



EXAMINATION OF TEACHER CANDIDATES' ATTITUDES, EMOTIONS, AND ANXIETIES REGARDING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION BY DIFFERENT VARIABLES

Yahya Çikili¹,

M. Abdulbaki Karaca²ⁱ

¹Assistant Prof. Dr,

Special Education Department,

Necmettin Erbakan University, Turkey

²Research Assistant,

Special Education Department,

Necmettin Erbakan University, Turkey

Abstract:

To benefit teaching-learning processes, Individuals needing special education must be placed in suitable education environments after educational identification and evaluation processes. The least restrictive environment approach was employed considering peer interaction and academic skills. Inclusive education is one of the most chosen least restrictive environments. Studies have suggested that inclusive education is beneficial for both the typical students and students with special needs. It is stated that the main element in the success of inclusive education is the teacher. Because teachers prepare, apply, monitor and evaluate the individualized educations programs which are suitable for the needs and characteristics of students with special needs. In this respect, it is known that the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teachers towards inclusive education are significant factors (Salend and Duhaney, 1999; Şekercioğlu, 2010; Diken, 1999). Many studies can be found on inclusive education but few of them are about the emotions, attitudes, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education. So, this study aims to examine the emotions, attitudes, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education by different variables such as gender, the department they are studying in, inclusive education legislation knowledge, and having been interacted with an inclusive student before. The relational screening model one the descriptive survey model was used in this study. 600 teacher candidates studying in ten different departments participated in the study. Data were collected through "Scale for Emotions, Attitudes, and Anxieties Regarding Inclusive Education" developed by Chris Forling et al. (2011) and adapted to Turkish by Bayar et al. (2015). Data were analyzed through SPSS. Independent samples t-test was used to reveal the differentiation in terms of gender and having an interaction before variables. One-way

ⁱ Correspondence: email akaracaegitim@gmail.com

analysis of variance was applied to reveal the differentiation in terms of the legislation knowledge and department variables. Tukey test was performed to find the reason for the differentiation. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between gender and attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates, but that there is a significant difference between the having an interaction with inclusive students before, inclusive education legislation knowledge, the department they are studying in variables and attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates. It is understood that activities towards inclusive education in teaching practice course must be increased and the undergraduate programs must include a course regarding inclusive education.

Keywords: inclusive education, emotion, attitude, anxiety, individual with special needs

1. Introduction

Individuals with special needs are placed in suitable educational environments according to their needs and requirements to make them gain independent living skills. The education environments of individuals with special needs differ in Turkey and other countries according to needs and competence of individuals. Restrictiveness is the main factor in placing individuals with special needs in different educational environments. Therefore, individuals with special needs are aimed to be educated in the least restrictive environments according to their individual differences (Mastropier and Scruggs, 2006; Gözün and Yıkımsı, 2004; Sucuoğlu, 2006). So, when the education of individuals with special needs is examined historically, it can be seen that the educational environment shifted from separated schools or boarding schools to inclusive education (Orel et al., 2004).

The main factor in developing social and cognitive skills of individuals with special needs cannot be separated from the aim of general education. Making each person fulfill his potential and help them develop independent living skills are among the main aims of education (Kayaoğlu, 1999). The interaction between the individuals with special needs and typically developed individuals through inclusive education improves the social and communication skills of both inclusive students and typical students (Lindsay, 2007; Güven and Aydan, 2007; Gürel and Özmen, 2003). Thus, inclusive education programs must be carried out effectively to make individuals with special needs gain social skills and independent living skills (Kırcaali-İftar, 1998).

