY, and Ayten DÜZKANTAR authored the fourth research article namely “*The Effectiveness of the Constant Time Delay Procedure in Teaching Reading and Writing with the Sound-Based Sentence Method.*” This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the constant time delay procedure (CTDP) in teaching reading and writing with the sound-based sentence method to individuals with special needs. In addition to the said main purpose, the permanence of reading and writing skills and their generalizability across materials and persons were also examined. Moreover, the opinions of families and teachers of ISN were obtained to collect social validity data. Three individuals with special needs were included in this study. Of these, two were girls, and one was a boy, all aged seven. They attended the second grade as full-day co-teaching inclusive students and had not learned reading and writing. The study employed a multiple probe design across behaviors, one of the single-subject research designs. The study aimed to teach three behaviors and eighteen sub-behaviors, including six sub-behaviors in each behavior. The study showed that two participants acquired reading and writing skills in all the sub-behaviors (closed syllables, open syllables, three-letter monosyllables, three-letter two syllables, words, and sentences) of all three behaviors (syllables, words, and sentences consisting of e-l-a-k-i-n sounds, syllables, words, and sentences consisting of o-m-u-t-ü-y sounds, syllables, words, and sentences consisting of the combination of sounds in these two groups [e-l-a-k-i-n-o-m-u-t-ü-y]); that the skills they acquired were permanent; that they generalized these skills across persons and materials, while one participant acquired skills in the first three sub-behaviors (closed syllables, open syllables, three-letter monosyllables) only in the first behavior. Considering the social validity findings of the study, the participants’ families and primary school teachers expressed positive opinions about the study. According to the findings, it was concluded that necessary precautions should be taken for the problems faced by the students.

The fifth article which was conducted by *Mustafa EROL, Osman GEDİK, and Berat DEMİRTAŞ* is namely “*Primary School Teachers' Experiences in the Identification of Gifted Students and Nominating Them to Science and Art Centers.*” This study aimed to examine the experiences of primary school teachers in the identification of gifted students and nominating them to science and art centers. This research was carried out within the scope of phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research designs. The research study group was determined by the criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods. The research study group consisted of 15 primary school teachers working in İstanbul. The study data were obtained through semi-structured interview forms developed by the researchers and personal interviews conducted with the study group. The data were analyzed by content analysis. Researcher triangulation was used in the analysis of the data. To minimize data loss, the data were recorded with a voice recorder. According to the study's findings, it was determined that the classroom teachers took into account the students' cognitive, affective, and social characteristics while identifying them with giftedness and made observations depending on the process. Although many features are used to identify gifted students when the relevant literature is examined, it has been determined that cognitive features are frequently used in the identification of gifted students.

The sixth research article namely “*Perceptions of Gifted People on the Concept of Citizenship*” authored by *Fatih ÖZDEMİR, Yıldız AYBAR-ERCAN, and Emine Özlem YİĞİT*. This study aimed to explore the perceptions of gifted people trained at Science and Art Centers (SAC) in relation to the concept of citizenship. The study was conducted using a phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research designs. The study group of the research consisted of 23 6th grade students, 13 boys and 10 girls, studying at SACs in İstanbul in the academic year 2020-2021. The data of the study was collected using a structured interview form developed by the researchers. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. It was found that gifted students defined citizenship as a person living in a place and having some basic duties and rights to the place to which they belong. The students mostly defined themselves as good citizens and stated that a good citizen has responsibilities towards his environment and country. In the context of the view that the state is a political institution in which people live together, the understanding of a social and legal state dominates. The main responsibility of citizens is seen in being hardworking and respecting the country and society. The majority of students feel connected to their country, with the most important factor for this connection being culture and history. While the most positive aspect of being a citizen of Turkey is its historical heritage, it is noteworthy that some of the students wish to be citizens of the developed Western countries. The students’ views were largely consistent with studies in the literature on citizenship and state definitions and citizenship of other countries based on brain drain. However, unlike other studies, this one emphasized researcher personality, which is one of the distinguishing characteristics of gifted individuals, among the characteristics of citizens.

The article namely “*A Comparison of Social Stories with and without Video Modeling in Teaching How to Respond to Lures of Strangers to Children with Autism*” was authored by *Metehan KUTLU* and *Onur KURT*, is the seventh research article of this issue. The purpose of this study was to compare the effectiveness and efficiency of social stories with and without video modeling in teaching how to respond to lures of strangers to children with autism. The study was conducted with four children aged 10-13 years diagnosed with autism. Target skills for the students were how to avoid abduction by strangers and how to respond if a stranger knocked at the door. An adapted alternating treatments design was used in the study. The findings of the study showed that both procedures were equally effective on promoting acquisition for three of the four students with autism. The findings showed that social stories alone was more effective than social stories with video modeling for one student. There was no considerable difference between the two procedures in terms of efficiency. Social validity findings showed that opinions of the participants and their mothers were positive overall. It was suggested that teachers, researchers, practitioners, and families use only one of the teaching practices compared in this study, taking into account the characteristics and preferences of their students in teaching the skills of protection from strangers. To generalize the findings from this study, it was also suggested that similar studies be conducted with different practitioners and participants in various age groups.

The eighth and last research article in this issue with the title of “*Being a Special Education Teacher in a General Education School: Effect of Working Conditions on Work Alienation*” was authored by *Sinem CANPOLAT* and *Meltem SÜNKÜR-ÇAKMAK*. The purpose of this study was to find the effect of working conditions of special education teachers, who work in general education schools, on the work alienation levels. Phenomenology pattern, one of qualitative research methods, was used in the study. Study data were collected through semi-structured interview technique and the data were analyzed through descriptive analysis technique. 20 special education teachers working in the city center of Diyarbakır during 2019-2020 academic year participated in the study. The study group was determined through snowball and criterion sampling methods. When the study findings were examined, it was found that the teachers have intensive amount of work alienation. It was claimed that special education teachers were experiencing alienation in isolation level at most and senselessness level at least. It was concluded that working conditions had effect on work alienation of special education teachers. It was understood that special education teachers felt themselves unhappy, alone and isolated in the organizations they worked, they were required to work in an environment, where no one understood them, they believed that they would not receive the support they needed from their managers, they experienced a conflict of authority within the class, and they had problems in following the rules of organization. Thus, it was found that they experience many symptoms of work alienation. It was recommended to hire supporting staff to take over the responsibility of care of students from these teachers and ensure that special education teachers work under the same conditions with their colleagues.

I would like to kindly thank once again my colleagues for their vigorous efforts who are working with me on the Editorial Board for our journal to be published timely and to increase quality. I would like to thank our dear readers, authors, and reviewers for their support and contributions once again and I would like to kindly request you to continue your support and contributions during the ongoing process. I wish to be with you again in the third issue of the 24th volume which will be published in September 2023...

Prof. Hatice BAKKALOĞLU