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The Opinions of Provincial Teacher Trainers of Support Training Room on Teacher Needs Regarding Special Talented Students

Ahmet Onur Çobanoğlu, Salih Zeki Genç

Abstract. This aim of this research is to examine the opinions of special education in-service teacher trainers on K-12 teachers' educational needs regarding special talented students. The sample group of the research was consisted of 132 provincial teacher trainers whose job is to provide in-service training for K-12 teachers on special talented student training rooms. The teacher trainers have been working as "Special Talented Students Support Training Room Teacher Trainer" in different provinces of Turkey under the Ministry of Education's General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services. The trainers we selected with simple random sampling method. This research is the first study to examine the teacher needs of the provincial formers of special talented support education rooms that provide in-service training for teachers with special skills. When the responses were examined according to the demographics of the trainers; it was found that the responses did not differ according to their gender, education level and the institutions they work for. However, differences were found in the responses according to trainers' duration of teaching job and the number of trainings they performed. When the responses were analysed in terms of participants' consensus, the response level to the expression of "Teachers need to communicate with special talented students." were highest (4.40); whereas the response level to the expression of "Teachers need to choose the materials suitable for the teaching process of special talented students." were the lowest average (4.13). The results obtained show that provincial teacher trainers of the support education room think that teachers need many issues regarding the teaching of special talented students.

Keywords. Special education, teacher in-service training, teacher trainer, special talented student, special talented support training room.

Ahmet Onur ÇOBANOĞLU (Responsible Author). Çanakkale Science and Art Centre, Çanakkale, Turkey
e-mail: ahmetonurcobanoglu@gmail.com

Salih Zeki GENÇ. Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Educatıon, Çanakkale, Turkey
e-mail: szgenc@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

The studies on special talented students (STSs) in Turkey began first in 1960's in Ankara with special classes and homogeneous ability class applications. The special class trial was carried out with the implementation of an enriched program by gathering students from the schools around Ergenekon Primary School, whose intelligence levels (Intelligence Quotient - IQ) of 125 and above, according to the measurement tools of that day, in a separate class. However, the trial was interrupted even though it was planned to continue at the secondary school level, and Maarif College accepted the students leaving this class. The homogeneous schools practice was initiated in three schools in Ankara in the same period, but ended at the end of five years without any evaluation. The second attempt for special talented students during the Republic period was initiated by two entrepreneurs by opening schools specific to gifted students, which was trying to carry the rapidly spreading overseas special education winds to Turkey and emerged with the efforts of the parents of special talented students; but did not show a significant effect at the end of a struggle of ten years (Ministry of Education [MEB], 2017).

It is observed that the importance given to special education services in the laws and regulations issued has increased in recent years. In the Special Education Services Regulation, which is in force today, support education is provided in schools and institutions for the provision of special education support by providing special equipment and educational materials for students who need special education and for special talented students who continue their education in the same class with their peers without disabilities and to this end, it is stated that support training rooms shall be opened (MEB, 2019). Individuals with special needs within the scope of this explanation emerge as a comprehensive term that includes children with learning and / or behavioral problems, children with physical or sensory disabilities, as well as children with superior or special talents (Eripek, 2007).

Support training rooms are education environments which are designed to enable equal education opportunity for students with special needs (disability) and students with special talents by providing special equipment and educational materials to benefit from the education services offered at the highest level, and to continue their education in the same class with their peers who do not have disability or superiority within the scope of inclusion classroom practices (MEB, 2019).

Support education service means providing specialist personnel, equipment, training and counseling services to individuals, families, teachers and school staff in line with the educational needs determined by the medical and educational evaluation and diagnosis of individuals who need

special education. The support training room refers to the environment designed to provide support education services to students who continue their education through full-time inclusion / integration and special talented students in the areas they need (MEB, 2019). In the Special Education Services Regulation (2019), the support education room used as a resource room is defined as "The environment organized for providing support education services to students who continue their education through inclusive practices and special talented students". In the same regulation, the legal basis has been established in schools and institutions by stating that such special rooms can be opened by providing special tools and materials and training materials for students who need special education and specially talented students who can continue their education in the same class with their peers who do not have any disability, and to provide special education support.

