An Exploration of Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Professional Development

Faris Algahtani

Abstract

Introduction: This interpretive qualitative study explored professional development needs and practices for supporting and promoting the development of special education teachers in Saudi Arabia. There is an increasing demand for highly effective special education teachers in Saudi Arabia.

Method: Nine teachers were interviewed. The study used the interpretive approach. Semi-structured interviews were carried out. Thematic analysis was used in data analysis. Despite positive experiences regarding the supportive environment.

Findings: The majority of the participants expressed their frustration with workloads especially including administrative tasks. They clearly articulated their needs for professional development in areas specific to special education, notably more effective management of the whole process involving Individualized Educational Plans. In particular, they sought ways of improving the instruction and student attainment based on classroom situations.

Discussion: They wished to have access to mentoring and online resources so that their needs were met. This would require a sufficient number of experienced and knowledgeable teachers to act as mentors, a need which could potentially be met through access to one or more digital platforms.

Keywords: Professional development, special education, special education teacher, children with special needs, practices.

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1Assist. Prof., University of Jeddah, E-mail: fhalqahtani@uj.edu.sa, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4941-3442
Introduction

Professional development plays a key role in all sectors in terms of knowledge enhancement and skill improvement. Researchers have not yet arrived at an agreement on a working definition for teachers' professional development (Mitchell, 2013). Terms such as lifelong learning and staff development have been used interchangeably (Crawford, 2009) without any conceptual or practical differences. However, there is some agreement among researchers that teachers' professional development is an intentional, systematic and ongoing process of formal and informal education taking place within either external or work-based settings (Gabriel et al., 2011; Kyndt et al., 2016). The key aim of teacher development programs is to help special education teachers improve their educational skills and receive training to meet government standards (Brownell, et al., 2005; Leko & Brownell, 2009). However, the frustration of the teachers stems from the lack of professional development activities tailored to their needs (Leko & Brownell, 2009; Vittek, 2015). Professional development in Saudi Arabia adopted international standards implemented through international legislation, integration, supportive technology. The curriculum of intellectual disability was also prepared, which included measurement and evaluation along with the educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities and using appropriate strategies to meet the needs these students (Al-Madani & Allafajiy, 2014). Professional development of special education teachers is a dynamic process. In this sense, advocating the professional development of these teachers means recognising the significance of the continuing education in terms of supporting the teachers and achieving progress in education.

Education Policies and Teacher Education in Other Countries

Education policies in relation to professional development are implemented differently among other countries. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries adopted more than 450 education reforms from 2008 to 2014 (OECD, 2015). For instance, in the United States, alternative approaches were adopted to support teacher education within postgraduate studies (Darling-Hammond, 2010). This policy was found to be effective in enhancing their performance, thus, leading to job retention (Darling-Hammond, 2010). The European Union launched the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to promote higher education among European countries in 2010 (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). This initiative led to changes in the approaches of teacher education in these countries. 90% of these countries adopted undergraduate and graduate degree system in teacher education (Ries et al., 2016). Therefore, these countries ensured sustainable progress in their education system to enhance professional development through post-graduate education. Similar approaches were also adopted in Guatemala where it was found that the quality of training did not meet the expected performance (Guzmán et al., 2013). The reasons for such failures included low quality in-service training and lack of resources to align with the goals of student learning (Guzmán et al., 2013). As a result, the Ministry of Education developed the Academic Program for Teacher Development (PADEP/D) with the aim of enhancing the quality of teacher education programs. Previous studies on the professional development of special education teachers highlighted the importance of continuing education at the beginning of their careers. The foundations of future teaching skills along with the relevance of monitoring and training for these teachers were established (Durr, 2019; Papi, 2018).

In Brazil, the difficulties experienced by special education teachers were addressed (Roveda, et al., 2014). Ander et al. (2014) asserted the challenges of teaching as a profession and drew attention to the need of offering pedagogical, affective and cognitive support to teachers.

Professional Development Models

Some schools have programs to help teachers move into the learning environment (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Nevertheless, all the programs do not provide support to special education teachers (Billingsley, 2004; Leko & Brownell, 2009). The lack of appropriate guidance for schools (Billingsley, 2005; Leko & Brownell, 2009) hinders the design and implementation of programs supporting special education teachers. In Saudi Arabia, the teacher education career development is continuous through the development of the national professional standards for educators as adopted from Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in United States. These standards also aim at teachers of students with intellectual disabilities in that they include regulations regarding measurement and evaluation, planning and implementing teaching skills and using appropriate strategies and practices that are based on theories (Algahtani, 2018; Al-Seghayer, 2014; Algahtani & Alshubmii, 2020)

Leko & Brownell (2009) highlight the importance of cohesion and appropriate curricula. Professional development should align with appropriate standards on a national basis (O’Gorman & Drudy, 2011). The activities should help them link educational interventions to academic content. In addition, professional
development should address the limitations, procedures and practices of special education (Leko & Brownell, 2009).

There are two categories of professional development including traditional and alternative (or “reform-type”) (Desimone et al., 2002). The traditional methods typically assume the existence of a gap in teachers’ knowledge and skills which could be filled through workshops (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). These methods include local short-term or postgraduate courses (Desimone et al., 2002). Although these foster the knowledge and skills of the teachers, they are not sufficient (Boyle et al., 2004).

The alternative model of professional development is the ‘reform-type’ or ‘growth’ model which comprises “a variety of professional development activities that accompany continuous inquiry into one’s instructional practice” (Guskey & Huberman, 1995). The paradigm shift from the traditional model is reflected in a change “from replication to reflection, from learning separately to learning together, and from centralization to decentralization” (Hawley & Valli, 1999). The school is said to be the most suitable place for teachers’ professional development as new competencies can only be acquired in practice (Kwakman, 2003). However, this “does not necessarily imply situations in classrooms in real time” according to Ball & Cohen (1999) who propose that better opportunities for teachers can be created through strategic documentation of practice, the collection of records and materials for teaching and learning that form the basis of a professional development curriculum.

Lack of support in the early years of teaching is associated with high rates of attrition (Brownell et al., 2005; Boyd et al., 2009). Professional growth is significant for experienced teachers as it heavily influences the student achievement (Kelchtermans, 2004; Sugrue & Mertkan, 2017).

