

## An Overview of Reverse Inclusion: A Qualitative Study

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### Abstract

*This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of reverse inclusion, which is a pilot study in the place where the study was conducted, in line with the views of teachers, school principals and parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) and with typical developmental characteristics (TDC). Data were collected from a total of 46 participants (preschool teachers (N = 19); school principals (N = 3) working in the special education kindergarten included in the study and the parents whose children have attended this institution as students (N = 24; 16 parents of children with TDC; 8 parents of children with SEN through semi-structured interviews using maximum variation sampling and analyzed through Maxqda 11 program. Codes and themes were created by conducting the content analysis. Students with TDC could not progress in line with their speed, their learning was minimized and, they modelled and imitated the negative behaviors of their friends with SEN. Although it has contributed positively to socialization, participation in games and communication skills of the students with SEN, insufficient time and crowded classrooms to take care of their individualized education emerged as main problems. It is recommended that class sizes for reverse inclusive practices should be reduced.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive practices, Reverse inclusion, Pre-school education, Maxqda program, COREQ*

## Tersine Kaynaştırmaya Genel Bakış: Nitel Bir Çalışma

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### Öz

*Bu çalışma, özel eğitim gereksinimli (ÖEG) ve tipik gelişim özelliği gösteren (TGÖG) çocukların öğretmenlerinin, okul müdürlerinin ve ebeveynlerinin görüşleri doğrultusunda, çalışmanın yapıldığı yerde pilot bir uygulama olan tersine kaynaştırma uygulamalarının etkililiğini değerlendirmeyi amaçlamıştır. Araştırmaya dâhil edilen toplam 46 katılımcıdan (okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden (N = 19), özel eğitim anaokulunda çalışan okul müdürlerinden (N = 3) ve çocukları bu okula öğrenci olarak devam eden velilerden (N = 24; 16 TGÖG çocukların ebeveynleri; 8 ÖEG çocukların ebeveynleri ) maksimum çeşitlilik örnekleme kullanılarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla veriler toplanmış ve Maxqda 11 programı ile analiz edilmiştir. İçerik analizi yapılarak kodlar ve temalar oluşturulmuştur. TGÖG öğrencilerin hızları doğrultusunda ilerleyemedikleri, öğrenmelerinin en aza indirildiği ve ÖEG arkadaşlarının olumsuz davranışlarını model alıp taklit ettikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Tersine kaynaştırma uygulamaları ÖEG öğrencilerin sosyalleşmesine, oyunlara katılımına ve iletişim becerilerine olumlu katkı sağlasa da, yetersiz zaman ve kalabalık sınıflar bireyselleştirilmiş eğitimlerine gereken özenin gösterilememesinde temel sorunlar olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Dolayısıyla, tersine kaynaştırma uygulamalarında sınıflarda öğrenci sayılarının azaltılması tavsiye edilmektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Kaynaştırma uygulamaları, Tersine kaynaştırma, Okulöncesi eğitim, Maxqda programı, COREQ*

## Introduction

Individuals with special educational needs (SEN) differ significantly from their peers in terms of both individual characteristics and educational competences (Buford and Casey, 2012; Kahn and Lewis, 2014; Özgür, 2013). These individuals may be physically, mentally, emotionally or socially inadequate and therefore cannot benefit from general education services or have limited benefit, or maybe mentally advanced (gifted or talented) (Forrester, 2016; McCarty, 2006; Royster, Reglin, and Losike-Sedimo, 2014). Special education services are individually planned educational services for children who do not show typical developmental characteristics to acquire independent life skills to live in harmony with the society (Ataman, 2005; Forlin and Chambers, 2011; Hallahan and Kauffman, 2006; Kahn and Lewis, 2014; Özgür, 2013). Through these educational services, it is aimed to reveal the potential of the child as an individual and a member of the society and to enable him/her to lead an independent life (Farrell, 2009; Hallahan and Kauffman, 2006). On the other hand, countries are obliged to ensure that children with SEN have access to education in order to fulfil the universal principle of "education for all" (World Health Organization [WHO], 2011); the right of these children to participate in the general education system and to receive the individual support they need is defined by international conventions (i.e. The UNESCO Salamanca Statement, 1994; The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC], 1989; The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [CRPD], 2006 as cited in Katıtaş, 2019).