Educational environments determined in line with this purpose and created by providing special educational materials are defined as support training rooms. According to the educational needs of the students, in the support training room, primarily from among the teachers of the school, special education teachers, classroom teachers and field teachers, as well as special education teachers working in the guidance research center or teachers in other schools and institutions are assigned.

Teachers have a great role in providing appropriate education for special talented students. In order to understand the differences of these students, to meet their needs and to guide them correctly, teachers must have certain abilities. What is expected from the teacher is that he / she can correctly evaluate and develop student capacity. By choosing appropriate teaching methods and strategies, teachers determine goals, achievements and values for special talented children and can be role models for children.

General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services (2017) listed as follows the first ten of the most important teacher competencies determined by children with special talent:

- Being interested and competent in learning,
- Having extraordinary methods and competencies in education,
- Being fair and impartial,
- Demonstrating collaborative democratic attitudes,
- Being flexible,
- Having a sense of humor,
- Having rewarding and appreciating skills,

- Showing diversity in the interest are,
- Dealing with people's problems,
- Having a good appearance and attitude.

These studies show that teachers working with special talented students should have strong pedagogical equipment. The main reason for this is that besides teaching, they prepare appropriate educational programs for students and direct student studies accordingly. The teachers who will direct STSs to take part in projects, workshops, laboratories etc. should first know and apply these methods themselves at an advanced level.

Considering the related literature, the high number of studies on teachers working with STSs is remarkable. When the related studies are reviewed, we can find different studies of which obtained the opinions of teachers about STS education (Ekinci, 2002; Coşkun, 2007; Şenol, 2011; Çoban, 2018; Şimşek, 2019), and which examined the attitudes of teachers about STS education (Seyhan, 2015; Daştan 2016) and which tried to determine the self-efficacy of teachers (Nar 2017; Acar 2018; Sarar 2018; Daşdemir 2019; Arslan 2019). However, any research specifically on the needs of teachers working with STSs through the eyes of teacher trainers hasn't been found in the literature. Thus, this research is the first study examining the needs of STS teachers through the eyes of provincial teacher trainers who provide in-service training for STS teachers.

In the study of Tortop and Dinçer (2016), one of the studies in which teachers' opinions were obtained, the opinions of 15 teachers about the support training room application for STSs were examined. Semi-structured interview form was used as data collection tool in this study. According to the teachers' statements obtained by interviews, seven themes (dimensions) were generated: Teachers' Educational / Instructional Competence Dimension, Instructional Material Dimension, Instructional Environment Dimension, Managerial Regulation Dimension, Parent Dimension, and Teacher Suggestions Dimension. Teachers who provide education to STSs stated that they wanted higher quality in-service training, and pointed out insufficient in-service training and lack of teaching materials in the support education rooms. When the teachers' statements are examined, they indicate a lack of research in the related literature. Studies about STSs show that these students need special education as much as those students who are unsuccessful or who have learning difficulties. In addition, it is noted that if these students are not supported, they can experience problems in their inclusion classroom (Işık Ercan, 2004). For this reason, giving correct and sufficient educational

opportunities to STSs is of great importance and great responsibility falls to those teachers working in this field. Because the most important factor for a student in school life is his/her teachers.

In these studies on the education of STSs, it is seen that the importance of the teacher factor is constantly emphasized in the development of students' abilities. It is highly emphasized that the interests of teachers working with students in this profile should be very divers and they should really love children (Bishop, 1980). It was stated that teachers working with STSs should be individuals who are not afraid to make mistakes, have high self-confidence, are patient, and respect ethical values (Bernal, 1994). It was emphasized that these teachers should have excellent communication skills and a strong sense of humor (Lewis, 1982). It was stated that a teacher who leads the child in the field where the child has an ability should have the highest level of expertise in their own field (Burg, 1988). In addition, teachers who provide support education to STSs in these rooms are advised not to act as transmitters of existing knowledge, but to act as a guide that facilitates students' access to new information and allows them to synthesize old information and new information, behave fairly calm, dignified and emotionally balanced. (Rogers, 2009). It was recommended that teachers carrying out education and teaching activities with STSs should be chosen among people who can think creatively and have an above average intelligence (Milgram, 1979). It is emphasized that the teachers working with STSs should take into consideration that, instead of assuming the superiority as only high success, creative power or high potential, being talented can bring some difficulties, inadequacies and problems as well.

