Developing Inclusive Education Policies and Practices in Turkey:

A Study of the Roles of UNESCO and Local Educators

by

Aysegul Ciyer

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Beth Blue Swadener, Chair
Alfredo J. Artiles
Joseph Tobin
Sarup Mathur

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ABSTRACT

According to UNESCO's 2010 survey results of 58 member countries, 34 of the countries had less than 1 percent of children enrolled in special education programs. Ten of these countries provided special education provision for less than .01 percent of children. However, the demand to educate students with disabilities in inclusive educational settings continues to grow. Thus, there are many national initiatives aimed at finding ways of creating forms of inclusive educational settings that can respond to children with special needs. In this study, the purpose was to better understand the processes of local adaptation and modification of UNESCO's inclusive education policies, the possible resistances to global forces in inclusive education in Turkey, and the consequences of the implications of those policies in Ankara, Turkey from local educators' views. With that goal in mind, recently adopted Turkish inclusive educational policies implemented after the Salamanca Statement in 1994 were reviewed on a selective basis. The discussion of the policy and document analysis section helped to make connections between the global inclusive education policy changes and local practices in the Turkish education system. In the second part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with local educators in Ankara (teachers, administrators, and academic advisors) and policy makers from the Ministry of

National Education. An analysis of the interview data highlighted the various complexities, tensions, and inadequacies in the conceptualization of inclusive education in Turkish public primary schools that study participants have observed and experienced. In light of the findings, possible reasons behind the gap between theory and practice and the discrepancies between Western and Turkish interpretations of inclusive education in Turkey are discussed. In the current inclusive education system in Turkey, the challenge of modifying deeply held attitudes at both personal and institutional levels, providing clearly constructed inclusive education policies and approaches, offering appropriate training to key stakeholders, and making adequate resources available appear to be the primary issues for moving forward with full inclusion initiatives.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the memory of two strong and courageous

women, my grandmothers Saliha Ciyer & Ayse Tezel

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The greatest thanks go to all of my family, who had my best interest in their hearts at all times, who loved, supported and motivated me. I wholeheartedly thank my mom Meral Ciyer, my dad Aydin Ciyer, and my lovely sister Pinar Ciyer. They have made me the person I am today, taught me to believe in myself, and reminded me what is important in life.

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Abbreviation	Definition
APPEAL	Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All
DPD	Department of People with Disabilities
EFA	Education for All
ERI	Education Reform Initiative
ERM	Education Reform Movement project
EU	European Union
GRC	Guidance and Research Centers
IEP	Individual Education Programs
ILO	World Bank, the International Labor Office
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MLSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
MONE	Ministry of National Education
NC	National Curriculum
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSE	Office of Special Education
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PMAID	Prime Ministry Administration on Individuals with Disabilities

Abbreviation	Definition
RMESEC	Regulation on Ministry of Education, Special Education Counseling
SHCEK	Social Services and Child Protection Agency
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Funds
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Over the last three decades, "integration" of children with special needs has been a crucial topic for special education professionals. As a result, integration of children with special needs in regular classes instead of segregated settings has become more prevalent (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 1999). In the last decade, however, the international debate has been more focused on "inclusion," a concept notably different than "integration". In general, integration" refers to helping the child to "fit" in already existing educational settings through additional individual support or further modifications to curriculum. Whereas, inclusion refers to restructuring educational provision to encourage children to feel they belong to an educational environment (Kunc, 1992).

The inclusive education concept has many meanings and interpretations in the literature, and several authors and professionals in the field have attempted to define inclusive education from different perspectives. The concepts and ideas relating to inclusive education are subject to struggles over their definition and application. Undoubtedly, an important initial step in advancing inclusive approaches is to clearly define what is meant by inclusive education. Although the most common definition of inclusive education is recognizing and valuing

diversity in educational settings, some researchers limit it to the education of students with disabilities.

Similarly, legislation and policy statements concerning barriers to inclusive education often focus on students with special needs, not all learners. For instance, Mastropieri and Scruggs (2004) defined inclusive education as the education provided for children with disabilities in the regular classroom where instruction is provided by the regular classroom teacher. On the other hand, Villa and Thousand (2005) viewed inclusive education as a belief system, "not just a set of strategies" (p. 5), and Mentis, Quinn, and Ryba (2005) suggested that inclusive education involves "attitudes, values, and beliefs that extend beyond schools to the wider community" (p.76). While some scholars define inclusive education as a process, which evolves as changes in the educational context emerge, some others view it as a "basic human right," where all children are accepted and taught in the regular classrooms.

According to Mitchell (1999), inclusive education policies enable everyone to be accorded equal status regardless of the level of functioning or other personal characteristics. In its broadest term, inclusive education refers to "education for all," those from poverty backgrounds, ethnic minorities, rural communities, and other sources of disadvantage. Singh (2009) added that, philosophically and

pragmatically, inclusive education is primarily about "belonging, membership, and acceptance" (p. 13). Villa and Thousand (2000) furthered this discussion by stating that quality education is not simply determined by student placement, but rather it is based on creating an environment that supports and includes all learners.

The Role of UNESCO and its Polices

Although the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, the International Labor Office (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and other governments with international cooperation programs were also major sponsors of the international agreements on "children's rights," the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been a key leader in persuading its member nations to borrow and adopt its inclusive education policies. Consequently, this study focuses on UNESCO's policy documents that are driving inclusive education policies in Turkey. Although Turkey has prepared a "National Plan for Adoption of ED Acquis," which includes a legislative framework for "persons with disabilities," several recent amendments and additions to the legislation for children with special needs are shaped by UNESCO's framework.

Figuring most prominently in Turkey's inclusion education programs is UNESCO's Salamanca Statement (1994), which defines

inclusive education from the United Nation's (UN) perspective. The Salamanca Statement has also been the most powerful influence on education policies worldwide, although its emphasis on "children's rights" perspective is grounded in previous UN declarations. Inclusive education, as understood in UNESCO's approach, is primarily about issues of human rights, equality, and the struggle for a non-discriminatory society.

The Salamanca Statement (1994), UNESCO's flagship on Special Needs Education, was agreed upon by 92 governments and 25 international organizations. In the Salamanca Statement, UNESCO's role as the key leader is to: 1) ensure that special needs education forms part of every discussion dealing with education for all in various forums; 2) mobilize the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education as regards provision for special educational needs; 3) stimulate the academic community to strengthen research; 4) network and to establish regional centers of information and documentation; and 5) mobilize funds through the creation within its next Medium-term Plan (1996-2002) of an expanded program for inclusive schools and community support programs.

Regardless of UNESCO's role on paper, application of these policies in reality is eventually the task of national governments.

Although each government, predictably, has its own way of interpreting international agreements and guidance, depending on a given country's social, political, economic, and cultural contexts, they also have their own unique history of conceptualizing and responding to students with special needs. Further, when we look at UNESCO's *Five Year Reports*, inclusive education policies of different countries, including Turkey, highlight different requirements, steps, and future goals to secure appropriate education for young children with special educational needs. How those inclusive education policies are understood, internalized, and locally implemented needs to be carefully examined.

A number of researchers have agreed that in order for inclusive education practices to be effective, the school's personnel, and most importantly general education teachers, who will be most responsible for its success, should be open to their principles and the demands of inclusion. Therefore, several studies focus on the environmental factors and the teachers' practices towards the inclusion of children with special needs (Centre & Ward, 1987; Clough & Lindsay, 1991; Myles & Simpson, 1989). Many researchers review and agree that the availability of support services both at the classroom and school levels, including restructured physical environments, teaching materials and resources, and social support from assistant teachers, special education

teachers, and therapists, need to be dramatically increased to achieve inclusive practices.

In his study on inclusive practices, Carrington (1999) concluded that teachers' beliefs and values did influence how they implemented inclusive education policies in their classrooms. Carrington (1999) also summarized environmental factors that influence inclusive education practices as quality of support provided by staff and agencies, relationship between the special education professionals and general education teachers, the administrators' attitudes toward inclusive education, and teachers' level of confidence in selecting and applying appropriate teaching methods.

However, most of the studies were conducted in Western countries. Therefore, the effects of environmental factors and teachers' beliefs and attitudes on inclusive education "success," including definition of "success" of the adapted educational policies, practices, and students with special needs would change from one context to another. Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) argue that that what can be known about one context cannot be assumed to be true in another context. They highlight the importance of "ecological validity" (p. 198) as it refers to examining how cultural, economic, historical, and political forces within a given context play out in schooling.

Vavrus and Bartlett (2006) discuss that 'vertical case study' offers the best opportunity of broadening "the historically dominant epistemological bases of both comparative and international education" (p. 96) and claim that vertical case study is an accommodating tool of comparing knowledge among stakeholders with different social locations in a vertically bounded analysis. In this framework, attention to context and the local level is obligatory and crucial in order to generate reliable knowledge and understanding. In a vertical case study, understanding of the micro level is viewed as part and parcel of larger structures, forces, and policies about which the researcher must also develop a full and thorough knowledge. Nevertheless, reviewing previous research on inclusion studies provides a foundation on which to evaluate benefits and pitfalls of adopting UNESCO's inclusion education policies in Turkey.

Purpose of the Study

Despite the examples and different approaches given above, the common-sense view of inclusion in some non-Western countries such as Turkey tends to be only related to children with disabilities. Most researchers in Turkey view children with disabilities as a higher disadvantage group when compared to other groups of generally excluded children, especially based on a socio-economic status and gender. This study examines key international policies, resolutions, and their effect on inclusive education programs in Turkey from the perspective of current practitioners in the Turkish education system.

The primary goal of this research is to provide a better understanding of the processes of local adaptation and modification of these international education policies in Turkey, the possible resistances to global forces in inclusion there, and the consequences of the application of UNESCO's inclusive education policies in Turkish classrooms. Additionally, the research aims to better understand teachers' and administrators' interpretations and perceptions of UNESCO's inclusive education policies and applications, as it describes the current situation, teacher training opportunities, the level of parents' participation, and research and development in inclusive education in that specific context. Equally important is the

intent to examine the different types of support that UNESCO provides to improve Turkish inclusive education policy planning and practices and examine the cultural compatibility of various approaches and goals of the organization.

Research Questions

Research questions that guided the study include the following:

1. What themes in UNESCO policy documents are reflected in inclusive education policies and practices in Turkey? What types of support does UNESCO provide for Turkey to improve their inclusive education system?

2. How are some of the stakeholders involved in implementation of Turkey's inclusionary policies and what are the relevance of such policies for Turkey?

3. From local practitioners/administrators point of view, which newly adapted inclusive educational policies work in Turkey and which do not?

In support of these goals, extensive research and primary data collection took place in Ankara, Turkey, through semi-structured interviews with Turkish administrators, Kindergarten through 8th grade, primary school teachers, academic advisors, and policy makers from MONE. This vertical case study results show that while the usual constraints of limited resources make application of inclusion

education difficult at best, that many other variables are at play from the ground level up. Social and economic barriers, the cultural perceptions of the special needs students, and the critical viewpoint that inclusion may not actually be good for severely challenged children are just a few of the hurdles that the education community faces in Turkey. Finally, the research results shed light on several crucial issues in inclusive education, illuminate UNESCO's roles in shaping global special education policies and practices, and determine the social and cultural compatibility of the organization's various inclusive education approaches within Turkish culture.

Organization of the Dissertation

The following section of this chapter, chapter 2, provides a brief overview of the UNESCO policies that are affecting global inclusive education policies and practices. Chapter 2 provides an exhaustive literature review focusing on historical developments in the Turkish education system and on inclusion as it has mainly been studied in Western countries. Although a list of major policies and legislation is provided, their details are covered in Appendix A for those readers who require more information on these global guidelines.

Chapter 4 provides an analysis of policies and documents pertaining to inclusive education in Turkey, demonstrating links to UNESCO policy documents (particularly the Salamanca Statement).

The synthesis furthers the overall understanding of key questions and issues regarding inclusive education policies and programs in Turkey that were implemented after the Salamanca Statement in 1994.

Chapter 5 summarizes local Ankara educators' interpretations of recently adopted inclusive education policies, pedagogical challenges, as well as major barriers to inclusive education. The final chapter presents the results of this research and discusses implications for further study.

The target audience for this study includes researchers, special education teachers, general education teachers, and policy makers in the field. My vision for this research endeavor is to be able to contribute to the larger body of knowledge in the form of conference presentations, and published articles in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. This study may also play an important role in adding another dialogue on how to best address tensions and contradictions between global policies and local possibilities/ enactments of policies, advocated by global organizations and funders, in Turkey.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

The primary purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive literature review of international studies and discussions on inclusive education research, policy, and practices. This section also includes a summary about history and current situation of inclusive education in Turkey and major themes in UNESCO's inclusive education policies.

The inclusive education concept has many meanings and interpretations in the literature, and several authors and professionals in the field have attempted to define inclusive education from different perspectives. For instance, Mastropieri and Scruggs (2004) defined inclusive education as the education provided for children with disabilities in the regular classroom where instruction is provided by the regular classroom teacher. On the other hand, Villa and Thousand (2005) viewed inclusive education as a belief system, "not just a set of strategies" (p. 5) and Mentis, Quinn, and Ryba (2005) suggested that inclusive education involves "attitudes, values, and beliefs that extend beyond schools to the wider community" (p.76). While some scholars define inclusive education as a process, which evolves as changes in the educational context emerge, some others view it as a "basic human right", where all children are accepted and

taught in the regular classrooms. According to Mitchell (1999), inclusive education policies enable everyone to be accorded equal status regardless of the level of functioning or other personal characteristics.

Regardless of one's educational values, inclusion has emerged in the forefront of international education policy and spurred many organizations and countries to develop their own position on the topic. This section presents an overview of these developments in Turkey as well as the key international institutions.

Inclusive Education and International Scene

Each girl and boy is born free and equal in dignity and rights; therefore all forms of discrimination affecting children must end. We will take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including equal access to health, education, and recreational services, by children with disabilities and children with special needs to ensure the recognition of their dignity; to promote their self reliance and to facilitate their active participation in the community (Statements by Heads of State, United Nations, 2002).

According to UNESCO's 1986–87 survey results among fifty-eight member countries, thirty-four of the countries had less than 1 % of children enrolled in special education programs. Ten of these countries

provided special education provision for less than .01 % of children. The *Global Monitoring Report on Education for All*, (UNESCO 2006) revealed that over 90 % of children with special needs in poor countries of the South do not have access to primary education at all.

Most countries, including Turkey, are seeking ways to apply the principals of the Salamanca Framework (UNESCO 1994), with its focus on inclusive education, and the *Dakar Framework for Action* (2000), with its commitment to Education for All. Steiner-Khamsi (2004) argues that in low-income countries, the external pressure to reform in certain ways and the reference to an international community are crucial. Although there is evidence that most professionals began to perceive inclusive education as a "readily exportable item in the international market" (Conors, 1964; Kalyanpur, 1996), it is of great importance to examine whether or not, and how these externally induced reforms are locally implemented.

Preferred ways of conducting international efforts remain a controversial debate. Some researchers argue that inclusive education is achievable regardless of the level of disability, and that it has positive outcomes for all children (Crawford, 2008; Porter, 2001). On the other hand, several researchers (Kalyanpur, 1991 & 1996; Manion & Bersani, 1988; Scheer & Groce, 1988; Walker, 1986; World-Herald, 1991) argued beliefs and practices towards children with special needs

differ among societies. For example, some critics challenge the idea of "normalization" and argue that the concepts of individual self-fulfillment, attaining one's "maximum potential," and being "integrated into society" are part of a Western package of ideals and philosophy, and not necessarily shared by people from other cultures (Miles, 1981; Nirje, 1969; Taylor et al., 1987; Wolfensberger, 1972). Artiles and Dyson (2005) reviewed the international development of inclusive education and pointed out that people increasingly have more access to regional and global markets and education systems are vulnerable to these globalizing trends.

Additionally, developments in social systems, concepts, and language are "historically situated and culturally specific" (Armstrong & Barton, 2007, p.10) and because of this very reason, inclusive education and related terms cannot have one fixed and universal interpretation independent from the social context. Miles (1989) also raised some concerns about introducing Western models of special education into developing countries. He noted that the reasons that adopted inclusive education policies and practices often do not seem to work are complex but include what he referred to as "conceptual blockage" (p. 47). In the light of these arguments and some evidence presented, it is important to recognize that the social, cultural, and economical uniqueness of each national context makes transportation

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of educational conclusions from one situation to another very problematic (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). Additionally, in inclusive educational policy, there is a difference between what has been politically decided and formulated, and what has really been enacted, including how things function in different socio-cultural contexts.