Education of children with SEN and their peers with typical developmental characteristics (TDC) takes place within the scope of inclusion (Batu and Kırcaali-İftar, 2011; Friend and Bursuck, 2006). In this context, inclusion is the practice of integrating children with SEN and their peers with TDC in the general education classes, which contain the least restrictive environments, to continue their education together with their peers (Acarlar, 2013; Batu, Kırcaali-İftar and Uzuner, 2004; Broderick, Mehta-Parekh and Reid, 2005; Farrell, 2009; Forlin and Chambers, 2011; McLeskey, Landers, Hoppey and Williamson, 2011; Özgür, 2013; Rafferty, Boettcher and Griffin, 2001; Sucuoğlu and Özokçu, 2005; Voltz, Brazil and Ford, 2001). Inclusive education requires recognizing and protecting the rights of all children and under-

standing human diversity as a rich resource (Cologon, 2013). In inclusive education, it is possible to talk about the process which aims to increase the participation of students with SEN and to reduce their exclusion from learning environments and from other peers (Booth, 1999; Nilholm, 2020). The greatest expectation during this process is explained as to provide social development of children with SEN and to increase the possibility of communication and interaction with their peers (De Boer, Pijl and Minnaert, 2011; Sloper and Tyler, 1992; Sucuoğlu and Özokçu, 2005). In this vein, Rudd (2002) stressed that the benefits of inclusive education were growth in social cognition, improvements in self-concept, and the opportunity to develop necessary social skills for developing reciprocal friendships as well as academic gains. On the other hand, according to Mesibov and Shea (1996), inclusive practices have the benefits as “increased expectations by teachers of the learning potential of included students, behavioral modelling of normally developing peers, more learning, more self-esteem, more accepting attitudes on the part of peers, and less isolation and stigma for disabled students and their families” (p. 338).

One of the key elements to social success for children with SEN is for them to be educated with their same-age peers (McDonnell, Thorson, Disher, Mathot-Buckner, Mendel and Ray, 2003; Sucuoğlu and Özokçu, 2005). Today, students with SEN are increasingly being educated in inclusive environments. These environments are places where children with and without identified SEN are educated or jointly participate in educational activities (Farrell, 2009; Özgür, 2013). In reverse inclusion preschool classrooms, both students with TDC and SEN participate as full-time class members in a special education setting (Schoger, 2006). The classroom consists of mostly students with SEN and a few peers with TDC (Alicı, 2018). Many research indicates that preschool integration and inclusive settings positively influence children with SEN, as well as children with TDC, and appears to have a long term effect (Alicı, 2018; Arı, 2015; Guralnick, 2001; Rafferty et al, 2001).

The notion of reverse inclusion was first introduced by Poorman (1980) who taught students with severe disabilities in a segregated classroom because integration was neither a benefit to the children with SEN nor TDC. However, the researcher felt it was important for children with SEN to experience outside interaction with their peers. Therefore, she created a concept called “reverse inclusion.” It involved bringing students with TDC into the

special education classroom who acted as tutors for the students with SEN. The tutors were to encourage and help if needed, children with SEN to complete assigned tasks and to complete them correctly. At the end of the first year, Poorman (1980) declared that “reverse inclusion worked, [and] it was an environment that special children could not help but learn” (p. 141). On the other hand, there were important outcomes that Poorman (1980) noted related to her investigation. First, the work of students with SEN improved. Social relationships between children with SEN and TDC developed outside the classroom. The whole school’s atmosphere appeared to have a more positive attitude toward each other and her students with SEN. Since Poorman’s (1980) investigation, researchers have looked further into a reverse inclusion classroom as an alternative placement for children with SEN.

Utilizing aspects of Poorman’s (1980) program, many researchers (e.g. Alici, 2018; Cormany 1994, Diamond and Carpenter, 2000) investigated reverse inclusion as a strategy providing an opportunity for developing social communication skills among students with SEN and TDC. All have concluded that preschool children with SEN enrolled in inclusive settings make at least as much progress on cognitive, language, motor, and social development as children in self-contained preschool special education classrooms.

### **Purpose and Importance of Research**

Reverse inclusion, which is a pilot study in Turkey and is applied in a limited number of special education kindergartens, mostly appears in the national literature as descriptive knowledge that is “a kind of practice included in the inclusive education” (Alici, 2018, p.14; Aral, Kandır and Can Yaşar, 2011, p.184; Arı, 2015, p.6; Doğru and Saltalı, 2009, p.175). Therefore, based on the fact that reverse inclusive practices are not widespread on a national basis and not knowing how the process works and its effect on students with both SEN and TDC, this study aims to provide in-depth information about reverse inclusive practices through the views of teachers, school principals, and parents from a pilot study school. This school is a public special education kindergarten where reverse inclusion is practiced as a pilot study to integrate children with moderate mental disabilities in the group of 37-66 months old children with TDC in the same environment. This kindergarten is an institu-

tion which operates in a double shift system to provide basic academic education that is suitable for the development of individuals who cannot benefit from normal education environments, equipping them with the knowledge and skills they will use in daily life and ensuring the adaptation of individuals with SEN to school environments with a sense of social responsibility. The school has five classrooms, 23 teachers and 85 students. Mixed classes consist of 15 students. Five of these students have special needs (Down syndrome, autism or moderate mental disability).

For this purpose, the following questions are addressed:

1. What are the views of teachers, school principals, and parents about the effectiveness of reverse inclusive practices?
2. What are the problems experienced by teachers, school principals and parents regarding reverse inclusive practices and what are their solution offers for these problems?
3. What are the suggestions and expectations of teachers, school principals, and parents about reverse inclusive practices?

