

From the Editor...

Dear Readers,

We are with you again with the Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences Journal of Special Education's third issue, September 2023, Volume 24, Issue 3. 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. Before I start to introduce the articles in this issue, I would like to thank and wish the best with their future works to two of our co-editors who have quit their designation, Section Editor *Assist. Prof. Özgül ALDEMİR-FIRAT*, and English / Foreign Language Editor *Assist. Prof. Şevket ÖZDEMİR*.

In this issue of our Journal, there are six research articles. I would like to briefly introduce them to our readers. The first research article in the current issue includes a study of *Mustafa CEYLAN* namely "*Analysis of Cohesion and Coherence of Written Products by Reading Performance and Developmental Levels*." In this study, the cohesion and coherence of students' written products were examined depending on their reading performance and grade level. The research was carried out with a comparative descriptive model, one of the quantitative research methods. In the study, the frequency of using cohesion items and the text coherence scores of 183 poor readers (fourth grade 50, sixth grade 71 and eighth grade 62) and 192 good readers (fourth grade 55, sixth grade 74 and eighth grade 63) in written products were examined by comparison. Informal Reading Inventory, a video prepared to remind the story structure and a silent movie were used to collect the data. In the analysis of the data, Mann Whitney U Tests were used for pairwise comparisons and Kruskal Wallis Tests were used for triple comparisons. Looking at the cohesion items, it is seen that poor readers in the fourth and eighth grades get lower scores than their peers who are good readers in reading skills. In addition, from the fourth to the eighth grade, it was observed that there was an improvement in the written products of the students with good reading skills in terms of cohesion items, while there was no significant improvement in the poor readers. Considering the coherence scores, it was seen that poor readers got lower scores than good readers at all grade levels, and students in both groups improved in terms of coherence scores in their written products from fourth to eighth grade. It is seen that the problems of students with poor readers in using cohesion tools and their inability to create coherence texts may be due to the inadequacy of the students' language skills, that the students prefer to use short sentences in their writing exercises, they do not need to connect sentences, and the level of use of cohesion tools increases with the progress of their grade levels.

The second study namely "*Pre-Service Teachers' Views on Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairment*" was conducted by *Pınar DEMİRYÜREK*, *Hatice Cansu BİLGİÇ*, and *Pınar ŞAFAK*. The study aimed to determine whether there were any changes in the perceptions of final year pre-service special education teachers towards students with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairment (MDVI) and their education as a result of their teaching practice with these students. The study was conducted through semi-structured interviews under qualitative research methods involved four female and two male pre-service teachers who were purposively selected according to the criterion sampling method and who were studying in the Visual Impairments Teaching Program and continue their teaching practice with MDVI students. The data of the study were collected through semi-structured interviews. The data were collected before and after the teaching practice and analyzed using the content analysis method. In the light of the findings obtained, it is observed that the teaching practice with students with MDVI has a positive impact on the pre-service teachers' perceptions of students with MDVI and their education. After the practice, all participants had positive experiences with students with MDVI. The pre-service teachers have critically examined the physical structure of the school and the classroom after the practice; therefore, in the theme of the educational environment, while initially, two participants found the physical structure of the classroom positive, in the final interview all participants stated that it was not suitable. In the theme of pre-service teacher education, it was expressed that theoretical courses were useful but needed to be supported by practice. Participants stated that teaching practice with students with MDVI was beneficial in terms of gaining experience and that they would be able to work with students with all types of disabilities after graduation. The pre-service teachers stated that their feelings and views about the educational environment changed positively as they gained experience. Participants emphasized the need to enrich special education curriculum by increasing the focus on practice and experience in course content. In addition, it was noted that in-service training and digital materials could help teachers to provide quality education.

The third research article in this issue is authored by *Hidayet DİKİCİ* and *Selda ÖZDEMİR* namely "*A Comparative Study of Social Information Processing and Executive Functioning in Children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder and Typically Developing Children*." Examining the performance of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in each step of the social information processing and their executive functioning behaviors while comparing them to typically developing (TD) children and determining

