



## A Study on Parental Participation in The Literacy Learning Process of The Children with Special Learning Disability<sup>#</sup>

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### Research Article

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine parental participation in the literacy learning process of students with special learning disability, based on the views of parents and teachers. This study is designed as phenomenological research. During the data collection process of the research, teacher and parent interviews were conducted. Descriptive analysis was performed using the MAXQDA qualitative data analysis program. As a result of the study, parents state that children with special learning disability have negative experiences due to the difficulties and unwillingness of the child in learning academic skills during the literacy education process. On the other hand, teachers stated that they could not get the support they expected from the family due to the insufficient teacher-parent communication and cooperation in the literacy education process of the child, and the inadequate and incorrect information that the families have. In addition, teachers stated that they need to cooperate with families and have the family help their children doing homework and repeat the studies with their children at home. Parents, on the other hand, stated that to be able to participate in their children's education, they need to acquire knowledge and skills about special learning disability, sound-based sentence methods and teaching principles. Although all of the teachers emphasized the need for family participation in the literacy education process and for families to receive education on this issue, they stated that they have not provided any training to the parents before.

**Keywords:** Parental participation in education, parent-teacher cooperation, literacy learning, special learning disability, parent education.

## Özel Öğrenme Güçlüğü Yaşayan Öğrencilerin İlk Okuma-Yazma Öğrenme Sürecine Ebeveyn Katılımına İlişkin Bir İnceleme

#### Bilgi

<sup>#</sup>Bu çalışma doktora tezinin bir parçasıdır.

\*Sorumlu yazar

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### ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı, özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan öğrencilerin okuma yazma öğrenme sürecine ebeveyn katılımını ebeveyn ve öğretmen görüşlerine dayalı olarak incelemektir. Bu çalışma fenomenolojik araştırma olarak tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın veri toplama sürecinde öğretmen ve ebeveyn görüşmeleri yapılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde MAXQDA nitel veri analiz programı kullanılarak betimsel analiz yapılmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre ebeveynler, okuma yazma eğitimi sürecinde çocuğun akademik becerileri öğrenmede yaşadığı güçlükler ve isteksizliği nedeniyle olumsuz deneyimler yaşadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Öte yandan öğretmenler, çocuğun okuryazarlık eğitimi sürecinde öğretmen-ebeveyn iletişim ve iş birliğinin yetersiz olması, ailelerin sahip olduğu yetersiz ve yanlış bilgiler nedeniyle aileden bekledikleri desteği alamadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca öğretmenler, ailelerle iş birliği yapmaları ve aileden çocuklarının ödevlerini yapmalarına yardımcı olmaları ve evde çocuklarıyla birlikte çalışmalarını tekrar etmeleri gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir. Ebeveynler ise çocuklarının eğitimine katılabilmeleri için özel öğrenme güçlüğü, ses temelli cümle yöntemleri ve öğretim ilkeleri hakkında bilgi ve beceri kazanmaları gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin tamamı okuma yazma eğitimi sürecinde ebeveyn katılımının ve ailelerin bu konuda eğitim alması gerektiğini vurgulasalar da daha önce ebeveynlere böyle bir eğitim vermediklerini ifade etmişlerdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Eğitime ebeveyn katılımı, aile-öğretmen işbirliği, okuma yazma eğitimi, özel öğrenme güçlüğü, aile eğitimi.

## Introduction

The term learning disability was first introduced by Samuel Kirk in 1963 (MEB, 2014). Individuals with special learning disability, despite necessary interventions, for at least six months; exhibits behaviors such as incorrect or slow reading, difficulty in reading comprehension, writing difficulty, difficulty in learning, using and calculating numbers, and difficulty in mathematical reasoning (APA, 2013). Learning difficulties in an individual can occur in learning language skills or learning mathematics, as well as in both areas. Studies show that learning disability mostly arises in learning to read and write (Ergül, 2012; MEB, 2014). The literacy skill directly affects the success in other lessons, especially in the Turkish lesson (Erginer, 1996). The first indicators of special learning disability in the pre-school period; speech difficulties can be seen as inadequacies in concept development, limited self-expression, weakness in motor skills, and inadequate vocabulary (Sakallı-Gümüş, 2017). During school, they may exhibit difficulties in understanding and using language skills, difficulties in organizational skills, and social adaptation difficulties (Ataman, 2017). Therefore, individualization is essential in their education (Sakallı-Gümüş, 2017).

Güngörmüş- Özkardeşler (2012), in Turkey on the studies that investigate practices related to the special learning disability, the group can provide the most benefit from mainstream education of individuals with special learning disability but because of the lack of information implies that students could not provide enough benefits from the training. In the education of these individuals, it is necessary to use individualized education programs, support education services, in-class instructional adaptations, and parental involvement (Özyürek, 2009). Collaborative approaches are taken as a basis in the education of individuals with special learning disability. For this reason, the family, school, classroom teacher, and the teacher providing support education services should be in continuous and mutual communication and interaction (Sakallı- Gümüş, 2017).

When the role of the family is examined in literacy teaching, we come across the term family literacy. Family literacy refers to the family's being literate as well as the active participation of the child in the literacy process (Gül, 2007). When the studies on this subject are examined, it is seen that the literacy of the family contributes positively to the child's literacy learning (Akyol & Temur, 2008; Gül, 2007). The family and the teacher have different roles and responsibilities in the education of the child (Epstein, 1986). Families and teachers should work together to create a learning environment suitable for student learning (Çelenk, 2003). Including the family in the literacy, teaching process allows both the child to learn more easily and the learned information to be more permanent (Başal & Batu, 2002). Families doing reading studies with their children have a positive effect on children's literacy education (Senechal, Lefevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998).

On the other hand, the time that teachers can spare for students with learning difficulties in a course is limited. In this context, the inclusion of families in the process also saves time for the teacher. In addition, when the studies are examined, it is seen that teachers need family support both in the education of students with special needs and in the literacy teaching process (Başal & Batu, 2002; Gül, 2007). Sanır (2009), in his study on the difficulties faced by students who attend inclusive education in academic learning, stated that the participation of families in education will both contribute positively to the education of the student and provide support to the teacher by saving time for the teacher. Dadandi and Dadandi (2005), in their study with Turkish teachers of children with special learning disability; He emphasized that teachers need family support because the classrooms are crowded and these children forget what they have learned quickly, but they do not participate in the education of their children due to the fact that the families are ignorant and do not pay enough attention to the education of the children, and even children often return to school without doing their homework. Similarly, Uçgun (2003) in his study examining special learning disability in terms of teaching Turkish states that the role of family and teachers is very important in eliminating learning difficulties and that students with learning difficulties should receive appropriate training. In this context, it can be said that it is necessary for the family and the teacher to work in cooperation in the literacy learning process.