Clearly, inclusive education is one of the most controversial and multifaceted topics in educational research. Where educators and other professionals do not share common understanding of the aims and the processes, implementation tends to be inconsistent from region to region (for example, urban/rural), from system to system (for example, private/public) and even from school to school or classroom to classroom within the same system in a given community (Lutfiyya & Van Welleghem, 2002). Educational researchers, policy makers, and professionals around the world still debate what inclusive education really means and whether this Western model will work in developing countries or not. Some researchers further question how well inclusive education works in Western countries and despite many countries' apparent commitment to "inclusive education" idea in theory, in practice it often falls short (Mitchell, 2005). Further, the mode in which inclusion policies are adopted may be at issue.

Vavrus and Bartlett (2006) discuss that 'vertical case study'
offers the best opportunity of broadening "the historically dominant
epistemological bases of both comparative and international education"
(p. 96) and claim that vertical case study is an accommodating tool of
comparing knowledge among stakeholders with different social
locations in a vertically bounded analysis. In this framework, attention
to context and the local level is obligatory and crucial in order to
generate reliable knowledge and understanding. In a vertical case
study, understanding of the micro level is viewed as part and parcel of
larger structures, forces, and policies about which the researcher must
also develop a full and thorough knowledge.

According to Bartlett and Vavrus (2009), the growing inter-
connections between national education systems and global
organizations that fund and evaluate their operations is one of the
most important issues for educational scholars world-wide and the
vertical case studies should be:

> Grounded in a principal site—e.g., a school, a community, an
> institution, or a government ministry—and should fully attend
> to the ways in which historical trends, social structures, and
> national and international forces shape local processes at this
> site. In other words, local understandings and social interactions
> should not be considered demographically or geographically

bounded. Instead, in a vertical case study, understanding of the micro-level is viewed as part and parcel of larger structures, forces, and policies about which the researcher must also develop a full and thorough knowledge (p. 96).

Education for All (1990)
The Salamanca
Statement (1994)   International

MONE inclusive education
policy & document analyses
Interviews w/ policy makers   National

Interviews w/ teachers,
administrators, and academic   Local
advisors

Figure 1 Vertical Case Study Model

The vertical case study lends itself to the simultaneous comparisons of similarities and differences, across multiple levels, which are necessary to avoid both ultra-relativism and universalism. Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) claim that "attention to the contextual limits of knowledge is an important step toward developing not only trustworthy knowledge but also an adequate conceptualization of comparison among current and future scholars in comparative and international education." (p. 19)

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Policy Copying versus Borrowing

"Can country X solve its educational problems by adopting policy or practice deemed to be successful in country Y? And, if so, how is such policy or practice borrowed and implemented?" These are commonly asked questions in the comparative education literature. In the same field, several terms, including policy "copying," "appropriation," "importation," "implantation," "transfer," "transformation," "translation," and "borrowing" have been used synonymously to refer to cross-national attraction and to using of "foreign example" in policy-making (Vislie, 2003, p. 19). In this study, I would rather use the term "policy borrowing" to describe a conscious policy adoption from one context to another, although the degree of consciousness or awareness of borrowing is different in each case.

As Kyung-Chul stated in his 2001 article, "No social products, including educational change, can be transferred directly from one area to another. They are products of the social context and cannot be separated from their unique place and time" (p. 260). As will be seen in this study's results, while there is plenty evidence of good intentions and occasional examples of inclusive education being implemented in Turkey, practices do not always match the promises.

A number of researchers agree that in order for inclusive education practices to be effective, the school personnel and most

importantly general education teachers, who will be most responsible for its success, should be open to their principles and the demands of inclusion. Therefore, several studies have focused on the environmental factors and the teachers' practices towards the inclusion of children with special needs (Centre & Ward, 1987; Clough & Lindsay, 1991; Myles & Simpson, 1989). Most of these researchers state that the availability of support services both at the classroom and school levels, including restructured physical environment, teaching materials and resources, and social support from assistant teachers, special education teachers, and therapists, are related to achieve inclusive practices. For instance, Avramidis et al. (2000) reported that overcrowded classrooms, insufficiently prepared materials, insufficient time to plan with learning support team, lack of modified and flexible timetables, inadequate available support from specialists, and lack of regular in-service training opportunities are also key contributors of failure or achievement of inclusive educational practices.

In his study on inclusive practices, Carrington (1999) concluded that teachers" beliefs and values did influence how they implemented inclusive education policies in their classrooms. Carrington (1999) also summarized environmental factors that influence inclusive education practices as quality of support provided by staff and agencies, relationship between the special education professionals and general

education teachers, the administrators' attitudes toward inclusive education, and teachers' level of confidence in selecting and applying appropriate teaching methods.

Unfortunately, most of the previously mentioned studies were conducted in Western countries. Therefore, it is difficult to predict how environmental factors and teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward inclusive education— including definitions of "success" of the adapted educational policies, practices— and students with special needs would change from one context to another. Mitchell (2005) argued that the relationships between the social, political, and cultural contexts of the region of interest, directly affect the implementation of inclusive educational principles. This clearly suggests that inclusion has to be context and culture specific.

On the other hand, Alur and Timmons (2009) argued that inclusion is not about a place and stated,

> …that is a mistake we often make, believing that placing a child in a particular educational space means having achieved inclusion. Inclusion, rather, is about quality education, ensuring all children's needs are met in a classroom. It's a process of change, not a product or final place (p.26).

Apart from various definitions, it is crucial to consider that the term "inclusion" has different consequences when applied to different

settings. In industrialized countries, inclusion related issues are mostly about deconstruction of segregated services for children with disabilities with attempts to make them part of the general education system.

Most comparative research studies conclude that countries with a very long history of special education, in other words segregated dual system, face longer and stronger resistance against inclusive education practices from both parents and educators in the system. Traditionally, students with special needs spend most of their education life away from other students in Turkey. In Turkey, although the Turkish law does not forbid children with special needs to study in regular classrooms, it does not guarantee services or staff to support children with special needs in the mainstream classroom, either. In the late 1990s, due to lobbying efforts of disability NGO's and especially the Salamanca agreement, the first inclusive primary and middle school programs emerged in Ankara and other big cities, such as Izmir, Istanbul, Bursa, and Diyarbakir.

Special and Inclusive Education in Turkey

Overall structure of the Turkish national special education system. Turkey, compared to most other industrialized Western countries, has a young population. According to the census held in 2000, Turkey's population is over 67 million and 30% of the population

is under age 14. Today, the number of students at all levels is about 19.5 million and there are 67,000 educational institutions nation-wide. The total number of teaching personnel, including those in higher education, is more than 710 thousand. In primary education, 10.5 million students are provided education by 399 thousand teachers in 35,581 schools.

The Turkish national education system consists of two main parts: "formal education" and "non-formal" education. Formal education includes pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. Most special education schools are part of vocational and technical secondary education institutions under formal education. Non-formal education covers education for those who have never had education or who left without achieving a qualification, also for those who are still attending formal education but willing to focus on a particular subject. Therefore, some special education and application schools, special education vocational schools, special education vocational training centers, special education science and art centers are part of non-formal education system in Turkey. According to the *2005 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD) report, educational opportunities are offered to young children in eight groups of special needs.

Students with visual impairments. At special education schools, education services at preschool and primary education levels are available for visually impaired individuals. All of the schools at the level of primary education are boarding schools, but the students can attend those schools on a daily basis. Students with visual impairments also have an opportunity to continue their education within the context of inclusive education. These students who completed their primary education in special schools continue their further education at regular schools.

Students with hearing impairments. At special education schools, preschool, primary, and secondary education services are provided for the students with hearing impairments as boarding and daily schools. These students can also continue their education in inclusive settings and vocational high schools, without an entrance exam, is another option for this group of students.

Students with orthopedic disabilities. At special education schools, preschool, primary, secondary education, and medical rehabilitation services are provided for the students with orthopedic disabilities. The vocational schools that specifically targeted this group of students provide decorative handicrafts, bookbinding and serigraphy, and accounting classes.

Students with long-term illnesses. Primary education is provided within the hospital schools for children who cannot continue their regular education because of their long term illnesses that require constant care and treatment. However, these students cannot continue their education in inclusive settings or benefit secondary education services.

Students with mental retardation. Education at preschool, primary, and non-formal levels is available for children with mental retardation at special education schools on a daily basis. Children with moderate (educable) mental retardation cases can continue their primary education at both regular schools within the context of inclusive education and special education primary schools although priority is given to the education of these students in inclusive settings. Unfortunately, secondary education is not available for this group of children but the students who complete their primary education successfully can attend "Vocational Education Centers" where students gain basic vocational skills and take cultural courses aiming to sharpen their adaptation skills.

The education services for children with severe (trainable) mental retardation are only provided at "Education Application Schools" where programs aim to teach them basic life skills, self-care, to develop functional academic skills to better adapt to the society.

Inclusive education at regular schools is not an option for these students.

Gifted and talented students. In order to ensure awareness of gifted or talented children's individual skills and maximize their capacities, 'Science and Art Centers" have been established at pre-school, primary, and secondary education levels. These institutions provide education based on their students" interests, skills, and demands in their spare time.

Students with adjustment difficulties. Children with emotional, behavioral, and social adjustment problems continue their education through inclusive education at regular schools where special measures are taken. These measures include informative meetings for general education teachers, administrators, and parents organized by the guidance and research centers and child psychiatry offices where they discuss individual and developmental characteristics of the child and educational plans to apply at school and home.

Students with speaking difficulties. All children with speaking difficulties continue their education through inclusive education at regular schools. Similar to children with adjustment difficulties, these students are generally provided additional support through informative meetings organized by the guidance and research centers and child psychiatry offices for teachers, institution administrators,

and parents. In the meetings, individual and developmental characteristics of the child are examined and a guidance plan discussed. Some speech therapy services are available for these at the guidance and research centers and as well as in-service training seminars for their teachers.

Other educational options. Early childhood special education, parent education, education at home, and special education in non-formal education settings are among other special education services. Special education services for children under 36 months are not common, though detailed evaluation, monitoring, and pedagogical identification are provided at some institutions. Some professionals and teachers in cooperation with selected universities support parents of young children with special needs by providing basic information and guidance. For children between 37–72 months with special needs, inclusive educational settings are available at some preschools, especially in the big cities, where a group of professionals work on individualized education plan goals prior to the child entering primary school.

Education at home is another option for children with special needs who are at the age of compulsory education but cannot make it to the educational institutions directly due to severity of their problems, although these services are not nationwide or always

available. When available, home services are carried out by teachers whose tasks are providing special education on site by informing and supporting parents and educating children at home.

Vocational education given by Turkey's Ministry of National Education (MONE) is provided at special education institutions and vocational-technical education institutions. Additionally, when formal education schools are on vacation in summer time, some vocational courses are offered at special educational schools and public education centers for children and adults with different special needs. In general, three placement services are available for the education of children with special needs in Turkey: a) inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream classrooms; b) special schools with and without residential provision; c) special classes or units in mainstream schools.

Special education schools have been configured in accordance with the levels in the Turkish national education system. However, unlike other schools, there is a preparatory class prior to primary education. Students with special needs who are able to continue in primary education can skip the preparatory phase and start primary education.

Organizations affiliated with the Ministry of National Education, with various roles and responsibilities such as diagnosis, vocational rehabilitation, care, and education/training are as follows;

a) guidance and research centers, b) public and private special education schools, c) home-boarding special education schools and classes, d) vocational schools and vocational education centers.

The Turkish government has several agencies that have responsibilities for educational research and special education. There is a centralized educational system in Turkey directed by MONE. Within MONE, the Office of Special Education (OSE) recruits, coordinates, and monitors all special education services in Turkey to improve the quality and quantity of those services. Another department within the Ministry of State, the Department of People with Disabilities (DPD), coordinates the bureaucratic, social, educational, and research components among all governmental and nongovernmental efforts regarding individuals with disabilities.

Other than OSE and DPD, the main ministries to which the legislation delegated responsibilities on diverse issues of individuals with special needs are; Ministry of Health, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Prime Ministry Administration on Individuals with Disabilities (PMAID), and Prime Ministry Agency for Social Services and Child Protection.

Special Education in Numbers

In 2005, the OECD National Education Policy Review Background Report showed that in the 2004–2005 academic year, a

total 76,237 individuals used special education services at 22,082

special education schools, 50,355 inclusive and special education

classes, and 3800 special education primary schools affiliated with the

General Directorate for Private Education; and 34,099 individuals

used rehabilitation services at public and private rehabilitation centers

affiliated with the Institution of Social Services and Child Protection

(Table 1).

Table 1

Quantitative Developments of Special Education between the Years of

2000-2005 (OECD Report)

YEARS	Number of Schools	Number of students special schools	Number of students special classes	Number of students inclusive education	Total number of students	Number of teachers
2000-2001	342	15,838	6,862	23,915	51,923	2,355
2001-2002	419	17,320	6,912	29,074	53,306	2,834
2002-2003	440	17,988	6,912	31,708	56,608	3,385
2003-2004	468	19,895	7,405	35,625	63,194	3,481
2004-2005	480	22,082	8,130	42,225	72,437	4,506

According to the results of a survey conducted by the State of

Statistics (MONE, 2001) in cooperation with PMAID (1997), 12.29% of

total population in Turkey is disabled. This contributes to

approximately 8.5 million children and adults with disabilities. The

most recent statistics of the Prime Ministry (2006) shows that there

are 603.840 children under age 15 have disabilities in Turkey. The

most common disability is the physical disability with a percentage of

10 among all the disability categories. 12.69% of the urban population is disabled while this rate is 11.67% in rural areas where some essential services are difficult to provide.

The State Institute of Statistics reports (2007) indicate that 40.97% of the children with disabilities (children with physical, visual, hearing, and speech impairments and mental retardation) have graduated from primary school (1st–5th grades), 5.64% from secondary school (6th-–8th grades), 6.90% from high school, and only 2.42% have a university degree. The reports demonstrate that these rates are much less in rural areas (East, Southeast, and Black Sea regions) compared to urban areas (Marmara, Aegean, Mediterranean, and Central Anatolia regions), and decreases considerably towards university level.

By April 2005, the number of publicly owned rehabilitation centers was 62. In addition, there are 505 private rehabilitation centers established with the license of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHCEK). The most advanced rehabilitation centers are in larger cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. The resulting report of the First Congress on Disabilities held in 1999 concluded that these numbers are quite low for serving the special needs population According to the records of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MLSS), 60.27% of people with disabilities in Turkey have access to

social security and social security institutions mainly finance

rehabilitation services.

Table 2

Number of Schools, Students, and Teachers in Special Education (2004-2005, OECD report)

Type of Schools/ Institution	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Primary School Teachers	Branch Teachers	Special Education Teachers	Guidance Teachers
Nurseries (Hearing Impairment)	1	31	7			6	1
Primary Schools (Hearing Impairment)	49	5732	1159	287	785	43	32
Vocational High Schools (Hearing Impairment)	14	1174	175		166		9
Primary Schools (Visual Impairment)	16	1348	358	54	157	122	20
Primary Schools (Orthopedic Impairment)	4	191	55	30	20	2	2
Vocational High Schools (Orthopedic Impairment)	2	55	19		19		
Vocational Education Centers	57	1852	209	56	59	84	10
Training and Application Schools	104	4550	1276	451	161	590	50
Science and Art Centers	25	2232	253	31	208	1	11
Hospital Primary Schools	44		81	71	5	2	
Training Centers (Autism)	12	366	159	37	49	64	5
Primary School for Street Children	1	22	10				
Special School Kindergartens	38	309					
Total	480	22082	4506	1300	1800	1183	165

According to PMAID records, there are approximately 342 associations and 42 foundations working with children and young adults with disabilities. Most of those societies, 65 of them, are located in Ankara. Istanbul and Izmir are following with 32 and 23 societies respectively. Main activities of the associations and foundations are mostly funded through World Bank, although there are also some grant programs through European Commission.

European Union (EU) policies are also important for Turkey in the process of accession. Turkey was officially recognized as one of the candidate countries in December 1999 at the Helsinki European Council meeting (Tarman, 2008). Although Turkey has prepared a "National Plan for Adoption of ED Acquis" (2001), which includes a legislative framework for "Persons with disabilities", several recent amendments and additions to the legislation for children with special needs are shaped mostly by UNESCO's 1994 Salamanca framework. For the purpose of this study, however, it is important to look at the historical context of special needs education in Turkey.

History of the Special Education System and Related Organizations

The history of formal special education in Turkey traces back to 1880's with the establishment of two special education schools with visual and hearing impairments. At the same era, educational reforms

began with the establishment of military schools when western languages (French and English) appeared in curricula, some college-level students were sent to Europe, and compulsory elementary education was put into a practice.

Until the 1950's, a department in MONE tried to serve a small group of children with special needs here and there. After that time, with American aid and support in various spheres of the governmental and public sectors, there were new perspectives and rapid changes in the educational system. During 1950s, more special schools and classes became available and Turkish government and society started to develop more awareness and sensitivity towards the needs and demands of children with special needs. As a consequence, 1961 legislation promoted the preparation of the rules and regulations for the provision of education to children with special needs (Akkok, 1999).

