



Examination of inclusive education and resource room service in a pre-school

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Abstract

Equal and qualified education opportunities offered to children with special needs are important in terms of their development in the pre-school education process. This study aimed to examine inclusive education and resource room services in the pre-school. The study adopted a phenomenological research methodology. The participants were selected via the criterion sampling method, and comprised nine pre-school teachers who were providing resource room facilities for the children with special needs in their classes. The research data were collected through a semi-structured interview form, and document analysis. The analysis of the data was carried out through inductive approach. The results based on the data analysis revealed that inclusive education and resource room service had many contributions to the students with special needs, their families, their teachers, and the students with normal growth and development. In addition, the basic elements of inclusive education and resource room were determined to be physical arrangements in schools, teacher training, resource room, cooperation, and inclusion activities. However, the results based on the interview form showed that the methods, techniques and materials suitable for the characteristics of the students with special needs were not used in the planning, implementation, or evaluation processes of the inclusive education and in the resource room service. Likewise, it was noted that effective cooperation and teamwork were not carried out during these processes.

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1. Introduction

The prominent step in supporting the development of students with special needs is early diagnosis and early education (Heward, 2013). An early diagnosis and early education in accordance with human rights and the principle of equity and equality in education is very important for the wellbeing of students with special needs. Therefore, an educational practice that enables the children with special needs to receive education in general education schools where they have equal rights with their peers. This practice is

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called inclusive education (Keogh, 2007; Mitchell, 2008; Rayner, 2007). In other words, inclusive education means that children with special needs receive education with their peers in general education schools in which various educational and physical arrangements are made and support service is provided (Ainscow, 2005; Farrell, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Heward, 2013; Lindsay, 2007; Mitchell, 2008; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013).

As can be understood from the definition of inclusive education, it includes many elements. One of these is the physical and instructional arrangements. The physical arrangement of schools and classrooms for students with special needs is very important for their success, continuity of education in a comfortable environment with efficient teaching practices (Frederickson & Cline, 2009; Halvorsen & Neary, 2001; Kargin, 2017). Another important element of inclusive education is the preparation of Individualized Education Programs (IEP), in which the individualized instructional adaptations are clearly stated in written form, and the continuation of education accordingly. IEP, which has to be legally prepared, is a document that clearly states the educational needs of the children after the educational evaluation (DuBos & Fromer, 2006; Ministry of National Education-MoNE, 2018; Wearmouth, 2016). At the same time, in the IEPs, the goals defining the knowledge and skills needed by students with special needs, and the time, method, material and evaluation techniques required to achieve these goals are clearly stated. In addition, IEP is a detailed document that includes support services and those responsible for all educational processes of the student (Briggs, 2004; Cohen, 2009; Halvorsen & Neary, 2001; Heward, 2013; MONE, 2018; Salend, 2005; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013; Wearmouth, 2016). An important issue regarding the IEP is that the IEP development team should work in cooperation to ensure that all processes in its content function properly (Briggs, 2004; Cohen, 2009; Frederickson & Cline, 2009; Heward, 2013; Loreman, Deppeler, & Harvey, 2005; Mitchell, 2008; Rayner, 2007). The aforementioned team includes the school administration, classroom teacher, special education teacher, other experts, learning support staff and family (Dev & Haynes, 2015; Frederickson & Cline, 2009; Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey, 2005; Mitchell, 2008).

Another important element of inclusive education is support services. The purpose of support services is to ensure that all students participate in the school culture and program as much as possible. In addition to these, it is to support the success of students with special needs in inclusive education (Farrell, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Mitchell, 2008; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013). In inclusive education, support services to students with special needs and their teachers are provided in many ways such as special education consultancy, co-teaching and resource room (Gürgür 2008; Heward, 2013; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2016).

Inclusive education is believed to make important contributions to the education of students with special needs as well as other parties who have roles and responsibilities in their education. Inclusive education supports the development of social interaction skills among students with special needs and their peers (Farrell, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Mitchell, 2008; Vaughn & Klingner, 1998). It helps them build self-esteem and confidence. (Briggs, 2004; Dukes & Smith, 2006; Mitchell, 2008; Vaughn & Klingner, 1998). Also, it

helps them feel part of a community and experience the same experiences as their peers (Dukes & Smith, 2006). In addition to its contribution to students with special needs, it also contributes to the development of teachers' ability to respond to different needs (Dukes & Smith, 2006). On the other hand, it is also believed to help the families of children with special needs in terms of reducing their worries about their children's education and involving them more in their children's education process (Acarlar, 2017; Frederickson & Cline, 2009; Kırcaali-Iftar, 1998). In addition to these, it is believed to contribute to the development of empathy and helping skills of students with special needs' peers (Acarlar, 2017; Dukes & Smith, 2006; Frederickson & Cline, 2009).

In accordance with the definition of inclusive education and the principle of equity and equality in education, many steps have been taken to develop inclusive education policies and appropriate teaching and learning practices all over the world (Ainscow, Slee, Best, 2019; Opertti, Walker & Zhang 2014; UNESCO, 2015). Likewise, some comprehensive legal arrangements were made for children with special needs in Turkey. The Decree Law No. 573 enacted in 1997 and the Special Education Services Regulation issued in 2000 depending on this decree support inclusive education. According to the Ministry of Education (2020), 318 300 out of 425 774 students with special needs continue their education in general education schools through inclusive education. However, only 789 out of 318 300 students who continue their education through inclusive education are enrolled in pre-school (MONE, 2020).