**Perspective of the Special Education Discipline**

Special education is characterized by diverse modes and strategies to meet the needs of students with learning, physical, emotional, and sensory needs (Algahtani, 2018) who experience diverse challenges that impede their learning. Training for special education teachers has to be continuous to keep pace with the ever-changing instructional practices, technologies, and laws that govern the special education discipline (Novak et al., 2009). As special education teachers involve more in an inclusive school environment, the need is both urgent and essential. Effective professional development activities are crucial.

Leko and Brownell (2009) stated that special education teachers who teach in an inclusive classroom setting had the advantage of instructional support from general education teachers. However, they reported stress that stemmed from sharing the classroom and instructional duties with general education teachers. Brownell et al. (2005) revealed that special education teachers were poorly prepared to handle the tasks expected of them. They quickly became overwhelmed by endless burdensome tasks, a lack of available resources, and a high incidence of problematic behaviors of the students (Minarik et al., 2003). These teachers might work with students with learning disabilities, emotional disorders or cognitive disabilities (Leko & Brownell, 2009) or could work as peripatetic teachers of students with sensory impairments, or those with more than one developmental need (Williams & Poel, 2006). Some might provide instruction to students in inclusion classrooms with the support of general education teachers. Others might work alone in self-contained special education classrooms (Manning et al., 2009; Schirmer, 2008). The discipline has been characterized by tiring paperwork and frequent meetings either for initial assessment or monitoring progress (Vannest et al., 2010; Vannest et al., 2011). Special education teachers work long hours with few positive outcomes for their efforts (Zabel & Kay Zabel, 2001). A review of teachers’ blogs revealed the difficulties in terms of large class sizes, little planning time, a lack of support from colleagues and administration, and a continuous feeling of being overwhelmed and inadequate in their jobs (Gebbie et al., 2012). Some teachers place the blame on the workload, while some researchers blame the lack of effective teacher education programs to train special education teachers (Brownell et al., 2005).

**Special Education Development in Saudi Arabia**

According to Bakhsh (2017), there is a need for in-service training for special education teachers in Saudi Arabia. Professional development plays an important role for improving the quality of education (Almazroa & Al-Shamrani, 2015). It is also important to overcome challenges that hinder teachers’ professional growth (Desimone, 2009; Fullan & Mascall, 2000). This is also needed for a successful education reform. It serves as a bridge between prospective and experienced teachers to meet the new challenges of guiding pupils towards higher standards of learning and development. It is vital that teachers update their professional knowledge to improve the quality of education.

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The potential of research to create an empirical knowledge base is recognized (Connelly & Rosenberg, 2009; Stigler & Thompson, 2009) together with the importance of creating links between innovations in induction, mentoring, professional development and teacher performance, satisfaction and retention (Sindelar, Brownell, & Billingsley, 2010). Improving the quality of teacher development is needed through systematic research (O’Gorman & Drudy, 2011). However, conceptualizing how professional development should be is not sufficient. Buczynski & Hansen (2010) assert that teachers must practice and experiment with their new knowledge and skills for any effective professional development. Therefore, the present study examine the practices that would improve the professional growth of in-service special education teachers working with children who have special needs children in Saudi Arabia.

Reid & Kleinhenz (2015) stress that it is important to adapt the intervention in order to meet social cultural, political and economic needs of the country. Teachers indicate that professional development is beneficial. However, Hustler et al. (2003) report considerable variation in teachers’ knowledge and understanding of professional development. Morewood et al. (2010), state that “professional development may be perceived differently by individual teachers”. Hence, Powell et al. (2003) indicate that teachers’ perceptions of the impact of their professional development form an important part of the evaluation of its effectiveness. The lack of information highlights the need for the present study.

It is a concern for schools in the United States to provide special education teachers with appropriate professional development (Berry et al., 2011; Schwartz et al., 2019). The design of professional development programs has focused on the principles, effectiveness of these programs and the relative advantages of various models on an international basis (Kennedy, 2005; Leko & Brownell, 2009). A review of 35 studies which focus on the relationship between professional development, practices, and student achievement identifies positive components of professional development programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). These programs should include coaching and support from experts, employ effective strategies and active learning, involve reflection and feedback. They should also provide opportunities for collaboration and be focused on job-related context and content. The professional development process should also be meaningful, organized and consistent to provide effective support to teachers (Leko & Brownell, 2009).

**Research Questions**

1. How do special education teachers describe their professional learning needs in the context of their experiences of working with children with special needs?
2. What professional development practices could improve the professional growth of special education teachers?

**Method**

This study adopted a qualitative interpretive approach and included semi-structured interviews to describe the needs of professional development for special education teachers, explore their experiences. Qualitative research aims to understand the world from the participant’s point of view (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Consequently, some studies emphasize the needs of special education teachers (Brownell et al., 2017) and explore their experiences from their perspectives. The ethical approval of this study was granted by the Ministry of Education (reference no. 323145).

**Participants of the Study**

The study was carried out at the Children with Disability Association (CDA) in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia). The CDA provides care for children with multiple and intellectual disabilities disabilities from birth until the age of twelve free of charge. The formal approval for the recruitment of the participants was granted by the association. The consent of the participants was received prior to the interviews. Purposive sampling was adopted to select the research participants. Therefore, nine special education teachers working at the association were involved in the study. Special attention was given to those teachers who were working with the children with diverse learning needs. The experience and qualifications of the teachers were shown in Table 1.
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Table 1
Participants Characteristics

| Interview no | Code | Gender | Qualification            | Years of experience-age |
|--------------|------|--------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1            | SE1  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 12-36                   |
| 2            | SE2  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 14-38                   |
| 3            | SE3  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 15-39                   |
| 4            | SE4  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 18-42                   |
| 5            | SE5  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 11-35                   |
| 6            | SE6  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 10-35                   |
| 7            | SE7  | Female | BA in Special Education  | 11-36                   |
| 8            | SE8  | Female | MA in Special Education  | 16-43                   |
| 9            | SE9  | Female | MA in Special Education  | 19-45                   |

Note: SE = Special education; BA = Bachelor degree; MA = Master degree.

All the participants were female in CDA. All had at least 10 years of experience. Seven of them had a bachelor’s degree in Special Education along with two having a postgraduate degree. The participants had experiences of teaching students with disabilities including learning difficulties and multiple disabilities.

Data Collection

Data were collected during the first academic term of 2018 using in-depth semi-structured interviews. Interview questions were prepared as a result of literature review and and three pilot interviews (See Appendix A). The participants were invited to face to face interviews that would last approximately 45 minutes in a silent environment. Before the interview, the participants provided demographic information regarding education and work. The interview sessions addressed the experiences of participants in terms of their work environment, professional development activities and suggestions.