The Turkish *Special Education Legislation 2916* came into practice in 1983 and shaped the Turkish National Congress for revision of General National Curricular and Special Education issues in 1991 (Sari, 2000). The Turkish government anticipated that the National Curriculum (NC) would offer a positive step towards inclusion and the legislation affirmed that children with special needs should be integrated in mainstream schools. The late 1990's, the period

right after 1994 Salamanca Statement agreement, could be identified as a major period for Turkish special education, as a reorganization, reestablishment, and updating of all the governmental provisions was taking place. The involvement of parents in the educational provisions, initiation of individualized educational programs, importance of early intervention, and effective implementation of inclusion were major areas of emphasis in Act 573 of 1997. With this act, bureaucracy, rules, and regulations for special education in Turkey seemed to be at same levels when compared to other countries with well-developed special education services (Turkish Society and People with Disabilities, 1999).

Most Recent Special Education Projects

Numerous projects have recently been implemented in various regions of Turkey: 1) the Project on Development of Education Models for Treatment and Inclusion of the children with Speaking Difficulties; 2) the 1999-Project on the Education of Autistic Children and Implementation; 3) the Project on the Education of Children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity; 4) the Project on the Children with Visual Impairments; and 5) the Project on the Development of Gifted Children. Each of these projects targets school age children and was

developed to advocate for the educational rights of special needs children to be educational in a typical school setting.

In addition to these target specific programs, a major national project recently involved research on developing new strategies for improving the Turkish special education system (MONE, 1997) and within this comprehensive project, the inclusion of students with mental disabilities and hearing impairments is the most important segment. However, as primary education progresses, a few children with severe difficulties are accepted in mainstream schools. Also, some students with multiple disabilities are totally excluded both from mainstream schools and from segregated facilities due to lack of resources and professionals to educate them (Ozyurek, 1996)

With the significant expansion of primary education in the last two decades, more and more children with special needs are now enrolled in mainstream schools (Eripek, 1996). Although the recent statistics are encouraging and worthy, many of these children with special needs simply cannot survive the system in Turkey. They are often at risk of repeating and dropping out because of environmental reasons and lack of resources (Ari et al. 1998, Yilmaz, 1997). The majority are being educated by state schools to the best of their ability, though with varying degrees of support from their local community,

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government, and non-governmental departments (MONE Report, 1996).

The General Directorate of Special Education, Guidance, and Research Services has responsibility for the screening, allocation and placement of students with special needs (MONE Report, 1997). The directorate is also responsible for running the Guidance and Research Centers (GRC) where those who need special education are assessed and identified for their provision in schools. Most public special education schools provide educational opportunities for children with hearing, visual, mental, and physical disabilities. However, children who have different difficulties than those described above, such as epilepsy, are served by separate private institutions that are not available in every city. Furthermore, schools and classroom teachers have the choice to accept an "additional" child with special needs, or not to accept. The difficulty arises when a teacher chooses not to accept a special needs child and the outcome, in effect, is a denial of that students human rights to an education. Table 3 provides a breakdown of schools offering some type of special education.

Table 3

Number of Schools, Classes, and Students at Special

Education Classes and Inclusive Education in 2005 (MONE)

Type of Education	Number of Schools	Number of Classes	Number of Students
Special Education Class	700	1,265	8,130
Inclusive Education	6,488	19,487	42,225
Total	7,188	20,752	50,355

Themes in UNESCO's Inclusive Education Policies

This section introduces 10 major policies which are summarized in Appendix A. The intention is to provide a resource for future researchers while not encumbering the present study. These international agreements and policy documents have been purposefully selected, because their substantive content is related to inclusive education of children with special needs, and/or rights of children with special needs to education. They are also crucial to the evolution of educational rights in Turkey, and many represent the country's genuine attempt to improve the legal status of education rights of disabled children. But as results will later show, these policies are in their infancy and have yet to affect a real change for the better in urban and rural school systems in Turkey. These policies, declarations, and laws include:

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948)

2. The Convention against Discrimination in Education (UN, 1960)

3. The Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons (UN, 1971)

4. The Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons (UN, 1975)

5. The Sundberg Declaration (UNESCO, 1981)

6. The World Programme for Action Concerning Disabled Persons (UN Enable, 1982)

7. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989)

8. The World Conference on Education for All (UN, 1990)

9. The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993)

10. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994)

11. Dakar World Education Forum (2000).

In this study, the primary focus was on two international conferences and agreements: 1) The Education for All World Conference (EFA), and 2) The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.

The World Conference on Education for All (UN, 1990)

A world conference on "Education for All" (EFA) was sponsored by UNESCO in March 1990, Jomtein, Thailand. Participants, who represented 155 governments, and160 governmental and nongovernmental agencies at the conference, approved a "Framework for Action." The framework focused on children who may be excluded from or marginalized within education systems, because of their apparent differences. World Declaration on EFA contains 10 articles; and a social model of disability with inclusive education concepts were still included, although the framework intended to address not only educational needs of people with disabilities, but also refugees, women and girls, people from "economically poorer countries", large illiterate populations, and people with little or no access to basic learning opportunities.

Article 3 of the declaration is entitled as *Universalizing Access and Promoting Equity* and stated that "basic education should be provided to all children, youth, and adults. To this end, basic education services of quality should be expanded and consistent measures must be taken to reduce disparities" (p.3). The fifth and last section of the article indicated that the learning needs of the disabled demand special attention; and some steps need to be taken "to provide equal

access to education to every category of disabled persons as an integral part of the education system."

At Jomtien, each member country invited to determine its own intermediate goals and targets, to design a "plan of action" for achieving them, to set a timetable, and to schedule specific educational activities. It is also indicated that regional and international action would need to be scheduled to help countries meet their goals on time. Some of the major regional programs established through UNESCO to provide consultation on policy issues and technical issues include Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL), Regional Programme for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education and the Eradication of Illiteracy in the Arab States by the year 2000, Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, and Regional Programme for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Africa.

After discussing priority actions at the national and regional levels, the third and last chapter of the EFA framework, "priority action at world level," aimed to address four issues: 1) cooperation within the international context; 2) enhancing national capacities; 3) providing sustained long-term support for national and regional actions; and 4) consultations on policy issues. In the last section, in

terms of "creating a supportive policy environment," member governments and organizations urged to "design the means to adapt information and communication media to meet basic learning needs" and "mobilize resources and establish operational partnerships" (p.13). Additionally, developmental agencies, which were responsible to establish policies and plans for the 1990s, were required to provide long-term support for national and regional actions and increase their financial and technical assistance accordingly.

EFA Forum, consisting of the UNESCO, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Funds (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and later the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, was decided to guide and coordinate the work, to monitor progress, to assess achievements, and to undertake comprehensive policy review at regional and global levels.

On the inclusive education issue, the EFA document emphasized 'universal access and equity' concepts. Specifically, the declaration asserted that children with disabilities should have equal access through an education that is 'integral to' general education, but not particularly integrated with general education. Moreover, organizations and governments held accountable for providing

resources and funding solutions to access and equity, a totally different perspective from the earlier 'Convention on the Rights of the Child', which stated that 'access' should be 'subject to available resources and dependent on the child's condition.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994)

More than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, to review Education for All, by considering the policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, explicitly enabling schools to serve children with special needs. The Salamanca Statement (1994) is unique among all of the UN's educational policy documents, because in this analysis, education of children and youth with disabilities is its main focus, rather than background study or addition to Article 23 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Vislie (2003) indicated that this document set the policy agenda for inclusive education on a global basis and represented a linguistic shift from integration to inclusion as a global descriptor. Based on the Salamanca Statement:

> Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning;

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Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and

learning needs;

Education systems should be designed and educational

programmes implemented to take into account the wide

diversity of these characteristics and needs;

Those with special education needs must have access to regular

schools which should accommodate them with a child-centered

pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.

Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means

of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming

communities, building and inclusive society and achieving an

education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the

majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-

effectiveness of the entire education system (UNESCO, 1994, p. viii-ix).

Before Salamanca Statement, in most western countries

"integration" had served as a descriptor of a particular policy concern

during 1970s and 1980s. At the beginning of 1980s, UNESCO adopted

the term "inclusion" as a descriptor for the organization's main

activities in the field, and those activities had a global orientation.

Vislie (2003) argued that UNESCO needed a new label to avoid giving

the wrong signals to significant actors in the international arena.

Furthermore, segregation of disabled people was mainly embedded in the Western European history and "integration" was a difficult descriptor for the new actions in the developing countries.

This statement on principles, policy, and practice in special needs education contains 57 Articles and in Article 2 it is stated that:

Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs. Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (p.ix).

In Article 3, all governments urged to adopt "as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise," and "[to] develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools."

UNESCO, as the United Nations agency for education, was specifically responsible for mobilizing "the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education as regards provision for special educational needs." UNESCO was also in charge of funds which mainly used for expanded inclusive schools, community support programs, and pilot projects.

In the framework, the term "special educational needs" referred to all children and youth "whose needs arises from disabilities or learning difficulties" (p.6). It is explained that the challenge confronting the inclusive school was that of developing a child-centered pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. It was discussed that the well-established special education schools for specific impairment categories could serve as training and resource centers for regular school staff, although they might continue to work with a relatively smaller number of children with disabilities who could not be "adequately served in regular classrooms or schools." The new and expanded role of special education schools was including creation of curricular content and method depending on each individual child's special needs. Member countries that had few or no special schools advised to concentrate their efforts on the development of inclusive

schools, teacher training in special needs education, and the establishment of equipped resource centers.

The Salamanca Statement added the following on inclusive education:

> Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the more effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building and inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (p.2).

Guidelines for action are outlined in seven areas at the national level and six at the regional/international level. The "school factors" chapter of the declaration defined changes in "curriculum, buildings, school organization, pedagogy, assessment, staffing, school culture, and extracurricular activities" as necessary contributors of the success of inclusive schools. "Appropriate preparation of all educational personal" is recognized as a key factor in promoting inclusive schools by the committee. Specifically, the declaration asserted that teacher certification programs should required skills to respond to special educational needs. Article 43 addressed the need of written materials

and seminars for local administrators, supervisors, head-teachers, and senior teachers to develop their capacity to provide leadership in the area. The training of special education teachers is reconsidered to enable them to work and play a key role in inclusive settings. In Article 47, the advisory role of universities described as preparing and evaluating teacher certification programs, designing training programs and materials for inclusive education. The importance of sharing information on relevant research findings, pilot experiments, and in-depth studies is highlighted by this framework of action. The dissemination of examples of "good inclusive practice" among the member countries is also encouraged.

In "external support services" section of the statement, it is suggested that education services would benefit significantly if "greater efforts were made to ensure optimal use of all available expertise and resources" (p. 32) and external support by resource personnel from various agencies (such as, educational psychologists, speech and occupational therapists, etc.) should be coordinated at the local level. The value of "decentralization and local-area-based planning" emphasized for greater involvement of communities in education and training of people with special needs.

The declaration also highlighted the importance of coordination between educational authorities and health, employment, and social services. Article 73 stated that:

Pooling the human, institutional, logistic, material, and financial resources of various ministerial departments (Education, Social Welfare, Labour, Youth, etc.), territorial and local authorities, and other specialized institutions is an effective way to maximize their impact. Combining both an educational and a social approach to special needs education will require effective management structures enabling the various services to co-operate at both national and local levels, and allowing the public authorities and associative bodies to join forces (p. 42).

At the international level, a priority was given to support the launching of pilot projects aimed at trying out new approaches, especially in developing countries. Another important task for international cooperation was described facilitating exchange of data, information, and results of pilot programs in inclusive special education between countries and regions. UNESCO and other intergovernmental agencies held responsible for providing advanced training seminars for educational managers and other specialists at

the regional level and fostering cooperation between university departments and training institutions.

The following chapter aims to provide analyses of policies and documents pertaining to inclusive education in Turkey, demonstrating links to UNESCO (particularly the Salamanca Statement) policy documents.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

> A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the
> road; spinning in the air it goes nowhere. Rubbing two sticks
> together produces heat and light; one stick alone is just a stick.
> As a metaphorical image, friction reminds us that heterogeneous
> and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of
> culture and power (Tsing, 2005, p. 5).

In this research study, a qualitative case study was conducted to better understand the processes of local adaptation and modification of UNESCO's inclusive education policies and local educators' understanding and interpretations of UNESCO's inclusive education policy statements, underlying principles, and practices in Turkey. Morrow & Smith (2000) indicate that the main purpose of qualitative research methodology is to understand people's actions and sense making processes in a given context.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), qualitative data analysis is "the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them" (p. 153). Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) affirm that qualitative methods offer the epistemological advantage of showing how systems, structures, or processes play out "on the ground" (p. 8). Qualitative methods were

particularly useful in examining specific tensions, resistance, pedagogical strategies, failures and successes experienced by the research participants involved in this case study.

Morrow and Smith (2000) noted that case studies should be examined holistically as situated in the cultural-historical resources of a specific social context. Hoepfl (1997) indicates that "qualitative analysis requires some creativity, for the challenge is to place the raw data into logical, meaningful categories; to examine them in a holistic fashion; and to find a way to communicate this interpretation to others" (p.4). In this study, three strategies were employed in this qualitative design: open-ended, semi-structured interviews, policy analysis, and document analysis.

According to Walsh, Tobin, & Graue (1993), interpretive writing invites the reader into critical dialogue with the researcher and the researched, "the meaning and the worth of the research emerge in the interaction of the reader and text." According to interpretive researchers, writing "is not just a means of communicating their findings, but is a soul of the interpretive enterprise." In this study, my primary goal as the researcher is to create a link between the empirical and the theoretical realm – by using theory to make sense of

the data and using the data analysis to further sharpen and refine theory.

The interpretive/naturalistic research paradigm is concerned with how individuals make meanings out of their social situations and milieu (Bouma, 1996; Gephart, 1999). For instance, for this study it is assumed that teachers, school administrators, university supervisors would be able provide useful information regarding their experiences on how they interpreted recent inclusive education policies, how they have included students with special needs in their classrooms and schools, and how they have tried to help them in the learning process. That means through the use of the interpretive/naturalistic research paradigm, meanings and experiences could be constructed by individuals making meanings out of their lived experiences and actions, which are exhibited in their natural social contexts (Creswell, 2005; Harker, 1999).

Because of the interpretative nature of the research questions raised in this study, a qualitative research design and case study methodology were selected and used to analytically reflect on the data.

Inclusive Education Policy and Document Analyses

According to Labuschagne (2003), qualitative document analysis yields excerpts, quotations, or entire passages from records, correspondence, official reports and open-ended surveys. In this research study, documentary sources, such as UNESCO reports and seminar support materials, government publications, research articles, books, manuscripts, and press releases were treated like sets of field notes. The documents were selected for their relevance to this research study's purposes. The content analysis of the selected documents specifically focused on the Turkish inclusive education policies. The emerging themes and how themes relate to each other are discussed in Chapter 4. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), while working on the document and policy review, all students of social life must provide two key assurances of the "trustworthiness" of their analyses: 1) they must be explicit as to the process by which they interpret their evidence, and 2) they must provide access to their data, so that their findings may be verified. During the interpretation of the document analysis in this study, these two rules were closely followed.

Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding by many researchers

(Berelson, 1952; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1996; Krippendorff, 1980; and Weber, 1990). Content analysis is defined by Seale (2004) as any technique for analyzing texts in terms of the presence and frequency of specific terms, narratives or concepts. According to U.S. General Accounting Office (1996), content analysis enables researchers to sift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion.

In this study, content analysis method was used for examining trends and patterns in Turkish Government education policy documents. After the "word-frequency count" (Weber, 1990), the results of the word-counting analysis tested for the consistency of usage of words in the documents by the researcher and a colleague. After the preliminary examination of the data, major categories were established. Weber (1990) points out that the content analysis method relies on categorization of data and defines a category as a "group of words with similar meaning or connotations" (p. 37).

The results of the content analysis of Turkish special education and inclusive education policy pieces are discussed in the light of inclusive education projects and programs in Turkey that were implemented after the Salamanca Statement in 1994.

Interviews

Hoepfl (1997) explains that interview guides ensure good use of limited interview time, help to keep interactions between the researcher and the respondent more focused, and make interviewing multiple participants more systematic and comprehensive. In this study, the focus was on the qualitative analysis of the interview data with a specific focus on cultural compatibility of the UNESCO's various inclusive education approaches and goals with Turkish culture.

Data collection relied on open-ended semi-structured interview questions, which were used to cover such topics as the participants' understanding of the role of the government and UNESCO in providing appropriate services for the children with special needs in inclusive settings as well as the social compatibility of UNESCO's various inclusive education policies and classroom applications. It is considered that in this approach, the participants could freely express themselves, and where needed the research participants would be asked with further questions to gauge their lived experiences and perspectives about the policies and practices that influence inclusive education in Turkey.