Figure 1 and Figure 2 below, which are developed based on the statistical information of MONE (2020), show a significant increase in the number of students who continue their education through inclusive education, and a significant decrease in the number of students studying in special education schools and special education classrooms.

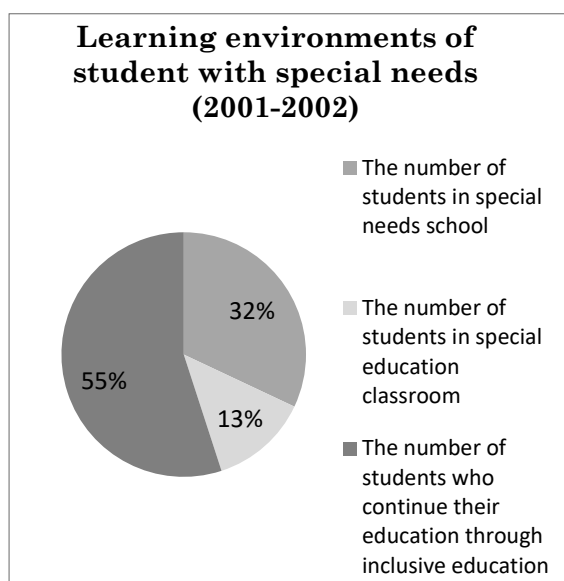


Figure 1. The ratio of learning environments where students with special needs study in 2001-2002 academic year

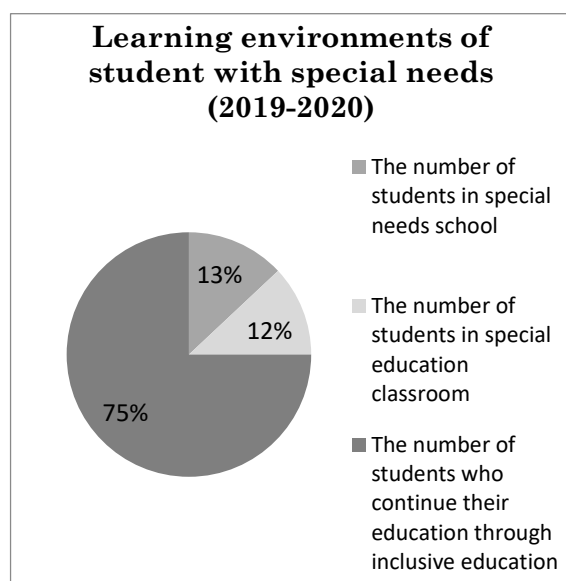


Figure 2. The ratio of learning environments where students with special needs study in 2019-2020 academic year

As seen in Figure 1 and Figure 2, although inclusive education has become widespread in Turkey, regulations on support services, which are an important factor in the success of inclusive education, have been delayed. The absence of these regulations, in addition to many disruptive aspects of the inclusive education, proved that support services were not provided and were necessary (Eripek, 2004; Gök & Erbaş, 2011; İlk, 2014; Özengi, 2009; Zeybek, 2015). With the regulations made to eliminate these deficiencies, it has become obligatory to open resource rooms which is a support service in all schools at all levels where inclusive education is provided, in accordance with the Circular No. 2015/15 (MONE, 2015). Resource room is an out-of-class environment where they receive training individually or in small groups, regularly scheduled for part of the of their school time in general education classrooms (Heward, 2013; Idol, 2006; Wiederholt, Hammill & Brown, 1978).

Since then, the number of studies on resource room in the national literature has increased (Aydın, 2015; Çağlar, 2016; Filik, 2019; Kaptan, 2019; Öpengin, 2018; Pesen, 2019; Sayan, 2019; Yazçayır, 2020). Despite this increasing number of studies on the subject, it was determined that only Sayan's (2019) research was conducted in the pre-school. In this study, the development of students with special needs who studying in the resource room in pre-school was examined by experimental method. It can be argued that Sayan's (2019) work is important, but it will not guide practitioners much beyond determining the situation. In this respect, the studies examining the resource room services in the pre-school education seems to be quite limited in Turkey with its five-years-history of resource room. It can be argued that it is important to deliver better quality education to the children with special needs in the pre-school years which is known as the fast and critical years of development to make significant contributions to their development.

The results of a study focusing on the resource room in the pre-school education are considered to be important in order to develop suggestions that will increase the quality of the inclusive education and resource room service. Therefore, this study aimed to examine inclusive education and resource room service in the pre-school education.

This study was carried out to find the answer to the research question; **"How are the inclusive education and resource room service carried out in the pre-school education?"**. In addition, answers to the following sub-research questions were sought:

- 1) What are the participant teachers' perceptions about inclusive education and resource room service in the pre-school education?
- 2) How is the application process of inclusive education and resource room service in the pre-school education?
- 3) What are the suggestions for a successful inclusive education and resource room service?

2. Method

2.1. Design of the study

In this study phenomenological research methodology was used to examine how the inclusive education and resource room services run in general education pre-school. The main aim of the phenomenological research approach is to explain and understand a phenomenon based on the experiences and opinions of the individuals (Creswell, 2007; Given, 2008). Phenomenological research studies generally use personal experiences, perceptions, and feelings of participants about a phenomenon. Therefore, in this study phenomenological research methodology is employed to determine the opinions of the teachers as practitioners of the processes regarding the inclusive education and resource room services.