Data Collection Tools

Introduce the tools used in the study in the data collection tools section. Specify the psychometric characteristics of each tool that is used in the study both in terms of national and international characteristics. If the tools are developed by the researchers give all the information related to the development process and include the last version of the tool in Appendices. The explanations regarding the title levels are given below.

Data Analysis

The data were transcribed and coded. “Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). In this respect, Taylor et. al. (2015) assert that “qualitative researchers develop concepts, insights, and understandings from patterns in the data” (p. 8). The researcher identified patterns through repeated words and phrases in responses to each interview question and assigned a code. Similar codes were grouped into themes. The codes and themes were reviewed several times to ensure accuracy. The excerpts were provided.

Research Validity and Reliability

Following transcription, each participant was provided with a copy of their transcripts to ask for clarification where they felt it was needed (Richards, 2009) and where it was required by the researcher. As the participants acknowledged that the transcript accurately reflected their responses and experiences, their data were included. Thematic analysis was utilized (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Some strategies utilized to enhance trustworthiness in the study included prolonged field work, multi-method strategies of data collection to permit triangulation, verbatim transcription, and negative case analysis. Additional strategies were utilized to enhance reflexivity to control the researcher’s bias.

Findings and Discussion

The participants highlighted that they encountered ongoing challenges regarding their teaching environments, which supported the findings of Durr (2019). These included technical challenges and issues related to individualized educational plans (IEPs). As for the first research questions, three themes were observed and
they included: Professional experience, technical issues and challenges of special education; collaboration, teamwork, and support.

**Professional Experience**

All the participants expressed that the teaching environment was very challenging for them. For example, the participant (SE3) stated in the following: “My work environment is challenging all the time. I plan for more than five children, attend in-service sessions, and in between all of that, there are IEP meetings, and endless study meetings. I work days, nights and weekends and yet... I am not prepared to handle the paperwork, children's behaviors, their learning needs, and curricula, and I am not prepared.” This participant complained about the work environment and caseload. These statements showed that the teachers experienced challenges that included preparing the IEPs of the students and adapting curricula to meet the instructional needs of their students.

These data suggested that professional development activities that addressed the technical aspects of special education would support the teachers. Therefore, an examination of the professional experiences of special education teachers is paramount to identifying the needs of the teachers to support their learning process.

**Technical Issues and Challenges of Special Education**

The participants highlighted that particular problems and stress were prevalent due to the duration of the IEP meetings. Some participants found the paperwork boring, while most suggested that more time should be allocated to preparing lessons and communicating with parents. SE2 made the following statements: “In my eleven years of teaching and three years with this group of children, I still find it hard to meet the expectations of my job. We all do. It is hard to stay on top of everything. I spend a long time writing IEPs and completing special education paperwork... it’s really boring.”

SE4 also noted that insufficient attention was given to support teachers in the preparation of IEPs: “Special education commitment is so significant as you deal with legal requirements like meeting IEP deadlines and writing appropriate IEPs, and yet I have had only three in-service sessions on this so far, even though we now have monthly professional development activities at the center.”

Five participants highlighted difficulties in adapting the curricula to meeting the instructional needs of special education students. SE9 made the following statements: “There is a lot of preparation. I have to adapt my teaching strategies, activities and interventions to what is written in the IEP for each child. I spend too much time doing this and sometimes get frustrated.”

The participants shared their experiences and thought this challenge was even more difficult and frustrating for new teachers. SE5 said that she had spent the first few years thinking of quitting the job as she felt inadequate and stated that she was “still submerged by the amount of work. It is difficult to stay on top of everything.”

These challenges cause more stress in special education centers as every single child in the class requires additional preparation and paperwork. Advice is only available from teachers who find more efficient ways of doing this according to the teacher receiving education abroad.

Geiger et al. (2014) highlighted the lack of time to effectively prepare, plan and teach to achieve IEP objectives. Almahdi (2014) reported that some special education teachers in Saudi Arabia divided classes of eight or more students into two groups and prepared a single IEP for each group. This did not consider the guidelines including national policies and standards which specified that each child must have his or her own IEP.

Most of the participants experienced technical challenges in the teaching environment. This suggested that professional development activities that addressed these challenges would support special education teachers.

**Collaboration, Teamwork, and Support**

The participants stated that they collaborated with the parents. In the absence of collaboration, they continued to phone them, send letters and provide information about how to help students with assignments. However, few parents did not respond or show any interest. The teachers highlighted family involvement and support effective educational programs, even though they were not always been able to engage the family members.
SE5 stated that children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) showed progress when parents were involved: “It affects them a lot. I’m sure about that, but I think if I can communicate with the parent, if we can be on the same page, it’s huge.” SE3 reported that a caring and accepting attitude assisted her to develop positive parent-teacher relationships: “I have had really good experiences with the parents of children with Down syndrome...One of the parents once said that they think he/she understands them, and I kind of think I do...I think that they know that I’m willing to work with their children too, and that’s really all a lot of them want ...just somebody that’s going to accept their child.”

McCoach et al. (2010) asserted that parent involvement could predict whether students would achieve in the educational program. Although training is provided to parents, their constant and consistent involvement may not be ensured (Murray & Mandell, 2006). Ongoing communication is essential.

Four themes were observed regarding the second research question: On-going communication, technical support, center support, collective support. The participants reported the need for professional development activities that were technical in nature and included laws and regulations, IEP preparation and paperwork.

**On-going Communication**

The importance of on-going communication emerged as a theme. All the participants found this vital for effective educational programs in terms of facilitating family involvement and positive parent-teacher relationships which in turn supported achievement of the goals.

SE7 commented that her relationship with parents was one of her “strongest areas” as a result of ongoing communication. She also utilized a school-home note system as she explained in the following: “What I do is always becoming really close to my parents. I communicate with them every day...it’s very, very important in my experience to have this good communication. And I fill a notebook every day on every child. I try my very best to receive as much detail as possible so that parents can work on this at home.” Another participant (SE6) made the following statements: “I try to talk to parents when they bring their children to school each day, asking how their child is and behaves at home. Then I can suggest strategies that can help the parents at home as well as the child so they may be more likely to use them.”

The responses revealed commonalities in the perceptions of their work environment. They also noted that initial teacher education did not include skills of establishing and maintaining effective relationships with parents, and did not adequately cover the IEP preparation (in particular, how to handle multiple IEPs in classes of eight or more children). All of these statements reflected their learning needs which were categorised under technical support, center support, and collaborative support.