## **Method**

This study is a qualitative case study used to determine the effectiveness of reverse inclusive practices. Case studies include an in-depth study of one or more situations; investigations of factors (such as environments, individuals, events, processes, etc.) with a holistic approach; and how these factors affect the relevant situation or how they are affected by the situation (Yin, 2003). The study was conducted under the guidelines of Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ) statement developed by Tong, Sainsbury, and Craig (2007) that guides researchers drawing on qualitative methods.

### ***Study Group***

After obtaining the necessary legal permission from the National Education Directorate of the province where the research was conducted, 23 teachers 3 principals and 45 parents were invited for the interview. However, 4 teachers and 21 parents refused to participate in the study. The reasons were not sought and the data were collected from the preschool teachers (N=19) and

the school principals (N=3) working in the special education kindergarten included in the study and the parents whose children have attended this institution as students (N=24; 16 parents of children with TDC; 8 parents of children with SEN) through semi-structured interviews using maximum variation sampling which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. Maximum variation sampling is based on the principle of introducing samples that reflect different situations to find and define the basic themes available in the population (Patton, 1987).

### *Data Collection Tool*

As data collection tools, Teacher Interview Form, Interview Form for School Principals and Interview Form for Parents were prepared by the researchers in the light of the literature and expert opinions (2 Associate Professors and 1 assistant professor in the field of Educational Sciences, 1 assistant professor with Ph.D. in special education and lecturing special education courses, 1 assistant professor in the field of preschool education and 1 preschool teacher). Some of the questions asked about the reverse inclusive practices to the teachers, school principals and parents are as follows:

1. How do you evaluate reverse inclusive practices?
  - Do you think that reverse inclusive practices are necessary?
  - Do reverse inclusive practices meet your expectations?
  - How do you evaluate reverse inclusive practices in terms of their purposes and their accessibility?
  - What are the aims of reverse inclusive practices that you find inaccessible?
  - How do you evaluate its contributions to all students in the same class?
2. What do you think about the duties of teachers, students and parents in reverse inclusive practices?
  - What do you think about the qualifications of teachers?
  - What do you think about the effectiveness of the school principals in reverse inclusive practices?
  - Do you think that parents contribute to reverse inclusive practices?
  - What are the most important features that you think are necessary for teachers, school principals and parents in reverse inclusive practices?

- Which characteristics of teachers, school principals and parents cause problems in reverse inclusive practices?

Data were collected in the spring term of 2019-2020 academic year. The participants were asked to choose to meet the researcher either in their school setting or any locations they would prefer and interviews were done in the school setting. Data were collected from teachers and school principals at the appropriate time. To collect data from parents, an appointment was asked for each parent by telephone or face-to-face meetings and interviews were conducted with the parents who want to be involved in the study in the special education kindergarten, where the study was conducted on the day and hour of the appointment. There were no participants who subsequently refused to participate, withdrew consent or dropped out. During the interview, which lasted about twenty minutes or forty-five minutes, manipulation was avoided.

### *Data Analysis*

To obtain a general idea, the data set was read at regular intervals before the analysis. In the coding process, to analyse the interviews, firstly the teachers, school principals, and parents were given a sequence number. Each participant's response was coded as K1-Ö-E / B (K: Participant 1: Participant No: O: Teacher / Y: Director / V: Parent; E: Male / B: Female) and the texts were recorded verbatim and then codes and themes were created by conducting a content analysis. In the analysis, the qualitative analysis program Maxqda 11 was used. Research design, data collection, and data analysis in detail are indicators for external validity. The internal validity of the study is associated with creating the integrity of the consistency and meaningfulness amongst the themes and codes and ensuring the consistency of the findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994). On the other hand, direct quotations from the typical examples of sentences said by the participants were originally given with no comment by the researchers for the internal reliability as well.

### **Results**

The main themes that emerged are handled separately from the viewpoint of teachers, school principals and parents and are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2 with related codes.