2.2. Participants

The participants of the study were selected via the criterion sampling method, one of the purposive sampling techniques (Mertens, 2010; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The criterion for determining participants of the research were volunteer teachers of pre-school children with special need in inclusive education. This study was conducted with the participation of nine pre-school teachers providing training in resource room for the students with special needs in their classes. The study was conducted in a general education pre-school. The detailed information regarding the research pre-school is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1.
Information regarding the institute where the study is conducted

Demographics	Number
Number of pre-school teachers	14
Number of pre-school teachers who deliver integrated education	9
Number of education resource room teachers in the school	1
Number of guidance counselors in the school	1
Number of administrators in the school	2
Number of classes in the school	14
Average class size	28
Number of students with special needs	16
The number of students with special needs in classes	1 student in 3 classes each 2 students in 5 classes each 3 students in 1 class

As seen in Table 1, there is one resource room teacher in the school whereas there are 12 pre-school teachers and 16 students with special needs. The detailed information regarding the diagnoses of students with special needs is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

The diagnoses of students with special needs

The diagnoses of students with special needs	Number
Multiple disability	5
Physically disabled	3
Intellectual disability	3
Pervasive developmental disorder	1
Hearing impairment	1
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	1
Specific learning difficulties	1
Speech and language disorder	1

Also, when we look at Table 2, it is seen that students with multiple disabilities are the most common among the students with various types of diagnoses at school. Table 3 presents data about the pre-school teachers while Table 4 presents data about the resource room teacher.

Table 3.

Demographic information about pre-school teachers

	Participant Characteristics	Number
Gender	Woman	9
Education status	BA	9
Average professional seniority	Year (Average)	8
Training on “Special and Inclusive Education”	Received	6
	Not received	3
Work experience on “Inclusive Education”	Year (Average)	5

As can be seen in Table 3, all the pre-school teachers are female with a bachelor's degree (BA). They also have an average of 8 years of professional seniority and 5 years of experience in inclusive education. The number of teachers who received training about special education and inclusive education is quite high. Table 4 below presents demographic information about the resource room teacher.

Table 4.

Demographic information about the resource room teacher

Participant characteristics	Number
Age	41
Gender	Female
Professional seniority	4 years in life learning education 5 years in pre-school 2 years in resource room
Education status	BA
Major	Child development
Training on special education and inclusive education	Available
The number of students receiving support in the research process	13 students

As seen in Table 4, the teacher of the resource room has a bachelor's degree in child development and has worked in different positions. She has work experience for only 2 years in resource room. The participant teacher provides support education to 13 students with special needs during the academic period in which this research was conducted.

2.3. Data collection technique and analysis

In this study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, one of the qualitative data collection techniques (Creswell, 2007; Given, 2008). The interview questions were developed after having reviewed the related literature and consulted three field experts. These questions are as given in Table 5 below:

Table 5.

Semi-structured interview question examples

Semi-structured interview question examples
1. What are your views on the inclusive education and resource room?
2. What factors should be considered for effective inclusive education and resource room services?
3. How do you plan the process of the inclusive education and resource room service process?
4. How do you maintain the inclusive education and resource room teaching processes?
5. How do you evaluate the inclusive education and resource room teaching processes?
6. What kind of measures should be taken for the success of inclusive education and resource room services?

The data of this research were collected in April 2017. The face-to-face interviews were conducted with the teachers after written informed consent was acquired from them. The interviews were audio recorded. The total duration of interviews with teachers is 3 hours and 28 minutes. In addition to these, 126 pages of documents including individualized education programs (IEP), educational diagnosis and placement reports of the students, weekly course schedule of resource room and teachers' diary were examined.

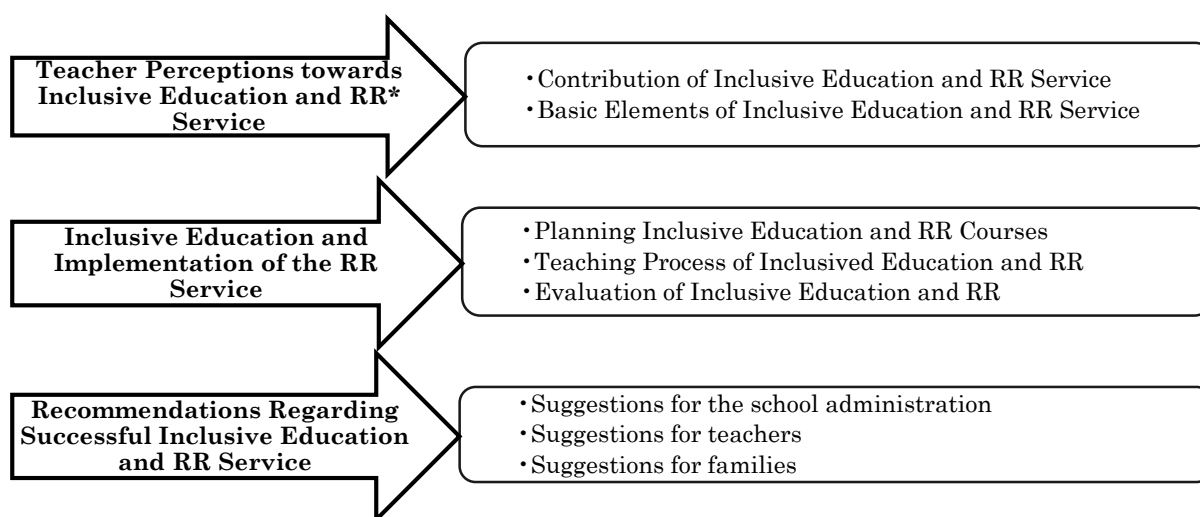
In this study, the analysis of the semi-structured interviews and documents were carried out with the inductive approach. The interviews were audio recorded and short notes were taken during the interviews. After the interviews were transcribed, the researchers independently reviewed the interview materials, extracted meaningful statements and coded them. Conflicting opinions on the contents of the themes and sub-themes were discussed and resolved (Creswell, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