When the literature is examined, it has been observed that studies on participation in literacy education are generally limited to normal children and there are not enough studies on this subject regarding students with special needs (Gül, 2007). Individuals with special needs are generally one of the groups that need family participation the most. Families should be encouraged to participate in their child's literacy education. Participation of the family in education both contributes positively to the education of the student and supports the teacher by saving time (Sanır, 2009). In this context, the aim of the research is; It is the description of the current situation of parents' participation in the first literacy teaching process of students with special learning disability in line with the views of parents and teachers.

## Method

This research is designed as phenomenological research, one of the qualitative research methods. Phenomenology research is a qualitative research design that is used to have in-depth knowledge about the subject, situation, or actions (Patton, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The interview approach, which is frequently used in qualitative research, was used to collect data in the study. The interview is a data collection approach in which the opinions of the source person about the subject, situation, or action are taken with their expressions (Glesne, 2012; Patton, 2014).

### Participants

While determining the participants of the study, the criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used. Criterion sampling is the study of situations that meet a set of criteria previously determined or determined by the researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The criteria determined for parents who are the participants of the research; having a child in the first literacy and writing teaching process diagnosed with a special learning disability and being able to read and write. The criteria for the teachers who make up another participant group of the study; are determined as the teacher of a student with special learning disability.

In qualitative research, the number of participants is selected according to the research question, the time frame of the study and the available resources, and it is acceptable to collect data from a limited number of participants who can best describe the group when working with special groups (Nastasi, 2015). Although there is no clear formula that can be used when determining the number of participants in qualitative studies, the researcher can stop the data collection process when he/she thinks that data saturation has been reached. In this research, detailed descriptions were tried to be made by conducting key information interviews. In addition, the opinions of teachers and families who played a role in the literacy education process were included and diversified in terms of data sources.

The participants of this study are four parents with a child diagnosed with special learning disability and their teachers who meet the above-mentioned criteria and volunteer to participate in the study. In order to protect the ethical values, the names of the participants will be hidden and in the following parts of the study, parents will be mentioned as P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>3</sub>, P<sub>4</sub> and teachers as T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>3</sub>, T<sub>4</sub>. Demographic information about participating parents is presented in Table 1.

As seen in Table 1, the participating parents are mothers of children with special learning disability; their ages range between 28 and 41; two of them are primary

school graduates, one is a secondary school, one is a high school graduate. Table 2 contains demographic information about participating teachers.

According to Table 2, their ages vary between 35 and 51, and two of the teachers are male and two are female. Three of the teachers are graduates of primary school teaching and one is a graduate of a special education teaching department, and their professional experience varies between 10 and 24 years.

### Data Collection Tools

In the research, semi-structured interview forms were developed by the researcher as a means of collecting data to conduct interviews with parents and teachers. While developing the interview forms, the relevant literature was first reviewed, and an item pool was created. Then, in order to ensure the content validity of the forms expert opinion from a curriculum and instruction, and assessment and evaluation, a special education field expert was taken, and necessary revisions are made in accordance with expert opinion. Then, the draft forms created were applied with a parent (who had a child with special learning disability in the first literacy teaching process) and a teacher (who gave education to a student with special learning disability), who showed similar characteristics to the participant group of the study, and a pilot study was conducted. In line with the pilot study findings, the interview forms were revised and finalized. The parent interview form consists of nine items and probe questions. In the interview form; expectations of the parents from the education of their child, the strengths and weaknesses experienced by the parents in the education of their child, the people/institutions they receive support, the status of their child's participation in their education, the subjects they need to learn, etc. questions are included. The teacher interview form consists of five items and probe questions, and the form includes questions about the student's performance, the

Table 1. Demographic information on participating parents

Participating Parent	Proximity Status	Age	Educational Status
P <sub>1</sub>	Mother	29	Primary School
P <sub>2</sub>	Mother	28	Middle School
P <sub>3</sub>	Mother	34	Primary School
P <sub>4</sub>	Mother	41	High school

Table 2. Demographic information on participating teachers

Participating Teachers	Age	Gender	Educational Status	Professional Experience
T <sub>1</sub>	51	Female	Department of Primary Education/ Undergraduate	24 Year
T <sub>2</sub>	35	Male	Department of Special Education/ Undergraduate	11 Year
T <sub>3</sub>	40	Male	Department of Primary Education/ Undergraduate	15 Year
T <sub>4</sub>	35	Female	Department of Primary Education / Undergraduate	10 Year

support the teacher needs in the literacy education process, the attitude of the family to participate in education, and the help that the family expects to receive from the family.

### ***Research Environment and Process***

This research was carried out in a private education institution operating for 11 years in a city center in the Central Anatolia Region in the 2018-2019 academic year. Parent and teacher interviews within the scope of the study were conducted in the guidance counselor interview room on the third floor of the institution. There is a book cabinet, a table, and three armchairs in the counselor interview room.

The researcher and the participant were found to be one-to-one during the agreed interviews with the parents and teachers to be interviewed on the appropriate day and time. Participants were informed about the purpose and scope of the study, and their written consent was obtained through the informed consent form that they were willing to participate in the study. The interviews were recorded with a voice recorder and there was no time limit during the interview. The interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes.

### ***Validity and Reliability***

Although some measures need to be taken to ensure validity and reliability in qualitative research, there are many methods that can be used for this purpose (Patton, 2014). Expert opinions were consulted in order to ensure the content validity of the study. The criterion sampling technique was used while determining the participants of the study. Criteria sampling; It contributes to increasing validity in terms of revealing the variability and diversity of events, facts, or situations examined within the scope of qualitative research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Another measure is taken to ensure validity and reliability is making detailed descriptions. A detailed description of the research environment, participants, and participant expressions increase validity in terms of qualitative research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In addition, voice recordings were taken in order to prevent data loss within the scope of the research, and characteristics such as facial expressions, intonation, tone of voice, and body language of the participants were taken into consideration when deciphering the data. In the findings section of the study, the validity of the research results was supported by using direct participant expressions.