Erickson's (1986 & 1992) interpretive research approach is used for collecting and analyzing empirical data in order to gain an in-depth

understanding of local educators' interpretations on recently adopted inclusive education policies and classroom practices. The interpretation of the qualitative data, which is presented in the form of assertions (Erickson, 1986), used triangulation of quotations from interviews, policy analysis and document analysis.

Procedures

The interview data for this study were collected over 8 weeks in Ankara, Turkey. Teachers, administrators of sampled schools, academic advisors from Hititler University, and policy makers from MONE were contacted in person and interviewed. Each participant was individually interviewed in a private office or a classroom. Interviews were 45 to 90 minutes in length and were conducted by the researcher and a colleague. Research methods included semi-structured interviews with a guided approach, including both pre-determined topics and open-ended questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003).

Semi-structured interview questions were linked to the research questions and focused on the participants' perceptions of recently adopted inclusive education policies in Turkey. In this semi-structured, personal interview method, a group of open-ended questions that were pertinent to the research objectives were pre-

determined. During the interviews, the pre-determined group of questions were arranged and improvised on sight as the participants began to answer questions. The interview protocol is found in Appendix B.

All interviews were recorded through the use of audio-taping and observational field notes, following an assurance to participants that their responses would be kept in confidentiality.

Participant Selection

According to Strydon and De Vos (1998), a sample is a subset of measurement drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested. According to Mason (1996), in the broadest sense, sampling technique and selection are principles and procedures used to identify, choose and gain access to relevant units, which will be used for data generation by any method. For this study, a purposeful sampling technique was employed. According to Patton (1990), in qualitative research methods, the dominant sampling strategy is purposeful sampling, which seeks information-rich cases that can be studied in depth.

In this study, participants came from four groups: (1) general education teachers from the selected public primary schools in Ankara, (2) administrators from same selected inclusive settings, (3) policy

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makers from the Ministry of National Education (MONE)'s Special

Education Department in Ankara, and (4) academic advisors from

Hititler University, Ankara. Six teachers, four administrators, two

policy makers from MONE, and four academic advisors participated in

the in-depth interviews that investigate and describe their inclusive

education experiences. Special education teachers generally work with

students with special needs at separate resource rooms or special

needs schools and are not active participants of regular classrooms in

Turkey. Therefore, special education teachers were not selected as

participants in this study. Participants for this research study were

non-randomly selected. Purposive sampling was utilized as all

participants within this study maintained certain characteristics to

meet the purposes of the study.

Consent forms were tailored to suit each group of participants

(teachers, administrators, policy makers, and academic advisors).

Since a number of the topics discussed may be sensitive in relation to

participants' reactions to policies of funders, global agencies, and

government offices, all names and titles used in this report are

pseudonyms.

Academic Advisors. Four academic advisors from Hititler University, Special Education Department were interviewed in this study.

Hititler University is a public university primarily located in Ankara, Turkey. The university comprises 15 faculties, 9 vocational schools of higher education, 26 research centers and 6 graduate institutes. The undergraduate student enrolment of Hititler University is approximately 57,000 in total and 5,000 thousand of the students are enrolled in graduate programs. The total size of the teaching faculty exceeds 3,000 persons.

The Special Education Department at Hititler University has two main programs: "teaching visually handicapped children program" and "teaching mentally handicapped children program." There are a total of twenty faculty members serving under the department. The interviews were conducted with one full professor (the chair of the department), two assistant professors, and one lecturer with a varied range of teaching, research, and advising experiences.

Administrators. Schools in all education levels in Turkey are administered by school administrators (okul müdürü). School administrators are responsible for the administration, evaluation and development. They are appointed by the governor (*Vali*) through the

district's national education administrator's office and the province's national education administrator's approval. The primary education institutions have "chief deputy principal" and "deputy principals" besides the principal depending on the size of the school. The chief deputy principal is the major assistant of the principal. In addition, each school has its teachers' board and branch teachers' board.

While two of the participating administrators have long-standing experience in the field of education (more than 15 years), the other two administrators have been in their positions for less than five years. It is also worth noting that all four administrators in this study are male.

Teachers. The level of primary education in Turkey is 8-years and includes the age category of 6-14. The participating teachers' were public primary school teachers and their students' age ranges varied from age 6 years to 13 years of age, with grade levels ranging between 1st grade through 7th grade. Among 8 regular education teachers in this study, only one teacher is male.

Setting

The research study was conducted at a central area in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. Centrally located in Anatolia, Ankara is the country's second largest city after Istanbul, with a population of

4,500,000. It is the center of the Turkish Government (including the Ministry of National Education), and houses all foreign embassies. Ankara has 27 districts and the teacher and administrator interview data in this study were collected from Altindag District. Altindag district has total 74 public primary schools. For this study, we worked with regular classroom teachers and administrators from three public primary schools in the district: 1) Metristepe Primary School, 2) Atam Primary School, and 3) Cumhuriyet Primary School.

The Altindag district is located just outside the city center and this hillside has long been home to the workers in the city of Ankara. Altındag remains one of the poorer districts of the capital and has a higher rate of illiteracy. The hillside is covered with illegally-built gecekondu housing, home to low-income families. This was one of the first gecekondu developments in Turkey, when in the 1970s people illegally built one-bedroom cottages on small plots of land; then in the 80s and 90s these plots were sold to developers who replaced the cottages with apartment buildings. The Altindag district was chosen as a case study because of the diverse nature of its population in terms of socio-economic status. The students form the three selected schools were from both middle and low income families. Furthermore, during the initial contact with the Hititler University, the district and the

schools were suggested by the academic professionals because of its central location and friendly personnel.

Researchers from different countries argue that the struggle for building inclusive environments started and is more visible in primary education (Emmanuelsson, Haug, & Persson, 2005). In this study, the focus is also on the primary schooling in central Ankara, Turkey.

Selection of the participants was made among primary school teachers and administrators in 1st grade through 7th grade in this small school district in Ankara. According to the Turkish Statistics Institute (2000), the Altindag district serves approximately 40.000 students, with 74 primary schools, and 14 high schools.

As regards the size of primary schools in this study, two of the schools, Metristepe and Atam, were medium-sized (between 600 and 800 students). Cumhuriyet Primary was one of the largest schools in the district (between 800 and 1200 students). Although the schools are located in a mid-to-high income, central area, the participating public schools are mostly educating children of recently migrated families from rural areas. In rural areas in Turkey, close relative marriages are moderately common, resulting in higher numbers of children with special needs compared to urban areas.

In Metristepe School, there were 14 inclusive education students during the data collection, and 7 of them were also enrolled in the special education classroom.

Interview Data Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) define qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p. 145). According to interpretive researchers, writing 'is not just a means of communicating their findings, but is a soul of the interpretive enterprise.' In this study, my primary goal as the researcher was to create a link between the empirical and the theoretical realm –by using theory to make sense of the data and using the data analysis to further sharpen and refine theory.

To develop a category system for the responses to the open-form questions, all the transcribed interviews were content analyzed in terms of emergent categories and sub-categories on the one hand and the research questions on the other (Merriam, 1998). To categorize and interpret the collected data in this study, three phases of coding were applied: "open coding," "axial coding," and "selective coding" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Creswell, 2005). The analysis of the interview data

began with identifying, naming, categorizing, and describing the themes emerging from the raw data, a process mostly referred to as "open coding" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Subsequently, during this phase, the data were compared and similar themes were grouped together and given the same conceptual labels. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), the second step, "axial coding" refers to the process of developing main categories and their sub-categories. Therefore, in the next step, connections between themes and new categories were made and a basic frame of generic relationships was created. As the final phase, "selective coding" involves the integration of the categories that have been developed to form the initial theoretical framework. In the final step of the interview data analysis, the central categories were defined and then other categories were related to the central ideas according to the framework.

Main categories, and understanding and meaning emerged from in-depth analysis of detailed descriptions and verbatim quotations were discussed in the second findings chapter of this study.

Integration of Policy and Interview Analyses

In order to analyze and understand the hybrid nature of inclusive educational policies, Grace (1991) suggests a holistic approach to provide the wider picture of inclusive education policy

making in a specific context. In other words, one should provide an analysis of the historical, cultural, and political dynamics that impacted the formulation and implementation of these policies.

Vertical Comparisons

The term 'vertical case studies' means addressing the flow of action across levels as influenced by political, social, economic, and cultural variables (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2009). Piot (1999) highlights that the local cannot be divorced from national and international forces but neither can it be conceptualized as determined by these forces. Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) emphasize the importance of examining how cultural, economic, historical, and political forces within a given context play out in schooling. Therefore, Bartlett and Vavrus (2009) argue that "multilevel analysis" requires "carefully tracing of vertical relationships across local, national, and international level" (p. 10). Multilevel analysis put by Bray and Thomas (1995) occurs along three dimensions: the geographic/locational (e.g., country, region, state, province, district, school, classroom), the demographic (e.g., ethnic and religious groups), and the societal (political or economic structure or forces).

According to Bartlett and Vavrus (2009), the growing inter-connections between national education systems and global

organizations that fund and evaluate their operations is one of the most important issues for educational scholars world-wide and the vertical case studies should be:

> Grounded in a principal site—e.g., a school, a community, an institution, or a government ministry—and should fully attend to the ways in which historical trends, social structures, and national and international forces shape local processes at this site. In other words, local understandings and social interactions should not be considered demographically or geographically bounded. Instead, in a vertical case study, understanding of the micro-level is viewed as part and parcel of larger structures, forces, and policies about which the researcher must also develop a full and thorough knowledge (p. 96).

Therefore, in this vertical case study research, there is the potential to place local knowledge on a more equal footing with official, authoritative knowledge by analyzing what "ought to be" based on policy pronouncements and international reports as well as what "is happening" as recounted by local actors.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings: Inclusive Education Policies in Turkey

The primary purpose of this chapter is to provide a

comprehensive document and policy review of Turkish policies related

to inclusive education. This synthesis furthers the overall

understanding of key questions and issues regarding inclusive

education policies and programs in Turkey that were implemented

after the Salamanca Statement in 1994. The discussion also makes

connections between these global policy changes and local practices in

the Turkish education system.

This chapter was guided by the following research question:

- What themes in UNESCO policy documents are reflected in

  inclusive education policies and practices in Turkey? What types

  of support does UNESCO provide for Turkey to improve their

  inclusive education system?

Many educational reform initiatives have been launched by

different Turkish governments since 1994. This chapter covers some of

these policy efforts on a selective basis. Unfortunately, the only

overarching public educational policy documents accessible to non-

governmental actors are the Development Plans prepared by the State

Planning Organization, which limits the range of internal policies that researchers can access.

Aydagul (2006) portrays Turkey as a country of economic and social contradictions and inconsistencies. On the one hand, according to 2004 World Development Index figures, Turkey's economy is among the 20 largest economies in the world (World Bank, 2004). The country has been a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 1961 and a member of the European Economic Community since 1963. On the other hand, based on 2003 figures, Turkey is ranked 94th in the World Development Index (2005). Aydagul (2007) points out that the country's economic performance is much better than its "overall human development" (p. 3). She further argues that this discrepancy has been caused by two major factors: high population growth and a lack of political commitment to social policies in education and health development.

Brief History of Education Policy and Demographics

After the foundation of the Republic in 1923, Turkey's first census of the republican era was taken in 1927 and counted a total population of about 13.6 million people (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2008). Less than seventy years later, the country's population had more than quadrupled. Between 1945 and 1980, the population

increased almost 2.5 times, and the population of Turkey is expected to reach 100 million by 2050. In 2007, there were approximately 15.3 million young children and teenagers of primary- and secondary-school ages in Turkey—more than the entire population of many countries in Europe, including Sweden, Belgium, Greece, Portugal, and Ireland (Nohl, Akkoyunlu-Wigley, & Wigley, 2008). Although many governments including the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MONE) have tried to deal with relatively young populations' diverse educational needs through a variety of policies, programs, and projects, it's a widely accepted notion that the Republic's economic infrastructure was not strong enough to accommodate the population growth.

Above all else, "equal access to education" is still an existing social equity problem among regions and social classes. According to the World Bank (2005), nine out of ten provinces with the lowest spending on education per student are located in east and southeast Anatolia and primary school enrollment rates in the east, southeast, and northeast parts of the country lag behind other regions. The OECD's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results indicate that the variation of performance among schools in Turkey,

based on socio-economic levels of school districts and students, is highest among OECD countries.

Today, the Turkish education system is characterized by numerous social tensions between rural areas and urban metropolises, between poor and rich, between generations, and between ethnic and ideological groups. First of all, population growth in certain regions, especially in industrialized regions, is much higher than the population growth in non-industrialized regions because of immigration (OECD, 2003). Nevertheless, at least at the level of political statements, the system primarily follows educational standards of Europe and the United States. Primary education is also oriented towards the dominant American and European perspectives. Shortly after the founding of the Republic, the extensive reforms initiated by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk were primarily based on Western ideas of education. John Dewey was invited to Turkey in 1924 to make his proposals to "establish a democratic culture by the way of public school; to democratize the education of children; and to train the 'army of teachers' in accordance with the democratic principles" (Ata, 1995, p.120). In the Republican Era, Dewey's ideas and thoughts on education were eagerly observed and implemented by Turkish authorities, who openly recognized his competence and authority in the

field of education. His impact on the Turkish education system is still visible as the present policy makers continue to make reference to his works.

Teacher education curricula. Curricula in teacher education programs in Turkey tend to be similar to programs in Western countries. Further, most college- level, education textbooks and readings still originate from authors who are mostly from the USA or the UK, either as a translation or as an original text if the instruction is in English (Binbasi, 1995). Nohl, Akkoyunlu-Wigley, & Wigley (2008) indicated that "many prospective educationalists are sent to the Unites States and Europe to earn a doctoral degree and come back to teach at Turkish universities. Or, Western higher education is imported directly, in the form of English and French medium universities" (p. 8).

Figure 2

Regions of Turkey

Source: http://www.map-of-turkey.com/cities-map-turkey.htm

Figure 3

Cities of Turkey (http://www.obeliskhotel.com/turkiye_maps.html)

Additionally, the involvement of international agencies (UN, OECD, European Union [EU], the World Bank, etc.) has been critical in supporting the emergence of a new policy culture in Turkey, as well as for a gradual shift to discussing educational policies on a more transparent basis. Turkey received its first educational loan from the World Bank in the early 1980s. The World Bank, a key player in the area of international development, is a large institution that loans billions of dollars to developing countries every year. Turkey has remained one of the World Bank's largest borrowers in Europe and Central Asia in the last several years. In the 1990s, the World Bank's education policy has shifted to primary education with the United

Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations

Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and

committed to expand access to education via the "Education for All"

(EFA) campaign (Psacharopoulos, 2006).

Overview of the Turkish Education System

Among countries of the OECD and the EU, Turkey has one of

the most centralized, education systems in Europe and Central Asia

(Gershberg, 2005). The Turkish education system was centralized by

enactment of the Law of Unification of Instruction of 1924

(Government of Turkey, 1924). The system consists of 36 central units

and 81 provincial directorates, carrying responsibility for 45,812

preschools, primary schools, and elementary schools, 15 million

students, and 600 thousand teachers (MONE, 2006). All major

decisions are made through MONE, and their implementation is also

controlled from there. MONE is responsible for the production and

supervision of all formal and non-formal education services in the

country, excluding higher education. The Minister (Bakan in Turkish)

is responsible for execution of the services offered by the ministry in

compliance with the legislation, general politics, and national security

politics of the government. The minister also ensures cooperation and

coordination with other ministries and institutions for related issues

and oversees development plans and annual programs.

The most influential authorities in the Turkish education system, the Council of Higher Education (Yuksek Ogretim Kurumu-YOK) and the Board of Education are directly under the control of the minister. All curricula of general and vocational schools, including those of private schools, are developed at the Board of Education, and all textbooks undergo an authorization process there (TEU, 2010). The Board of Education is the most proximate scientific advisory and decision-making body of the Ministry. The Board is also responsible for monitoring domestic and foreign education trends, delivering opinions on cultural exchange and education protocols (MONE, 2007).