2.4. Validity, Reliability and Ethics

In accordance with the design of this study, some precautions were taken regarding the validity and reliability of the study. Accordingly, first, the reliability calculation proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994) regarding the encodings made during the data analysis process was made. For this, the agreement percentage formula " $\text{Reliability} = \text{consensus} / (\text{agreement} + \text{disagreement}) \times 100$ " was used and the total consensus agreement percentage was found to be 100%. In other words, total consensus agreement has been achieved between coders. In order to increase the internal reliability of this study, that is consistency, the excerpts were given directly without interpretation and supported by direct quotations from the participants. (Creswell, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In accordance with the research ethics, the study was conducted with the necessary permissions and approvals of the school administration and participants. The participants were also informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, participants were assured that their personal information and names would not be used. For this reason, code names such as RRT (resource room teacher), PST-1 (pre-school teacher-1), PST-2... were given to each teacher.

3. Results

As a result of the analysis of the data, three main themes were emerged. Themes and sub-themes are shown in Figure 3 below.



*RR= Resource Room

Figure 3. Theme and sub-theme emerged in the study

Each theme and sub-themes seen in Figure 3 are explained below.

3.1. Teachers' perceptions towards inclusive education and RR service

In this study, as a result of the analysis of the data obtained from interviews, two sub-themes emerged under the main theme “teachers’ perceptions towards inclusive education and RR Service. Findings related to each sub-theme are presented in Figure 4.

Teachers' Perceptions Towards Inclusive Education and RR Service	
Basic Elements of Inclusive Education and RR Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Physical arrangements * Teacher training * Education support * Cooperation * Integration preparation activities 	Contribution of Inclusive Education and RR Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Contribution to students with special needs * Contributions to families * Contributions to teachers * Contributions to children with normal growth

Figure 4. The theme and sub-themes of teacher perceptions towards inclusive education and RR service

Detailed explanations on the theme and sub-themes of teacher perceptions towards inclusive education and RR service in Figure 4 are given below.

3.1.1. Basic elements of inclusive education and RR service

As a result of the analysis of the data obtained in this study, the sub-theme of the basic elements of inclusive education and RR service emerged. According to the sub-theme emerged, the basic elements of inclusive education and RR service are determined to be as physical arrangements (f = 7, 70%), teacher training (f = 6, 60%), education support (f = 3, 30%), cooperation (f = 2, 20%) and preparation activities (f = 1, 10%).

Regarding physical arrangements, the RR teacher stated that

"It is important to arrange the physical environment of the school or class according to the characteristics of the student in schools, however, that is not the case. One of our students is physically retarded, the child's classroom is upstairs, the mother carries her child. Sometimes the mother may not bring the child to school because she is tired. " (RRT).

Regarding the other highlighted element, the PST-2 pointed out the importance of proper teacher training by stating that *"...it has utmost importance to make teachers more qualified by providing them with proper teacher training."* In addition to these, PST-1 also put emphasis on the education support and stated that *"I think education support is the most important factor"*. Two participants highlighted the importance of cooperation among all the relevant people. PST-5 stated that *"Cooperating with all the relevant people is important"*. Just one participant reported that she thinks preparation activities is one of the basic elements of inclusive education and RR service. She stated that *"Raising awareness and informing other children before the child with special needs participates in the educational environment is very important."* (PST-4).

In addition to the information obtained on the basic elements of the inclusive training and the RR service, findings regarding the contributions of the inclusive education and education support courses will be presented in the following section.

3.1.2. Contribution of Inclusive Education and RR Service

In this sub-theme, the perceptions of the participating teachers regarding the contribution of inclusive education and the RR service to students with special needs, families, teachers and students with normal growth and development studied.

Based on the findings obtained, it was determined that all participants think that inclusive education contribute to the socialization of students with special needs. In addition to socialization, inclusive education contribute to students with special needs gaining self-confidence (f = 3, 30%), receiving education with their peers (f = 2, 20%), being beneficial to themselves and society (f = 2, 20%) and learning by modeling (f = 2, 20%). Regarding the students' gaining self-confidence, one participant stated that *"It contributes to the children's self-confidence"* (PST-6). Regarding the contribution to continuing their education with their peers, the PST-4 expressed that *"Continuing their education in the same educational environment with their peers who do not have disabilities is a great*

contribution". According to RR teacher, another contribution of the inclusive education is that *"They socialize, they do what they see from their friends, they learn by doing and experiencing."* By this statement, she means that students with special needs learn by modeling their peers. In addition to these, a participant (PST-3) commented on the contribution of inclusive education to students with special needs and stated that *"they become individuals who are beneficial to themselves and to the society ..."*. On the other hand, all of the participating teachers emphasized that the RR service contributes to the academic success of the students by customizing teaching in accordance with the individual learning pace of the students with special needs in the subjects they need. Regarding this, one participant stated that *"Individual learning speeds and readiness are taken into account therefore, they can receive education in the subjects they need"* (PST-3).