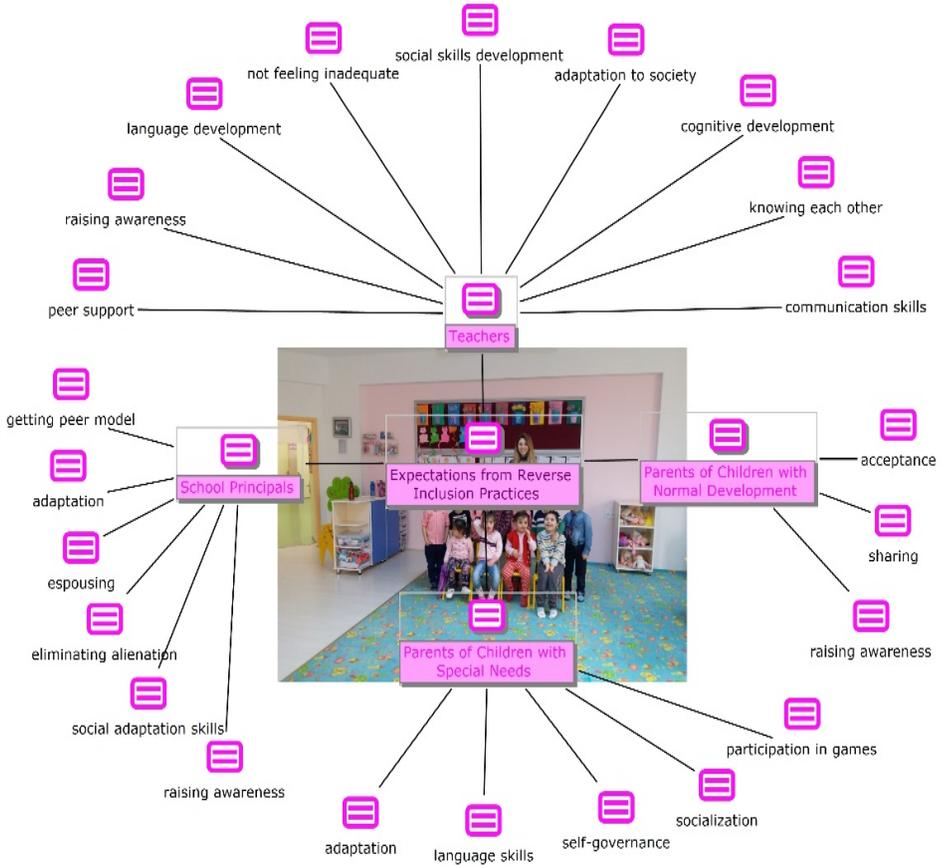
### *Expectations from Reverse Inclusive Practices*

With the analysis of the data obtained from the views of teachers, school principals and parents, the codes related to expectations from inclusive practices were included under this theme and shown in Figure 1.

As given in Figure 1, when the data obtained from the teachers were analyzed, the emerging codes were: *communication skills, adaptation to society, not feeling inadequate, peer support, language development, cognitive development, raising awareness in children with normal development, children's knowing each other, social skills development*. When evaluating reverse inclusive practices, almost all the teachers (N = 17) emphasized the adaptation and the development of communication skills between the students with SEN and other children. Regarding this situation, some expressions of the teachers are as follows:

*Contributing to social adaptation by providing the inclusion student's acceptance in the classroom and contributing to peer-assisted skill development. P13-T-F*

*Providing social and language development of children with SEN, allowing children an opportunity to get to know each other, raising awareness of obstacles in children with TDC at an early age. P2-T-F.*



**Figure 1. Expectations from Reverse Inclusive Practices**

When the data obtained from the school principals were analyzed, the emerging codes were *espousing, facilitating adaptation to normal life, eliminating alienation, social adaptation skills, raising awareness, getting peer model*. Some quotations are as follows:

*Facilitating the adaptation of students with SEN to normal life. P20-SP-M.*

*Ensuring that inclusion students learn their peers with TDC by observing them in the least restricted educational environment. P21-SP-F.*

When the data obtained from the parents of children with SEN were analyzed, the codes such as *socialization, adaptation, language skills, self-governance, socializing with games* emerged. From the data collected from the parents of

children with TDC, the codes related to this theme were *raising awareness, seeing other children as oneself, learning to share*. Some quotations are given below:

*Ensuring that my child communicates better and manages himself/herself. K32-V-B.*

*Providing the development of language skills and learning what their peers learned. K40-V-B.*

The data obtained from the views of teachers, school principals and parents revealed positive expectations from reverse inclusion for students both with SEN and with TDC.

On the other hand, some expectations from the teachers working in reverse inclusion classrooms, from the school principals working in reverse inclusion schools and from the parents whose children have attended reverse inclusion schools as students emerged as the sub-categories under this theme. Parents' expectations from the teacher in reverse inclusive practices were almost the same. While the parents of children with TDC expected the teacher to allocate more time and more interest for their children, expectations of the parents of children with SEN were related to one-to-one education and giving close and more attention to their children. Some views of the parents are given below:

*It is a fact that teachers devote more time to children with SEN in the reverse inclusion class. This leads to the disruption of the curricula to be carried out to the children with TDC. I think teachers should adjust time better K44-V-B.*

*I was expecting the teachers to take care of my child and to give him individual attention from this practice but not. Due to the lack of one-to-one interest, I have to fasten up the diaper to my child. K32-V-B.*

*Classes are crowded and the number of teachers is insufficient. I would like to have one-to-one attention. K34-V-B.*

Parents' common expectations from the school principals were related to improving classroom conditions and hiring more special education teachers. While the parents of students with SEN expected one-to-one education, the parents of children with TDC expected the school principals to be more selective in enrolling the children with SEN in reverse inclusion classes. Some parents' views are as follows:

*Children with TDC can go to other schools they want. But the number of schools we can enroll our children is limited. For this reason, I expect from the school principals to be more sensitive about this issue, and to give priority to the education of our*

children and to be able to offer one-to-one education with fewer students in the classes. K34-V-B.