This study was conducted to determine the opinions of teacher trainers serving in STSs support training rooms located in Turkey's 81 provinces on the special needs of teachers working on STSs. For his purpose, answers to the following research questions were sought:

1) Do teachers need access to information about special talented students?

2) Do teachers need to identify special talented students?

3) Do teachers need to communicate with special talented students?

4) Do teachers need to communicate with parents of special talented students?

5) Do teachers need to choose the appropriate teaching method for special talented students?

6) Do teachers need to organize teaching activities for special talented students?

7) Do teachers need to determine the learning needs of special talented students?

8) Do teachers need to choose the materials suitable for the teaching process of special talented students?

9) Do teachers need to share information with other teachers who have special talented students in their classrooms?

10) Do teachers need to communicate with people who have specialization in special talented students?

11) Do teachers need to create a learning environment suitable for special talented students?

12) Do teachers need to use measurement tools suitable for special talented students?

METHOD

Research Model

This study was included in the scope of quantitative research in terms of its philosophy. It was carried out with a survey model since it aimed to describe the current situation as it is experienced. Survey models are classified from various angles. This study was organized with general survey model. General survey models are surveying arrangements made on the whole or on a part / group / sample of a universe in order to reach a general judgment about the universe which is comprised of many elements (Karasar, 2004).

While the opinions of the teacher trainers were surveyed, single survey was performed. This temporal surveying was achieved with a sectioning approach (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel, 2008).

Study Group

A total of 735 teacher trainers working throughout Turkey, who have received training on the subject by the Department of Development of Special Talented Children, constitute the universe of the research. The sample group out of this universe comprises 132 teacher trainers who have been working as "Special Talented Support Training Room Teacher Trainer" in different provinces of Turkey under the Ministry of Education’s General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services. The sample group were selected by the simple random sampling method.

Data Collection Tools

During the development stage of the Likert-type scale which was used in the study, expert opinion was first taken. Many positive or negative attitude items that were considered to be related to a particular attitude were written down and all the written items were pre-tested and evaluated. After the evaluation, the trial version of the scale was created and applied to 66 teacher trainers for improvement. With the application, item analyzes were made and the coefficient of the relationship between the score obtained from each attitude item and the score from the whole scale was calculated. As a result of the item analysis, items that were not statistically significant were removed from the scale with all scale scores. As a result of this study, validity and reliability studies were performed and Cronbach's Alpha value was determined as 0.977.

Process

The Likert-type scale which was used in the study, sent to the sample group was sent using google form. Our data collection process was carried out using the internet network.

Data Analysis

In the comparison of the data obtained in the research; the percent (%), frequency (f), independent sample t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Post-Hoc multiple comparison tests of Scheffe and Tukey calculation methods were utilized. In the evaluation of the findings obtained, the level of significance was set at 0.05 and the SPSS program was used to make statistical analyzes.

RESULTS

In this section, the findings are presented in tables in accordance with the objectives of the research. The findings reached after the analysis of the results of the application of the scale are as follows:

Table 1. *Distribution of the Sample Group Teacher Trainers by Gender*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	54	40.9
Male	78	59.1
Total	132	100

As seen in the Table 1, there are 54 (40.9 %) women and 78 (59.1 %) men in the sample group which includes 132 participants in total.

Table 2. *Distribution of the Sample Group Teacher Trainers by Education Level*

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BS/BA Degree	75	56.8
MS/MA/MBA or PhD Degree	57	43.2
Total	132	100

As seen in the Table 2, 75 of the participants (56.8 %) have an undergraduate degree and 57 of the participants (43.2 %) have a graduate degree.

Table 3. *Distribution of the Sample Group Teacher Trainers by Duration of Teaching Work Experience*

Duration of Teaching Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-5 years	44	33.3
6-10 years	48	36.4
11 or more years	40	30.3
Total	132	100

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that of the participants, 44 of them (33.3%) have a teaching work experience between 0-5 years, 48 of them (36.4%) have a teaching work experience between 6-10 years, and 40 of them (30.3%) have a teaching work experience of 11 years or more.

Table 4. *Distribution of the Sample Group Teacher Trainers by Their Job Institutions*

Trainers's Job Institution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary School	72	54.5
Secondary or High School	60	45.5
Total	132	100

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that 72 (54.5%) of the participants work as teachers at primary schools, and 60 (45.5%) of the participants work as teachers at secondary or high schools.