In addition to the contribution of the inclusive education and the RR services to students with special needs, they contribute the families to developing realistic expectations about their children (f = 5, 50%); the children to having positive point of views of school (f = 4, 40%), and psychological comfort of being accepted (f = 1, 10%). Accordingly, regarding the families get to know their children better and thus develop realistic expectations of their children, PST-3 stated that *"The families' expectations of the child begins to conform to their children's capacities"*. Regarding the change of point of view of the school, and developing a more positive viewpoint, one participant (PST-4) expressed that *"Their viewpoint of the school becomes more positive. Because they learn about how to help their children."* A participant reported that it helps the families to psychologically feel better and stated that *"The family thinks that it is also accepted. They are psychologically comfortable..."* (PST-8).

The participants as the practitioners of inclusive education and RR services stated that these processes have contributed themselves to getting to know students with different characteristics (f = 3, 30%), the development of professional skills (f = 3, 30%) and to becoming more tolerant, patient, accepting of their students unconditionally (f = 4, 40%). Regarding the contribution of inclusive education and RR services to teachers in terms of tolerance, patience and unconditional acceptance, PRS-6 stated that *"Teachers develop patience, tolerance, unconditional acceptance, and respect for individual characteristics."* Regarding the contribution to the development of teachers' professional skills, PST-4 expressed that *"Thanks to the work done with these students, the teachers gain experience and improve themselves."* Only one participant stated the inclusive education and RR services contribute them to raising awareness of different developmental characteristics" (PST-7).

In addition, all participants stated that the contribution of inclusive education to students with normal growth is empathy, accepting differences and tolerance. Regarding this, RRT stated that *"They develop empathy, get to know themselves better, learns how to behave around them."* Another participant stated that *"They develop empathic abilities, learn to accept individual differences, show respect and tolerance"* (PST-9). In addition to these, the sample statement of contribution to development of the sensitivity feelings and cooperation is that *"... inclusive education helps students with normal growth and development develop sensitivity, cooperation ability and solidarity feelings"* (PST-2).

3.2. Inclusive education and implementation of the RR service

As a result of the analysis of the obtained data, under the main theme “*Inclusive Education and Implementation of the RR Service*” three sub-themes emerged. Detailed information on these three sub-themes are presented in Figure 5.

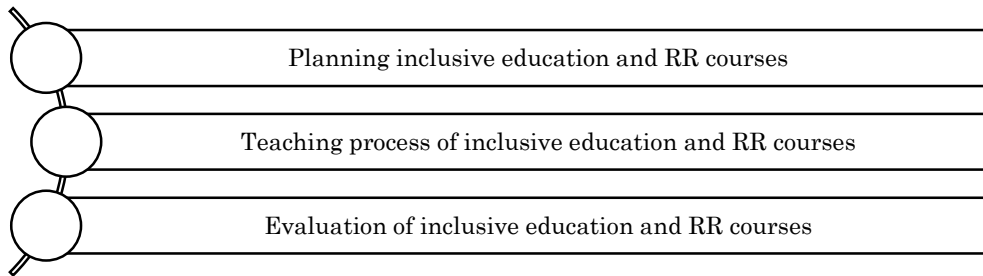


Figure 5. The theme and sub-themes of inclusive education and implementation of the RR service

Detailed explanations on the theme and sub-themes of the implementation of the inclusive education and support RR service in Figure 5 are presented in the following sections.

3.2.1. Planning inclusive education and RR courses

As a result of the analysis of the data obtained through semi-structured interviews, it was determined that the planning of the inclusive education and RR courses was made with the collaboration of pre-school teachers and RR teacher. Regarding this, one participant stated that “The RR teacher and the other teachers make plans together. The prepared IEP (individualized education program) and IIP (Individualized instruction program) plans are applied to the students at the specified hours” (PST-4). Likewise, it was pointed out that “*The lesson plan is developed by teachers together.*” (PST-1). However, based on the statements of the RR teacher and the document reviews, it was determined that RR teacher wasn’t included in the BEP meetings. Regarding the issue, the RR teacher stated that:

“The planning regarding the RR weekly course schedules, which child will receive what, etc. is done together with the counselor, principal and classroom teachers. Classroom teachers make IEPs. RR teacher does IIPs. The school principal approves them.” (RRT)

During the document analysis, it was found out that the IEP document has the name and signature of the student's parent, pre-school teacher, guidance counselor and school administrator. However, there is no signature of the RR teacher, which supports her statement. In addition, in the field notes of the researcher, it was determined that the students' IEP and IIP were not filed systematically and some students' files were missing

(Field notes, 2017). Similarly, it was stated by the RR teacher that there was no systematic and effective teamwork and cooperation in the process of developing the IIPs of RR courses:

"The classroom teacher tells me what kind of support the child needs and I work with the child on that subject. The teacher gives me the IEP and I turn it into IIP. I decide the content based on the RAM (Guidance Research Center) report. I do not meet with the family; the classroom teacher meets them." (RRS)

In addition to the data regarding the planning process, findings regarding the teaching process of the inclusive education and RR courses will be presented in the following section.

3.2.2. Teaching Process of Inclusive Education and RR Courses

As a result of the analysis of the data, the sub-theme of the teaching process of inclusive education and RR courses emerged. Some participants expressed that there are problems related to the teaching process in inclusive education due to the crowded class sizes ($f = 3$, 30%). One participant stated that *"The efficiency of education decreases because the class is crowded."* (PST-3). In addition to the problems encountered in the teaching process, the teaching methods and techniques used by teachers in this process are determined to be active learning techniques ($f = 7$, 70%), discovery method ($f = 4$, 40%), presentation method ($f = 3$, 30%) and demonstration technique ($f = 1$, 10%). PST-1 stated that they use the presentation method with instructions a lot. On the other hand, PST-6 reported that she uses the discovery method while teaching and she said, *"I use methods by which students can discover things themselves."* Many participants stated that they use active learning techniques while teaching. As an example, PST-9 stated that *"I use the method of learning by doing and experiencing, in which students actively participate in our lessons with games or activities"*. In addition to these, the DEOÖ teacher said that she frequently uses the demonstration and doing technique in addition to using presentation and discovery methods."