The biggest responsibility in the education and gaining social living skills of individuals with special needs belong to the teachers. Since the teacher responsible for the inclusive education spends more time with the student with special needs in the classroom environment, they are the most significant implementer of the inclusive education in terms of cognitive and social development of student with special needs (Friend, 2011; Güteryüz and Özdemir, 2015). Therefore, the attitudes and anxieties of teachers are of great significance in inclusive education which means placing students

with special needs in the same environment with their typically developed peers (Bürli, 2002). Teachers responsible for the inclusive education must be concerned, willing and have an accepting attitude (Ataman, 2002). Attitudes affect teachers' emotions, thoughts and behaviors towards inclusive education (Şekercioğlu, 2010). Attitudes are the mental, emotional and behavioral responses that an individual organizes according to his experience, information, and emotions towards any objects or social events surrounding him (İnceoğlu, 2010). Anxiety can be defined as the uneasiness or fear which can show up as the reflection of an individual's fear in a moment of danger (Manav, 2010). Anxiety which arises as a basic response is related to being alert (Dilmaç et al., 2009). It is found that teachers who have positive attitudes towards students with special needs, who are not overanxious and who plan and implement the teaching process are more successful (Orel et al., 2004).

It is believed that the attitudes and anxieties of teachers towards inclusive education play an important role in the acceptance of the children with special needs by their peers and the quality of the education given to these students. So, the attitudes and anxieties of teachers towards inclusion affect both the educational activities and inclusive students (Salend and Duhaney, 1999; Şekercioğlu, 2010; Diken, 1999). Teachers in inclusive education are expected to have an acceptive and supportive attitude towards inclusive students. It is thought that having positive emotions towards inclusion and not feeling high anxiety are the main duties of teachers in inclusive education Başgül et al., 2018; Kargın, 2004; Küçük-Doğaroğlu and Bapoğlu-Dümenci, 2015; Aker, 2014).

In Turkey, most of the inclusive education is carried out as full time inclusion. According to the data of Ministry of Education in Turkey, the number of inclusive students in kindergarten, primary school, secondary school and high school in 2017 – 2017 education year were 3.585, 94.897, 109.684, and 34.320 respectively. The total number of inclusive students in formal education was 242.486. In 2013 – 2014 education year the total number of inclusive students in formal education was 173.117. So, as is seen in three years' time there was a 29% increase in the number of inclusive students (Ministry of Education, 2018; Yazıcıoğlu, 2018).

Consequently, academics studying in special education are studying not only the success of inclusive education but also the attitudes, perceptions and anxieties of teachers responsible for the inclusion of students with special needs (Kuzu, 2011; Salend and Duhaney, 1999; Şekercioğlu, 2010; Aker, 2014). However, there are few studies regarding the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education in Turkey. Therefore, this study is important in understanding attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to examine the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education by different variables. With regard to this general aim, following sub-aims are investigated.

- 1) Is there a significant difference between the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education and their gender?
- 2) Is there a significant difference between the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education and their status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before?
- 3) Is there a significant difference between the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education and their knowledge of inclusive education legislation?
- 4) Is there a significant difference between the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education and the department in which they are studying?

2. Method

2.1. Model of the Study

The relational screening method was used in this study to examine the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education by different variables. Screening models describe a case which existed or still exists as it is. Relational screening models aim to define the presence and degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2006).

2.2. Study Group

600 teacher candidates studying in education faculty in Turkey participated in the study. The demographic information about the participants is shown in Table 1. Out of the 600 participants, 179 (29.8%) of them are male and 421 (70.2%) are female.

Table 1: Demographic Information Regarding the Teacher Candidates

		Gender			
		Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
Department	Pre-school	2	3,3	58	96,7
	Primary School Teaching	6	10	54	90
	English Language Teaching	9	15	51	85
	Special Education	34	56,7	26	43,3
	Turkish Language Teaching	18	30	42	70
	Science	16	26,2	45	73,8
	Mathematics	16	27,1	43	72,9
	Social Sciences	32	53,3	28	46,7
	Art	27	45	33	55
	Psychological Counseling and Guidance	19	31,7	41	68,3
	Total	179	29.8	421	70.2

2.3. Data Collection Tool

In order to assess the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive education, data were collected through "Scale for Attitudes, Emotions, and Anxieties Regarding Inclusive Education" developed by Chris Forling et al. (2011) and adapted to Turkish by Bayar et al. (2015). The scale which has three sub-scales composed of 15 items. The scale is 4 points likert scale. The points are 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for agree, and 4 for strongly agree. The lowest score is 15 points and the highest score is 60 points. The highest scores show that the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of individuals towards inclusive education are high. The internal consistency coefficient of the adapted scale is found as .88 after the Cronbach Alpha reliability study. Furthermore, after the Cronbach Alpha reliability study, the internal consistency of attitudes, emotions, and anxieties sub-scales are found as .86, .88, and .85 respectively. In accordance with the results, it is understood that the scale can be used in Turkey.