Table 5. *Distribution of the Sample Group Teacher Trainers by Teacher Trainings They Performed*

# of Teacher Trainings Performed	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Between 0 and 4	30	22.7
Between 5 and 9	34	25.8
Between 10 and 14	32	24.2
15 or more	36	27.3
Total	132	100

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that 30 (22.7 %) of the participants have performed teacher trainings between 0-4, 34 (25.8 %) of them have performed teacher trainings between 5-9, 32 (24.2 %) of them have performed teacher trainings between 10-14 and 36 (27.3 %) of them have performed teacher trainings of 15 or more.

Table 6. *Average Values of the Responses Given to the Scale Items*

	Completely Disagree		Don't Agree		Undecided		Agree		Completely Agree		$\overline{X}$
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1. Teachers need access to information about STSs.	8	6.1	2	1.5	14	10.6	26	19.7	82	62.1	4.30
2. Teachers need to identify STSs.	2	1.5	10	7.6	14	10.6	34	25.8	72	54.5	4.24
3. Teachers need to communicate with STSs.	0	0	8	6.1	10	7.6	34	25.8	80	60.6	4.40
4. Teachers need to communicate with parents of STSs.	4	3.0	8	6.1	12	9.1	42	31.8	66	50.0	4.19
5. Teachers need to choose the appropriate teaching method for STSs.	8	6.1	9	4.5	10	7.6	28	21.2	80	60.6	4.25
6. Teachers need to organize teaching activities for STSs.	10	7.6	4	3.0	8	6.1	36	27.3	74	56.1	4.21
7. Teachers need to determine the learning needs of STSs.	8	6.1	6	4.5	14	10.6	34	25.8	70	53.0	4.15
8. Teachers need to select material which is suitable for the teaching process of STSs.	10	7.6	6	4.5	14	10.6	28	21.2	74	56.1	4.13
9. Teachers need to share information with other teachers who have STSs in their classrooms.	6	4.5	8	6.1	16	12.1	28	21.2	74	56.1	4.18
10. Teachers need to communicate with people who have specialization in STSs.	6	4.5	6	4.5	8	6.1	40	30.3	72	54.5	4.26
11. Teachers need to create a learning environment suitable for STSs.	6	4.5	8	6.1	14	10.6	28	21.2	76	57.6	4.21
12. Teachers need to use measurement tools suitable for STSs.	8	6.1	10	7.6	12	9.1	24	18.2	78	59.1	4.16

When the responses were analyzed in terms of participants's consensus, the response level to the expression of "Teachers need to communicate with STSs." were highest with an average value of (4.40). This is followed by the expressions of "Teachers need access to information about STSs." with an average value of (4.30) and "Teachers need to communicate with people who have specialization in STSs." with an average value of (4.26). Whereas, the response level to the expression of "Teachers need to choose the materials suitable for the teaching process of special talented students." were the lowest with an average value of (4.13).

Table 7. *Analysis of the Distribution of Responses to the Items According to the Gender of the Trainers*

Gender	N	Average	*t*	sd	p
Female	54	4,24	0.05	130	0.90
Male	78	4,23			

As a result of examining the distribution of responses given to the items according to the trainers' gender there is no significant difference (p> 0.05).

Table 8. *Analysis of the Distribution of Responses to the Items According to the Education Level of the Trainers*

Education Level	N	Average	*t*	sd	p
BS/BA Degree	75	4,30	0.86	130	0.39
MS/MA/MBA or PhD Degree	57	4,14			

As a result of examining the distribution of responses given to the items according to the trainers' education level, there is no significant difference (p> 0.05).

Table 9. *Analysis of the Distribution of Responses to the Items According to the Trainers's Duration of Teaching Work Experience*

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean of Squares	f	p
Between Groups	13.91	2	6.95		
Within Groups	143.30	129	1.11	6.26	0.003
Total	157.22	131			

As a result of examining the distribution of the responses according to the duration of the trainers' teaching work experience, it is found that there is a significant difference ($p < 0.05$). According to the results of the Tukey test conducted to find out between which groups there are differences, it is seen that there is a difference in favor of the the group of trainers who have a work duration of 0-5 years.

