



## INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NEEDS OF PARENTS WHOSE CHILDREN ATTEND THE INCLUSION CLASS AND THEIR LEVELS OF BURNOUT

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### Abstract

Present study aims at determining the relationship between the needs of parents whose children are attending inclusion classes in the TRNC and their burnout levels. This study encompasses 150 parents in total. The scale used within the scope of the research was applied to the parents of children with special needs (150 participants), who attend the general education class affiliated to the TRNC "Ministry of National Education and Culture Primary Education Department" in the 2019-2020 academic year, via Google Forms. In this regard, scanning model was utilized in the present research. In the study, the "Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education" was utilized to determine the desires of the parents and the "Maslach Burnout Scale-Parent Form" was employed by researchers to reveal the burnout levels of the parents. Based on the relational results between the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students receiving inclusive education and the "Maslach Burnout Scale", it has been determined that there are statistically significant and positive correlations between the scores that the parents got from the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students receiving inclusive education, from the sub-dimensions of the scale, from the overall "Maslach Burnout Scale" and from the sub-dimension of emotional burnout in the scale.

**Keywords:** Inclusion, parent, burnout, special education.

### INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education takes a great significance in the field of special education. This allows students with special needs to demonstrate their life skills independently (Metin, 2012; Akbaba & Tutuncu, 2021; Sengun & Toptas, 2021). As the school is kind of a system and structure, where individuals are taught life skills and also a structure where school life skills are learned by students with special needs who continue inclusive education (Sucuoglu & Kargin, 2010). Students with special needs who participate in inclusive education acquire all the skills they will need in the society, especially the social skills, as a result of their interaction with their peers at school. Every student participating in inclusive education approaches the performance of their peers faster in independent living skills and important steps are taken in that direction to become a member of the society (Kocyyigit, 2015; Buldu, Ozer & Caliskan, 2021).



The student with special needs required to be assisted by several different and varied resources. The family ranks first among these resources. Psychological and physiological health of family members can be considered as a prerequisite for the family to ensure such support to the child who has special needs education (Anılan & Kayacan, 2015).

Every family gives birth to their children with the expectation of having a child with a normal development. However, having a child with special needs brings along various psychological processes in parents too (Akandere, Acar, & Bastug, 2009; Nuri, Akcamete, & Direktor, 2019; Sevimli, 2022). Also, the acceptance process differs from family to family. Roles and responsibilities in the family change after the child with special needs set foot in the family. Every family's lifestyle and thoughts are different. This also applies to families with children with special needs. Such varied thoughts and lifestyles also affects inclusive education (Sivrikaya & Tekinarslan, 2013; Akbaba & Tutuncu, 2021; Sengun & Toptas, 2021; Topal, 2021).

In order for inclusive education practices to be successful, teachers, children with normal development, inclusive students and families of both groups, school management, support special education services and additional services should be taken into consideration (Batu & Kırcaali-İftar, 2006). Necessary support should be given to the teacher in the classrooms, where inclusive education is implementing. Special education support services are classified by Sucuoglu and Kargin (2006) as support education services provided in the classroom (counselor, special education teacher and cooperative learning, educational support) and outside the classroom (resource room and mobile special education teacher) (Sucuoglu & Kargin, 2006).

When the studies on families with children with special needs are considered, it is noticed that the number of studies on the issues affecting the welfare and attitudes of families is quite limited. However, studies on various psychological variables such as families' psychological symptoms, stress perception, coping attitudes, difficulties in the family, family needs and perceived social support provide important information regarding the experiences of families (Yuzbası, 2019). When the literature is scrutinized, research on the issues and stress levels experienced by the families with children who has special needs (Karadag, 2009; Sardohan Aslan & Seker, 2011; Yıldırım & Akcamete, 2014; Sivrikaya & Ciftci Tekinarslan, 2013; Sengul & Baykan, 2013; Yazar, Bayramoglu, & Senol, 2021; Sevimli, 2022), families studies on expectations (Ozsoy, Ozkahraman, & Callı, 2006; Wang & Michaels, 2009; Topal, 2021; Aydemir, 2021) have been conducted. However, mentioned studies illustrate that there is a requirement to investigate the relationship among the needs of families whose children attend the inclusion class and their burnout levels. Identifying the problems and burnout levels of parents are quite important in order to raise awareness and inform the relevant people, institutions and organizations.

Various studies proving that the needs of the parents of children with special needs are influenced by some variables as presented in the related literature (Ersoy, Quadir & Temiz, 2018; Kumcagız, Bozkurt, & Kurtoglu, 2018). However, in the relevant literature and other studies; it was noticed that the burnout levels and needs of the parents of children with special needs were investigated separately (Toy & Kesici, 2020; Kucukozyigit, Aslan, & Yalcin, 2021), it is noteworthy that the relationship among burnout levels and their needs has not been examined yet.