Most of the participants ($f = 6$, 60%) stated that they do not use materials specially designed for students with special needs in the inclusive education and RR teaching process. The reason why one of the participants does not use them is because she does not have specially designed materials for those students in her class (PST-1). On the other hand, other teachers ($f = 4$, 40%) stated that students with special needs use materials suitable for the type of disability they have. For example, PST-6 said that *"I used the concept cards for my student with language and speech disorders. I prepared them myself."* The RR teacher, who works with many students with special needs stated that she uses the materials available in the school that are suitable for the type of disability:

"The materials which are suitable for the disability type of the student may not be available. I use what we have. I use play dough so that their fine motor skills, imagination and creativity can develop. I use painting, object cards etc. for children with language and speech disorders so that they can make sentences." (RRT)

In addition to the information on the teaching process, findings regarding the evaluation of inclusive education and RR courses will be presented in the following section.

3.2.3. *The evaluation of inclusive education and resource room courses*

As a result of the analysis of the data, the sub-theme of the evaluation of inclusive education and resource room courses emerged. Accordingly, it was determined that most of the participants ($f = 8$, 80%) made the assessment based on unstructured observation without recording it in writing. For example, PST-7 stated that *"We exchange information about the student, we talk about our observations"*. Unlike many teachers, only one teacher reported that she made a curriculum-based assessment *"I evaluate the activities in line with the prepared IEP and IIP "* (PST-4). Similarly, the RR teacher stated that she made curriculum-based assessment and recorded them as short notes:

"I do IIP and put it in each file of the children. I put my work in their files. I have my own notebook, I attach notes regarding what the child did, what she/he could not do, what he/she could not do independently or the things she/he had difficulties with. Then I simplify the difficult things and teach them step by step" (RRT)

3.3. *Suggestions for successful inclusive education and RR service*

The information related to the sub themes of the last theme of this study - Suggestions for Successful Inclusive Education and RR Service are presented in Figure 6.

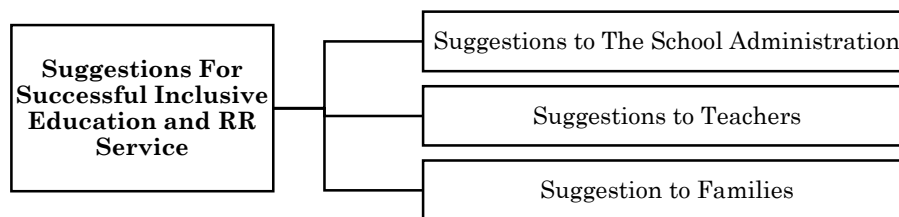


Figure 6. The theme and sub-themes of suggestions for successful inclusive education and RR service

Detailed explanations on the theme and sub-themes of suggestions for successful inclusive education and RR service in Figure 6 are discussed in the following section.

3.3.1. *Suggestions to the School Administration*

As a result of the analysis of the data, for the success of inclusive education and RR service, the participants stated that students with special needs need to be placed in each classroom equally ($f = 6$, 60%); the physical conditions of the school and classrooms need to be improved ($f = 2$, 20%); and problems experienced need to be addressed quickly ($f = 1$,

10%). Regarding the equal distribution of students with special needs among the classrooms, PST-9 stated that *"Equal distribution of integration students based on the class size is important."* PST-6 put emphasis on the betterment, improvement of the physical conditions of the school and classrooms. In addition to these, only one participant suggests that the school administration find quick solutions to problems, *"I recommend them to produce fast solutions and make decisions"* (PST-7). Unlike all these participants (f = 9, 90%), just one participant stated that she did not have any suggestions to the school administration (PST-8).

In addition to the suggestions to the school administration, findings regarding the suggestions to the teachers for successful inclusive education and RR service will be presented in the following section.

3.3.2. Suggestions for the teachers

In this study, as a result of the analysis of the data obtained through semi-structured interviews with the participants, the sub-theme of suggestions for teachers regarding successful inclusive education and RR service emerged. While most of the participants suggested that teachers become more tolerant and patient with the students with special needs (f = 8, 80%); just one participant mentions equity and equality in education principle (f = 1, 10%); and another one highlight the importance of continuity of professional development (f = 1, 10%). One participant (PST-3) expressed the importance of being patient and more tolerant to students with special needs with the words *"I recommend them to accept these children with patience and tolerance"*. Another participant (PST-6) said that *"I would like to say that they should not forget that equity and equality in education is very important."* In addition to these, only one teacher said, *"I recommend them to continue their professional development, to develop themselves individually"* (PST-7).