The involvement of the parents of children with SEN in the process of class selection and including the students who should not normally be in the reverse inclusion class led to negativity. Managers need to be more selective in this regard. K50-V-B.

Regarding the expectations of the teachers and the school principals from the parents, the emerging code is tolerance.

While the students with TDC were expected to gain values such as empathy, tolerance, and solidarity, we were disappointed by the intolerance of the parents of those with TDC. In this process, our only expectation from the parents of both groups is tolerance. K22-Y-E.

While some parents approach this practice positively, some parents can be biased. However, the biggest expectation from parents is tolerance. K16-Ö-B.

### Functionality of Reverse Inclusive Practices

The codes emerging from the views of the teachers, school principals and parents on the functionality of the currently practiced reverse inclusion are presented in Figure 2.

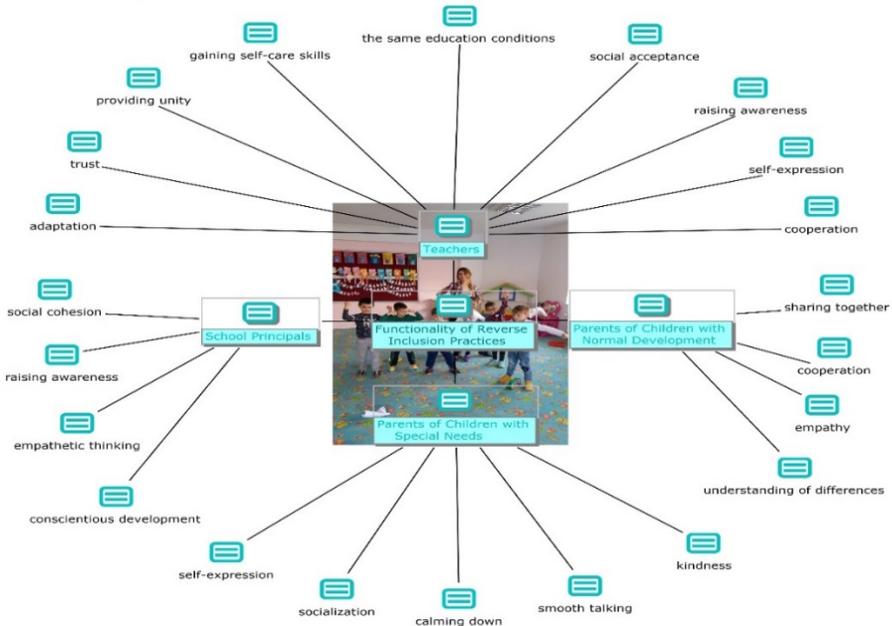


Figure 2. Functionality of Reverse Inclusive Practices

As shown in Figure 2, when the data from the teachers were analyzed, the emerging codes were: *education under the same conditions, raising awareness, providing unity, gaining self-care and daily life skills, social acceptance, trust, adaptation, cooperation, self-expression*. Some views of the teachers are as follows:

*This practice enables children with TDC to improve in terms of cooperation and respect for differences. K1-Ö-B.*

*It allows children to be more independent in terms of self-care and daily life skills. K15-Ö-B.*

The codes obtained from the views of the school principals were *empathetic thinking, promoting conscientious development, raising awareness and social cohesion*.

Some views of the school principals on the theme of the functionality of reverse inclusive practices were given below:

*This practice allows students with TDC to recognize those with SEN at an early age, to raise awareness about children with SEN and to accept them. K20-Y-B.*

*It supports empathetic thinking and conscientious development K22-Y-E.*

The codes such as *sharing, cooperation, empathy, understanding of differences, self-expression, socialization, calming down, smooth-talking and kindness* were obtained from the views of parents (See Figure 2). Some examples of parents' views are as follows:

*The communication of my child with us and his brother at home improved. He started playing with us. He's been making eye contact and he is a little calmer more than ever. K40-V-B.*

*My child became more social. His speech improved. He has learned to use greetings and politer expressions. K141-V-B.*

*My child has seen the differences in children with SEN and has begun to wonder, understand and play with them. K46-V-B.*

The views of almost all teachers, school principals and parents revealed that the functionality of inclusion practices is positive in children with both TDC and SEN.

### ***Problems Experienced in Reverse Inclusive Practices***

Figure 3 shows the codes that emerged from the views of the teachers, school principals and parents regarding problems experienced in reverse inclusive practices.