Unfortunately, most of teachers do not particularly have the skills they need to communicate beneficially with parents (Nel & Luneta, 2017). As communication skills are essential to engaging families in the education process, Olsen (2015) indicates that teacher preparation and professional development programs ought actively enhance communication skills for teachers.

**Technical Support**

All the responses reflected the need for professional development relevant to their responsibilities. One of the problems of current in-service provision was that although monthly sessions were offered, these sessions did not address some of the critical issues that the teachers were facing. Six participants referred to this issue. For example, SE4 highlighted that “none of the activities aimed at adapting curricula to special education students and learning styles”, while SE6 stated that “no help was offered in planning for eight or even twelve children at the same time.” The participants expressed that their in-service training helped the instruction. However, this training did not adequately prepare them for the teaching environment. This suggested that special education teachers would benefit from professional development. Both the administration of the association and the Ministry of Education of Saudi Arabia could take these findings into consideration to establish a professional development process for special education teachers.

**Center Support**

All the participants received different levels of support, partly because they had various needs and preferred different types of support. SE5 would have liked to have mentoring support but she sought support from other special education teachers as this was not officially provided. These teachers helped her with paperwork and
other formal procedures including the preparation of attendance reports. Although professional development activities were routinely offered, a mismatch was seen between individual needs and the implementation of the program. Some participants were able to adapt the curricula to their own students (SE3 and SE6), some could not make any adaptation (SE2 and SE8). For example, SE2 stated the following: “Sometimes I learn a good idea but I cannot see how I can make it work with my children...there is not enough space or equipment in my classroom. Sometimes I think [an idea] would have been perfect for my class five years ago but not for the children I have now. I want to talk about how to help the children I have now.”

Four participants referred to the difficulty of transferring the knowledge from in-service sessions into classroom skills, while SE8 highlighted the benefits of exploring new ideas following an international workshop she had attended. All the participants recognized that inexperienced teachers would need much more support than the one which was offered.

Collective Support

All the participants mentioned that there was not enough coaching or mentoring due to the number of available mentors to support all the teachers effectively. They demanded support from experienced special education teachers through a digital platform as part of the professional development. Four of them were surprised to find out that some countries had access to this support following their investigation in the internet. For example, SE5 stated the following: “There are advanced digital platforms for professional learning for teachers out there. I wish I had one for my students. In some countries where they have inclusion schools I believe special education teachers can receive help from the teachers and can also have assistant teachers and group instruction as well as websites for professional development. This is too difficult for us right now, we have so many changes, but a professional development platform could really help us.”

Teachers could be assigned to the platform and their working schedule could be made flexible in terms of planning the instruction and activities with their mentoring team. They could benefit from this support, guidance and feedback. Peer observations could also be an option in the process of acquiring further skills.

Although all the participants were willing to help each other, they mentioned it was almost impossible to find the time to have a meeting due to their workload. Five participants stated it would be better if they could arrange their own schedule through an electronic platform.

Special education centers employ a variety of professional development practices and programs. However, this study showed that not all of these provided effective support for the teachers.

In line with Schirmer (2008), professional development needs to be relevant to the discipline and address issues and challenges highlighted by the teachers themselves. In this study, the participants focused on the preparation of IEPs that would meet the needs of their students. The demand for coaching, mentoring and collective support were in parallel with the recommendations of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017). The modeling, active learning, feedback and reflection were implicit rather than explicit in the responses. This may be attributed to the lack of exposure of the participants to a constructivist approach to teacher education (Algahtani, 2018).

The current professional development programs could be made more meaningful, organized and consistent in line with Leko and Brownell (2009). These should consider the needs and goals of the teachers and achieve national education standards (Council for Exceptional Children [CEC], 2009; Leko & Brownell, 2009). The first step is to describe the needs of the teachers either through a survey or, ideally, through meetings between school administration and teacher. These should form a major part of these programs in which teachers could participate to address their needs (Billingsley, 2005; CEC, 2015). However, new graduates might be less likely to identify these specific needs when they probably feel they have everything to learn. The participants of the study emphasized the importance of support for new teachers. According to their statements, a comprehensive program based on the experiences and needs of teachers with at least two year’s experience could be developed. This should focus on developing the necessary skills for delivering quality instruction (Brownell et al., 2005; Duffy & Forgan, 2005; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). Professional development for special education teachers emphasize on academic content (Leko & Brownell, 2009) to ensure that children have the best possible access to the general education curriculum.

Forming a mentor team could support this development process both for new and experienced teachers (CEC, 2015; Leko & Brownell, 2009). Mentors could include colleagues or experts available through an electronic
According to The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), more special education students need to receive instruction in general education classrooms with their peers to ensure their access (Snell & Brown, 2005). Special education teachers in resource and self-contained classrooms must also have access to academic content that matches their learning needs. Due to these requirements, special education teachers are expected to be highly qualified in the academic content they teach. However, special education teachers might work without required certification or coursework in special education (Brownell et al., 2005; Leko & Brownell, 2009). The fact that special education teachers might not be prepared for the teaching environment supports the need for the school to provide them with professional development activities.

Professional development is an emerging concept. The centers need to continue to explore professional development practices to support the teacher. They are also supposed to include all stakeholders in this process. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education should implement and sustain this process to support the teachers through the identification and selection of mentor teachers. Mentors should be from the same discipline, grade level, and, or subject area. The centers need to provide mentors with training that takes the goals of the special education into account. The development process should include supportive policies and procedures. Finally, the special education centers need to conduct program evaluation to identify whether the process works, and to collect data to find out if the program needs adjustment.

Conclusion

The participants emphasized the importance of the continuing technical challenges in terms of paperwork, IEP preparation and meetings. Adapting the IEP into curriculum and the delivery of this were highlighted as further challenges. On the other hand, collaboration, teamwork, and ongoing communication were reported to be among positive aspects of their role. There was a need for this development in the early years of profession along with the support provided by the experienced teachers. Previous studies also confirm that opportunities for professional development should be offered on a consistent and relevant basis. This should be an ongoing process that requires curricula, organisation, and a supportive framework which includes mentors. The access to expert teachers via an electronic platform would address the teacher needs an effective professional development process would benefit special education teachers by helping them bridge the gap between theory and practice. Moreover, it would assist experienced teachers by providing motivation and helping them update the knowledge and instructional techniques.