3.3.3. Suggestions for the families

As a result of the analysis of the data, it was determined that the participants have some suggestions for families regarding successful inclusive education and RR services. Some participants suggested that families need to be interested, caring and informed about the education of their children (f = 3, 30%), cooperate (f = 3, 30%) and have realistic expectations (f = 3, 30%). Regarding parents' being interested and informed about their children's education, PST-6 stated that *"I suggest them to be more interested, knowledgeable and to lead their children to education from a young age"* (PST-6). As for the importance of collaboration between teacher and parents, PST-2 expressed that *"It would be better for them to cooperate with us, teachers more"*. In addition to these, it was highlighted that the families of the students with special need to have realistic expectations about their children as PST-3 stated, *"Being aware of the situation of their child and not keeping their expectations high is important"*. Unlike all the other participants (f = 9, 90%), just one participant stated that she did not have any suggestions to the families (PST-8).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this study was to examine the inclusive education and resource room service in a pre-school. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews with the participants were conducted and documents were analyzed. As a result of the analysis of the data obtained, the participants' perceptions about inclusive education and RR service, the contributions of the inclusive education and RR service, and the suggestions for successful inclusive education and RR service were determined. As a result of the analysis carried out, it was revealed that physical arrangements in the school and classrooms were among the basic elements of the inclusive education and RR service. The findings of several studies in the literature support the finding of this study regarding the physical and instructional arrangements are to be made for students with special needs in RR services for the success of inclusive education (Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2016; Salend, 2005).

As a result of the analysis carried out, it was determined that, in addition to the physical arrangements, another important element is the education and professional development of teachers who have roles and responsibilities in inclusive education and RR services. The finding regarding the importance of the training of teachers on inclusive education, resource room service, and applications is supported by the findings of several studies in the literature (Gürgür, Kış & Akçamete, 2012; Güven, 2019; Idol, 2006). Furthermore, it is emphasized in the literature that teachers' knowledge and skills on these issues affect their competencies in inclusive education (Dev & Haynes, 2015; Hornby, 2010).

In addition to these, an important element in the success of inclusive education, which is emphasized in the literature (Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Mitchell, 2008; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013) and in this study, is support services. It is stated that effective support services contribute significantly to the successful implementation of individualized education programs (Burns, 2003; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013).

On the other hand, in the literature, it is emphasized that the success of inclusive education depends on teamwork and collective work (Briggs, 2004; Cohen, 2009; Dukes & Smith, 2006; Idol, 2006; Kırcaali-İftar, 1998; Loreman, Deppeler, & Harvey, 2005; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2016; Salend, 2005). However, in this study, although it was stated as one of the basic elements of inclusive education and RR service, it was determined that the RR teacher was excluded from the team and effective cooperation and teamwork were not carried out during the IEP preparation process. Similarly, in several studies in the literature, it was determined that there is no cooperation between RR teachers and other teachers, but it needs to be otherwise (Akay, 2011; Fankhauser, 2010; Meyers, Gelzheiser, Yelich & Gallagher, 1990; Yazcayır, 2020). Considering the results of the literature and the findings together, it can be concluded that although there is a RR service, there is no teamwork in qualified implementation.

Another factor that was stated to be effective in the success of inclusive education in this study is to inform students with normal growth and to conduct preparatory activities for the acceptance of students with special needs. Likewise, according to the findings of several studies in the literature, the likelihood of social acceptance of the students with special needs can be increased by informing students with normal growth and development and making preparatory activities using interaction methods (Krahe & Altwasser, 2006; Yaşaran, 2009).

The other findings of this study were related to the contribution of inclusive education and RR services to students with special needs, their families, teachers, and students with normal growth. It was determined that inclusive education contributes to the education and socialization of students with special needs together with their peers. In addition to their socialization, it was revealed that inclusive education contributed to the students with special needs gaining self-confidence, being beneficial individuals, and learning by modeling. In the literature, the findings of several studies support this finding that inclusive education helps the students with special needs in terms of socialization and adaptation to social life (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Halvorsen & Neary, 2001; Heward, 2013) and their self-esteem (Esmer, Yılmaz, Güneş, Tarım & Delican, 2017).

In this study, one of the basic elements of inclusive education was determined to be delivering education to students with special needs and their peers together. This result is in alignment with the main purpose of inclusive education, the students with special needs should receive an education with their peers (Ainscow, 2005; Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Heward, 2013; Mitchell, 2008; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013). In addition to the contribution of inclusive education, a result regarding the contribution of the RR service to students with special needs in terms of individual education and academic support was determined. Similarly, in the literature, it is stated that RR service contributes to students with special needs receiving individual education (Jenkins & Mayhall, 1976; Heward, 2013) and to their academic success (Leviton, 1978).

In addition to the contribution of inclusive education and RR services to students with special needs, it was determined that they also contribute to their families creating realistic expectations for their children, developing positive perspective on the school, and enjoying psychological comfort of being accepted. In the literature, it is stated that inclusive education and resource room services motivate the families of students with special needs and thus they make more effort for their children's education and future life (Kırcaali-İftar, 1998).

In this study, it was also determined that besides the contributions of inclusive education and RR service to students with special needs and their families, they have many contributions to teachers who are the practitioners of inclusive education and RR services. It was determined that they contribute to teachers getting to know students with different characteristics, the development of professional skills and tolerance, patience, and unconditional acceptance. Similarly, as it is stated in several studies, inclusive education requires the improvement of teachers' professional skills by assigning various responsibilities such as getting to know students with different characteristics (Gürgür,

Kış & Akçamete, 2012; Kırcaali-İftar, 1998; Yazçayır, 2020) and organizing teaching processes depending on differences (Dev & Haynes, 2015; Lipsky & Gartner, 2009). It was determined that the other contributions of inclusive education and RR services to teachers were getting them to become more tolerant and patient. Similar to the aforementioned contributions to teachers, results regarding the contributions of inclusive education and RR services to students with normal growth and development were determined to be empathy, accepting differences, and tolerance. In the literature, it is stated that the empathy skills and respect for individual differences of all stakeholders who have roles and responsibilities in the education of students with special needs developed (Dukes & Smith, 2006; Frederickson & Cline, 2009). Considering the findings of the literature together, it can be concluded that inclusive education and RR service contributed to the professional development of teachers involved in the process.