Figure 4

Ministry of National Education Chart (MONE, 2007)
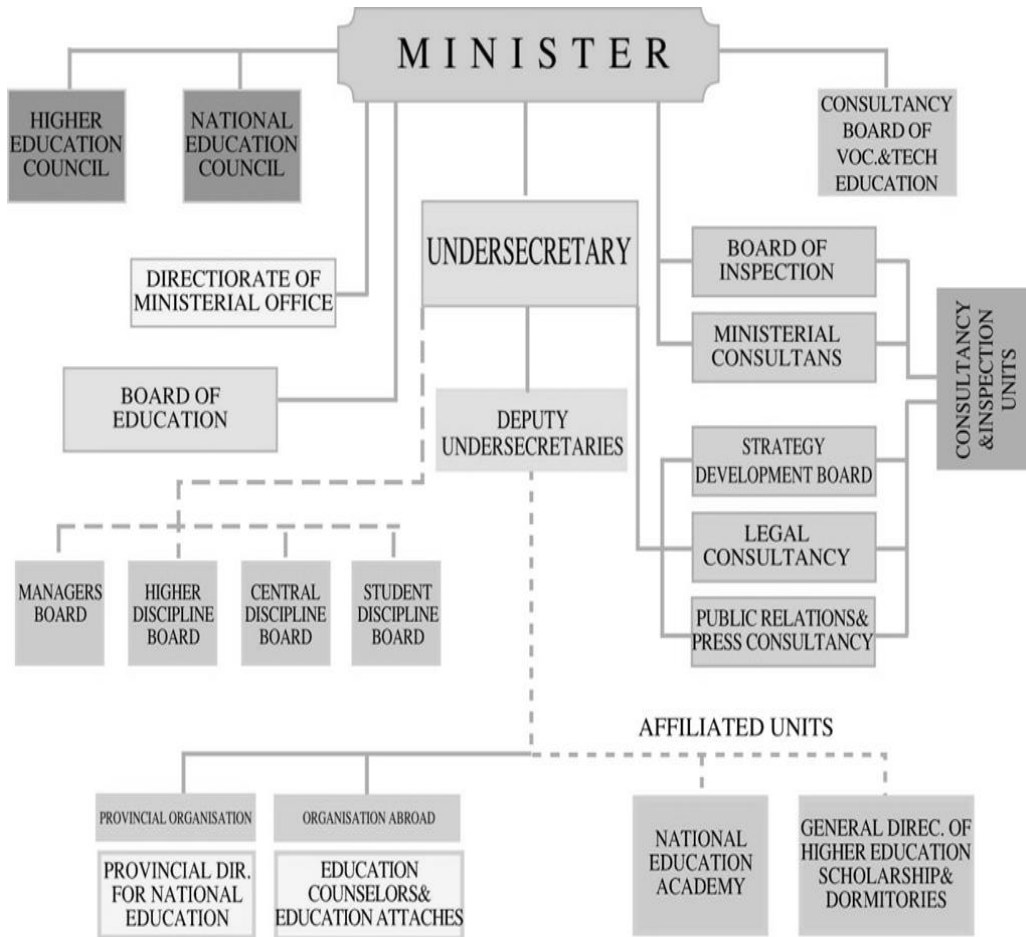
Other than YOK and the Board of Education, consultative structures that support the decision-making process or actively participate in the decision making process, include the National Education Council, the Board of Strategy Development, the Board of Administrators, and the School-Parent Associations.

The National Education Council (Milli Eğitim Şurası). The council is the highest advisory body of MONE. It ensures participation of all stakeholders (local and central level MONE authorities, representatives of certain ministries, non-governmental organizations [NGO], etc.) related to education and meets once per approximately 4–5 years. The board executes supervision, study, research, and inquiry works for and on behalf of MONE.

The Board of Strategy Development (Strateji Gelistirme Baskanligi). This body was previously the Research, Planning and Coordination Board, which was restructured as a result of the Law on Public Administration and Control, No. 5018, of 2005 (Kamu Mali Yönetimi ve Kontrol Kanunu). The organization now conducts studies to determine long and intermediate term educational strategies and policies for the administration. Its objectives are constituted within the framework of national development strategies, policies, and annual and government programs. The supervisors of the board coordinate the assessments, examinations, and investigations initiated by the Ministerial organization, the governorship, and the local administrations.

The Board of Administrators (Müdürler Kurulu). This board is an advisory organ comprising the senior superiors of the central

organization of the Ministry. The board makes advisory decisions on the issues given by the Ministry.

The School-Parent Associations (Okul-Aile Birlikleri). These associations are school level organizations comprising school principals, teachers, and parents. They support school administration for development of instruction and financially contribute to the school. The members are determined through elections.

Under the non-formal vocational education category, MONE organizes special vocational courses preparing people with special educational needs for business life. Within the courses organized for disabled persons, disability category, interests, and skills of the individual is taken into consideration, and programs are prepared and applied accordingly (TEU, 2010).

Government Regulation of Educational Rights

The basic law of national education (Milli Eğitim Temel Kanunu No. 1739). This law regulates all areas of education in the formal—pre-primary education, basic education, secondary education, and higher education—as well as the informal sectors. This law determines both the aims and the fundamental principles of Turkish education. The fundamental principles of national education are: 1) to provide every Turkish child with the basic knowledge, skills, behaviors, and habits to become a good citizen and favorably educate them on national moral

values and 2) to prepare every Turkish child for life and upper level education by means of developing their interests, abilities, and talents.

Additional principles of Turkish national education based on the Basic Law on National Education; Articles 4–17 include: The fundamental principles of Turkish national education are as follows: (Basic Law on National Education; Articles 4 - 17): "universality and equality," "individual and social needs," "orientation," "right to education," "equality of opportunity," "continuity in education,", "Atatürk's Reforms and Principles and Atatürk's Nationalism," "education for democracy," "secularism," "scientific approach to education," "planned education," "coeducation," "school–parent cooperation," and "education everywhere."

The objectives and principles that are fundamental to organization of the Turkish National Education, the general structure of the education system, the profession of teaching, the school buildings and facilities, training equipment and materials, the duties and the responsibilities of the State in education and training, are laid down in a systematic manner.

Fundamental principles governing the entire education system have a legislative framework in the Turkish constitution (1982) and have been specified in Articles 10, 24, 42, 62, 130, 131, and 132 of the Constitution of Republic of Turkey.

According to Article 42 of the Constitution of the Turkish Republic adopted in 1982 (Constitution), which regulates public education and liability issues, no citizen can be deprived of their educational rights. It further indicates that in relation to contemporary scientific and educational principles, education is conducted under the supervision and audit of the government. The constitution ensures the compulsory and free basic education plus everyone's right to access upper-levels education within the frame of their abilities (Turkish Eurydice Unit, 2010). According to the Constitution, schools should give priority to ensuring that children become competent in basic living skills, in social independence skills, and in the use of language and communication skills for their overall development.

The right to education is contained within Legislation 1739. It not only guarantees primary education, it encourages secondary education as well. Article 2 states:

> The overall objectives of Turkish national education are to educate all individuals of the Turkish nation so as to develop their interests talents and abilities and prepare them for life by providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviors and with the habit of working together and to enable them to have an occupation which will make them happy and contribute to the happiness of society.

Legislation 1739 also addresses how schools could prepare a child with special needs to make a valued contribution to the community. Accordingly, Article 6 states:

> During their education individuals shall be oriented towards various programs or schools to the extent and in the direction of their interests, talents and abilities. The National Education System shall be organized so as to ensure such orientation in all respects. Services of guidance and objective methods of measurement and assessment shall be used in orientation and in measuring success.

Constitutional Law

BASIC LAW OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

SECONDARY EDUCATION LAW

National Education Councils

EDUCATION UNION LAW

Development Plans

ATATÜRK PRINCIPLES AND REVOLUTIONS

Government Program

8 YEARS' OBLIGATORY PRIMARY EDUCATION LAW

National Program

LAW ABOUT MoNE ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES

REG. OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION LAW

LAW of PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Figure 5

Principles Regulating the TurkishEducation System (MONE, 2000)

The primary education and education law (İlköğretim ve eğitim kanunu No. 222). Regulating primary education (so-called single structure compulsory education), this law regulates issues such as the age of compulsory education, primary education institutions, primary education staff, planning instruction, registration and admission, school attendance , and revenue and expenditure of the primary schools.

When the latest developments in the Turkish education system were reviewed, the "expansion of compulsory education" from five to eight years was the first major reform that was triggered by the global EFA campaign in the 1990's and the project by the Council of Europe on Education for Democratic Citizenship. Apart from the national budget, the quantitative expansion of the education system was made possible by loans and projects of international donors (particularly the World Bank). For example, a credit agreement was reached between Turkey and the World Bank in 1998 that was primarily intended for the expansion of schools, including those in rural areas. In the same way, the EU assisted the Turkish education system from 2002 to 2007 with the "Support to Basic Education Project." This project was especially directed towards educational access for marginalized populations (children of ethnic minorities, from rural populations, and those with disabilities).

Quality Education for All: Education Reform Initiative Project (ERI)

Another new addition to the Turkish education, policy field is the Quality Education for All: Education Reform Initiative Project (ERI), which was launched within the Istanbul Policy Center at Sabanci University in 2003. The ERI's aim is to improve education policy and decision making through research, advocacy, and monitoring (Egitim Reformu Girisimi, 2005). Although ERI is engaged in monitoring and advocacy activities in regard to educational access, their emphasis is on a more democratic curriculum. Issues that they have not been addressed include gender disparities, non-compulsory religious culture, moral education courses, and inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Special Education Provisions in Turkey

In Turkey, according to the Special Education Regulation of the Ministry of Education, "inclusion" is defined as:

Special education applications that provide supportive educational services to individuals who are in need of special education, [and is] based on the principle that they continue their learning and education with peers who are not in need, throughout public and private preschool, primary, secondary schools and informal education (2000, Section 7, item 67,).

Further, the Ministry of Education subscribes to UNESCO's definition of inclusion (1994).This definition sees it as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities and reducing exclusion within education. Turkey also stands behind the principles of the National Education Law (2000). A major tenet of this legislation is that education for children with disabilities should be provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means an environment that is most similar to, if not the same as, the general education setting in which a child with disabilities can receive a regular education (Melekoglu, Cakiroglu, & Malmgren, 2009).

Still, earlier provisions such as the Salamanca Statement (1994) proclaimed that: "Special needs education—an issue of equal concern to countries of the North and South—cannot advance in isolation. It has to form part of an overall educational strategy and, indeed, of new social and economic policies. It calls for major reform of the ordinary schools" (p. 3). The statement also recommended that all member countries adopt a children's-rights, based approach to facilitate the achievement of an Education for All and Universal Education. This vision was reaffirmed by the World Education Forum meeting in Dakar, April 2000, held to review the progress made since 1990.

Turkey has also taken other steps to provide children's educational rights. For example, the Parliament accepted the Turkish Special Education Legislation 2916 (Legislation 2916) in October, 1983. This law states that all children, regardless of their disabilities, have the right to education. It promotes inclusive practices in all levels of schools. And recently, the Turkish President, in collaboration with a non-governmental organization working on disability rights, started a campaign named "Education Enables," which advocates for inclusive practices in all school levels. Further, Legislation 2916 clearly indicates that children with special needs should be integrated into mainstream schools. Consequently, starting from the mid 1980s, students with special needs started receiving education at regular schools with their typically developing peers.

Principles related to special education services, organized within the body of "General Directorate for Special Education, Guidance and Counseling Services" in accordance with the Law No. 3797, have been determined by Decree Law No. 573 issued on 6 June 1997. The Decree Law, which brings a new understanding of equal opportunities and participation in education for students with special needs, includes sections that address early childhood education, preschool education, primary education, education at home, secondary education, higher education, and non-formal education (MONE, 2005).

To help solve the extensive problems in the field of disability in Turkey and promote quality services for students with special needs, new Acts (571, 572, and 573) were legislated in 1997 pursuant to the Salamanca Statement. Turkey then started systematically including students with disabilities in general education classrooms. As a result of these laws, inclusion has become mandatory and the statement: "The students whose characteristics are appropriate should be educated with their peers in schools that were opened for students without disabilities" (Act 573) was officially accepted.

Act 571. This legislation describes the principles for the implementation of services for disabled people. Principles of this act include:

a) Promoting equal participation of disabled people to social life, increasing awareness and sensitivity about disabled people in society, providing adequate and sufficient medical care and rehabilitation, and promoting mobility and independent living abilities of disabled individuals.

b) Promoting accessible information, services and physical environment for the disabled.

c) Providing equal educational opportunities for disabled people throughout the life span.

d) Providing improvements in employment facilities for disabled individuals, in other words, rearranging work environments and redesigning equipments/instruments according to the needs of disabled people and precautions.

e) Guarantying social security, revenue, and protecting family life and personal integrity/unity of disabled people and of ensuring their full participation in cultural, recreational, sporting, and religious activities.

f) Guarantying full participation of disabled people in the decision-making processes for actions toward disabled people.

In Act 571, the Department for the Affairs of Disabled People is cited as the mechanism for constituting cooperation and coordination between national and international institutions. This department is also responsible for assisting preparation of national policies on disability, defining problems of disabled people, and conducting research in order to solve these problems.

Act 573. According to Act 573 on special education, the basic principles of special education are as follows, in line with the overall objectives regulating of Turkish national education (MONE, 2005).

a) All individuals with special education needs are given the right to be educated. Accordingly, disabled children who were previously disregarded or restricted from exercising their

90

educational rights are given the opportunity to benefit from education.

b) Inclusive education/mainstreaming is anticipated.

c) Adaptations of the programs according to the needs of disabled children are anticipated, when developing educational programs for children with special needs.

d) Child-centered education is suggested, because individualized educational programs require preparing according to the unique performance/needs of the disabled child.

e) It is suggested that a child's educational needs and developmental features are taken into account rather than his or her degree of disability, when making decisions about special education replacement.

f) The preparation of educational programs according to the performance of children is anticipated. This provides disabled children the chance to be educated without being labeled.

g) Classification applications based on discriminative labels are ended.

h) Early intervention practices are suggested to be delivered at homes and institutions. In addition, children are provided

with the right to benefit from preschool education institutions.

i) Parents are given rights and responsibilities in the decision-making process regarding the replacement of their disabled children.

j) It is suggested that parents have right to be informed about educational progress of and outcomes of the educational programs.

k) Individuals with special needs are given opportunities to be educated in the least restricted environment.

l) Early special education and continuity in education opportunities are enabled.

m) It is anticipated that providing support in terms of staff and educational programs will increase the quality of education provided by private sector (either by private enterprises or by the foundations for disabled individuals).

In the past, best practices counseled that students with special needs be educated in segregated residential schools and classes based on their disability in Turkey. However, with Act 537, effective implementation of inclusion, initiation of individualized education programs, importance of early intervention, and involvement of parents in educational provision have been identified as critical

priorities for the reorganization of special education services in Turkey (Akkok, 2000). According to Act 537, children who have one qualifying disabilities and who are between the ages of 3 and 21 can receive free and appropriate special education services.

Act 573, "Act of Special Education" describes the implicit and explicit educational services that are to be provided to students with special needs. It also defines programs, schools and institutions that would provide these services. As this act states, the right of students with special needs to benefit from early intervention, mainstream preschool, elementary, secondary, and high school education system, is guaranteed. Act 573 also aimed to bring a new perspective to services in the area of special education and mutual adaptation process of the students with special needs. In this regulation, similar amount of emphases are given to educational assessments, placement, multi-disciplinary teamwork, individualized education programs, family involvement, and mainstreaming.

Act 572. Act 572 brings some revisions to laws regarding new arrangements for students with disabilities. With these alterations, laws are formulated to undertake measures for exercising equal participation. For example, with the revision in Act 3194, urban development legislation, new building, and construction rules are implemented by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing. With this

legislation, improvement of accessibility for people with disabilities and elderly people to public places is anticipated. But these rules are only valid for newly constructed buildings. Moreover, responsibility for supervision of the application for this rule is given to both central and local authorities. In accordance with the rules of Act 3194, the Turkish Standard Institution formulated new standards for access to buildings and open spaces.

Act 572 also defines terms related to disability. The term "disabled persons" refers to a group of people who lost their physical, mental, psychological, emotional, or social abilities because of diseases, disorders, or accidents that prevent them from meeting the demands of daily life and need special care, protection, rehabilitation, guidance, and support services.

Another definition in Act 572 is more focused on working capacity. In this definition disabled people are defined as those people who have lost at least 40% of working capacity because of physical and mental impairment. This cut-off point is used to classify a person as disabled and determine that he/she is eligible for protective measures in terms of public services.

The Regulation on Ministry of Education, Special Education Counseling (RMESEC) was implemented in 2001 in accordance with the principles of Act of 573 and the RMESEC. In these regulations,

principles pertain to the foundation and procedures of Guidance and Counseling Services for disabled individuals in educational system at different governmental levels (city and grass-roots levels). It also defines the principles of procedures for Guidance and Research Centers, which are responsible for governing the actions related to evaluation and assessment, placement, and supervision.

Moreover, with the regulations, early childhood and preschool education become a part of compulsory educational facilities for disabled individuals. Families are given the right to be involved in all steps of their child's education. With the exclusion of degree of disability from the decision-making process, children who have multiple and/or severe disabilities are also given the chance to benefit from an equal educational opportunity.