### ***Data Analysis***

In the analysis of the data obtained from the research, the descriptive analysis technique, which is frequently used in qualitative research, was used. Descriptive analysis is a data analysis method that enables qualitative data to be presented to the reader in an organized,

interpreted, open and systematic manner (Glesne, 2012; Patton, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The audio recordings of the interviews made with the participants within the scope of the research were transformed into a written format on the Microsoft Office Word program. These decipher were loaded into the MAXQDA qualitative data analysis program and analyzed by grouping similar participant expressions. In addition, quotations were made by selecting sample participant expressions. Processed data; using the matrix browser feature of the MAXQDA program, it is presented directly by including participant expressions along with graphs and maps.

## **Results**

In this study, the opinions of the participating parents and teachers were taken in order to describe the current state of parental involvement in the first literacy teaching process of students with special learning disability. Under this heading, findings regarding interviews with parents and teachers are presented.

### ***Interviews with Parents***

In the interviews with the parents, questions were asked about the positive/negative situations that children encounter in the literacy education process, the child's expectations from education, the areas in which the child participates in his education, and the subjects he/she needs to learn. It was observed that parents had both positive and negative experiences in their children studying, establishing social relationships, and communicating with their teachers. While the most frequently stated positive situation was communication with the teacher, the most frequently stated negative situation was studying.

When parents were asked about the sources of positive/negative situations encountered in their children's education, they stated that the positive situations related to course work were due to the advancement of their academic skills, while the negative situations were due to their academic skills and learning difficulties and difficulties in doing homework. Parents stated that the positive situation of social relations depends on the child's making friends and increasing social acceptance in the classroom environment. He emphasizes that negative situations depend on the child's inability to make friends. According to parental opinions, while the positive situations experienced in communication with the teacher are the source of the child's better compliance with the school rules, ensuring the child's school attendance and advances in teacher-student- parent communication; Inadequate student-teacher communication and inadequate teacher-parent cooperation are the sources of negative situations (Figure 1).

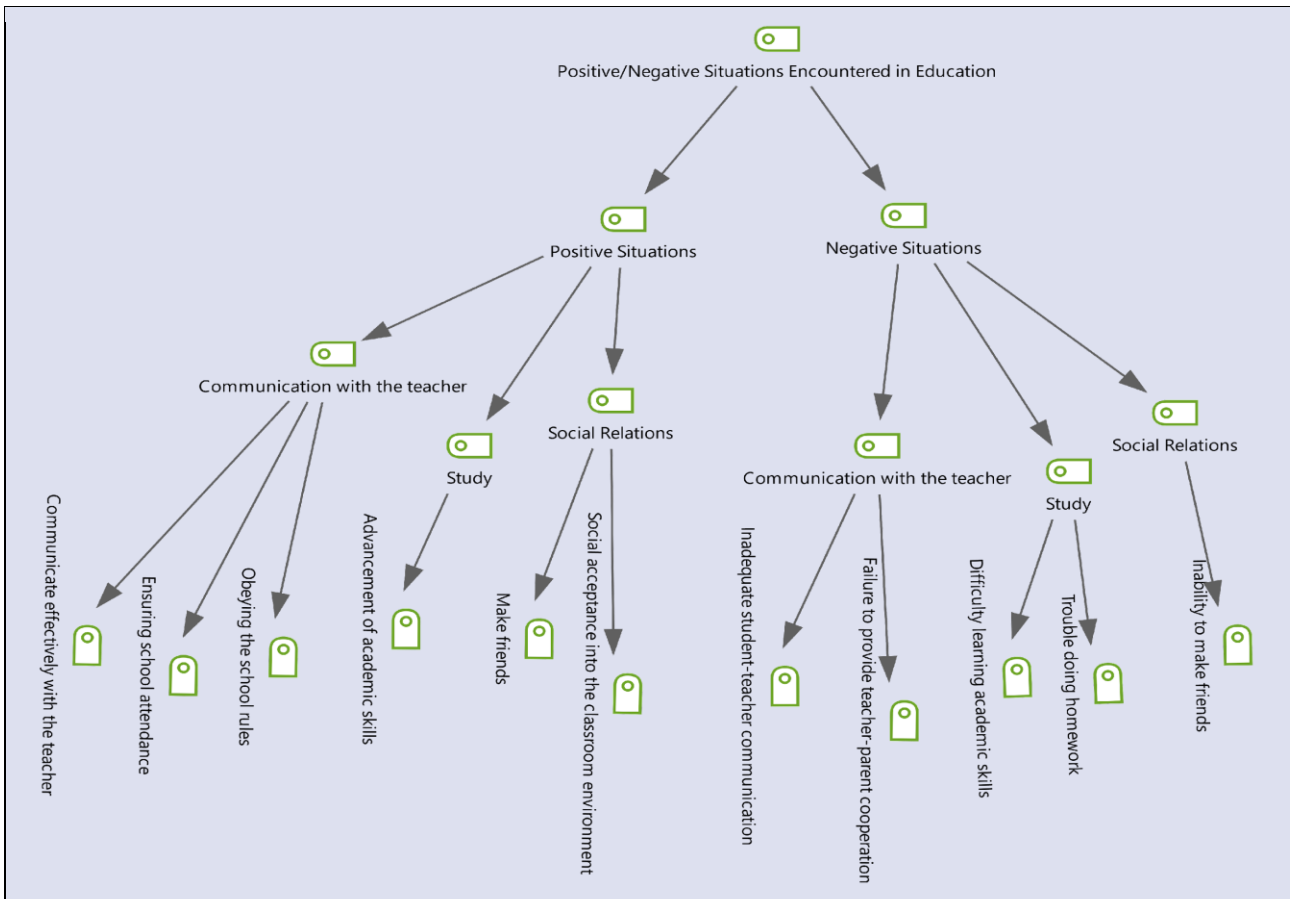


Figure 1. Positive/ negative situations encountered in child's education and their sources

Parents have the most positive experiences of communicating with the teacher. According to the parents, the communication between the teachers and their children enabled their children to develop positive behaviors. A parent states that he has difficulties in communicating with the teacher and that the classroom teacher labels the child due to his disability.