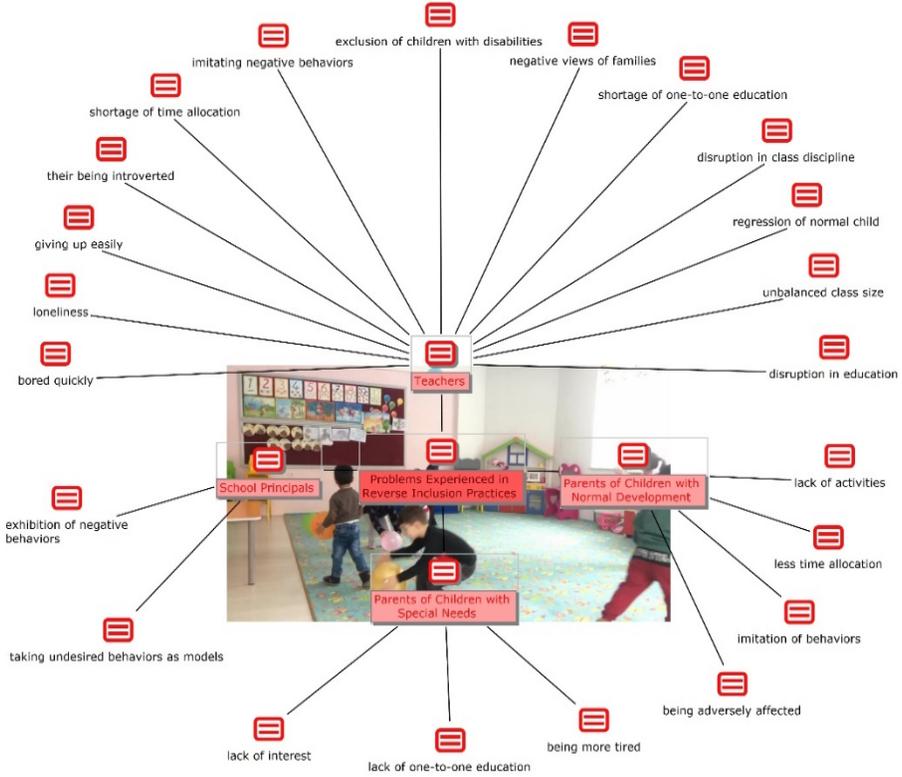


Figure 3. Problems Experienced in Reverse Inclusive Practices

As presented in Figure 3, the codes obtained from the views of teachers under this theme are as follows: *disruption in the education of children with TDC, shortage of time allocated to students with TDC, exclusion of children with SEN by children with TDC, unbalanced class size, when they are mocked they become introverted, negative views of families, loneliness, bored quickly from each other, disruption in class discipline, shortage of time for one-to-one education, regression of normal child, imitating negative behaviors of children with SEN.*

The views of some teachers on the problems experienced in reverse inclusive practices are given below:

*Allocation of more and one-to-one time is needed for children with SEN but this is not possible in the reverse inclusion classes. Children with TDC can imitate some negative behaviors of children with SEN such as finger sucking, spitting, screaming.* K14-Ö-B.

*Activities conducted with children with TDC can sometimes be hampered. Sometimes the children with TDC do not want to spend time with their peers with SEN although they know the state of the children with SEN, they get bored and they may feel uncomfortable.* K11-Ö-B. When the data obtained from the school principals were analyzed, some codes such as *exhibiting negative behaviors in both groups, taking undesired behaviors as the model* have emerged for the problems experienced in reverse inclusive practices. Some quotations regarding the codes are as follows:

*Students with TDC can take undesirable behaviors of those with SEN as the model.* K22-Y-E.

*Unfortunately, students with TDC also imitate the negative behaviors of students with SEN.* K20-Y-B.

Parents' views on the problems experienced in reverse inclusive practices were given separately. While the codes obtained from the parents of the students with SEN were *lack of one-to-one education, lack of interest, being more tired of the child*, the codes emerging from the data obtained from the parents of the students with TDC were *being adversely affected, teachers' allocating more time to the children with SEN, lack of activities, imitation of behaviors*. Some parents' views are as follows:

*To me the special education that my child needs is insufficient. I believe that the teacher should be more interested in the children with SEN and provide them one-to-one education.* K34-V-B.

*I think that our teachers do not show the same effort and time to the children with TDC as they devote most of their time and interest to the inclusion students. I think that this situation prevents our children from learning extra and different things and completing their activities.* K52-V-B.

*My child with TDC has begun to imitate the negative behaviors of the children with SEN.* K57-V-B.

When the problems experienced in reverse inclusive practices are evaluated overall, the problem that all the participant groups have mentioned is that the students with TDC imitate the negative behaviors of the students with SEN. Also, it has been observed that there is a disruption in the education of the students with TDC. These students with TDC cannot progress at their own pace and continue their education at a lower level than they can accomplish.

### Recommendations for Reverse Inclusive Practices

The codes emerging from the views of the teachers, school principals and parents under this theme are given in Figure 4.