their limitations in these processes is important for reducing the future risks that children with ADHD may face in academic and social life. In this context, the aim of the study was to comparatively examine the social information processing and executive functioning behaviors of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and typically developing (TD) children. The study was conducted using a general survey model, which is one of the quantitative research designs. The participants of the study included 25 children diagnosed with ADHD, aged between 8 and 10, and 25 TD children of the same gender and age range. Additionally, 25 teachers and 50 parents participated in the study. The data collection tools used in the study were the Social Information Processing Assessment Form and the Parent and Teacher Form of the Behavioral Rating Inventory of Executive Functions (BRIEF). The study findings showed significant differences between children with ADHD and TD children in all stages of the Social Information Processing Assessment Form. Similar significant differences were also found in all the sub-scales and sub-dimensions of the Parent and Teacher Form of the Behavioral Rating Inventory of Executive Functions. The relationships between social information processing skills and executive functioning skills also revealed significant associations between some sub-stages of the Social Information Processing Skills Assessment Form and some sub-dimensions of the Parent and Teacher Form of the Behavioral Rating Inventory of Executive Functions. The findings indicate that children with ADHD experience limitations in each of the six steps of the Social Information Processing Model and in some sub-dimensions of executive functions when compared to their TD peers. The findings emphasize the significance of the relationships between social information processing and executive functioning in the development of social and academic skills in children with ADHD.

Emrah BİLGİÇ and *Emine Sema BATU* authored the fourth research article namely “*The Effect of Instructional Adaptations Training within Inclusive Practices on Classroom Teachers' Opinions about the Importance of Instructional Adaptations.*” The study aims to examine the effect of an information package application (IPA) prepared on instructional adaptations (IA) for classroom teachers on teachers' opinions on the importance of IA. In the study, mixed method and “multi-stage mixed design” were used as the research design. The research consists of five stages: a) determination of opinion (requirement) before successful inclusion practices (SIP), b) SIP preparation and implementation, c) determination of SIP effectiveness, d) determination of social validity related to SIP, and e) monitoring phase respectively. The participants of the study are primary school class teachers from Hendek district of Sakarya province, who have students with special educational needs (SEN) in their class (60 [Experimental group: $n = 30$, control group: $n = 30$] in the quantitative dimension, 31 teachers in the qualitative dimension). The qualitative data of the research was obtained through focus group interviews (FGI). Quantitative dimension data of the research was obtained by using the Scale of Instructional Adaptations for Inclusion (SIMI); social validity data were obtained by using the Social Validity Form; and the data containing personal information was obtained by using the demographic information form. The findings of the research indicate that the implementation of the IPA has positively changed teachers' opinions regarding the importance of individualized education. “Social validity determination” findings of the study show that teachers find the IPA performed useful and functional.

The fifth article which was conducted by *Gizem KARAKAŞ* and *Atike YILMAZ* is namely “*Directors' Views on Adapted Physical Education and Sports Practices in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers.*” This study aimed to determine the current situation regarding physical education and sports practices for special needs students in special education and rehabilitation centers and to analyze the views of the directors of these institutions in detail. The case study design used for qualitative research was employed. The research was conducted in nine institutions operating in the Izmit district of Kocaeli province, Turkey, via selection through easily accessible case sampling. The directors of the institutions were interviewed individually following semi-structured interview forms. The data obtained were analyzed using the content analysis method. In line with the opinions expressed by the participants, four main themes and ten sub-themes emerged. The main themes identified were the shadow of the Ministry of National Education, educator characteristics, guidance toward physical education and sports, and integrity of development. Although there are no official guidelines for physical education and sports, services and guidance pertaining to physical education and sports exist thanks to the sensitivity and efforts of the institutions. The participating directors revealed the desire to add a module in physical education and sports to the regulations, and they are committed to fulfilling the relevant requirements. For the directors of the institutions, who undertake their efforts in the shadow of the regulations and are aware of the benefits that sports practices will provide to children with special needs, using their initiative and whatever financial and moral means are at their disposal are viewed as necessary steps to be taken in the name of education. Within this context, physical education and sports teachers and recreation leader should also be included and employed as personnel in such institutions, a condition that should be considered mandatory in the Special Education Institutions Regulation of the Ministry of National Education.

The sixth article of this issue, which is a review article, “*Comparative Analysis of Gifted Centers*” authored by *Ayşıl AYAGA* and *Sema TAN*. The aim of this study was to examine 17 different gifted education and research centers. As this research is a descriptive case study, the data collection method employed was document analysis. The websites of 17 gifted centers were thoroughly examined using content analysis, focusing on specific themes. The data obtained within the scope of this research were analyzed using both descriptive and content analysis methods. It was found that the websites of the centers mainly provide details about the center's program, curriculum models, and activities. However, information regarding admission criteria is less frequently available on these websites. Additionally, the majority of personnel in gifted centers are doctoral students, with a smaller proportion of master's students. When it comes to financial support, centers primarily rely on specific funds, with minimal state support. Moreover, centers that specify student admission requirements often adopt a unique evaluation system.

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 the 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 fourth and the last issue of the 24th volume which will be published in December 2023...

Prof. Hatice BAKKALOĞLU