*Our classroom teacher was very good, a very maternal teacher, never excluded my child. He defended him alongside his friends. He listened very carefully to everything he said. He listened patiently, although he could not. (P<sub>4</sub>)*

*So always as a bad student. So, for example, let's say if he could read and write, it would be normal even if he was misbehaving. Because even if literate students misbehave, they are calm. Because (according to the classroom teacher) my son is naughty. He is naughty because he is illiterate (according to the classroom teacher). He always seems to be a bad student. (P<sub>3</sub>)*

Participating parents generally have difficulties in studying with their children. They state that their children have a lot of difficulties while doing their daily homework and this situation is reflected in them as well. In addition, participating parents see the length of time their children do homework as a negative situation.

*In the negative situation, we are doing homework very difficult. He doesn't want it at all. He doesn't*

*want it because he failed. It is not happening. I'm a little angry too. So, I want him to do it as a mother. When he can't do it, I get angry. I get upset afterward, but I'm very angry. But I regret it. (P<sub>1</sub>)*  
*Let's say he came from school; he eats his food first. Let's do homework, son, for example, he opened the notebook. He stops for five minutes, says mom bored, writes again, writes two lines, and wanders again. So, it spreads over four hours. (P<sub>3</sub>)*

Another positive situation experienced by participating parents is the increase in social acceptance of their children in the classroom environment. The main reason for this situation is explained as the teacher's positive attitude and behavior towards the child with special learning disability.

*He is a very good student now, and he is very popular at school. Relationship with very good friends. His friends love it very much. When they don't see my child but only see me, they all come; "Where is our friend?" When they see my child, they lift it right away; "What do you want? What shall we do? What do you want to play?" They ask everything to my child. So, they did not exclude. Although illiterate, they did not exclude a person inferior to them. (P<sub>4</sub>)*

Within the scope of the study, the expectations of the participating parents about their children's literacy education were determined through semi-structured

interviews. According to the analysis results, participating parents have expectations of being literate (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>3</sub>, P<sub>4</sub>), acquiring a profession (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>3</sub>, P<sub>4</sub>), maintaining daily life (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>4</sub>), and being an independent individual (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>3</sub>).

When the research findings are examined, it is seen that all parents participating in the research have expectations for their children to be literate and to acquire a profession. Another participant stated that he had an expectation that his child would learn to read and write and catch up with his peers.

*My most expectation is, how can I tell you, let him have a profession. So, I really want this about my child. Why do I want him to see us as an example to him? You know, his father is a worker, after all, in a factory. In this period, I cannot make a living*

*with the minimum wage, and I want him to save himself from the minimum wage at most. (P<sub>2</sub>)*  
*I want him to catch up with his friends, but if his friends read ninety words per minute, my child doesn't have that. I want at least forty-five words to catch up to sixty words. I don't want his friends to read it serially and I don't want him to stammer. That's my first request right now. I want my child to reach that level. (P<sub>4</sub>)*

In the semi-structured interview with the parents, the areas in which their children participated in their education were asked. The areas where parents participate in the education of their children are presented in Figure 2.

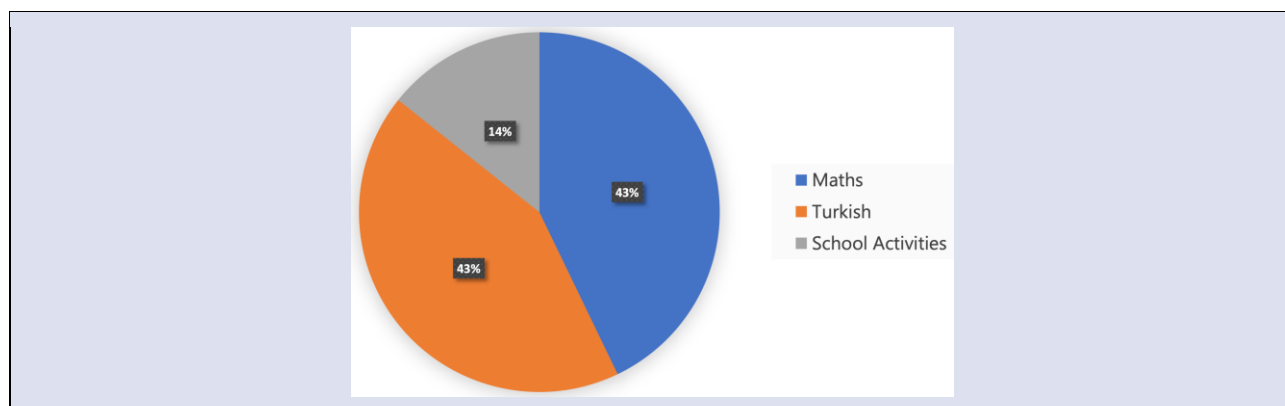


Figure 2. Fields in which parents participate in the education of children with special learning disability

As can be seen in the figure above, parents participate in their children's education mostly in literacy and mathematics. One of the participating parents (P<sub>2</sub>) stated that he attended and took part in certain days and weeks of activities organized at the school.

*For example, I have been running the April 23 show for my friends for a month. He said that this is my mother. He said this is my mother's name. "Mom, will you come?" he asks me. I did not go because I went to the last hospital, but she was upset that my mother did not come. The other friend ran it. Because he is stubborn, he does not listen to anyone else much. But he likes it very much because I participate. (P<sub>2</sub>)*

All of the participating parents stated that they wanted to participate in training for the literacy education of their children. Parents state that they have not participated in family education before, only to attend brief seminar-style information meetings held from time to time at the general education school. Within the scope of the study, parents were asked about the subjects their children needed to learn in order to participate in literacy training.

When the research findings are examined, in order for the participating parents to participate in the literacy education of children with special learning disability; It is seen that they need to gain knowledge and skills related to literacy studies (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>3</sub>, P<sub>4</sub>), general teaching principles (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>3</sub>) and special learning disability (P<sub>3</sub>, P<sub>4</sub>).

It is seen that the participants mostly want to acquire knowledge and skills about doing literacy activities. Parents stated that they had difficulties due to the difference between the method in which their children learned to read and write and the method in which their children learned to read and write and that they had learning requirements for the application of the sound-based sentence method. Another area that parents need to learn is general teaching principles. Participants stated that they generally had difficulties while teaching new things to their children or doing homework and that they had learning requirements on this subject.