2.4. Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed through SPSS software. Independent samples t-test was used to reveal the differentiation in terms of gender and having an interaction before variables. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to reveal the differentiation in terms of the legislation knowledge and department variables. Tukey test was performed to find the reason for the differentiation.

3. Findings

This section of the study contains the findings regarding the relationship between the attitudes, emotions, and anxieties of teacher candidates and their gender, status having an interaction with inclusive students before, inclusive education legislation knowledge and the department they are studying in.

Table 2: Independent samples t-test scores conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between gender and emotions

	Gender	N	X	SS	Sd	P
Emotions	Female	179	2,538	,41	597	0,915
	Male	421	2,534	,46		

*p> 0,05

In Table 2 genders of teacher candidates are compared with the emotions dimension. Means are found X=2,538 for females and X=2,534 for males. Table 2 investigates whether there is a significant difference between genders of teacher candidates and their emotions towards inclusive students. The results of the independent samples t-test show no significant difference between the gender variable and the emotions of teacher candidates towards inclusive students ($p > 0,05$).

Table 3: Independent samples t-test scores conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the gender and attitudes

	Gender	N	X	SS	Sd	P
Attitudes	Female	179	2,50	,44	597	0,915
	Male	421	2,57	,46		

*p> 0,05

In Table 3 genders of teacher candidates are compared with the attitudes dimension. Means are found X=2,50 for females and X=2,57 for males. Table 3 investigates whether there is a significant difference between the genders of teacher candidates and their attitudes towards students with special needs. The results of the independent samples t-test show no significant difference between the gender variable and the attitudes of teacher candidates towards inclusive students ($p > 0,05$).

Table 4: Independent samples t-test scores conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the gender and anxiety

	Gender	N	X	SS	Sd	P
Anxieties	Male	179	2,93	,44	597	0,077
	Female	421	2,36	,44		

*p>0,05

In Table 4 genders of teacher candidates are compared with the anxiety dimension. Means are found X=2,93 for females and X=2,36 for males. Table 4 investigates whether there is a significant difference between the genders of teacher candidates and their attitudes towards students with special needs. The results of the independent samples t-test show no significant difference between the gender variable and the anxieties of teacher candidates towards inclusive students ($p > 0,05$).

Table 5: Independent samples t-test scores conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the status of having an interaction with an inclusive before and emotions

	Status of interaction	N	X	SS	Sd	P
Emotions	Yes	325	2,48	,46	596	0,005
	No	275	2,59	,42		

*p<0,01

As seen in Table 5, teacher candidates' status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before is compared with their emotions towards inclusive students. Means are found X=2,48 for the teacher candidates having an interaction and X=2,59 for the ones not having an interaction. It was investigated whether there is a significant difference between teacher candidates' status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before and their emotions towards students with special needs. The results of the independent samples t-test reveal that there is a significant difference between the

status of having an interaction variable and the emotions of teacher candidates towards students with special needs ($p < 0,01$).

Table 6: Independent samples t-test scores conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the status of having an interaction with an inclusive before and attitudes

	Status of Interaction	N	X	SS	Sd	P
Attitudes	Yes	275	2,56	,45	596	0,670
	No	325	2,55	,46		

* $p > 0,05$

In Table 6, teacher candidates' status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before is compared with their attitudes towards inclusive students. Means are found as $X=2,5$ for the teacher candidates having an interaction and $X=2,56$ for the ones not having an interaction. It was investigated whether there is a significant difference between teacher candidates' status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before and their attitudes towards students with special needs. The results of the independent samples t-test reveal no significant difference between the status of having an interaction variable and the attitudes of teacher candidates towards students with special needs ($p > 0,05$).