Furthermore, no research has been found in the TRNC that examines the relationship between the needs of families whose children attend inclusion classes and their burnout levels. This situation necessitated the present study. In line with this need, in this study, it was aimed to reveal the relationship between the needs of parents whose children is continuing an inclusion class in the TRNC and their burnout levels. In line with this, following questions are set properly in connection to the research aim to seek answers:

1. What are the needs of parents whose children attend an inclusion class?
2. What is the burnout level of the parents whose children attend the inclusion class?

3. What is the relationship between the needs of parents whose children attend the inclusion class and their burnout levels?

## METHOD

### Research Model

The relational screening model was used in this study, which was conducted to reveal the relationship between the needs of parents whose children attend the inclusion class and their burnout levels, and to examine them in terms of various variables. Relational screening models are research designs which indicate the existence and degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2009).

### Sample

This research was carried out by sending a questionnaire to the parents of children with special needs (150 participants), who attend schools with inclusive education under the TRNC Ministry of National Education and Culture, Primary Education Department, in the 2019-2020 academic year. Demographic findings of the research group are given in Table 1. When Table 1 is examined, 26.0% of the parents included in the study are 20-29 years old, 36.67% are 30-39 years old, 37.33% are 40 years old and over, 52.67% are females. It was found out that 47.33% of them were married, 85.33% of them were married and 14.67% of them were single.

**Table 1.** Distribution of parents by their socio-demographic characteristics

Variables	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
20-29	39	26,00
30-39	55	36,67
40 and above	56	37,33
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	79	52,67
Male	71	47,33
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Divorced	22	14,67
Married	128	85,33

### Data Collection Tools

#### Family Demographic Information Form

A "Family Demographic Information Form" was prepared by the researcher in order to obtain information about the age, gender and marital status of the parents whose children attend the inclusion class.

#### The Scale for Determining the Needs of the Families of Students who have Inclusive Education

In this study, the "Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education" developed by Tekinarslan, Sivrikaya, Keskin, Ozlu, and Ucar-Rasmussen (2017) was used. The scale consists of 35 items and is examined in 5 sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions of the scale are as follows: Need for Social Support (8 items), Need for Environmental Regulation (8 items), Need for Information (7 items), Need for Adaptation (7 items), Need for Assistance (5 items). The scale is scored as a 3-point Likert type. The minimum score taken from the scale is 35 and the highest is 105. The high score obtained from the scale is interpreted as the needs of the families of the students receiving inclusive education are high. The chi-square statistics of the scale calculated with the Barlett Sphericity test were found to be significant and the data matrix was found to be appropriate. In addition, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .91.

### Maslach Burnout Scale

“Maslach Burnout Scale” developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) was adapted into Turkish by Ergin (1992). Consisting of 22 items in total, the scale evaluates burnout in three dimensions. The rating type of the scale was used as a 5-point Likert (0-4). 9 in the Emotional Burnout Dimension (1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16 and 20), 8 in the Personal Accomplishment Dimension (4,7,9,12,17,18,19 and 21), and in the Depersonalization Dimension, there are 5 (5,10,11,15 and 22) items. When the literature is examined, it was found out that Duygun and Sezgin's (2003) study, which was conducted with a research group consisting of mothers of mentally retarded children stated that the Turkish version of the “Maslach Burnout Scale” includes 2 factors. These two factors are expressed as emotional burnout and personal sense of accomplishment. It is noteworthy that Duygun (2001) employed different expressions in terms of the goal of restructuring instead of the expression "work" in the Turkish version of the Maslach Burnout Scale. For example, there are differences between "my child" instead of "my job" and "care of my child" instead of "the nature of my job". In this form of the scale, the first factor expressed as "emotional burnout - depersonalization" consists of 13 items (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 20, 22), while the second factor called "personal sense of accomplishment" consists of 8 items (4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, 21) (Duygun & Sezgin, 2003). Items 4, 7, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, and 20 of the scale require reverse coding. The level of burnout gains interpretation with two separate scores from each subscale. Since the high score obtained from the “Emotional Burnout” subscale is interpreted as the participant's high level of emotional burnout, it is noticed that a positive relationship can be added. On the other hand, there is a negative relationship since a high score on the Personal sense of accomplishment subscale indicates a low sense of achievement. Lastly, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients for the Maslach Burnout Scale's "emotional burnout" and "personal sense of accomplishment" sub-dimensions were .89 for emotional burnout and .80 for personal accomplishment. The overall Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient is .88.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The research data were obtained through the "Scale for Determining the Needs of the Families of Inclusive Education Students" and the "Maslach Burnout Scale". Since the research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic process, the scales were sent to the families between 01.03.2020 and 15.05.2020 via e-mail and other instant messaging platforms, and they were asked to answer them electronically. Data were gathered by reaching out 150 families via an online platform called Google Forms. Responses from families were recorded digitally. After the data collection process was terminated, the data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0 program. The compliance of the parents with the normal distribution of the “Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education” and “Maslach Burnout Scale” scores was examined with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test, and it was noticed that it did not produce a normal distribution. Therefore, non-parametric hypothesis tests were utilized. The Spearman test was also employed to examine the relationships between the “Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education” and “Maslach Burnout Scale” scores.