*We learned with the plug method. We hadn't learned to make sounds. Now they have noises. The child is learning with them. For example, I would like to know where letters came from, how they fit into a word. For example, if I knew them, I would teach my child well. (P<sub>3</sub>)*

*My child learns letters, joins, constructs sentences. To read it without spelling anymore. Most of all, I want him to read his books independently of me. So, don't be addicted to me anymore. Education is a must for me in this direction. So, for me to know what to do, it is essential in this direction. (P<sub>4</sub>)*

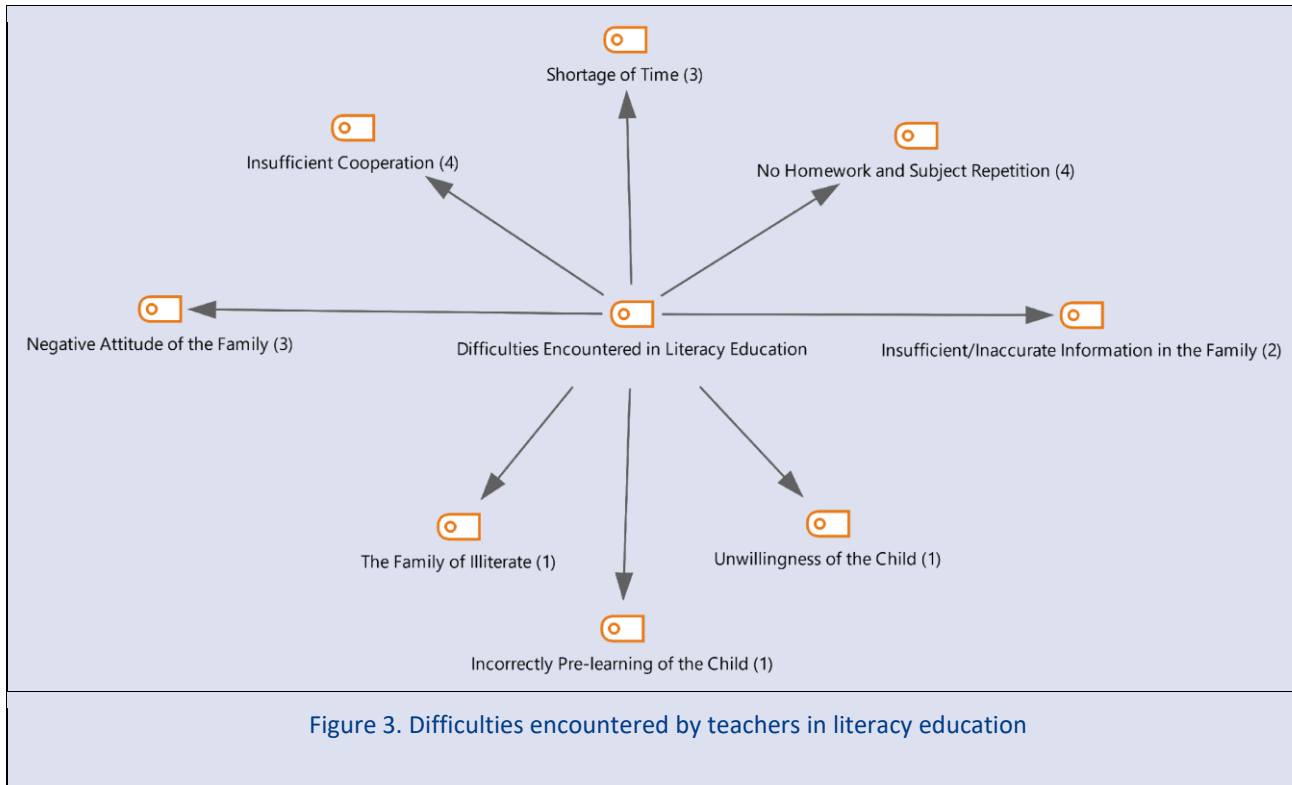
*The order of the letters in reading and writing. I would like to learn how to print them, combine them... All of these. (P<sub>1</sub>)*

For example, I want my child to be injured. While lecturing, I expect him to sit and do lectures with enthusiasm. For example, I do not want him to cry and teach. He also has difficulties when he does the lesson by crying, and I also have difficulties. We do not understand anything from the lesson we do. He gets angry, sometimes I get angry too. (P<sub>3</sub>)

### Interviews with Teachers

In the interviews with the teachers, questions were asked about the difficulties encountered in literacy

education, their expectations from families in the literacy education process, and their expectations from the family education program. According to the findings obtained from teacher interviews, teachers report inadequate cooperation, the unwillingness of the child, family not having homework/repetition, families not being literate, the negative approach of the family, the unwillingness of the child, erroneous pre-learning of the child and lack of time. The situations where teachers experience the most difficulties are inadequate cooperation and family not doing homework again (Figure 3).



When Figure 3 is examined, it is seen that teachers mostly have problems in insufficient cooperation and family repeat / not having homework. Teachers state that cooperation should be established between the general education class teacher, the support education class teacher, and the family. Teachers sometimes have a problem of cooperation with the general education classroom teacher. T<sub>3</sub> draws attention to the constructive role of the family in such situations with the following statements.

There are problems (with) the teacher at school. He is not preparing IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for the child. Mom goes back and forth all the time. The teacher also does not accept the interview. The mother is the intermediary between us. I mean, it's just whatever's working with the kid here. How much progress can fourth grader progress in two hours a week? Even if he writes at least one page in the other school, it is even helpful. But we could not establish that communication ..... These kinds of children are spent in schools. Some teachers are

very interested. They reveal themselves anyway. They meet and cooperate with us. I repeat what he taught; I am teaching something else. It is not a problem. But when there is no communication, the child gets in the way. This is where parents will come into play. My student is in the fourth grade. Whatever I do, I cannot train the classroom. No way. But if the family participates then it can happen. (T<sub>3</sub>)

All of the participating teachers stated that the family's failure to do homework and repetition has negative reflections on the education of the child. In addition, teachers believe that doing the child's homework by the mother does not contribute to the child's literacy education.