As shown in Figure 4, following the data obtained from the views of the teachers, the codes included in this theme are: *in-service training for teachers, inclusion at certain intervals, keeping the number of inclusion students low, raising the awareness of parents, balanced distribution of the classroom size, orientation for normal children, distribution to classes according to report levels.* Some of the teachers' views are as follows:

*Class size distribution should be balanced.* K16-Ö-B.

*If the children with SEN attend school two or three days a week, I think education will be more productive for the children with both TDC and SEN.* K2-Ö-B.

*The number of inclusion students should be kept low. To me, part-time inclusion is more useful.* K17-Ö-B.

*I recommend that orientation training should be given prior to inclusion practices for children with TDC.* K16-Ö-B.

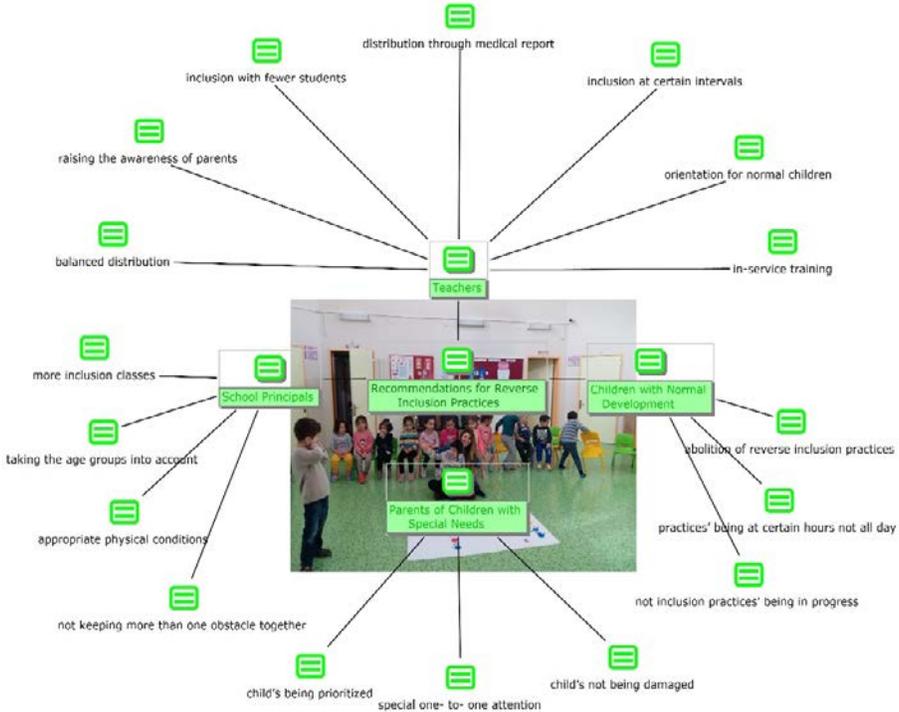


Figure 4. Recommendations for Reverse Inclusive Practices

In the analysis of the data obtained from the school principals, emerging codes are *increasing the number of inclusion classes, not keeping more than one obstacle together in the same class, taking the age groups into account and, ensuring appropriate physical conditions*. Some views of the school principals are as follows:

*The number of inclusion classes can be increased and class sizes can be reduced* K20-Y-B.

*Age groups should be considered. It should also be noted that more than one obstacle does not exist together in the same class.* K21-Y-B.

When the data obtained according to the views of the parents were analyzed, while the codes emerging from the views of the parents of children with SEN are: *special one-to-one attention, child's not being damaged, child's being prioritized*, the codes emerging from the views of the parents of children with TDC are *not inclusive practices' being in progress, to be practiced at certain hours not all day, abolition of reverse inclusive practices*. The views of some parents of children with SEN are as follows:

*One-to-one education and more importance should be given in all respects. For example, I would like my child to be taken to the toilet more frequently and to be focused on teaching toilet training.* K33-V-B.

*Students with SEN are very special children. I think that's why one-to-one special attention should be given to these children, the voice should never be raised and they should never be damaged.* K41-V-B.

The views of some parents of the children with TDC were as follows:

*To me, children cannot perceive what has happened although they spend time together. I do not find this practice useful and therefore, I would like it to be abolished.* K48-V-B.

*I think it will be more useful if they spend time together on certain days, not every day of the week.* K55-V-B.

*To me the practice of reverse inclusion is wrong. It will be easier for teachers to teach in separate classes. In this way, teachers will get less tired and both sides will get better education.* K57-V-B.