Limitations and Suggestions

This study, qualitative in nature, may not be appropriate for quantifying the extent to which professional development education impacts the teacher performance. A quantitative approach such as surveys should be used. Various data collection methods could also be utilized contrary to this study which includes one (Creswell, 2013). The findings from the participants of the study may also be hard to generalize. Therefore, a large number of teachers along with the officials working at the Ministry of Education and policy makers should be included. Other stakeholders may also be interviewed, in addition to teachers.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

Introduction
Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview. My name is Faris Algahtani and I am Assistant Professor at University of Jeddah doing research about “An Exploration of Special Education Teachers’ Perceptions of Professional Development”. I will record our interview. If you are unhappy about it, I can switch it off. This duration of this interview might be between 45 and 50 minutes. You can also withdraw from this interview at any time.

Switch on voice recorder

Warm-up questions
Can you please briefly describe your professional background?

Can you tell me how long you have been working in CDA center?

Have you worked in another center before?

1. Including this academic year, how many years of teaching experience do you have?
2. Including this academic year, do you have any experience of working with children with special needs?
3. What kind of undergraduate degree do you have?
4. Which classroom setting/services describe your teaching assignment? (Self-Contained Classroom, Consultation, or Monitoring Services)?
5. What grade(s) do you teach or support?
6. What content areas do you teach or support?
7. How many students do you provide service/support?
8. What is the disability or what are the disabilities of the students you service/support?
9. Describe your work environment.
10. Describe your challenges as a special education teacher.
11. Describe the areas of your preservice training that you feel that helped you prepare for the teaching environment.
12. Describe support available to you in your Center or in city that promotes your professional growth as a special education teacher.
13. Specifically, how has the support provided by your center helped your professional growth as a special education teacher?
14. Discuss your job responsibilities which you are expected to perform and are not covered in professional development activities provided by your center.
15. What kinds of professional development would help special education teachers?
16. This is a three-part question:
   a) Does your center offer professional learning community?
   b) If so, do you participate in a professional learning community in your center?
   c) If so, what areas did it help for your growth as a beginning special education teacher?
17. At this point, please ask questions you may have or provide comments.

Conclusion
I think we have covered all the interview questions today; do you have anything you would like to add?

Do you have anything you want to ask me about?
I highly appreciate your contribution for this study. Everything will be confidential and anonymous. I would be more than glad to respond if you contact me in the future regarding any interview question.

Now I will switch off the voice recorder.
Özel Eğitim Öğretmenlerinin Mesleki Gelişim Algılarının İncelenmesi

Faris Algahtani

Öz

Giriş: Bu araştırmanın amacı Suudi Arabistan'da özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimlerinin desteklenmesi için gereksinimlerini ve gerçekleştirdiğleri uygulamaları öğretmenlerin görüşlerine göre incelemektir.

Yöntem: Araştırmada nitel araştırma yaklaşımı benimsenmiş 9 özel eğitim öğretmeniyle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Görüşmelerden elde edilen bulgular tematik analizle çözümlenmiştir.

Bulgular: Katılımcıların çoğu, özellikle idari görevleri içeren iş yükü konusunda yaşadıkları hayal kırıklıklarını dile getirmişlerdir. Katılımcılar özel eğitime özgü alanlarda mesleki gelişim ihtiyaçlarını, özellikle Bireyselleştirilmiş Eğitim Planlarını içeren tüm sürecin daha etkili yönetimini açıkça ifade etmişlerdir. Özellikle, öğretimi daha nitelikli hale getirmenin ve sınıf durumlarına göre öğrencileri kazanımlarını iyileştirmenin yollarını aramışlardır.

Tartışma: Öğretmenler ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması için mentorluk ve çevrimiçi kaynaklara erişim istediklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Bu durum bir yanda da daha fazla dijital platforma erişim sayesinde karşılanabilen bir ihtiyaç olarak deneyimli ve bilgi sahibi pek çok öğretmenin mentor olarak rol oynamasını gerektirmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Mesleki gelişim, özel eğitim, özel eğitim öğretmeni, özel gereksinimi öğrenciler, uygulamalar.
Giriş

Mesleki gelişim bilgi ve becerilerin artması için her sektörde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Araştırmacılar, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimleri için henüz işlevsel bir tanım üzerinde anlaşmaya varamamışlardır (Mitchell, 2013). Yaşam boyu öğrenme için gerekli kavramlar, kavramsal ya da uygulamalı farklılıklar göz önünde bulundurulurken sürən mesleki gelişim kavramının yerine kullanılmıştır (Crawford, 2009). Buna karşılık, araştırmacılar, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim tanımına ilişkin iş yerinde ya da dışında gerçekleştiren, resmi olan ya da olmayan amaçlı, sistematik ve sürən eğitim, öğretim, öğrenme ve destek etkinlikleri olarak farklı bir nghĩaye varılmışlardır (Cubriel vd., 2011; Kynndt vd., 2016).

Özel eğitimcilerin mesleki gelişim programlarının temel hedefi, öğretmenlerin öğretim becerilerini geliştirmek ve bakanlığın belirlediği standartları karşılamaları için eğitim almalarını sağlamaktır (Brownell vd., 2005; Leko & Brownell, 2009). Ancak, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim süreçleri ve sonuçları hakkındaki bilgi ve anlayışlarında önemli farklılıklar olduğu belirtilmiştir. Mesleki gelişim için gerekli bir eğitim ortamı, faydalı olabilecek yeni deneyimlere erişim sağlama, bakanlığın belirlediği standartları karşılamaları sağlamak için gerekmektedir (Almazroa & Al-Shamrani, 2015). Özel eğitimcilerin eğitim ortamlarında faydalanabileceğini ve yeni bilgi ve becerilerini uygulama fırsatı görmeleri gerekmektedir (Desimone, 2009).