We work here, I prepare special materials. But the next lesson is half gone. So, he forgot. Of course, I do not expect miracles, but it is difficult when there is no more at home. So, it would be better if the parents put in a little more effort, at least the homework was complete. (T<sub>1</sub>)

*Let them do their homework accurately and completely. Do not let the children (mothers) do their homework. I don't know if you met that mother. .... there is our student. The mother is always doing her homework. This should not happen. It doesn't work like that. Let them repeat as we taught. (T<sub>3</sub>)*

Another area where participating teachers have problems is the negative approach of the family. Teachers are of the opinion that the negative approach of the family may lead to behavioral problems in the child. Teachers also stated that the family's inadequate/incorrect information has negative reflections on literacy education, and they expect the family to guide the child with the right methods.

*Let them understand their children. Do not compare his child like this or that. Then the boy gets angry. This time we are also dealing with behavioral problems. (T<sub>3</sub>)*

*So, they shouldn't do it as they know it. As I said when teaching sounds, they shouldn't say "se". I spend my "ssss, sss" breathing throughout the lesson if the student comes, see. So really. I want them to show it right to their kids. (T<sub>1</sub>)*

In this study, teachers were asked about their expectations from families in the literacy education process. According to the findings obtained from the interviews with the teachers, teachers in the literacy education process from families; It is seen that they have expectations about cooperating (T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>3</sub>, T<sub>4</sub>), repeating the topic (T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>3</sub>), guiding the child to do homework (T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>3</sub>), reading books with the child (T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>), positive communication with the child (T<sub>3</sub>), transferring the lessons learned to life (T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>4</sub>), motivating the child (T<sub>4</sub>), providing feedback to the child and teacher, and being a positive model for the child (T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>4</sub>).

Participating teachers state that they most frequently have expectations about cooperation. In addition, teachers stated that family-child-teacher cooperation should be strong. Another point regarding teachers' expectations is that the family motivates the child to learn, and they state that it is wrong for the family to try to motivate their child to just acquire/buy something.

*Unfortunately, we cannot get that support. Families throw the job to the teacher. They want the child to be all right immediately, read and write. My teacher, for example, a new student started last week. Parents came talking, how long he reads, does this. I listened and stopped. Then I said we don't have a magic wand. So, I take it to school like that, my motherhood and fatherhood duty is not okay. They, too, should put their hands under the stone. So, every child is different, though. This is like a haircut. Teacher kid family. There will be all three. Without one, the teacher is not enough. (T<sub>2</sub>)*

*When we say to motivate them, what comes to mind is materiality. Sir, I bought this, I got this. These are not what we want. This time we're*

*raising kids who don't like anything. This is not our aim either. (T<sub>4</sub>)*

In addition, teachers expressed the opinion that families should read books with their children and that this situation will serve the child to gain reading habit. Another expectation of participating teachers is that families guide the child to do his / her homework in a timely and correct manner. T<sub>2</sub> expresses this expectation for the family as follows:

*Another subject is homework. So again, is a must. Not just to get the kid to do homework. We give homework to the child to reinforce the issues here. I am waiting for homework on time. (T<sub>2</sub>)*

During the interviews with the participating teacher, questions were asked about the family education program for the participation of families in the literacy education process. Although all of the teachers emphasized the need for family participation in the literacy education process and for families to receive education on this issue, they stated that they did not give such an education to parents before.

## Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications

In the research, opinions of parents and teachers were consulted through semi-structured interviews. Thus, the difficulties encountered by parents and teachers in the literacy education process of the child with special learning disability were examined and the current situation was described. According to the findings of the interviews with the parents; in the education of the child, it is observed that they experience both positive and negative situations in terms of studying behavior, social relations, and communication with the teacher. When the findings are examined, the difficulties experienced by the parents regarding their children's study behaviors stand out. Special learning disability; it is characterized as a learning disorder that occurs in the areas of literacy and/or mathematics (APA, 2013). It is known that there is a positive relationship between working skills and academic achievement (Thomas, 1993). In this case, it is necessary to improve the study skills of children with special learning disability who have difficulties in learning academic skills. Thomas (1993) in his research on study habits; emphasizes the necessity of including individuals with special needs in educational activities and gaining these individuals the habits of studying. In this regard, the teacher of the child plays a role primarily, but the family should also support their studying habits at home and be a model for their child (Kesiktaş, 2006).

Another finding that emerged in the study is related to the social relations of the child with special learning disability. Parents emphasize that their children have problems in social relations in the school environment and in some cases, they can overcome this problem with the support of teachers. Children with special learning disability can be found as mainstreaming students in normal education classes. However, it is important for the child to benefit from supportive education services and to



integrate with their peers for this mainstreaming application to be successful. There are studies in the literature on the social acceptance of mainstreaming students. Güteryüz (2009), in his research examining the relations of mainstreaming students with their peers; concluded that mainstreaming students were unable to establish friendship relations, could not express themselves well enough, and were exposed to exclusion and violence by their peers. Kabasakal, Girli, Okun, Çelik, and Vardarlı (2008), in their studies with 329 students, aiming to determine the peer relationships of mainstreaming students using "sociometry" and "who is it" methods; she concluded that mainstreaming students were not chosen by their peers to do an activity and that they were generally perceived as problematic in adaptation and communication. Sucuoğlu and Özokçu (2005) conducted their research with 613 students in which they examined the social skills of mainstreaming students. Findings obtained from the research; it is that mainstreaming students have lower academic and social skills and higher behavioral problems than their peers. Sucuoğlu and Özokçu (2005) also recommend the development and implementation of social skills development programs for inclusive students.

Many factors affect the social acceptance of a child with special needs in the classroom environment. In this study, it was stated by the parents who participated in the study that the teacher had a positive role in increasing the social acceptance of the child with special learning disability. It is thought that the positive attitude of the teacher in the classroom environment, which is a small reflection of the society, and the provision of a healthy communication environment for the inclusion student with their peers will serve these children to be happy and socially accepted individuals in the future (Sart, Ala, Yaz, & Yılmaz, 2004).

In this study, the expectations of parents from their child's education were also examined. According to the findings, mothers' children; expects him to become literate, acquire a profession, maintain his daily life and become an independent individual. Parents may have very high or very low expectations from the education of their children with special needs (Bedel, 2017). In addition, Özmen and Çetinkaya (2012) found in their research that parents of children with special needs have high levels of anxiety about the future of their children. In these cases, it is recommended to organize family training in order to reduce both the anxiety level of the family and to set realistic goals for the child (Bedel, 2017).

