

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, December 2019, Volume 20, Issue 4. 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, as in the previous issues, there are six research articles and two review articles. I would like to briefly share these articles with you. The first research article in the current issue includes a study of *Merih TOKER, Ş. Senem BAŞGÜL, and Latife ÖZAYDIN* namely "*Determination of Family Needs of Mothers of Children with Down Syndrome and Their Opinions Regarding Sense of Social Support.*" The aim of this study was to determine the family needs of mothers of children with Down-Syndrome and their opinions regarding sense of social support. Research participants are 20 mothers residing in Gaziantep city and having a child with Down-Syndrome. Having employed qualitative model, data for this study were collected from participant mothers via semi-structured interview and collected data were analyzed by content analysis. This study revealed that children with Down-Syndrome and their mothers wanted to be accepted in their social interactions. Mothers reported that their children were disadvantageous in benefiting from general education process and they emphasized their plea for support, especially from local administrations and nongovernmental organizations. Mothers were in need of education as regards the deficient skills of their children and the coping strategies against such deficiencies. They also reported their request for financial support to meet the needs of their children with Down Syndrome and benefit from better educational opportunities. Mothers added that they need support mostly in domains of education and social skills. Mothers reiterated their expectations from local administrations and nongovernmental organizations to hold social activities.

The second study namely "*School Administrators' Opinions on Preparation/Implementation of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for Students with Special Needs*" was conducted by *Çiğdem AYANOĞLU* and *Duygu GÜR-ERDOĞAN*. The purpose of this study was to reveal the opinions of school administrators (principals/associate principals) on the preparation and implementation of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for students with special needs. The research study group consisted of 36 volunteer principals working in 20 schools. Research data were obtained by the questionnaires consisting of open-ended questions created by the researchers and the descriptive analysis method was used in the analysis of the data. At the end of the study, it was found that the majority of the principals believed in the necessity of preparation/implementation of the IEP for the students with special needs, that their knowledge on the preparation/implementation of the IEP was partially sufficient and that they did not receive any prior education and that they needed training. Majority of the schools had established an IEP unit, their works had partially reached their aim, however, IEPs that were prepared/implemented for the students with special needs only benefited partially due to problems caused by teachers and principals, educational status (teaching-learning process), Guidance and Counseling Centers (GRC), and parents of students with special needs. Principals suggested solutions for these problems, and they indicated there was a need for legal regulations.

The third research article in this issue is authored by *Abdurrahman MENGİ* namely "*Examination of Social Studies Textbook and Curriculum from the Aspect of Disability.*" This study aimed to examine the Social Studies Textbook (SST) and Curriculum of Primary and Secondary Schools in terms of disability. The study tried to figure out how, how many times and in what contexts the concepts and themes related to disability were handled in the SST and Curriculum of Primary and Secondary Schools. Qualitative research approach was adopted in this research. The data of the study were obtained by document analysis and the data were analyzed with the content analysis technique in accordance with the stages of document review. The results showed, in general, seven learning areas were covered by the Social Studies Curriculum prepared by the Ministry of National Education, and in these areas of learning, 33 achievements in the 4th and 5th grades of the primary school and 33 in the 6th grade as well as 31 in the 7th grade were included. With only two acquisitions, all of these gains were included in the disability phenomenon. A total of 26 different concepts and 8 visuals in the textbooks focused attention on the issue of disability. Therefore, it was concluded that the concept of disability in the SST and Curriculum was treated very little. At the end of the research, a number of suggestions have been made to eliminate the shortcomings in the existing sources of disability.

The fourth article which was conducted by *Ayşe ALPTEKİN* and *Kezban TEPELİ* namely "*Examination of Sexual Development in Children with 48-72 Months of Age.*" The sexual identity and gender behaviors of children with different disabilities (hearing impairment, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder) were examined. This study was a case study, which is one of the qualitative research methods and a general survey model, which is one of the quantitative research methods. Selcuk Sexual Development Scale (36-72 Months) was used as the data collection tool. The sample of the study consisted of 48-72 months of children who resided in

Konya between 2017-2018, who were diagnosed with a medical diagnosis by the health board, and who were diagnosed with educational diagnosis by the guidance and research centers, who had a mild level of inadequacy, and who had achieved at least one word-expressing language development at least. As a result of the research, the reasons of non-preferential behaviors of children with intellectual disabilities were grouped under five themes, children with autism spectrum disorder were grouped under six themes and children with hearing impairment under three themes. It was determined that the acquisition of sexual identity of children with hearing-impairment was more sufficient than children with intellectual disabilities and children with intellectual disabilities' sexual identity acquisition was more sufficient than children with autism spectrum disorder.