Mesleki eğitim, öğrenme güçlükle ri olan; fiziksel, duygusal ve duyusal gereksinimleri olan öğrencilerin gereksinimlerini karşılamak ve yaşadıkları güçlüklerin üstesinden gelmeleri için çeşitli stratejiler ve yollar kullanır (Algahtani, 2018). Özel eğitim alanının yasalarını ve alanda gereklilik uygulamaları yeterli değildir. Özel eğitim alanına ait eğitim uygulamaları ve teknolojilere ilişkin gelişmeler takip edilmeli, öğretmenlerin etkinliklerinin etkili olmaması için daha fazla önem kazanmıştır (Billingsley, 2005; Leko & Brownell, 2009). Aşırı uygulama ve eğitim ortamının eğitiminin etkili olmaması  

Özel Eğitim Alanının Bakış Açısı

Özel eğitim, öğrenme güçlükleri olan; fiziksel, duygusal ve duyuşal öğrencilerin gereksinimlerini karşılamak ve yaşadıkları güçlüklerin üstesinden gelmeleri için çeşitli stratejiler ve yollar kullanır. Bu bilgiler, özel eğitimcilerin gerekli bilgiyi ve uzmanlığı ilerletmeleri için önemlidir. Öğretmen algıları mesleki gelişimin faydalanır ve öğretmenlerin öğretim becerilerini geliştirmek ve bakanlığın belirlediği standartları karşılamaları için eğitim almalarını sağlamaktır. Ancak, özel eğitimcilerin mesleki gelişim programlarının temel hedefi, öğretmenlerin öğretim becerilerini geliştirmek ve bakanlığın belirlediği standartları karşılamaları için eğitim almalarını sağlamaktır.
ÖZEL EĞİTİM ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN MESLEKİ GELİŞİM ALGILARININ İNELENMESİ

Leko ve Brownell (2009) bütünleştiriçi sınıf ortamlarında görev alan özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin genel eğitim öğretmenlerinden öğretimsel destek alabildiğini ancak genel eğitim öğretmenleriyle ayni sınıfı paylaşmanın ve öğretimsel görevleri bozunun strese neden olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Brownell ve diğerleri (2005), yeni mezon özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin lisansları boyunca özel eğitim sınıfında kendilerini beklenen görevleri yerine getirmez yeterince hazırlanmadıklarını ifade etmiştir. Özel eğitim öğretmenleri süregen yorucu görevleri, var olan kaynakların azlığı ve öğrencilerin yüksek düzeyde problem davranışlarıyla baş etmeleri gerektiğini hızagregindeyorun düşüncektedirler (Minarik vd., 2003). Özel eğitim öğretmenleriโรง에께 Gülülüğu olan, duygusal-davranışsal bozuklukları olan ya da bilisel yetersizlikler olan öğrencilerle çalışabildiği gibi (Leko & Brownell, 2009) duygusal yetersizlikleri olan öğrenciler ile birden fazağı gerekeniini olan öğrenciler için geliyorun öğretmen olarak da çalışabilmediklerdir (Williams & Poel, 2006). Bu öğretmenlerin bir kısım genel eğitim öğretmenlerinin de yardımıyla bütünleştirmeye sınıfında öğrencileri öğretim yapabilmekte diğer kısım ise bireyselleştirmiş özel eğitim sınıfıında tek başına çalışabilmediklerdir (Manning vd., 2009; Schirmer, 2008). Özel eğitim alanı ilk değerlenme ve ilerlemenin izlenmesi için yorucu kadarı ve sıkça gerçekleştirilen toplantılarla karakterizedir (Vannest & Hagan-Burke, 2010; Vannest vd., 2011). Özel eğitim öğretmenleri çok uzun saatler çalışmakta emeklerinin karşılığını almak için de uzun süre beklemek durumunda kalabilmediklerdir (Zabel & Kay Zabel, 2001). Gebbie ve diğerleri (2012) öğretmenlerin bloglarından paylaşımları inceledikleri öğretmenler, sınıf mevcutlarının fazla olduğunu, zamanlama için ayrılan sürenin az olduğunu, meslektaşları ve yöneticilerin desteğinin az olduğunu ve mesleklerinde yorgun ve yetersiz hissedebildiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bazı özel eğitim öğretmenleri sorunlarının nedeni olarak iş yükünü gösterirken diğerleri bu durumu özel eğitim programlarının olmamasına bağlamaktadır (Brown vd., 2005). Bu araştırmanın amacı Suudi Arabistan'da özel eğitim öğretmeni yetiştirme için sunulan mesleki gelişim etkinliklerini incelemek ve bu mesleki gelişime ilişkin öğretmenlerin gereksinimlerini belirlemektir. Bu araştırma aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aramaktadır:

1. Özel eğitim öğretmenleri özel gereksinimli çocuklarınla çalışmak için kendi mesleki öğrenme gereksinimlerini nasıl tanımlarlar?
2. Özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin özel gereksinimli çocuklarınla çalışırken mesleki gelişimini nasıl artırmaktadırlar?

Yöntem

Özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişime ilişkin gereksinimlerini anlamak için bu araştırma nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Nitel araştırma katılımcının bakış açısından dünya ne göre anlamayı hedefler (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Çalışmanın Katılımcıları

Bu çalışma Suudi Arabistan'da Cidade'de bulunan Engelli Çocuklar Derneği'nin (ECD) merkezinde gerçekleşmiştir. ECD, 0-12 yaş arasındaki zihinsel yetersizliği olan ve çoklu yetersizliği olan çocuklar için bireyselleştirilmiş ortamlarda ücretsiz bakım sağlamaktadır. Araştırma için Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı'ndan (MEB) gerekli izinler alınmıştır. Katılımcılar gönüllülük esasına göre belirlenmiştir. Arastırmacı ECD'nin müdürü ile görüşerek araştırmaın amacı açıklandığı, MEB'in araştırma iznini göstermiş ve araştırma için kendisinden izin istemiştir. Amaçlı örneklemeye 9 özel eğitim öğretmeni katılmıştır. Katılımcıların özelliklerini Tablo 1'de verilmiştir.

Verilerin Toplanması

Bu araştırmada 2018 güzdende toplanan derinlemesine yönelik yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Görüşmelere araştırma süreci sonucu gerçekleştirmiş ekibin değerlendirmesi oluşturulan araştırmacı soruları kullanılmıştır. Arastırmacı geliştirliği sorularla üç pilot görüşme gerçekleştirerek araştırmacı sorularına son halini vermiştir. Veriler toplanması amacıyla katılımcılar duygu yorununu davet etmiştir. Görüşmeler katılımcılar arasında toplanan görüşmeler 45 dk. süren durumlardır. Görüşmenin ilk kısımda katılımcıların eğitimleri ve çalışma deneyimlerini sorulmuş böylece bir katılmının demografik bilgileri elde edilmiştir. Görüşmenin ikinci kısmında katılımcıların çalışma ortamları ve mesleki gelişim etkinliklerine ilişkin deneyimlerinin incelemesi amaçlanmıştır. Uçüncü ve son kısımda ise mesleki gelişimin iyileştirilmesine ilişkin önerileri sorulmuştur.