According to the findings obtained from parent interviews, it was observed that parents participated in their children's education mostly in Turkish and mathematics. A parent participates in their child's school activities. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), parents' involvement in Turkish and mathematics at home is learning at home; participation in school activities, on the other hand, indicates the status of participating in education as a school supporter. It can be thought that, as children with special learning disability have learning

difficulties in Turkish and mathematics, parents prefer to participate in education in the form of learning at home more.

Within the scope of this research, the subjects that parents need to learn about the literacy education process; it has been observed that there are literacy studies, general teaching principles, and special learning disability. In the first literacy process, families should be provided with information support (Özbaş, 2013; Ölmez, 2017). In Özcan and Özcan (2016) research; he concluded that there were difficulties in the first literacy process due to the families' ignorance, not knowing the education system and indifference. This result supports the finding obtained in the study. Another issue that parents need to learn about is their children's special learning disability. Parents of individuals with special needs should recognize the disability of their child and have information about their characteristics. In the Ministry of Education (2011) research report on the evaluation of family education practices in special education schools, it is emphasized that issues related to the family's recognition of the child's disability should be added to family education programs. Similarly, Sanır (2009) and Şanlı (2012) state that families need to be informed about the disability of their children.

In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers. With the interviews, the needs of the teachers in the literacy education process of the child with special learning disability were determined and the current situation was described. According to the findings obtained from teacher interviews; teachers in the literacy education of children with special learning disability; reported that the family had difficulties because of not having homework and repeat exercises, insufficient or wrong knowledge of the family, insufficient cooperation, negative family approach, lack of time, erroneous preliminary learning of the child, the unwillingness of the child, and the families' illiteracy. Ay and Aydoğdu (2016) interviewed 100 classroom teachers in their study to determine classroom teachers' views on family participation. According to the results obtained; it has been observed that teachers lean towards family participation outside the classroom in teaching academic skills and do not participate in the education adequately due to their insufficient knowledge of parents' attitudes towards their children, program, and family participation. Berkant and Atılğan (2017) in their study aims to determine the problems faced by classroom teachers in inclusive education; it was concluded that teachers had difficulties with family illiteracy, communication, and ignorance. This situation coincides with the findings of the research that the family has insufficient or wrong information, and the families are illiterate. It is known that misinformation of families harms children's literacy education (Ölmez, 2017). It can be said that the insufficient or inaccurate information the family has about the literacy process is also prevented from accessing the family support that teachers expect and is perceived as a problem for teachers.

Another finding that emerged in the study is that the family does not do homework and repeat it. Repetition is of great importance in the literacy acquisition process (Bilir, 2005). Kanmaz (2007), in his research conducted with teachers on the first literacy education process, concluded that families have more roles and responsibilities in the literacy education process with the sound-based sentence method. Similarly, in the research of Bıçak and Kırmızı (2013); it was concluded that the family should take roles and responsibilities in the literacy education process with the sound-based sentence method, the child should repeat what they learned, and do their homework. The family should support their child's literacy skills at home by having homework and repetition in the literacy education process. In this respect, it can be thought that the problem teachers experience with homework and repetition makes the literacy education process of the child difficult. Participating teachers stated that they also had difficulties due to lack of time. Similarly, Başal and Batu (2002) emphasize the necessity of family participation in the literacy education process due to the limited time spent by the student at school.

According to the findings obtained from the interviews conducted within the scope of this research, teachers' expectations from families in the literacy education process; collaborating, repeating the topic and doing homework, reading books together, communicating positively with the child, and transferring what has been learned to daily life. In the literacy education process, cooperation with the family and participation of the family in the education of their child is a necessity (Sorani-Villanueva, McMahon, Crouch, & Keys, 2014; Sadioğlu, Bilgin, Batu, & Oksal, 2013; Sanır 2009; Özbaş, 2013; Yıldırım & Dönmez, 2008) and the participation of families in the literacy education process of the child helps the child to improve his literacy level (Başal & Batu, 2002). Teachers emphasized that families should participate in the literacy education process of children with special learning disability and families should receive education on this issue. They also stated that they had not organized any training for families before.

All parents who make up the participant group of this research are the mother of the child. This situation is seen as a limitation in terms of research. Another limitation of the study is that illiterate parents were excluded from the scope of the study. In future research, studies can be conducted on the participation of the father and the role of illiterate parents in the literacy process.

In the light of the findings of the study, the recommendations for parental participation in the literacy education of the child with special learning disability are as follows: According to the findings of the interview with participating parents, it was observed that the parents participated in the education of the child mostly in Turkish and mathematics. Teachers can organize activities that will enable parents to participate in the education of their children in different areas. According to the expressions of the participants, there are difficulties in communication between parents and teachers in the education of

children with special learning disability. Parents stated that they felt inadequate to cope with the difficulties encountered in the education of the child with special learning disability. Teachers can cooperate with families and inform families about the difficulties encountered in the education of the child. In this study, teachers stated that they had difficulties in communicating and cooperating with the family. Teachers' communication and cooperation with the family and the characteristics and needs of children with special learning disability, etc. Sustainable in-service training can be organized to increase their knowledge and skills. In addition, teachers can encourage families in this regard and inform families about different communication techniques.

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## Genişletilmiş Özet

### Giriş

Özel öğrenme güçlüğü okuma, yazma ve aritmetik alanların bir ya da bir kaçında görülen bir bozukluk olup (APA, 2013) en fazla sıklıkla okuma alanında görüldüğü bilinmektedir. Özel öğrenme güçlüğü yaşayan bireyler kaynaştırma eğitiminden en fazla faydayı görebilecek grup olarak görülmelerine rağmen bilgi yetersizliğinden ötürü bazı güçlüklerle karşılaşmaktadır (Güngörmüş-Özkardeşler, 2012). Bu bireylerin eğitimden yeterli faydayı sağlamak adına eğitimlerinde bireyselleştirilmiş eğitim programlarının kullanılması, destek eğitim hizmetlerinin, sınıf içi öğretim uyarlamalarının ve aile katılımının sağlanması gerekmektedir (Özyürek, 2009). Özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan bireylerin eğitiminde işbirlikçi yaklaşımlar esas alınmaktadır. Bu nedenle aile, okul, sınıf öğretmeni ve destek eğitim hizmeti veren öğretmen sürekli ve

karşılıklı iletişim ve etkileşim içinde olmalıdır (Sakallı-Gümüş, 2017).