Table 7: Independent samples t-test scores conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the status of having an interaction with an inclusive before and anxieties

	Status of Interaction	N	X	SS	Sd	P
Anxiety	Yes	325	2,30	,44	596	0,009
	No	275	2,39	,44		

* $p < 0,01$

As seen in Table 7, teacher candidates' status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before is compared with their anxiety level. Means are found as $X=2,30$ for the teacher candidates having an interaction, and as $X=2,39$ for the ones not having an interaction. It was investigated whether there is a significant difference between teacher candidates' status of having an interaction with an inclusive student before and their emotions towards students with special needs. The results of the independent samples t-test reveal that there is a significant difference between the status of having an interaction variable and the anxieties of teacher candidates ($p < 0,01$). The ones having an interaction with students with special needs before are less anxious than the ones who do not.

Table 8: ANOVA results conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the inclusive education legislation knowledge variable and emotions

Dimension legislation knowledge level		N	X	SS	F	P	Significant Difference
Emotions	Very good	106	2,60	0,51	8,947	0,00	None- very good
	Good	245	2,60	0,37			
	Moderate	175	2,47	0,43			
	Weak	57	2,42	0,47			
	None	17	2,07	0,61			

*p<0,001

As seen in Table 8, when the inclusive education legislation knowledge level is compared with emotions dimension, it is seen that the highest mean score belongs to the teacher candidates who have very good legislation knowledge (X=2,60). It is followed by teacher candidates who have good legislation knowledge (X=2,60), moderate legislation knowledge (X=2,47), weak legislation knowledge (X=2,42), and no legislation knowledge (X=2,07). In order to find out whether the emotions of teacher candidates differ according to their legislation knowledge level, one-way analysis of variance is used. As a result, it is found that there is a significant difference (p<0,001). So as to test the source of the difference Tukey test, one of the Post Hoc tests, is conducted. The difference is found between the “none” and “very good”.

Table 9: ANOVA results conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the inclusive education legislation knowledge variable and attitudes

Dimension legislation knowledge level		N	X	SS	F	P
Attitudes	Very good	106	2,59	0,40	1,682	0,269
	Good	245	2,59	0,46		
	Moderate	175	2,50	0,46		
	Weak	57	2,51	0,49		
	None	17	2,40	0,57		

*p>0,05

When the inclusive education legislation knowledge level is compared with attitudes dimension, it is seen that the highest mean score belongs to the teacher candidates who have very good legislation knowledge (X=2,59). It is followed by teacher candidates who have good legislation knowledge (X=2,59), moderate legislation knowledge (X=2,50), weak legislation knowledge (X=2,51), and no legislation knowledge (X=2,40). In order to find out whether the attitudes of teacher candidates differ according to their legislation knowledge level, one-way analysis of variance is used. As a result of the variance analysis, no significant difference is found (P>0,05).

Table 10: ANOVA results conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the inclusive education legislation knowledge variable and anxieties

Dimension Legislation knowledge level		N	X	SS	F	P	Significant Difference
Anxieties	None	106	2,40	0,42	8,574	0,00	None – very good
	Weak	245	2,39	0,41			
	Moderate	175	2,33	0,43			
	Good	57	2,14	0,50			
	Very good	17	1,92	0,39			

*p<0,001

As seen in Table 10, when the inclusive education legislation knowledge level is compared with anxieties dimension, it is seen that the highest mean score belongs to the teacher candidates who have no legislation knowledge (X=2,40). It is followed by teacher candidates who have weak legislation knowledge (X=2,39), moderate legislation knowledge (X=2,33), good legislation knowledge (X=2,14), and very good legislation knowledge (X=2,92). In order to find out whether the anxieties of teacher candidates differ according to their legislation knowledge level, one-way analysis of variance is used. As a result, it is found that there is a significant difference (p<0,001). The difference is found between the “none” and “very good”.