Algahtani

ERKEN GÖRÜNÜM
Verilerin Analizi

Bu araştırmada veri analizinde niteliksel yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Yan-yapilandırlıms güçlendirilen yede edilen veriler çevriyazısı dönüşümlüms ve kodlar oluşturulmuştur. “Kodlar, bir çalışmada betimsel ya da çıkarımsal olarak olunur, verileri anlamak için kullanılan etiketler ya da adlar” (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Bu bağlamda, Taylor, Bogdan ve DeVault’a (2015) göre, “Nitel araştırmalar verilerindeki örüntülerden kavramlar, içgörüler ve anlayışlar geliştirirler”. Araştırmacı, bir görüşmesi sonrasında tekrarlanan sözcükler ve ifadelerden örüntüler belirlenmiş ve bunlara birer kod atılmıştır. Benzer koşullar gruplandırların temalar oluşturulmuştur. Kodlar ve temalar birçok kez olduğundan ve doğru anlaşılabilmesi için çevriyazılar dönüştülmüş ve kodlar oluşturulmuştur. Katımların tepkilerini ve algılarını net ve doğru bir şekilde yorumlanmadan enin olmak için uygun olarak yerde kendi sözüklere kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular ve Tartışma

Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler, ilgili araştırma sorusunu yantlayabilme amacıyla mesleki deneyimler ve mesleki öğrenme gereksinimlerine ilişkin ana temalar altında sunulmuştur. Çalışma ortaya çıkan ana temaları bire, birçok öğretmenin öğretim ortamlarında süregen güçlüklerle karşılaştıkları. Bu güçlükler, özellikle bireyselleştirilmiş eğitim programlarıyla (BEP) ilgili sorunlarla ilişkili olmak üzere özellikin teknik güçlükleri diye adlandırılmışlardır. Araştırma ile ilgili olan “Özel eğitim öğretmenleri, özellikle çocukları sınıf birlikleriyle ilgili görüşleri tabandan mesleki öğrenme gereksinimlerini nasıl betimlemediğini” için üç teman belirlenmiştir. Mesleki öğrenme gereksinimlerine ilişkin beliren temalar aşağıda verilmiştir.

Mesleki Deneyim

Tüm katılımcılar, öğretim ortamının kendileri için zorluk oluşturduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Özel eğitim öğretmenleri, BEP geliştirme, özel gereksinimli öğrencilerin öğretimsel gereksinimlerini karşılamak için müfredatı uyarlama gibi zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu bulgular mesleki gelişim etkinliklerinin bu tür gereksinimleri ele alması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin mesleki tecrübelerinin incelenmesi, mesleki gelişimleri desteklemek için önemlidir.

Özel Eğitim Teknik Sorunları ve Güçlükleri

Araştırmının katılımcıları, BEP hazırlama ve bu süreçteki ekip toplantlarına aylanın zamanı fazla gibi nedeniyle bu durunun kendilerinde stres oluşturan ve sorun yarattığı vurgulanmıştır. Bazı katılımcılar, kâğıt işlerinin sıkıcı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Bazı katılımcılar ise ders planı hazırlama ve velilerle görüşmekle ilgili zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu zorluklar, özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin mesleki tecrübelerinin incelenmesini desteklediği ikiye katılan mesleki gelişim uygulamalarını belirlemek için önemlidir.

BEP amaçlarına ulaşmak için etkili planlama, hazırlama ve öğretim yapmayı aylanın zamanını yetersizliği, Geiger ve diğerler (2014) tarafından vurgulanmıştır. Alnahdi (2014), Suudi Arabistan okullarındaki bazı özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin takımları ve birlikte yürütükleri, “Kâğıt işlerinin sıkıcı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Bazı katılımcılar ise ders planı hazırlama ve velilerle görüşmekle ilgili zorluklarla karşılaştıkları belirtmişlerdir. Bu zorluklar, özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin mesleki tecrübelerinin incelenmesini desteklediği ikiye katılan mesleki gelişim uygulamalarını belirlemek için önemlidir.

İşbirliği, Takım Çalışması ve Destek

Özel eğitim öğretmenleri, öğrencilerin ebeveynlerile ilişkilerini ebeveynlerin çocuklarının eğitim programlarına katılmaya eğilimli olmalarına bağlı olarak olumlu olarak algılamaktadırlar. Katımların eğitim programlarını katılmaya teşvik etmek için, “Özel eğitim öğretmenleri, öğrencilerin ebeveynlerine katılmaya eğilimli olmalarına bağlı olarak olumlu olarak algılamaktadırlar. Katımların eğitim programını katılmaya eğilimli olmalarına bağlı olarak olumlu olarak algılamaktadırlar. Katımların eğitim programını katılmaya eğilimli olmalarına bağlı olarak olumlu olarak algılamaktadırlar. Katımların eğitim programını katılmaya eğilimli olmalarına bağlı olarak olumlu olarak algılamaktadırlar.

Ağahtani

ERKEN GÖRÜNÜM
Genel anlamda, katılımcıların yanıtları, yukarıda özetlenen ana temalar çerçevesinde, deneyimleri ve çalışma ortamlarına ilişkin algılarını ortaya koymuştur. Buna ek olarak, öğretmenler hizmet öncesi eğitimle etkileşime geçmek için, geniş bir çapta becerileri geliştirmektedir; BEP’ın nasıl hazırlanacağı ve neleri içermesi gerektiğini yeterince ele almadığını, özellikle de sekiz veya daha fazla çocukta oluşan sınıflarda birden fazla BEP ile nasıl başlaçağı yeterince farkatsızdır.

Çalışmanın ikinci araştırma sorusu olan “Hangi mesleki gelişim uygulamaları özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin özel gereksinimli çocuklarla çalışmalarında mesleki geliştirmelerini desteklemektedir?” bağlamında, özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin özel gereksinimli çocuklarla çalışmalarında mesleki gelişimlerini destekleyebilecek dört ana grup mesleki gelişim uygulaması olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bunlar süreğen iletişim, teknik destek, merkez destek ve işbirliğine dayalıdır.

Süreğen İletişim
Süreğen iletişimin önemi, tüm katılımcı tarafından vurgulanmış bir tema olmuştur. Katılımcıların tamamı süreğen iletişim için özel gereksinimli çocuk için etkili eğitim programları için hayati önem taşıdığını öne sürmüşlerdir. Süreğen iletişimin öğretmen taraflıda aile katılımını ve olumlu ebeveyn-öğretmen ilişkisini kolaylaştırmada son derece yararlı olduğu ileri sürülmüştür.