Okuma yazma öğretiminde ailenin rolü incelendiğinde karşımıza aile okuryazarlığı kavramı çıkmaktadır. Aile okuryazarlığı, ailenin okuryazar olmasının yanı sıra çocuğun okuryazarlık sürecine aktif katılımını ifade eder (Gül, 2007). Bu konuda yapılan çalışmalar ailenin okuryazarlığının çocuğun okuma yazma öğrenmesine olumlu katkı sağladığını desteklemektedir (Akyol ve Temur, 2008; Gül, 2007). Çocuğun eğitiminde aile ve öğretmenin farklı rol ve sorumlulukları vardır (Epstein, 1986). Öğrencilerin öğrenmesine uygun bir öğrenme ortamı oluşturmak için aileler ve öğretmenler birlikte çalışmalıdır (Çelenk, 2003).

Alanyazın incelendiğinde okuma yazma eğitime katılım ile ilgili çalışmaların genellikle normal çocuklarla sınırlı olduğu ve bu konuda özel gereksinimli öğrencilere yönelik yeterli çalışmanın olmadığı görülmektedir (Gül, 2007). Özel gereksinimli bireyler genellikle aile katılımına en çok ihtiyaç duyan gruplardan biridir. Aileler, çocuklarının okuma yazma eğitime katılmaya teşvik edilmelidir. Ailenin eğitime katılımı hem öğrencinin eğitimine olumlu katkı sağlamakta hem de öğretmene zamandan tasarruf sağlayarak destek olmaktadır (Sanır, 2009). Bu bağlamda araştırmanın amacı; özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan öğrencilerin okuma yazma öğrenme sürecine ebeveyn katılımını ebeveyn ve öğretmen görüşlerine dayalı olarak incelemektir.

### Yöntem

Bu çalışma fenomenolojik araştırma olarak tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcıları belirlenirken seçkisiz olmayan örnekleme tekniklerinden biri olan ölçüt örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Bu bağlamda araştırmanın katılımcıları özel öğrenme güçlüğü yaşayan dört çocuğun ebeveyni ve sınıf öğretmeninden oluşmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak görüşme tekniği kullanılmış olup veri toplama sürecinde öğretmen ve ebeveyn görüşmeleri yapılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde MAXQDA nitel veri analiz programı kullanılarak betimsel analiz yapılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler kod haritaları ve direk katılımcı ifadeleri eşliğinde sunulmuştur.

### Sonuç

Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre ebeveynler, okuma yazma eğitimi sürecinde çocuğun akademik becerileri öğrenmede yaşadığı güçlükler ve isteksizliği nedeniyle olumsuz deneyimler yaşadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Öte yandan öğretmenler, çocuğun okuryazarlık eğitimi sürecinde öğretmen-ebeveyn iletişim ve iş birliğinin yetersiz olması, ailelerin sahip olduğu yetersiz ve yanlış bilgiler nedeniyle aileden bekledikleri desteği alamadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca öğretmenler, ailelerle iş birliği yapmaları ve aileden çocuklarının ödevlerini yapmalarına yardımcı olmaları ve evde çocuklarıyla birlikte çalışmalarını tekrar etmelerini gerektiğini

belirtmişlerdir. Ebeveynler ise çocuklarının eğitimine katılabilmeleri için özel öğrenme güçlüğü, ses temelli cümle yöntemleri ve öğretim ilkeleri hakkında bilgi ve beceri kazanmaları gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin tamamı okuma yazma eğitimi sürecinde ebeveyn katılımının ve ailelerin bu konuda eğitim alması gerektiğini vurgulasalar da daha önce ebeveynlere böyle bir eğitim vermediklerini ifade etmişlerdir.

### Tartışma

Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre hem ebeveynler hem de öğretmenler özel öğrenme güçlüğü yaşayan öğrencinin okuma yazma eğitimi sürecinde işbirliğinin önemine vurgu yapmaktadır. Ancak bu konuda yapılan çalışmaların sınırlılığı dikkat çekmektedir. Ayrıca bu araştırmanın katılımcı grubunu oluşturan tüm ebeveynler çocuğun annesidir. Bu durum araştırma açısından bir sınırlılık olarak görülmektedir. Araştırmanın bir diğer sınırlılığı ise okuma yazma bilmeyen anne-babaların araştırma kapsamı dışında tutulmuş olmasıdır. İleride yapılacak araştırmalarda babanın eğitime katılımı ve okuma yazma bilmeyen ebeveynlerin okuryazarlık sürecindeki rolü üzerine çalışmalar yapılabilir.

### Öneri

Araştırmanın katılımcısı konumundaki ebeveyn ve öğretmen ifadelerine göre özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan çocukların eğitiminde aile ve öğretmenler arasında iletişimde güçlükler yaşanmaktadır. Ebeveynler, özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan çocuğun eğitiminde karşılaşılan zorluklarla baş etmede kendilerini yetersiz hissettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenler ailelerle işbirliği yapabilir ve çocuğun eğitiminde karşılaşılan zorluklar hakkında aileleri bilgilendirebilir. Bu araştırmada öğretmenler aile ile iletişim ve işbirliğinde güçlük çektiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin, aile ile iletişim ve işbirliği ve özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan çocukların özellikleri ve ihtiyaçları konularında bilgi ve becerilerinin artırılmasına yönelik sürdürülebilir hizmet içi eğitimler düzenlenebilir. Ayrıca öğretmenler bu konuda aileleri teşvik edebilir ve farklı iletişim teknikleri konusunda aileleri bilgilendirebilir.

### Araştırmanın Etik Taahhüt Metni

Yapılan bu çalışmada bilimsel, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulduğu; toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifatın yapılmadığı, karşılaşılabilecek tüm etik ihlallerde "Cumhuriyet Uluslararası Eğitim Dergisi ve Editörünün" hiçbir sorumluluğunun olmadığı, tüm sorumluluğun Sorumlu Yazara ait olduğu ve bu çalışmanın herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiş olduğu sorumlu yazar tarafından taahhüt edilmiştir.