The fifth research article namely *“Pre-Service Special Education Teachers’ Experiences in the Practice They Perform in a Guidance and Research Center”* was authored by *Canan SOLA-ÖZGÜÇ*. The aim of this research was to investigate the experiences of pre-service teachers who were students at Teaching Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities Program of a state university in Turkey about the teaching practice they performed in a guidance and research center (GRC). The study employed the phenomenological design, and its study group consisted of 13 pre-service teachers who were final-year students in Education of Mentally Disabled Program. The primary data of the study were obtained through semi-structured interviews, whereas the preservice teachers’ daily reports and the artifacts they obtained from the GRCs were used as supporting data. The data obtained from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed through content analysis. The presentation of the findings in this paper was as follows: the pre-service teachers’ views about the GRC, their practical experiences, and their views about working in a GRC. It was observed that negative views turned into positive ones after they started the practice. Pre-service teachers examined the positive and negative aspects of the practice in GRC. It was determined that some pre-service teachers wanted to work in GRCs. It was recommended that this study could be replicated within the scope of observation courses in institutions and applied in different universities.

“Employment Challenges among Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder from Their Parents’ Perspective in Saudi Arabia,” the sixth research article, was authored by *Ola M. ABUSUKKAR* in English. The study aimed at identifying employment challenges among youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from their parents’ perspective in Saudi Arabia. ASD Youth Employment Challenges Scale was applied to 85 parents of youth with ASD. Results concluded that employment challenges in Saudi Arabia were ASD-based challenges, ASD youth’s family challenges, work environment challenges, and social challenges. There were no statistically significant differences between the mean score of the responses of parents of youth with ASD to employment challenges scale due to parent’s gender, children’s gender, and children’s age. There were statistically significant differences between the mean score of the responses of parents of youth with ASD to employment challenges scale due to the variable of receiving financial support, in favor of those who did not receive support.

The first review article of this issue was authored by *Gizem ERGİN* and *İbrahim H. DİKEN* namely *“The Review of Studies on Routine-Based Teaching Practices Carried Out with Children with Developmental Disabilities.”* The researchers defined routine based teaching as the approach based on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory, as a relationship among the child-family-teacher is formed and collaborative approach is adopted, and child’s learning opportunities are utilized at best. This research aimed to holistically and systematically examine studies on routine-based teaching practices. In this descriptive study, various electronic databases were scanned. 39 studies were reached in the literature review, and according to the inclusion-exclusion criteria, 19 studies were included in the analysis. The studies were analyzed under the headings of participant characteristics, dependent variable, independent variable, method, data collection tools, generalization, and maintenance. The analyzed data were interpreted under two main headings, as studies in which routine-based teaching practices were applied, and as studies in which routines were used for teaching purposes. The results showed that routine-based teaching practices could be used functionally in teaching many skills to young children with developmental disabilities.

The second review article of this issue is *“Sibling Participation in Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Review,”* which was authored by *Selin GÖKÇE* and *Burcu ÜLKE-KÜRKÇÜOĞLU*. The researchers indicated that in addition to many studies investigating the effectiveness of sibling-mediated interventions for children with ASD, there are literature review studies evaluating these research studies conducted till 2012; however, there is no recent systematic review on the subject in literature. The purpose of this systematic review was to examine the literature and make a comprehensive descriptive analysis of the existing single-case studies that investigated the effectiveness of sibling-mediated interventions for children with ASD between 1977 and 2018 by demographic and methodological features and findings variables. 166 studies in the initial search in search engines and eight studies upon examining reference lists, 174 in total, were identified. Finally, a total of 16 studies were included in the review in consideration of inclusion and exclusion criteria. The following inclusion criteria were applied: studies that were published in peer reviewed journals either in English or Turkish, conducted with one of the single subject research designs, included participants of which at least one had a diagnosis of ASD, and in which the siblings were included as active participants were included in the review.

The study results showed studies in which typically developing siblings were implementers successfully taught target skills to siblings with ASD. However, it was found out that intervention packages used in the studies consisted of similar or different components, and that length of training varied.

I would like to kindly thank my colleagues who are working with me on the Editorial Board for our journal to be published timely and to increase the quality: *Assist. Prof. Şeyda DEMİR, Assist. Prof. Gamze ALAK, Assist. Prof. Zeynep BAHAP-KUDRET* and *Assist. Prof. Meral Çilem ÖKCÜN-AKÇAMUŞ*, as well as Technical Coordination Executives *Res. Assist. Hatice AKÇAKAYA, Res. Assist. Yasemin ŞENGÜL, Res. Assist. Cebrail KARADAŞ*, and *Res. Assist. Samet Burak TAYLAN*.

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 upcoming issue which will be published in 2020...

Assoc. Prof. Hatice Bakkaloğlu