Table 11: ANOVA results conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the departments and emotions

Dimension Departments		N	X	SS	F	P	Significant difference
Emotions	Social Sciences	60	2,34	0,53	2,735	0,004	Social S. – Special Edu.
	Primary School Teaching	60	2,42	0,46			
	Psychological Counseling and Guidance	60	2,50	0,53			
	Science	60	2,53	0,37			
	Pre-school	60	2,54	0,47			
	Turkish Language Teaching	60	2,54	0,42			
	Mathematics	60	2,57	0,40			
	English Language Teaching	60	2,58	0,39			
	Art	60	2,60	0,37			
	Special Education	60	2,69	0,42			

p<0,01

When the departments teacher candidates are studying in are compared with emotions dimension, it is seen that the highest mean score belongs to the teacher candidates studying in the special education department (X=2,69). It is followed by the departments: Art (X=2,60), English language teaching (X=2,58), mathematics (X=2,57), Turkish language teaching (X=2,54), pre-school (X=2,54), science (X=2,53), Psychological Counseling and Guidance (X=2,50), primary school teaching (X=2,42), and social sciences (X=2,34). In order to find out whether the emotions of teacher candidates differ according to the departments they are studying in, one-way analysis of variance is used. As a result, it is found that there is a significant difference (p<0,01). The difference is found between the “social sciences” and “special education”.

Table 12: ANOVA results conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the departments and attitudes

Dimension	Departments	N	X	SS	F	P	Significant difference
Attitudes	Pre-school	60	2,40	0,50	3,011	0,002	Pre-school-Special edu.
	Science	60	2,41	0,42			
	Psychological Counseling and Guidance	60	2,44	0,39			
	Primary School Teaching	60	2,54	0,45			
	Social Sciences	60	2,58	0,52			
	English Language Teaching	60	2,60	0,43			
	Turkish Language Teaching	60	2,60	0,49			
	Mathematics	60	2,63	0,41			
	Art	60	2,63	0,44			
	Special Education	60	2,69	0,42			

*p<0,01

When the departments teacher candidates are studying in are compared with attitudes dimension, it is seen that the highest mean score belongs to the teacher candidates studying in the special education department (X=2,69). It is followed by the departments: Art (X=2,63), Mathematics (X=2,63), Turkish language teaching (X=2,60), English language teaching (X=2,60), social sciences (X=2,58), primary school teaching (X=2,54), Psychological Counseling and Guidance (X=2,44), science (X=2,41), and pre-school (X=2,40). In order to find out whether the attitudes of teacher candidates differ according to the departments they are studying in, one-way analysis of variance is used. As a result, it is found that there is a significant difference (p<0,01). The difference is found between the "Pre-school" and "special education" departments.

Table 13: ANOVA results conducted to find out whether there is a significant difference between the departments and anxieties

Dimensions	Departments	N	X	SS	F	P	Significant difference
Anxieties	Special Education	60	2,10	0,49	3,678	0,000	Special Edu. - PCG
	English Language Teaching	60	2,27	0,51			
	Art	60	2,29	0,42			
	Pre-school	60	2,32	0,37			
	Science	60	2,33	0,31			
	Social Sciences	60	2,38	0,44			
	Primary School Teaching	60	2,60	0,40			
	Turkish Language Teaching	60	2,636	0,50			
	Mathematics	60	2,639	0,48			
	Psychological Counseling and Guidance	60	2,69	0,32			

*p<0,001

As seen Table 13 when the departments teacher candidates are studying in are compared with anxieties dimension, it is seen that the highest mean score belongs to the teacher candidates studying in the Psychological Counseling and Guidance department (X=2,69). It is followed by the departments: Mathematics (X=2,63), Turkish language teaching (X=2,63), primary school teaching (X=2,60), social sciences (X=2,28), science

($X=2,33$), pre-school ($X=2,32$), art ($X=2,29$), English language teaching ($X=2,27$), and special education ($X=2,10$). In order to find out whether the anxieties of teacher candidates differ according to the departments they are studying in, one-way analysis of variance is used. As a result, it is found that there is a significant difference ($p<0,001$). The difference is found between the "Psychological Counseling and Guidance" and "special education" departments.