Table 10. *Analysis of the Distribution of Responses to the Items According to the Trainers's Job Institution*

Trainers's Job Institution	N	Average	*t*	sd	p
Primary School	72	4,30	0.81	130	0.41
Secondary or High School	60	4,15			

As a result of examining the distribution of responses given to the items according to the trainers' job institutions, there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$).

Table 11. *Analysis of the Distribution of Responses to the Items According to the Number of Teacher Trainings Performed by Trainers*

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean of Squares	f	p
Between Groups	11.89	3	3.96		
Within Groups	145.32	128	1.13	3.49	0.018
Total	157.22	131			

As a result of examining the distribution of the responses according to the number of trainings performed by trainers, it is found that there is a significant difference ($p < 0.05$). According to the results of the Tukey test conducted to find out between which groups there are differences, it is seen that there is a difference in favor of the group of trainers who have performed 0-4 trainings.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

When the responses of the teacher trainers who were trained by the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services in order to enable the implementation of necessary and efficient activities for the training of STSs in schools in 81 provinces of our country, were examined according to the demographic data of the trainers; it was found that the responses did not differ according to their gender, education level and the institutions they work

for. However, differences were found in the responses according to trainers' duration of teaching job and the number of trainings they performed. All of the answers given to the questions in the scale were above four points according to the five-point Likert-style scaling.

Provincial trainers stated that teachers need access to information about STSs and to identify STSs. In their study, Şahin and Kargın (2013) stated that teachers' knowledge about the identification and evaluation of STSs is insufficient. Trainers also think that teachers need to choose the appropriate teaching methods, organize teaching activities, determine the learning needs, choose the materials suitable for the teaching process of STSs, and to communicate with people who have specialization in STS education. In Akkaş and Tortop (2015), their research on differentiation in the education of STSs also indicated that teachers working with these students in our country should receive in-service training from academicians working in this field.

According to the findings of the research, it is seen that the trainers think that teachers need to communicate with STSs and their families. Similarly, the research findings of Dağlıoğlu (2010) carried out with teachers and student parents have revealed that parent-teacher cooperation is weak in the education of STSs, and teachers are not sufficient to cooperate with parents in order to resolve these difficulties.

Trainers agree that teachers need to create a learning environment and need to use measuring tools suitable for STSs. Kaya and Ataman (2017) also revealed that teachers have training needs for the unwanted behaviors of STSs. In their classroom observations, they observed that teachers' interventions on problem behaviors of STSs were mostly insufficient.

The obtained results show that the provincial teacher trainers of support education room think that teachers have many needs related to STSs. As a result of the research conducted by Chipego (2004) which investigated the attitudes of teachers towards STSs, it was determined that teachers' attitude scores for creating special talent classes were moderate or weak. Thus, our results were similar to this study.

Recommendations

1. In order to ensure that teachers' qualifications are at a better level before starting the profession, STSs and courses related to their education can be included in all undergraduate curriculum.

2. The implementation outcomes of the teacher education program developed in collaboration with the education coordinator of special talents based on a support education room in a school can be observed.

3. In addition to this study conducted for the needs of teachers working with STSs, similar studies can be carried out in different regions and in various socio-economic structures.

4. Some studies can be created that will enable the self-assessment of teachers working with STSs in schools.

5. A new study can be created to address the existing needs of teachers regarding STSs.

6. Apart from teachers, researches related to the needs of STSs can also be organized.

7. By following the professional development of teachers, an effective supervision system may be needed to ensure that those who are not efficient enough in their profession undergo in-service training and to ensure that they are open to change and development.

About Authors

First Author: Ahmet Onur ÇOBANOĞLU finished his undergraduate education at Dokuz Eylul University, Faculty of Education, in Izmir, Turkey. He completed his MS at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Çanakkale, Turkey on the subject of "teachers' usage of education technologies and social media habits".

Second Author: Salih Zeki GENÇ is a professor and working as the Dean of School of Education, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale, Turkey.

Conflict of Interest

It has been reported by the authors that there is no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Standards

We have carried out the research within the framework of the Helsinki Declaration; the participants are volunteers.

ORCID

Ahmet Onur ÇOBANOĞLU https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3423-3841

Salih Zeki GENÇ https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6839-8284

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