Another important finding of this study is related to the evaluation of inclusive education and RR courses. In this context, it was determined that there are problems in the teaching process due to the crowded class sizes. Based on this finding, suggestions were made to the school administration to ensure a balanced distribution of students with special needs to the classes. Similarly, Nayır & Karaman-Kepeneci (2013) found out that some problems arise owing to the crowded classroom and therefore students with special needs need to be placed in the classrooms equally.

In addition to these, it was determined that teachers mostly use active teaching techniques, discovery, and presentation methods, the demonstration technique, and learning by doing technique while teaching. On the other hand, it was determined that most of the pre-school teachers do not use materials specially designed for students with special needs, but the resource room teacher reported using the available materials in the school by the type of disability of the students. However, in the literature, it is stated that methods and materials suitable for students' characteristics and learning styles should be used for students with special needs in a way that appeals to many senses of students (Desphande, 2013; Friend & Bursuck, 2012; Heward, 2013; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2016; Salend, 2005). In addition to these, another finding is that most of the participants reported making evaluations based on observations, and it is not done systematically, in a planned way, and based on records. Unlike other teachers, in addition to observation, the resource room teacher reported making evaluations based on the product files consisting of the work done by the students in the RR and her personal short notes about what the student could not do at the end of each lesson. Similarly, in Aydın & Sapsağlam's (2019) study, it was determined that pre-school teachers do not use different methods and techniques other than observation and product files in the evaluation of students with special needs who continue their education through inclusive education. However, performance evaluation needs to be done systematically with individual-specific methods to provide feedback regarding the effects of the practices on the child. Keeping the evaluation records provides the opportunity to monitor the progress of the student, to determine ineffective practices in the process and to make necessary adjustments (Gürsel & Vuran, 2010; Mitchell, 2008; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013).

The other important findings of this study were the suggestions to school administrators, teachers, and families regarding successful inclusive education and RR service. Accordingly, suggestions were made to school administrators to improve the physical conditions in school and classroom and to find quick solutions to problems. It can be said that physical improvement of schools is necessary for the safety of all students, access to school resources, and effective teaching practices. In addition to these, a suggestion to teachers was that they need to act by the equity and equality in education principle. It can be said that this finding is pleasing because inclusive education is based on the idea that students with special needs have equal education rights like their peers with normal growth and development (Keogh, 2007; Mitchell, 2008; Rayner, 2007). In addition to these, it was determined that there were suggestions for teachers to continue their professional development. Accordingly, it can be said that teachers need to pay attention to their professional development, their professional knowledge and skills throughout their professional life for successful educational practices. Besides, suggestions for teachers included becoming more tolerant and patient with the students with special needs. In the literature, it is stated that the way teachers behave towards students, accepting their students' differences, supporting the learning needs of students, and having the knowledge and skills of working in collaboration with other stakeholders are quite effective for the success of inclusive education (Dukes & Smith, 2006; Forlin, 2010). On the other hand, suggestions for families, who are other important stakeholders of education, were that they need to be more concerned with the educational life of their children and to have realistic expectations about their children. The findings of several studies support this finding and suggestions regarding the families of students with special needs related to the education of their children (Esmer, Yılmaz, Güneş, Tarım & Delican, 2017; Gürgür, Kış & Akçamete, 2012). At the same time, as a result of this study, it was determined that families were recommended to cooperate with other stakeholders. Similarly, in the literature, cooperation with stakeholders is recommended for successful inclusive education and RR service (Desphande, 2013; Hornby, 2010; Jones, 2004; Güven, 2019; Pesen, 2019; Yazıcı, 2020).

As a result, this study presents both the implementation process of inclusive education with resource room services in pre-school education and teachers' perceptions about inclusive education and RR service, as well as the implementations process with some concrete suggestions for successful practices. In this context, inclusive education and the RR service have many contributions to students with special needs, families, teachers, and students with normal growth. On the other hand, the basic elements of inclusive education and RR services such as physical arrangements in schools, teacher training, resource room, cooperation, and integration preparation activities were determined. In the study it has been noted that although students are aware of the basic elements in the success of the inclusive education and resource room and their contribution to the stakeholders, they may not reflect these to the practices. One of the reasons for that could be ineffective cooperation and lack of teamwork in the planning and implementation stages. In addition, necessary methods-techniques or suitable materials for the students with special needs might not be used in the teaching and evaluation process. Another reason could be unequal distribution of students with special needs to classes and unrealistic expectations of their families.

Considering the findings of the study, the following suggestions can be put forward:

- It may be suggested to create a team consisting of all stakeholders who have roles and responsibilities in the education of students with special needs in the success of inclusive education and resource room services.
- It can be suggested to make physical and instructional arrangements, which are of great importance in the success of inclusive education.
- It can be suggested that for teachers' professional development, various seminars, workshops, etc. could be organized and their attendance could be required.

In addition to these, and suggestions for advanced applications are presented. These:

- Application-based studies can be carried out to improve the process (e.g. action research)
- It can be said that experimental or quasi-experimental studies could be carried out in a way to establish a cause and effect relationship of the effect of RR.
- This study was carried out in a pre-school. Similar studies can be carried out in institutions in different regions or provinces.

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