However, despite legislation, it seems that there is still a gap between rhetoric and reality, particularly in the partnership among the schools, external services, and parents who must meet the educational needs of children with special needs. Akkok (2000) points out that although a considerable change has been achieved in inclusive education policy, we can hardly see a significant impact on educational practices for children with special needs. According to MONE, during the 2007–2008 academic year, the percentage of students with special needs in regular schools within compulsory education was 0.52 %.

UNESCO's Influence on Inclusive Education Policy in Turkey

In 1994, the Salamanca Statement called on the international

community to endorse the approach of inclusive schooling, and to

support the development of special needs education as an integral part

of all education programs. Arguably the most significant international

document in the field, the Salamanca Statement states that:

> Regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most
>
> effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building
>
> an inclusive society, and achieving education for all."
>
> Furthermore, it suggests that such schools can provide an
>
> effective education for the majority of children and improve the
>
> efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire
>
> education system (UNESCO, 1994).

The Statement urged all governments to "adopt as a matter of law or

policy the principles of inclusive education, enrolling all children in

regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing

otherwise" (UNESCO, 1994, Statement, p. ix). It asked the UN, its

specialized agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, and UNDP), and the World

Bank-for endorsement. It also asked the UN to "strengthen their

inputs for technical cooperation" and improve their networking for

more efficient support and integrated special needs provision. The

NGOs were also asked to strengthen their collaboration with official

national bodies and become more involved in all aspects of inclusive education.

In 1994, the UNESCO World Conference also argued that a school should:

Accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic or other conditions. These guidelines (mandates) also applied to disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities, and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized area and groups (UNESCO, 1994, Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, p.6).

These inclusive schools must also learn to individualize instruction. According to UNESCO:

[Schools] must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities (UNESCO, 1994, Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, p.11–12).

In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Summit set a goal of achieving universal EFA goals by 2015 and reaffirmed the primary school completion of and equity in primary and secondary education as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The World Bank took the initiative of establishing an EFA Fast-Track in 2002 to facilitate the effort to achieve MGDs by 2015. The most recent report on EFA was released in early January, 2010. According to UNESCO's latest report *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010*, Turkey is still too far behind to meet the six EFA goals. The report places Turkey at the intermediate position in the Education Development Index, quantifies EFA's goals.

In the Eighth, Five-Year Development Plan (2001–05), it is stated that to provide a lifelong learning perspective, education shall be re -arranged so as to "include efficient guidance services; enable vertical-horizontal transfers in secondary education; be appropriate to vocational standards in the labor market and be geared towards production; and observe equality of opportunity for all students" (p. 14).

The *Education-for- all Year 2000 Assessment Turkiye Report* was prepared by the relevant units and the Technical Commission formed by these units, under the coordination of MONE General Directorate for Primary Education, and this report was presented to

the members of the Council of Higher Education. The report criticized the structure of the Turkish education system on the grounds that it lacks flexibility. Its heavy content-base also makes it difficult to address the individual interests and talents of students. It is widely discussed that a transparent, overarching education policy could foster policy dialogue among stakeholders in Turkey. It is also stated that there is an emergent need to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of these policy efforts. For 2006 and 2007 budgets, the Strategic Development Unit has published reviews, consequently making comprehensive information about educational policies and projects of MONE accessible to general public.

While access to public records regarding education policy is a positive start to educating society about the changing landscape at the governmental level, none of the legislation creates enough funds or provides resources for inclusive practices in schools. Schools continue to be left on their own when it comes to transforming theory into practice. Further, while Turkey adopts more inclusive educational policies and strategies, perspectives toward children with special needs at social and cultural levels remain same.

In summary, the focus in this chapter was on the themes in UNESCO documents that are reflected in inclusive education policies and practices in Turkey. As seen in the analysis results, those themes

are including but not limited to; the definition of "inclusive education" and "disabled person," responsibilities of general education teachers and schools on accommodating all learners, the principals of inclusive education procedures, inclusive education teaching strategies, organizational arrangements, developing educational assessments and individualized education plans, and importance of early intervention.

The newly developed inclusive education regulations brought qualitative and quantitative changes and a turning point in special education services in Turkey. The shift in educational policy was the result of Turkey's signing a number of international declarations calling for more inclusive education systems- especially the Salamanca Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) and National Plan for Adoption of ED Acquis. Recommendations and decisions of UNESCO on inclusive education and the "Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability" were translated into Turkish and disseminated to national and local governmental institutions and NGO related disability issues, beginning mid 1990's.

UNESCO provides financial support through the World Bank for the successful application of recently adopted inclusive education policies in Turkey. The organization also provides supervision and

guidance on inclusive education practices through preparing support materials and seminars for administrators and teachers.

As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, although some inclusive education policies and notions of educational reform established, there are delays in the practice of those policies and challenges still exist in the ability to practice meaningful inclusive education at the micro level. Some local educators' voices will be heard in the next chapter as they have been heavily impacted by the recently developed inclusive education policies and practices in Turkey.

CHAPTER FIVE

Findings: Stakeholders' Perspectives on Full Inclusion Policies

This chapter attempts to tease out the complexity of change in Turkey regarding the shift from a dual education system, special and mainstream, to an inclusive outcomes-based approach in education. It summarizes local Ankara educators' interpretations of recently adopted inclusive education policies, pedagogical challenges, as well as major barriers to inclusive education. As described in Chapter 2, six primary school teachers, four primary school administrators, two policymakers from the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MONE), and four academic advisors from Hititler University in Ankara were interviewed as part of this study.

The following research questions were posed in order to specify the intended focus areas and to provide parameters for the data collection and analysis:

   1) How do some of the stakeholders involved in the implementation of Turkey's inclusionary policies view the relevance of such policies for Turkey?

   2) From local practitioners/administrators' points of view, which newly adopted inclusive educational policies work in Turkey and which do not?

Semi-structured interview questions were linked to the research questions and focused on the participants' perceptions of recently adopted inclusive education policies. The following sections reflect themes that emerged from an analysis of the interview data. Findings highlight the various complexities, tensions, and inadequacies in the conceptualization of inclusive education in Turkish public schools that study participants have observed. For inclusive education, as typically defined by international bodies and agreements, to become reality and complete the transformation, curriculum, teacher education and practice, school structure, and organization all need to be reviewed. Improving alternate forms of assessment and evaluation is also a must. While the philosophy of inclusive education has been discussed and enforced globally, particularly through the UN and its agencies, each country must reach its own understanding of how it can be incorporated into its own culture(s). In this chapter, we find several examples of this localization of the philosophy, related policies, and practices of inclusion. Themes that emerged from analysis of the data are discussed in the following sections.

Major Barriers to Inclusive Education in Turkey

Inclusive education is concerned with removing all barriers to learning, and with the participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization. It is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. It addresses the common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusion from the human right to education, at least at the elementary level, and enhancing access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all (UNESCO, 2000).

This is the way that UNESCO's Section for Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 2000) has recently defined inclusive education. There are, of course, many different types of barriers to inclusive education such as; environmental barriers, resource barriers, or socio-cultural barriers. Smith & Smith (2000) argued that "the issue is not whether inclusion works. Rather, the issue is how and why inclusion works." (p.163). They later suggested that where inclusion is working, we need to ask practitioners what or who is helping them to be successful, and where inclusion is not working, we need to ask what gets in the way. In this section, the primary reasons behind the gap between 'what is officially endorsed' and 'what actually occurs' in inclusive education are discussed.

Social Barriers

Societal values and beliefs. Singai (2009) argues that developing an inclusive education system not only demands changes in the adopted policies and practices, but also it requires a shift in existing beliefs. Most researchers agree that attitudes toward disability are major barriers. These barriers not only exist amongst families, but also go right up to policy makers, government officials, academic professionals at universities, school teachers and administrators, etc. It's a widely accepted view that the success of inclusion lies in the hands of the classroom teacher who must plan to meet diverse needs of diverse learners. Hargreaves (1998) indicated that one of the most neglected dimensions of educational change is the emotional one: "The challenge of educational change is thus primarily about dealing with emotions and feelings of members of the school and family who may be fearful due in the new situation, which may be threatening at times" (p. 558). During their interviews, 4 out of 5 administrators stated that general education teachers are 'skeptical' and 'scared', because they need to work out of their comfort zones and have to face new challenges with their students with special needs. In this study, overall, all interviewees believed in inclusion and felt children with disabilities should be in inclusive classrooms. However,

most of them were pessimistic about the outcomes of inclusion and expressed concerns about the current system.

A primary school teacher considered "fear" as the contributing factor to the negative attitude in regular classrooms: "We (teachers) are probably scared that something bad would happen to those kids (with special needs) under our care and later have to explain what happened to the child in our presence." Her administrator also reiterated that:

> Some parents constantly blame teachers for their lack of interest and patience for their children with special needs while attending a regular classroom. I hear them (parents) saying, you know… 'teachers do not have what it takes to teach a child with a disability. They do not know how to handle those situations.'

A 7th year primary school teacher explained that:

> In math classes my inclusive education students could not calculate 2+2 while I was teaching 3 or 4 digits summation to other (typically developing) students. They are always so behind… and I don't think they benefit academically for being in a regular classroom. Maybe socially, but not academically.

Kagitcibasi (2005) argues that regular primary education teachers in Turkey frequently have preconceived ideas about what is appropriate for their students with disabilities, often resulting in the exclusion of

children with special needs from certain activities. It has been extensively argued that teachers' beliefs and attitudes are critical for ensuring the success of inclusive practices because teachers' acceptance of more inclusive policies is likely to affect their commitment to implementing it (Norwich, 1994). The attitudes and beliefs of regular education teachers towards inclusive education are crucial for progress of inclusive education in Turkey since the failure or success of the program depends largely on them.

Moreover, an academic advisor from Hititler University argued that:

Some regular education teachers refuse the placement of the disabled in their classes because they believe that this may be unrewarding and burdensome. Unfortunately, the rejection is stronger with those children with severe disabilities than those with learning disabilities or less severe disabilities.

Salend (1994) indicated that it is common for classroom teachers to feel abandoned, insufficiently supported, and inadequately trained subsequent to placement of students with severe disabilities in their general education classroom.

Teacher bias during the referral and later acceptance of children with special needs in a regular classroom environment is another crucial factor when it comes to inclusive education practices. Four out

of five teachers who interviewed for this study regarded IQ or cognitive abilities as an important factor to decide whether a child is suitable for inclusion or not. All teachers and administrators highlighted a range of pragmatic concerns regarding the feasibility of children with special needs in general education classrooms.

Some concerns were more centered on the child's IQ level and degree or kind of disability. Since children who did not fall within the existing range of abilities based on Counseling and Guidance Service Centers decisions are excluded from regular schools, some teachers suggest that those children should be taught in a different setting. Some teachers also believed that students with special needs in regular classes would affect the academic performance and emotional well-being of their peers without disabilities:

> We must not only be thinking about the placement of students with special needs into regular schools, we also must think about how their placement is going to disturb the emotions and academic performance of the other students without disabilities. You meet some of the students who cannot express themselves and most of us do not know how to handle their problems.

Therefore, for some teachers and counselors, it seemed valid to deny include those children who were seen as best taught in special schools. Students with severe disabilities and emotional and behavioral

problems especially were seen as potentially problematic students, and therefore not "suitable" for inclusion. As a 3rd year primary school teacher stated: "I have no problem with a student who has physical disabilities, but I do have a problem with severe difficulties and behavioral problems."

Further, the teacher of one 7-year-old, autistic student stated that, "I do not want to have him in the class. I don't think I have anything to offer or help him." The administrator of same student added:

> The parents of other students were complaining about aggressive behaviors of Serkan and his inappropriate, well... slang language. And his teacher was constantly saying that he was distracting other kids in the class. Once the parents (of other students) held a special meeting and collected signatures to get rid of him but I know the schools have to accept those students no matter what.

Families' cultural and religious beliefs also appeared to play a major role in their views about the causes of their children's disabilities and their expectations from their children. Low expectations, especially towards children's academic goals can be based on lack of knowledge or negative attitudes toward children with special needs.

Some special education teachers in Ankara, Turkey also favor the dual system and resist accepting inclusive education concepts and practices. Since collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers is not common in the existing system, the focus sometimes is shifted from the "excluded student" to the "excluded teacher."

In this study, two academic advisors pointed out that special education is still set in some separate departments and specialties, and "does not break away from dual-oriented education." Batuhan (2007) indicated that the continuation of separate administrative structures for special education programs contributes to a lack of coordination and cooperation between regular and special education services. The academic advisors similarly suggested that "the dual system creates artificial barriers between professionals and divides resources."

Invisibility in the community. Previous research has found that stigma and negative attitudes about raising a child with a disability continue to affect the social and cultural status of children and their parents in many countries. Kagitcibasi (1990) argues that the collective achievement of the family is often indicated as a source of pride and identity in Turkish culture and today even though modern treatment options are used and valued by most people, fate and God are believed to be responsible for disabilities. In their study, Erbas,

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Turan, Aslan, and Dunlap (2009) concluded that some families believe that a child's disability might reflect negatively on his or her family and tend to hide their children with special needs behind closed doors. Similarly, an academic advisor indicated that:

> This invisibility issue reflects most parents' fear of being labeled if they are open about their children's problems and educational needs. Secrecy adds to the stress. Even when a child is well or has a condition that does not entail acute or clinical illness, parents think they do not have enough money or time to make medical appointments or contact with schools and other available service systems.

In Turkey, people with disabilities have traditionally been excluded from the social and political life of their communities and have been isolated from the mainstream community. In other words, disabled people in Turkey were historically invisible, especially in rural areas. Living in a country with a very long history of dual special education system, students with special needs in Turkey usually spend most of, if not their entire, school life apart from the other students.

> One of the teachers argued that:
>
> I believe some parents keep their children with disabilities at home, away from other people's pitying eyes and outside dangers… because the families think that school is not safe for

the kids with disabilities and they wouldn't benefit from education anyway." A second year primary teacher added that some parents fear "their children with special needs can get injured or get lost at regular schools among their 'normal' peers. Green (2003) points out that, as social creatures, humans desire a sense of identity and belonging - a desire to be part of a community that respects and appreciates you for who you are. Yet, for children with special needs, societal prejudices mostly prevent them from being accepted by the larger society, resulting in a loss of self-esteem, self-worth, and the creation of social isolation. According to Uzundemir (2000), in Turkey, fewer than 10% of children with special needs have access to any form of education and only .59% receive special education services, with another .25% being provided for in private and government rehabilitation centers. Those with severe and multiple disabilities are excluded all together.

Because "invisibility in the community" and therefore lack of identification affects prevalence figures, it can be assumed that the percentage of school-aged children with disabilities is even greater. This is either because they are not currently attending school in Turkey or are struggling in regular classrooms without the appropriate services. One of the structural problems in Turkey is that low performing students are not routinely tested; thus, many students who

would be classified in the high incidence categories (i.e. learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, speech and language, etc.) are casually an integral part of regular classrooms in Turkey.

Environmental Barriers

Economic factors: Cost, lack of funds, and family poverty.
Examinations of the disability and poverty link (e.g., Elwan, 1999) suggest that poverty is both a cause and a result of disability, "resulting in a vicious circle of exclusion" (p. 33). The relationship between poverty and disability is close in both industrialized and low-income countries. In some cases, the economic barriers are more disabling than the underlying health conditions.

In Turkey, most schools lack basic educational materials and equipment to provide a sufficient education for their students with special needs. All participating teachers, administrators, and academic advisors put emphasis on economic factors as a major barrier towards inclusion, even though the three schools in this study are located in Ankara, the capitol of Turkey, and have more private funding opportunities than rural area schools. One of the academic advisors stated that: "where there is some success (towards inclusion), it is usually achieved by the sheer determination and dedication of a teacher or administrator without resources or support from the

education system." More specifically, another administrator explained that:

> When we started enrolling students with special needs, we used schools' own sources, basically monetary donations from our parents to support those kids' educational needs. As a public school, we haven't received any additional funding from the government. Unfortunately, our classrooms are still not organized to maintain active participation of inclusive education students.

When such success continues to depend on individual effort and therefore remains extremely limited, it means only a minority of children with special needs are included in regular education in Ankara with the resources and support they need. Similar views were given by the teachers interviewed, as one teacher reported:

> I think if the school is financially supported and there is cash, and there are enough teaching resources and experts to teach a child, let's say with a mental retardation, who is normally wouldn't be placed in a general education classroom, I think that's fine. But the money and resources have got to be there, otherwise nobody should expect us to take care of that child.

Another teacher stated that:

Infrastructure is not enough. In the curriculum, there are many

activities for students with disabilities, but we need some

materials for those activities and we need money to buy the

materials. At the end, the success… everything depends on

money… We ask our parents to buy the materials but after a

point, they also start complaining.