4. Result and Discussion

In the present study conducted to examine the different variables affecting teacher candidates' attitudes, emotions, and anxieties it is found that there is no significant difference between the gender of teacher candidates and their attitudes, emotions, and anxieties. This result is supported by past studies (Çakmak and Hevedanlı, 2005; Doğan et al., 2009; Sarı and Bozgeyikli, 2002). In the study conducted by Güteryüz and Özdemir (2015) it was found that gender classroom teachers do not have a significant effect on their opinions about inclusive education. Bek et al. (2009) revealed that there is no significant difference between teacher candidates' attitudes towards inclusive education and their gender.

The results suggest that teacher candidates having interaction with inclusive students before have more positive emotions and less anxiety about inclusive education. It is seen that similar results were found in previous studies. Laarhoven et al. (2007) conducted a study with the participation of teacher candidates from special education and other departments. Results revealed that teacher candidates interacted with students with special needs have more positive emotions and less anxiety.

At the end of the study, it is found that there is no relationship between interacting with inclusive students and attitudes of teacher candidates. Some of the studies conducted suggested similar results (Sarı et al., 2002; Kayhan et al., 2012; Alver et al., 2011). However, other studies do not support this result. In those studies, it was found that teacher candidates interacting with inclusive students have more positive attitudes towards inclusive education (Compell et al., 2003; Aker, 2014; Bek et al., 2009). Aker (2014) stated that teacher candidates' attitudes towards inclusive education change according to attending teaching practice courses in a classroom with inclusive students. It was understood that teacher candidates interacting with inclusive students in teaching practice course have more positive attitudes towards inclusive education. In a study conducted to examine the effects of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education on the success of students, it was found that teachers having inclusive students in their classrooms and interacting with inclusive students in the past had more positive attitudes towards inclusive education (Kış, 2013). On the other hand, although teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusive education, these teachers have some anxieties about inclusive education (Odom, 2000).

The results revealed that there was no relationship between teacher candidates' legislation knowledge and their attitudes. However, It was understood that teacher

candidates knowing the special education legislation have more positive emotions and less anxiety about inclusive education. In a study conducted by Doğan (2010) similar results were found. The study suggested that although inclusive education became compulsory with the inclusive education legislation, teachers have many problems resulted from lack of legislation knowledge. The most common one among these problems is teachers' anxieties about inclusive education. It is stated that these negative emotions can be removed by organizing the schools providing inclusive education in line with the inclusive education legislation, and facilitating better coordination among teachers (Ward et al., 1994).

The present study also examined the relationship between the departments in which teacher candidates are studying and their attitudes, emotions, and anxieties. The results revealed that special education teacher candidates have the most positive attitudes, emotions and the least anxieties towards inclusive education. It is found that the teacher candidates studying in the social sciences department have the most negative emotion towards inclusive education, that the teacher candidates studying in the pre-school department have the most negative attitude, and that the teacher candidates studying in the psychological counseling and guidance department are the most anxious ones. Earlier studies suggest similar results. Dönmez et al. (1997) compared the attitudes of special education teacher and classroom teachers. It is seen that special education teachers have more positive attitudes towards inclusive education gözlenmiştir (Aker, 2004; Schmelkin, 1981; Dönmez et al., 1997). Moreover, Avradimis et al. (2000) stated that teacher candidates studying in the mathematics and science departments have high anxieties towards inclusive education. Similar results were found in the study examining the perceptions of teacher candidates regarding special education in Australia (Ward and Le Dean, 1996). In a study evaluating the opinions of pre-school teachers having inclusive students regarding inclusive education, Küçük-Doğaroğlu and Bapoğlu-Dümenci (2015) suggested that teachers have positive emotions towards inclusive education. However, as for the cognitive and behavioral dimension of the study, it is found that since their knowledge about inclusive education is too low, they suffer some difficulties.

5. Suggestions

- 1) Inclusive education course, as well as the special education course, could be provided all the teacher candidates studying in education faculties in Turkey.
- 2) Elective courses regarding preparing IEP in inclusive education could be given to teacher candidates.
- 3) Inclusive education activities could be added to the educational program of teaching practice course.

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