Teknik Destek
Araştırmanın katılımcıları, mevcut hizmet içi eğitimlerdeki sorunlardan birinin, aylık eğitimler sağlanmasına karşın, öğretmenlerin kararlılık ve belirttikleri bazı kritik sorunları içermemesi olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Dokuz katılımcıdan altısı buna ilişkin görüş bildirmiştir. Katılımcılar, hizmet içi eğitimlerin öğretmenleri mesleğe hazırlamada yeterli olmadığını ifade etmişler, bu bulgu da özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin gerekキンimlerine uygun olarak hazırlanacak mesleki gelişim değerendirme olarak yararlanacakları düşündürmüştür. Bu veriler, bu çalışmaya katılan EÇD merkezinde çalışan öğretmenlerin gerekキンimleri ortaya koyduğu ve merkezin mesleki gelişim için eğitimlerine sık tutacaktır. Aynı zamanda araştırmanın bulguları MEB’in özel eğitim öğretmenlerini özel gereksinimli çocuklar için mesleki gelişim sürecini planlamasına da faydalı olacaktır.

Merkez Destegi
Tüm katılımcılar, kısmen farklı ihtiyaçları olduğu için ve kısmen de farklı destek türlerini tercih ettikleri için farklı algılanan destek düzeylerine sahip oldukları belirtmiştir. Katılımcılarдан biri (Özel Eğitim Öğretmeni 5), mentörlük desteğin iyi olabileceği ancak bu destek resmi olarak sağlanması gerektiğini belirtmiştir. Katılımcılar, hizmet içi eğitim öğretmenlerin gerekキンimleri arasında olarak yer alan bazı mesleki gelişim kriterleri için bir belirli evraklar ve merkez tabanlı süreçlerin çıkması gerektirdiği belirtmiştir. 

İşbirliğine Dayalı Destek
Bu araştırmacpp, tüm öğretmenleri etkili bir şekilde desteklemek için çok az sayıda mentor olması nedeniyle yeteriyecek.SetFloat veya da mentorluğuna odaklanmalarını belirtmiştir. Bu tartışma, Katılımcılarдан biri (Özel Eğitim Öğretmeni 5) ve diğerleri (Özel Eğitim Öğretmeni 5), eğitim öğretmenlerinin dijital bir platform aracılığıyla destek taleplerini ifade etmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin dördüncü metninde neler olduğuna dair biriktiği ve bazı ülkelerin bu destek hâlâ erişebildirgende erişebildiği öğrenmekde boru olmakla da sözleşen ekmemlerdir.

Öğretmenler dijital platforma atanabilir ve Mentor ekibi ile öğretim teknikleri ve etkinliklerini planlama için kendi diliyle uygun zamanlarda eğitimler vermekten yer alan gereksinimlerinde göz vermektedirler. Bu sayede, öğretmenlerin yoğun mesleki ve ev yaşamalarını uygun zamanlarda gerektiği destek, rehberlik ve geribildirimleri yararlanmalarını sağlamaktır. Bu nedenle öğretmenlerin mesleki uygulamalarını geliştirmek için daha fazla beceri edinme süreçinde artışla göze çarpmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın bulguları, Schirmer’in (2008) da belirttiği gibi, mesleki gelişimin özel eğitim alanı ile ilişkili olması gerektiği ve öğretmenlerin gürültüde çalışmaları için zorluklar ele almaları gerektiğini göstermektedir. Bu çalışmada öğretmenler, sınıflarda gerekli becerileri edinmek istediklerini belirtmişler ve BEP hazırlanması için ekremeliklerin zorlandığı belirtmiştir. Bu öğrencilerin yükü, mentorluğ ve daha fazla işbirliğine yönelik talepleri Darling-Hammond ve diğerlerinin (2017) önerilerine benzerdir. Model olma, aktif öğrenme, geri bildirim sunma ve yanstıma gibi stratejiler, katıktırılar tarafından çok şekilde ifade edilmemiş ancak örtülü şekilde belirtilmiştir.
Bu durum, katılımcıların öğretmen eğitimine yönelik yapılandırmacı bir yaklaşım ilişkin bilgilerinin sınırlı olmasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir (Algahtani, 2018).

Hâlihazırdaki meslekli gelişim süreci, daha etkili destek sağlamak için Leko ve Brownell’in (2009) önerileri doğrultusunda daha anlamlı, organize ve tutarlı hale getirilebilir. Bu süreç, öğretmenlerin ihtiyaçlarını ve hedeflerine uyuşacak ve ulusal eğitim standartlarına eşlik eden programlar oluşturulmak için kullanılabilir (Billingsley, 2005; CEC, 2015). Bu araştırımlarda katılımcılar, henüz öğretmen olmalarına kadar bireysel toplantılar yoluyla öğrenilmiş olabilirler. Toplantılarla edilen veriler, öğretmenlerin gerekşimlerine uygun meslekli gelişim programı oluşturulabilir (Billingsley, 2005; CEC, 2015). İlk olarak özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin ihtiyaçlarının bir anketle ya da okul müdürü veya süpervizör ile öğretmen arası bir toplantı yoluyla öğrenilebilebilir. Toplantılarдан elde edilen veriler, öğretmenlerin gerekşimlerine uygun meslekli gelişim programı oluşturulabilir (CCE, 2009; Leko & Brownell, 2009). Bu program, öğrencilere kaliteli eğitim vermek için gereklileri geliştirecek şekilde düzenlenebilir (Brownell vd., 2005; Duffy & Forgan, 2005; Ingersoll & Krallik, 2004). Özel eğitim öğretmenleri için meslekli gelişim, öğrencilerin genel eğitim müfredatına münkin olan en iyi erişime sahip olması sağlanmak için akademikに入れ öne vermelidir (Leko & Brownell, 2009).

Son olarak, Hiçbir Çocuk Geride Kalmasın Yasası (No Child Left Behind [NCLB]) ve Engelli Bireylerin Eğitim Yasası (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]) kapsamında, fazla özel gereksinimli öğrencinin genel eğitim müfredatına erişimini sağlamak için özel gereksinimli olmayan akademik içeriğin de kullanılması önemlidir (Brownell vd., 2005; Brownell vd., 2005; Duffy & Forgan, 2005; Ingersoll & Krallik, 2004). Özel eğitim öğretmenleri için meslekli gelişim, öğrencilerin genel eğitim müfredatına münkin olan en iyi erişime sahip olması sağlanmak için akademik yerine öne vermelidir (CCE, 2009; Leko & Brownell, 2009).