Private contributions to public schools have long been a reality in

Turkey. In order to better regulate this phenomenon, the government

shut down all associations established to look after schools and located

authority to collect and spend external funds to parent-school unions

through a new MONE requirement in 2005. Those unions are

authorized to collect funds through receiving cash or in-kind donations

to manage schools' premises, to organize social, cultural, sportive

events, and in this case, also to support inclusive education students'

needs, including renovations and purchasing of supplementary

teaching and learning materials (Batuhan, 2007). In terms of private

spending, Turkey is second in a row after South Korea among OECD

countries (World Bank, 2005). At the primary level, where a

compulsory and free education is guaranteed by the constitution,

private out-of-pocket spending is around 1.36 billion USD and this

translates to an average of 39,000 USD of annual private contribution

per public primary school. This means an unequal distribution of

education quality among regions and social classes. Furthermore, Hosgor (2004) indicates that in low-income areas, poverty drives families to make choices among their children as to who will continue schooling and as a result, children with special needs are faced with discrimination.

Inadequate Educational Infrastructure

Physical barriers and lack of accessibility. Physical environment is another important factor that contributes to the success of inclusive education. Previous research shows that successful implementation of inclusion requires restructuring of the physical environment, as well as organizational changes and instructional adaptations. Most schools in Turkey, both in urban and rural areas, are not equipped to respond to the needs of inclusive education students with physical needs because their learning centers and recreational areas are inaccessible. One administrator noted:

> A major problem we have… or identified by many of our students and parents is physically getting into school. None of the schools I know have elevators and the doors are generally too heavy to open unaided. Our doors do not have automatic door buttons for easy access. During class changeover, the hallways are mostly over-crowded… because they are too narrow.

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Obviously, if a student with a disability cannot enter the classroom, let alone the school building, s/he cannot learn in an inclusive classroom. Most schools in Turkey, including three primary schools in this study, are still inaccessible to students in wheelchairs or other mobility aides such as elevators, ramps, paved pathways, or lifts to get in and around buildings.

The majority of administrators pointed out that the schools had "no physical space to support active participation of students with special needs." One of the teachers added that:

> Once I watched a documentary from the Netherlands and in that documentary, children with wheelchairs had access to the playground and the school's gym. I cannot imagine a student with wheel-chair moving around easily and without assistance at my school. We don't have that equipment (referring to accessible gym equipment) either.

Another teacher stated that "self-expression" is one of the most critical issues when it comes to educating children with special needs in inclusive environments and added that:

> I wish our school had units like arts studios, music rooms, or drama studios that those students might better express themselves compare to the regular classroom settings that we

have. Even if we find the money to build those units, there is not

enough (physical) space to do that.

At the time, one of the school administrators was trying to find enough

money to finish a redesigned restroom for the disabled students. He

explained that:

Before this, I did not see any special physical arrangement or

design for these kids in any school in this area. They were all

regular classrooms, there was no well-designed restroom for

disabled kids. No group study, no U-shape setting

arrangements, no studios.

Class size. Prior research has indicated that class size and

teacher student ratios are very important indicators of success in

inclusive classrooms (Harrington, 1997; Trump & Hange, 1996;

Vaughn, 1994). Most interviewees noted large class sizes as a big

hurdle towards more inclusive practices. A Turkish researcher also

observed that for "inclusive education to be successfully implemented,

the number of students in the classroom must be a maximum of 25-30

students, and this number is claimed to be ideal" (Batu, 2000). Public

primary and middle schools in larger cities (e.g., Istanbul, Ankara,

Izmir, Bursa, etc.) in Turkey are typically overcrowded (more than 50

students per class in primary education). According to the 2004-2005

Ministry of Education statistics (MONE, 2004), the average number of

students per primary school classroom in Turkey was 44 and in Ankara where this study took place, the number of students per classroom was 56 which is twice more than the ideal number of students per classroom according to Batu (2000) and almost four times more than the ideal number in most Western countries. The principal of one of the primary schools admitted that sometimes they have to violate the regulations to make room for new inclusive education students:

> In a class, you can have two students (with special needs) at most according to our regulations. The ratio is… up to 25 students, only one inclusive education student can be placed in the class. The violation of this rule is not the only problem. In some selected classrooms, teachers put all 'good-standing' students together… always the selected students are placed together in each school, based on either school success or the richness of the family. The rest of the classrooms are already over-crowded and filled with so-called 'rotten apples', and they place 5-6 inclusive education students together in one of those classes. It is so unfair and it is like… well, discrimination among people, or grouping kids based on wealth of their families and resources.

An academic advisor from Hititler University stated that:

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Improving the quality of inclusive education and developing

teacher's competence is directly dependent on teacher-student

ratio. Most children with special needs have really demanding

needs and when you place a child with a disability with another

50 students, you have to support the classroom teacher to cope

with them and with the remaining students.

Clearly, large class sizes, combined with poorly designed regular

education classrooms, hinder critically needed individual attention and

participatory learning for inclusive education students in Turkey.

While the size of a classroom group, overall teacher-child ratio, and

makeup of the group are common concerns among teachers, class load

issues become more significant and crucial with inclusion practices.

Lack of Educational Professionals

Implementing successful inclusion often requires adequately

prepared and equipped teachers. Teaching students with special needs

in general education classrooms takes specialists and additional staff

to support students' needs. Unfortunately, coordinating services and

offering individual support to children requires additional money that

most schools in Turkey do not have. All of the teachers interviewed

agreed that "the teacher can't do this (inclusion) alone and regular

education teachers need helping hands." They also all reported a lack

of support. "A special education person would be extremely helpful

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because so many more children need the assistance. We [classroom teachers] do the best we can, but it's not enough." Academic advisors from Hititler University emphasized that "There is the need to train more specialized teachers in order to assign them to regular schools to support non-specialized teachers in teaching children with disabilities."

To increase number of special education teachers, MONE offers short-term courses to get certified for graduates of other professions, such as psychology, counseling, social work, elementary education, and early childhood education. In addition to lack of special education teachers, there is also a lack of other professionals in the field, such as school psychologists and speech and language therapists, etc. who assist in supporting the overall quality of inclusion.

Some teachers acknowledged a lack of time for attending to students with special needs due to a lack of professional help. A primary school teacher expressed the challenge of balancing time between the students with special needs and those without:

> Administrative staff ask me whether I have 10 minutes to deal with those students and the answer is no, I do not have 10 minutes to get their attention for each activity. I simply cannot do it in every class… I need a regular professional help to be able to save enough time for them.

Another primary school teacher revealed: "They want us to be mothers, to be nurses, psychologists, police officers, so on and so forth. They expect us to come into this school and be all those things to those students... Do you think it's possible?"

In summary, qualified special education teachers are in short supply, and there are a lot of concerns about adequacy of existing special education certificate programs in Turkey. In his recent study Batu (2001) suggested that inclusive education students in Turkey are in urgent need of attention from 'creative, powerful, competent, inappropriately trained, interpersonally effective, and informed professionals." (p. 19). Findings from this study also support a widely accepted notion that qualified special education teachers and other paraprofessionals have a critical role in inclusive education settings.

Insufficient Teacher Preparation and In-service Training Programs

Smith & Smith (2000) point out that initial teacher training is one of the key elements when it comes to the transformation of an existing education system. It is the duty of the schools and teachers to adjust their perceptions and methods in order to respond to new demands of an inclusive setting. Ideally, university-based teacher education programs should develop curricula that prepare teacher candidates for diversity and inclusion in regular classrooms.

Teacher education programs in Turkey are being challenged to go through major changes that will ensure that all teachers are prepared to teach students with special needs. An academic advisor from Hititler University stated that: "I believe, universities and academic advisors have a key role in distributing knowledge about current research on inclusive education by translating them for practical use and improve their advisory help to classroom teachers, students, and parents."

All six teachers in this study emphatically stated that their undergraduate training did 'nothing' to prepare them for teaching at inclusive settings. These teachers' experience with the district schools ranged from 1 to 15 years. Regardless of when they had undergone their initial teacher training, they all felt unprepared for inclusion. As one of the administrators stated: "These teachers acquired all of their special needs knowledge and experiences 'on the job.'"

The findings revealed that on a broader level, government institutions dealing with massive teacher training (in which around 1 million teachers in the country are being trained) did not have a disability component in their curriculum. One of the teachers interviewed addressed the issue directly, saying:

> I want to plan for all my students, but then so often, I leave those special needs kids out of my true plans... There are times I

try to do more, but consistently I haven't. How can I adapt this

lesson? How can I make it fit them? Well… Sometimes you can,

but sometimes you can't…

Another teacher emphasized her need for education when she found

out that there would be students with special needs in her classroom:

Nobody told me what to do. There was very little education

about what this child could actually do. I think you need a little

education background. I really feel you need to know a little bit

about it. I do not really know how to develop an Individualized

Education Plan which, I believe, is really a significant factor for

(their) education. Even if I know how to work on such a plan, we

lack resources to be able to put it into practice.

Although preparing Individual Education Programs (IEP) for students

with disabilities became mandatory in 1997, Cuhadar's (2006) study

found that, only one out of twenty primary schools in Zonguldak,

Turkey who participated in his study were implementing IEPs. The

other nineteen schools did not even have IEP committees. In the study,

he worked with 115 primary school administrators and teachers. Of

these, 87% reported that they did not receive any IEP training to

prepare for students with disabilities. In the current study, teachers

and administrators were also in need of guidance regarding to

preparing IEPs and meeting the specific needs of each student with special needs.

An academic advisor from Hititler University stated that "a lack of training of teachers in the field, together with a lack of clarity and unity of the national policy concerning children with special needs, results in a substandard schooling for those kids." Some teachers expressed feelings of loss in dealing with the needs of children with disabilities and saw themselves as isolated and without adequate support. Most teachers indicated that at the beginning they were very nervous about accepting children with special needs in their classrooms since they had not undergone any training. A classroom teacher stated that:

> When my principal asked me if I minded accepting children with special needs in my classroom, I didn't want to disappoint him and I said it would be fine with me. At first, I was very afraid to take their responsibility. I didn't know what to expect or how to deal with their behavioral problems.

Another teacher added that:

Those inclusive education classes should be mandatory –not elective for primary and elementary school teacher candidates. I think all the teachers should learn at least the basics in college. There are teachers out there that they do not even know the

definition of 'mental retardation'. There are teachers that do not even know how to do some research to help these kids.

Ongoing professional development of teachers through in-service training opportunities and e-learning is another crucial component of encouraging regular classroom teachers to take responsibility of educating all learners in their classrooms. An administrator explained that:

> Primary and elementary school teachers can attend one-month special education seminars to get their certificates and they can start working as a special education teacher right away… I do not care how intense those seminar programs are but nobody can acquire all necessary information and experience in a month to work with those kids (with special needs). Those seminar programs are simply not long enough.

When we asked teachers and administrators whether they follow recent changes in inclusive education policies and legislations or not, most of them indicated that they read about the rights of students with special needs and how a student can qualify to have access to inclusive education services but they "do not really know a lot about the United Nations' influence on the changes and details of the international agreements."

Lack of Communication/Collaboration among Existing Education Professionals

Successfully including all students, including those with special needs in general education classrooms, demands collaboration and shared responsibility among education professionals. Productive collaboration takes time, energy, and well-developed interpersonal skills. Singh (2009) pointed out that collaboration is the cornerstone of inclusion and there is a need for shared responsibility, mutual planning, joint problem solving, and interdependent attainment of common goals in inclusive education settings. Unfortunately, collaboration and/communication among educators appears to be a neglected and problematic area in the Turkish education system. One administrator elaborated:

> If you look at the way our system has developed… I mean the regular education teachers and special education teachers, it's very difficult to break that paradigm. Clearly, in order to work successfully together, both regular education and special education teachers are going to need more pre-service and in-service preparation.

A relatively young 3rd year teacher described her feelings and opinions about the collaboration between young teachers and more experienced ones:

I believe, teachers tend to be more idealistic at the beginning of their careers. As time passes, they get tired and the inclusive education students seem to annoy them more. The experienced teachers, even principals do not offer help or support to younger teachers, because they do not know any better when it comes to inclusive education… They were not educated in this subject. I do not want to blame them but they do not care. They do not try to improve themselves, they avoid computers and professional development seminars. They just want to retire as soon as possible… without dealing with kids with disabilities or using a computer in their career. I need special education teachers' and counselors' help to prepare IEPs and to learn new strategies. I try to get help from the counseling center but the center is always very busy.

Previous research has shown that open communication and coordinated planning between general education teachers and special education staff are essential for inclusion to work. Time is needed for teachers and specialists to meet and create well-constructed plans to identify and implement modifications, accommodations, and specific goals for individual students (UNESCO, 2008).

Lack of Communication with Parents

Very few public schools in Turkey have defined strategies for communication with parents that encourage their active participation. To do this, they must regularly inform parents, and be sure to include all parents in the problem-solving process (Batu, 2000). Opportunities for informing and consulting parents are rare at primary schools (no more than once a semester; only one administrator said that this happens more often). During interviews with four administrators, they said that the parental participation came down to activities like school refurbishment, organization of some extracurricular activities, or financial support for schools.

An academic advisor explained that:

We specifically try to help inexperienced teachers to develop more efficient classroom management techniques. Sometimes we focus on disruptive behaviors of kids with disabilities… Both teachers and parents with whom we consulted feel nervous and defensive about their responsibilities or a possible blame for the student's failure.

Yet all participants agreed that strong communication between parents and teachers is essential to support student learning. Some teachers indicated that they turned to parents for suggestions and guidance, and actively sought their support in the child's learning. One

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of the teachers highlighted the importance of partnerships with parents: "The importance of parental support for any child is unquestioned, but for children with disabilities it is even more important. The parents can provide a family history, important information about the child, and let us know about family values."

Price, Mayfield, McFadden, and Marsh (2001) advocated that while it should be the policy of the board, individual schools, principals, and teachers can provide some services to parents that will facilitate involvement. Various research studies have pointed out that lack of awareness and education among the general public have been major reasons for misconceptions and negative attitudes towards disabilities. As discussed earlier, the issue of invisibility in the community is strongly linked to parents' negative beliefs and attitudes about their children with special needs. "Parents are not willing to send their challenged children to school, as they fear that they will be stigmatized or that their children will not be able to keep up with the class" suggested one of the teachers. Sinclair and Christenson (1992) discussed that efforts made by teachers and schools are among the most important influences on parent involvement and that teachers' beliefs about the importance of parent involvement, their comfort level with parents, and their ability to communicate with parents on an equal basis influence individual teacher practices.

Lack of Instructional Adaptations

Inclusion also requires instructional adaptations on the part of the teachers to ensure that all students participate in the curriculum and benefit from the lessons. While it is generally agreed that regular classroom teachers need to have an increasingly large range of instructional strategies to meet students' differing needs, little descriptive information is available regarding the types of instructional adaptations that are necessary in an inclusive setting in Turkey.

Glaser (1977) considers instructional adaptations as a process of choosing and applying an appropriate teaching action. This may include modifying materials, assignments, testing procedures, and grading criteria or varying presentation styles, group sizes, and feedback techniques in order to enhance the success of students with special needs in regular classroom settings. In this scheme, typical/routine adaptations are either strategies directed toward the class as a whole or relatively minor adaptations that a teacher might make for any student. In this study, some interviewed teachers and administrators reported that the students they were working with were expected to academically perform beyond their capabilities since modifying assignments and exams (breaking tasks into small steps,

shortening assignments, lowering difficulty levels, etc.) are rare instances.

In all three schools, the participants indicated that there was one standard curriculum for all students and there were no special arrangements in that curriculum to ensure active classroom participation of inclusive education students. As one of the academic advisors explained: "It (curriculum) is not child friendly. It is content based and children learn by rote and memorization. This centrally-designed curriculum is leaving very little flexibility for teachers to try out new approaches." The teachers strongly identified their instructions with textbook objectives and reported that they can do nothing or they can proceed with only minor interventions in terms of modifying instructional objectives. From this perspective, we can conclude that the educators' role in the system is more as 'deliverers' rather than as 'co-constructors' of the curriculum and its implementation. Participants, who reported usage of alternative material, referred more to regular-routine material such as geographical maps, cubs, abacus, or extra assignments rather than modified materials.

A 2nd year teacher made several comments to the lack of time to make appropriate instructional adaptations:

Time just keeps slipping away. How can I adapt my lessons? I want to plan for all my kids, including the ones with disabilities but then so often I ran out of time. Truth be told, I mostly leave those kids out of my plans… planning is the toughest part and I don't think there is much I can do.

This teacher's exhaustion resulted from giving up trying to capture additional time for planning and curricular adaptation. Batuhan (2007) argues that the finding of such time should reflect an organizational and administrative commitment, rather than simply referring teacher creativeness and cleverness in balancing various time-consuming demands. Another teacher from Cebeci Primary School added that: "It is difficult to modify lesson plans and materials while we are trying our best to maintain classroom order. One-to-one instruction with those students (with special needs) is out of question."