## RESULTS

### Findings on Requirements

**Table 2.** Parents' scale of identifying the needs of parents whose children attend inclusive education scores

	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	Bottom	Top
Social Support Need	150	19.04	4.89	8	24
Environmental Regulation Requirement	150	24.13	4.00	14	28
Adaptation Requirement	150	17.14	3.73	7	21
Information Requirement	150	14.92	3.50	6	18
Need for Help	150	12.31	2.80	5	15
<b>Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education</b>	150	87.53	16.93	40	106



When Table 2 is examined, 19.04±4.89 points from the Social Support Needs sub-dimension, 24.13±4.00 points from the Need for Environmental Arrangement sub-dimension, 17.14 points from the Need for Adaptation sub-dimension in the "Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education". It was determined that they scored ±3.73 points, 14.92±2.80 points from the Need for Information sub-dimension and 12.31±2.80 points from the Need for Help sub-dimension. It was revealed that the teachers got an average of 87.53±16.93 points from the "Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education", the lowest score being 40 and the highest score being 106.

### Findings Regarding the Burnout

**Table 3.** Parents' Maslach burnout scale scores

	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	Bottom	Top
Emotional Burnout - Depersonalization	150	48.00	8.70	20.00	63.00
Sense of Personal Success	150	23.71	6.54	12.00	37.00
<b>Maslach Burnout Scale</b>	150	71.71	9.72	53.00	98.00

When Table 3 was investigated, it was noticed that the parents got an average of 48.00±7.70 points from the emotional burnout-depersonalization sub-dimension, and 23.71±6.54 points from the personal sense of accomplishment sub-dimension in the "Maslach Burnout Scale". It was revealed that the parents got the lowest 25 and the highest 110 points from the "Maslach Burnout Scale" in general, and the average score obtained from the scale was 71.71±9.72.

### Relationships between Needs and Burnout

**Table 4.** Relationships between the "Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education" and "Maslach Burnout Scale" scores

		Emotional Exhaustion - Depersonalization	Feeling of Personal Achievement	Maslach Burnout Scale
Social Support Requirement	r	.353	.189	.409
	p	.000*	.020*	.000*
Environmental Regulation Requirement	r	.309	-.094	.177
	p	.000*	.252	.031*
Adaptation Requirement	r	.329	-.082	.222
	p	.000*	.317	.006*
Information Requirement	r	.401	-.023	.339
	p	.000*	.776	.000*
Need for Help	r	.350	-.088	.266
	p	.000*	.283	.001*
<b>Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education</b>	r	.367	-.013	.299
	p	.000*	.879	.000*

When Table 4 is examined, it has been determined that there are statistically significant and positive correlations between the scores of the parents from Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education and from the sub-dimensions of the scale, and the scores they got from the "Maslach Burnout Scale" in general and the emotional burnout sub-dimension of the scale (p<.05). As the scores of the students receiving inclusive education from the Scale for Determining the Needs of their Families in general and from the sub-dimensions in the scale increase, the scores they get from the overall "Maslach Burnout Scale" and the emotional burnout-Depersonalization sub-dimension of the scale also rise. It was obtained that there was a positive correlation between the scores that the parents got from the social support need sub-dimension in the Scale of Identifying the



Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education and the scores they got from the sub-dimension of the sense of personal achievement ( $p < .05$ ). Accordingly, as the scores obtained by the parents from the social support need sub-dimension in the “Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education” increase, the scores they get from the sense of personal achievement sub-dimension also rise.

## DISCUSSION

Parents' interest in their children's education, which is one of the basic building blocks of the inclusion process, is extremely important in solving the problems in the inclusion process and making it more effective (Sahin, 2017). At this point, the needs of the families who should be involved in the process should be determined and this process should be shaped by considering these needs (Nuri, 2019). It is emphasized that the first step in providing the most appropriate support and service to families is to determine family needs (Yuzbasioglu, 2019; Kucukozyigit, Aslan & Yalcin, 2021). With this understanding, the needs of families must first be determined in order for the education and support services to be given to children with special needs to reach their goals and be more effective and efficient (Yuksel & Tanriverdi, 2019; Nuri, Akcamete, & Direktor, 2019). Proper and valid identification of these needs ensures that the real needs of families are determined, that family education and support programs overlap with these needs, and that the programs to be implemented are structured on the basis of needs (Yigin, 2008). If the services provided to the family do not meet the basic needs, the success of the programs decreases and in parallel, the program cannot fulfill its purpose (Arkan, 2019; Nuri, Akcamete, & Direktor, 2021). In order to prevent such negative situations, it is extremely important to determine all the needs of the family with a standardized tool and to make the services more effective and efficient (Cavkaytar, Ardic, & Aksoy, 2014).