## Discussion

This study's aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of reverse inclusive practices, which is a pilot study in Turkey in line with the views of teachers, school principals and parents. The views of the preschool teachers and the school principals working in the special education institution and the parents whose children have attended this institution as students were examined. The overall results showed that reverse inclusive practices do not contribute to the desired level. Still, they are intended to contribute positively to the development of children both with TDC and with SEN. Especially parents of children with SEN see special education institutions as institutions providing services for the education of their children. To them, children with TDC may attend other schools they want, but the number of schools they can enroll their children with SEN is limited. For this reason, they see the educational priority to be given to their children as a right in these institutions. Therefore, they want to give priority to their children's one-to-one education, no matter how practices are applied in these institutions. One of the reasons why parents of children with TDC prefer choosing this school, which is designed for inclusion students, is that this school is close to their houses. According to the views of the parents of children with TDC, most of them became aware of the reverse inclusive practices provided in this school after enrolling their children. According to the views of one or two parents, they consciously enrolled their children with TDC in this school for their social and emotional development and to understand the differences. In this context, different expectations may cause parents to conflict with each other. On the other hand, the parents of the students with SEN have problems with the teachers and school principals due to their attempts to be involved in the education process.

According to the findings obtained from the teachers, school principals and parents regarding their expectations from reverse inclusive practices, it was revealed that they all had positive expectations for students with SEN and with TDC. The expectations from the teachers of reverse inclusion classes included paying more attention and allocating much more time for both the students with SEN and with TDC. Some expectations from the school principals were emphasized as improving classroom conditions and hiring more special education teachers. One of the most important expectations of

the teachers and principals from the parents was that they should not interfere with school management and teaching. Although cooperation, family participation, and continuity are essential in the principles of special education, all individuals involved in the educational processes of individuals must be acting in harmony with each other (MoNE, 2012). In this regard, O'Connor (2008) emphasized that parents want to be involved in the education of their children at an equal rate as an active decision-maker within the school. Similarly, in the study conducted by Yazıcıoğlu (2017), the frequent intervention of the parents of students with SEN in the educational processes of the teachers and the school has been stated as one of the most important problems that disturbs the teachers.

Regarding the functionality of reverse inclusive practices on the development of the children with both SEN and TDC, all the participant groups expressed their positive opinions. The positive functionality of inclusion practices has been disclosed by other researchers as well (i.e. Alici, 2018; Arı, 2015; Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000; Kanmaz and Duman, 2018; Schoger, 2006). Another finding was related to the problems experienced in reverse inclusive practices. The problem mentioned by all the participant groups was that the students with TDC took the negative behaviors of the students with SEN as models and imitated these behaviors such as finger sucking, spitting, screaming, etc. As Bandura (1977) stated in social learning theory, observation, modeling, and imitation take place in cognitive and behavioral learning. It is more common for pre-school students to imitate each other and to model problem behaviors (Baş and Şimay, 2013). As another problem, this study has revealed that there is a disruption in the education of the students with TDC. These students with TDC cannot progress at their own pace and they continue their education at a lower level than they can accomplish.

Regarding recommendations for reverse inclusive practices, while the codes obtained from the views of the teachers were "in-service training for teachers, inclusion at certain intervals, keeping the number of inclusion students low, raising the awareness of parents, balanced distribution of the classroom size", the codes emerging from the views of the school principals were "increasing the number of inclusion classes, not keeping more than one obstacle together in the same class, taking the age groups into account and, ensuring appropriate physical conditions." In the study conducted by

Yazıcıoğlu (2017), the teachers emphasized that the number of inclusion students in inclusive practices should be reduced and the number of students with SEN should be rearranged considering their inadequacies. While the recommendations of the parents of children with SEN included “special one-to-one attention, child’s not being damaged and, child’s being prioritized”, the recommendations of the parents of children with TDC included “not inclusion practices’ being in progress, giving these practices a place at certain hours not all day and abolition of reverse inclusive practices.” In a study by Rafferty and Griffin (2005), it was revealed that the biggest problem raised by the parents of pre-school students with SEN was that teachers were not sufficiently competent to meet the needs of their children, or that they could not provide enough special help or individual attention.

### **Conclusion**

In line with the findings obtained, it was revealed that reverse inclusive practices have not contributed to the education of students with both SEN and TDC at the desired level. It was found that the students with TDC could not progress in line with their speed, their learning was minimized and, they modeled and imitated the negative behaviors of their friends with SEN. Although it has contributed positively to the socialization, participation in games and communication skills of the students with SEN, insufficient time to take care of the individual education of these children due to the crowded classrooms, getting bored of the children with TDC from their friends with SEN and expelling them although they accept these children’s absence emerged as the main problems.

It was found that these practices were not particularly useful in the parents’ dimension. They stated that the teachers were more tired and the training of the two sides could not be achieved at the desired level. Parents of students with SEN want these institutions to respond primarily to the educational needs of their children, as the number of such institutions to enroll their children is limited. Parents of children with TDC want the removal of reverse inclusive practices or to involve inclusive education at certain hours or in specific courses.

## Recommendations

It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the relevant literature to ensure reverse inclusive practices at the desired level. In line with the findings, it is suggested that class sizes for reverse inclusive practices should be reduced and more in-service training programs for the school principals and teachers working in pilot schools should be included. It is also recommended that parents of students with TDC and with SEN should be subjected to an orientation program in the first weeks and interviews should be arranged at regular intervals to prevent them from trying to be involved in the education process in school and to understand each other well.

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