The participation of the family in the inclusion process is extremely important in terms of obtaining information from the families about the out-of-school performance of their children with special needs and determining the aims of the education programs. The participation and support of families cannot be denied in providing home-school parallelism at the level that should be applied at home (Tekinarslan et al., 2018; Nuri, Akcamete, & Direktor, 2021). Therefore, in order for families to be more active in the development process of their children, it is necessary to determine parent-child interaction, family structures, emotional states, parents' burnout levels, problem-solving skills, resources and needs (Sahin, 2017; Akbaba & Tutuncu, 2021).

According to the relational results between the Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education and the “Maslach Burnout Scale”, the scores that the parents got from the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students who received inclusive education and from the sub-dimensions of the scale, and the overall “Maslach Burnout Scale” and emotional burnout in the scale, there were statistically significant and positive correlations. As the scores of the students receiving inclusive education from the scale of determining their families' needs in general and from the sub-dimensions in the scale increase, the scores they get from the general “Maslach Burnout Scale” and the emotional burnout-depersonalization sub-dimension of the scale also increase. It was revealed that there was a positive correlation between the scores the parents got from the social support need sub-dimension in the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students receiving inclusive education and the scores they got from the sub-dimension of sense of personal achievement (Yarar, Bayramoglu, & Senol, 2021). Accordingly, as the scores of the parents in the sub-dimension of the need for social support in the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students receiving inclusive education increase, the scores they get from the sub-dimension of the sense of personal achievement also increase. In parallel with the correlation data of the study, Sahin (2017) found a positive correlation between emotional exhaustion, which is a sub-dimension of the “Maslach Burnout Scale” of mothers with children who have autism and learning difficulties, and depersonalization, lack of personal achievement and dysfunctional coping. Mutlu (2015) stated that as the level of general burnout increases, the levels of emotional exhaustion and



depersonalization also increase. In connection to this, it was revealed that as the general burnout level increased, the level of personal achievement also increased. Based on the correlation data of the study, the parents of children with special needs attend the inclusive classroom, the constant physical and emotional strain brought about by raising a child, the rejection of the situation, the conflict between family members, the inability to adapt to the society due to the child's problem behaviors, isolation from social environments, increased need for information in new situations (Nuri, Akcamete, & Direktor, 2019; Nuri, Akcamete, & Direktor, 2021). It can be pointed out that several negative effects such as social support and social support increase the burnout.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

To sum up, looking at the relational outcomes among the Scale of Identifying the Needs of Parents whose Children Attend Inclusive Education and the “Maslach Burnout Scale”, the scores that the parents got from the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students who received inclusive education and from the sub-dimensions of the scale, and the overall “Maslach Burnout Scale” and emotional burnout in the scale, statistically significant and positive correlations between the scores have been identified. As the scores of the students receiving inclusive education from the scale of determining their families' needs in general and from the sub-dimensions in the scale increase, the scores they get from the general “Maslach Burnout Scale” and the emotional exhaustion - depersonalization sub-dimension of the scale also increase. It was determined that there was a positive correlation between the scores the parents got from the social support need sub-dimension in the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students who received inclusive education and the scores they got from the personal achievement sub-dimension. Accordingly, as the scores that parents get from the social support need sub-dimension in the scale of determining the needs of the families of the students receiving inclusive education increase, the scores they get from the sense of personal achievement sub-dimension also increase.

The following points can be recommended within the scope of this research: Considering the outcomes of the research, the fact that the mother provides the child's care to a large extent and the fathers provide the income of the family more, has emerged as a reflection of the responsibilities that gender stereotypes impose on female and male. In order for the mother, who takes care of the child with special needs, to spare time for herself and to realize her social functionality, it should be ensured that she engages in activities where she can socialize at least once a week with various social projects. The financial and moral support given to the children of parents who have children attending the mainstreaming class can be increased in favor of mothers. Home or workplace burdens of parents who have children attending the mainstreaming class should be reduced and positive discrimination should be applied to them. For further studies, it is believed that it will greatly contribute to the existing literature to study how variables such as the communication of parents with children with special needs with their other children, the acceptance and adaptation process of siblings with special needs, and environmental and physical factors affect the level of burnout of families.

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