Evaluation/Measurement Bias at Counseling and Guidance Centers (Severe Disabilities vs. Mild and Moderate Disabilities)

'Disability' is a heterogeneous notion that includes multiple forms of impairment affecting; vision, hearing, speech, mobility, learning, or emotional development. It also includes multiple degrees of functional difficulty such as; mild, moderate, severe, or very severe, with mild being most common. In an ideal inclusive setting, all children with special needs regardless of their level of disability should

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access quality education in general education classrooms. At Counseling and Guidance Centers (RAM) in Turkey, psychologists and counselors are expected to assess and diagnose disabilities according to a coding scheme that 'slots' the student into various diagnostic categories. They are also expected to indicate the degree of functional difficulty for each student. Those categories in turn do serve as indicators as to whether the student is eligible to continue their education in inclusive settings or not. Today, there are 130 RAMs, 809 guidance teachers/counselors that serve at these centers, and 7,120 guidance teachers/school counselors that serve at schools.

As one of the administrators explained: "The officials from the Guidance and Counseling Center meet/ interview with these kids, talk (with them) one or two hours, prepare their inclusive education report, and decide how they continue their education in that short period of time." Most teachers, administrators, and academic advisors that were interviewed for this study stated that they have no kids with autism, Down syndrome, physical impairment, or severe disabilities in their inclusive classrooms, but mostly work with students with learning disabilities or emotional/behavioral disorders. In Metristepe Elementary School, seven of the fourteen inclusive education students were enrolled in special education classrooms, and thirteen out of fourteen students had learning difficulties. Only one student with mild

Down syndrome was the child of one of the school teachers. An administrator indicated that: "Students with mental retardation or severe disabilities are generally placed in vocational schools by REMs (guidance and counseling centers)" and added that:

> Most parents do not want to send their kids to those vocational schools because they are worried about 'labeling', but government provides more funds for those types of schools. They pay for transportation, food, office supplies, and other educational materials. I believe, students at vocational schools have better opportunities and more physical space than our inclusive education students.

Almost without exception, the notion of inclusive education in Turkey has been limited to students with mild disabilities. Students with severe or profound disabilities are either being educated in special schools or not at all. In this case, the emergence of a dual system of education is inevitable.

One of the administrators stated that the identification and evaluation process at Guidance and Counseling Centers is "unreliable" and added: "We are unable to gather accurate information about the students (with special needs) unless they have obvious conditions such as Down's syndrome or physical disabilities. They don't report anything back to schools about the individual needs of those kids."

Obviously, it is crucial for regular education teachers who implement inclusive practices in their classrooms to have an understanding of their students' special needs. Professionals at Guidance and Counseling Centers are expected to provide more detailed information in their reports on students' special needs and provide counseling and classroom support to teachers through IEP preparation and implementation.

Benefits of Inclusion

Although not all anticipated benefits have been seen in inclusion programs in Turkey, mostly due to various social, cultural, political, economic, and demographic factors discussed above. The participants, however, talked about some benefits of inclusive education practices. These benefits are not only limited to the children with special needs, but also to their typically developing peers and to general education staff.

 At the end of her interview, a hopeful 3rd year primary school teacher stated:

> I believe that our children are like a delicate and unique flower. They will blossom as long as we keep feeding them with soil, provide sufficient sun light and water them regularly. This care will result with a beautiful flower which will become our

present. As long as we provide love, care and protection our children will lead a happy life.

One of the most discussed advantages of inclusion was the fact that students with special needs can have more social interactions with their peers. On the other hand, typically developing students can gain a lot from their friendships with students with special needs. As this teacher pointed out, they learn about appreciation and acceptance for children who are different from them:

> My students have very good relationships with each other and Arda. They speak slowly to him and they also try to help him eating food and packing bags... Our children spend majority of the recess time playing outdoors. I observe that they are now more relaxed around Arda and they include him in their plays. I am very pleased and impressed by their behavior. I am very proud of my students.

Another primary school teacher echoed this statement:

> We did not get any negative response or feedback from parents. I did not hear anything like 'I do not want my kid to sit next to this particular kid' or something like that... Children did not complain either. They did not complain that it was unfair to take care of them than others. On the contrary, we heard thank yous."

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When some practitioners highlighted the positive affect of inclusive practices on the social relationships between students with and without special needs, some others stated that students without special needs "just get used to their weird peers" and "do not really benefit from the inclusive setting." And an administrator stated:

> There is no real advantage for the other (typically developing) students because the curriculum and instruction are not designed based on the inclusive education or inclusive education students. As a disadvantage, if the teacher is sensitive about the issue and spends some time with the inclusive education student, it means other students are getting less instruction time. There is no advantage for them.

On the contrary, a 3rd grade teacher from the same school indicated that: "Other (typically developing) students learn to be more tolerant, gentle with their friends… They care about their friends' problems, they become more mature and helpful."

Some school administrators pointed out that inclusive education students' nation-wide, standardized test scores do affect the mean of classroom performance and they generally recalculate the school results by removing the scores of inclusive education students. An administrator complained that:

It is also affecting our school performance. Our students are

taking city-wide or nation-wide standardized tests each year.

Our schools' results are unsurprisingly lower because test

questions are not appropriate for inclusive or special education

kids. Besides, teachers' performances are measured based on the

performance of their students on those national tests.

Peck, Furman, and Helmstetter (1993) argued that successful and

long-term inclusion programs maintain focus on values of belonging

and participating in the larger community. Another classroom teacher

stated: "I totally agree with inclusion, it is their right to be with their

family, it is their right to be with their friends, it is their right to be

within the community."

There are very few studies that have examined the ways in

which inclusive experiences influence young children's understanding

of, and sensitivity toward classmates with special needs (Bayindir,

2010; Melekoglu, 2009). Although there is no guarantee, in Western

societies it is widely accepted that placement of children with special

needs in general education classrooms helps developing more positive

attitudes among typically developing peers. On the other hand, several

researchers (Bayindir, 2010; Eres, 2010; & Sari, 2002) argued that

simply placing those children in special education classrooms without

professional support does not necessarily result in academic and social benefits.

Inclusive Education Policies in Practice

In the long run, it may not matter how successful inclusive programs are in meeting all students' needs, unless educational policymakers, especially those at the local level, are conscientious about meeting regular classroom teachers' needs. While Turkey has adopted internationally endorsed inclusive education policies, aligned itself with the principles of the Salamanca Statement, and targets to reach Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015; practice often falls short of what has been advocated. The local stakeholders and practitioners constantly have to balance the tension between pursuing the ideology of inclusive education and adopting pragmatic solutions in practice.

As seen through the eyes of a study participant:

I think we don't have a solid special education policy. Our educational policies keep changing based on each election results, so there is no stability. Sometimes we adopt policies from European Union countries, sometimes we try to follow international agreements. Even as a principal, I do not know how to evaluate all those recent (policy) changes. It's a huge mess if you ask me. Those inclusive education students pass

their grades without learning anything. They are just socializing

with their (typically developing) friends and that is all.

A young 3rd grade teacher raised a question when we asked her

opinions about recent inclusive education policies:

> I do not know a lot about policy making process or how they
>
> (policy makers) come up with all those unrealistic regulations…
>
> I don't understand how they expect us to work with students
>
> that we haven't been trained for?   Teaching all these students
>
> at the same time is really a difficult job for us.

From this summary and discussion of the interview responses, many

challenges surfaced which demonstrate the difficulties that teachers

and administrators face when implementing recently adopted inclusive

education policies and practices. The analysis of the interview data

clearly indicate that inclusive education policies and practices in

Turkey are filtered through various social, cultural, political, economic,

and demographic factors. With the exception of one teacher who

participated in the study, it is also apparent that participating

practitioners shared a strong belief in the fundamental value of

inclusion.

> I guess in an ideal world, I would agree with all those inclusive
>
> education policies. I mean… it looks great on paper… when I
>
> read about it. Who wouldn't want to create equal opportunities

for all students? In reality, it is really hard for us to get going

with the existing resources. We started accepting more students

(with special needs) but I don't think anything has changed for

the better...nobody seems to know where we are heading now.

In Turkish context, the term 'inclusion' is mostly used to describe a

child with a disability placed in a regular classroom environment.

Tomko (1996) questions the term 'inclusion' and current practices: "Is

every child in the regular class with or without disability considered

'included' just because they are there? Are there no requirements of

being an active participant or being considered as a member who

belongs? If you are sit in the room you are included?" (p. 2).

Undoubtedly, one of the critical challenges is to ensure all children

complete a good-quality education. Similarly, a participating

administrator regarded inclusive education as an unrealistic

imposition from outside:

The current government only focuses on meeting the minimum

requirements to get the European Union membership... or

artificially changing some statistics on those government

publications... maybe on the UN documents, too. I don't think

they care about our every-day struggles, our realities, realities of

this country... I don't think they look at the problem from

human rights perspective. Those who are advocating for

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inclusive education in this country sit in their offices and forcing

the policy on us.

An academic advisor from Hititler University discussed that inclusive

education policies need to be understood in the wider social context,

rather than referring to a simple top-to-down process, and added: "It

shouldn't be something made by government and handed down

through centres, schools, and practitioners ready-made." Arguably, an

alternative to a 'top-down' policy making process is to take a more

'bottom-up' approach by enabling stakeholders to be involved in

developing examples of inclusive education and, subsequently, to have

a real role in formulating policy. In the current situation in Turkey,

newly adopted inclusive education policies reach limited numbers of

stakeholders and it puts the burden on the government to 'sell' its

policies to groups who have had only a limited role in formulating

them.

Participants also recurrently discussed that practitioners, both

teachers and administrators, do not learn enough about the inclusive

education and policy 'deeply' enough in their trainings:

To be honest, we did not learn about these things at college. It

was (referring to 'inclusive education' class) an elective course,

not mandatory. During our internships at college, we should

have had a chance to observe an inclusive classroom but nobody

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really cared about the things that we learn during those

internship programs... I do not think the professional

development seminars are helpful, either. Those seminars are

annoying... well, boring for most of the teachers. I they are not

mandatory, nobody will show up. Most teachers just got to the

in-training seminars to sign the attendance sheet.

Further, and as expected, all of these factors and barriers seemed to

contribute to the discrepancies between Western and Turkish

interpretations of inclusive education policies and practices. As

discussed in Chapter 3, Turkish education policy documents

increasingly recognize that more weight has to be attached to inclusion

of children with special needs, but it is far from clear that the current

policy framework provides concrete measures for translating

statements into action. Most of the attention in the development of

inclusive education to date has been focused on the regular schools and

classrooms. However, many of the barriers which remain lie outside

the school. Therefore, international declarations have to be interpreted

in the light of local circumstances. Barriers to inclusive education in

Turkey and the tension between the local and global will be further

discussed in the final chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion

> How does the social structure affect the thinking and the
> practice of educational professionals in the search for
> educational inclusion and the fight against exclusion? What
> policies have been implemented in order to make viable the
> proposal of education for all? How are such policies reflected in
> the schools?" (Santos and Silva, 2009, p. 285)

In this study, the purpose was to better understand the

processes of local adaptation and modification of UNESCO's inclusive

education policies, the possible resistances to global forces in inclusive

education in Turkey, and the consequences of the implications of those

policies in Ankara, Turkey from local educators' views. With that goal

in mind, recently adopted Turkish inclusive educational policies that

were implemented after the Salamanca Statement in 1994 were

reviewed on a selective basis. The discussion of the policy and

document analysis section helped to make connections between the

global inclusive education policy changes and local practices in the

Turkish education system. In the second part of the study, semi-

structured interviews were conducted with local educators in Ankara

(teachers, administrators, and academic advisors) and policy makers

from MONE. The results of the interview data highlighted the various

complexities, tensions, and inadequacies in the conceptualization of

inclusive education in Turkish public schools that study participants have observed.

In this chapter, in the light of the findings, possible reasons behind the gap between theory and practice, and the discrepancy between Western and Turkish interpretations of inclusive education in Turkey are discussed. In summary, the challenge of modifying deeply held attitudes at both personal and institutional levels, providing clearly constructed inclusive education policies and approaches, offering appropriate training to key stakeholders, making adequate amount of resources available are the main discussion points of this chapter.

Good Intentions, Poor Results

Reflections emerging from this research are similar to the findings of other studies exploring the "realities" of developing an inclusive education system and how educational policies become practice (Mitchell, 2009). As will be seen in this study's results, while there is plenty evidence of good intentions and occasional examples of inclusive education being implemented in Turkey, practices do not always match the promises. Although some inclusive education policies and notions of educational reform have been established, there are delays in and resistance to enacting the practice of those policies and

challenges still exist in the ability to practice meaningful inclusive education at the micro level.

This study aimed at exploring the current situation of inclusive education for primary-school-aged children with special needs in Ankara, Turkey, from the perspectives of policy makers, administrators, general education teachers, and academic professionals.

Developing Inclusive Education Policies

From UNESCO's perspective, inclusive education starts from the belief that the right to education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just society. In the 'Open File on Inclusive Education Report' (2010), UNESCO authors summarize that in order to realize this right, the Education for All movement has worked to make quality basic education available to all. They suggest that, to begin with, inclusive education required major shifts from old to new educational paradigms and adopting inclusive education policies and principles. The process of change itself requires financial, human, and intellectual resources. According to UNESCO authors, mobilizing opinion, building consensus, carrying out a situation analysis, reforming legislation and supporting local projects, and including teacher education and support are also critical parts of the process.

The Salamanca Statement calls on member governments to "adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools" and "develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools" (UNESCO, 1994). Buyukduvenci (1995) discusses that although it is quite natural to make use of the experiences and stock of knowledge of the others, the crucial problem is to what extent the "borrowing processes" should be used. He further argues that in the Turkish education system, "borrowing ideas" became problematic when they took the form of "imitation" or "copy," and ended up with unexpected results and failure.

As discussed in the findings chapters of this study, the worldwide inclusive education movement is overt in terms of international agreements such as the UNESCO's "Education for All" program (1990) and the Salamanca Statement (1994). At the national level in Turkey, as the analyzed government documents and reports demonstrate, the inclusive education movement is occurring and developing through policy makers from MONE and inclusive education legislation. At the grassroots level, schools, local educational authorities, administrators, teachers, and other professionals in the field are implementing inclusive education movement in many diverse forms, depending on the social, cultural, economic, historical, and

political processes and conditions at their micro-levels. The results of this study made it clear that there are a variety of priorities, barriers, expectations, and contradictions involved in trying to extend inclusive principles and practices.

In Turkey, the idea and movement of inclusive education have definitely challenged traditional views and roles of special education and started a new discussion on "social injustice" in education. In this study, the results of the interview data revealed strong positive attitudes regarding inclusion, on the part of the participating teachers, administrators, and academic advisors in Ankara, Turkey. Yet, the participants referred to the current inclusive education system as a failure and reported the reasons as a combination of limited resources and socio-cultural barriers. The interview data results also revealed a lack of full comprehension of the influence of international politics on development of inclusive education policies and practices in Turkey. On the other hand, Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou (2010) argue that "when policies on inclusive education are developed independently from consideration of the broader social context within which they are situated, it is unlikely that they will be effective" (p. 11). Thus, it is also critical to ask questions about whose interests are served by specific ways of conceptualizing inclusive educational policies and practices in any given social context.

What is Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education has its origins in debates between academics and in the emerging politics of disability that questioned the construction of "normality" through the everyday interactions of social, cultural, economic, and institutional life (Armstrong, Armstrong, & Spandagou, 2010). Buyukduvenci (1995) discusses that the cultural characteristics of any country give shape to the educational system but no country can assert its own educational system to be wholly indigenous. According to Biko (1978, quoted in Oliver, 1996), systemic change within the sense of political, social, and practical application is important:

> If by integration, you understand a breakthrough into able bodied society by disabled people, an assimilation and acceptance of disabled people into an already established set of norms and code of behavior set up by the able bodied, then I am against it… If on the other hand by integration you mean there shall be participation by all members of a society, catering for the full expression of the self in a freely changing society as determined by people, then I am with you (p. 92).

The researcher of this study also shares Biko's view of having full expression of the self in a freely changing society as determined by all members of the society, including parents, teachers, students with

special needs themselves. Florian and McLaughlin (2008) discuss that, in line with the difficulties in defining disability and classifying impairment, there also appears to be little data on the progress of those disabled children in developing countries who are in school as they are often not receiving any specialist support which would imply official identification. As the findings of this research study suggest, even in one single country, the understanding of what inclusive education means can vary city to city, school to school, or even teacher to teacher.

The former United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, describes education as "a human right with immense power to transform" and claimed that on "its foundation rest cornerstones of freedom, democracy, and sustainable human development" (UNICEF, 1999, p.4). From UNESCO's perspective, the question of inclusion is fundamentally about issues of human rights. In 2006, UNESCO described inclusive education as;

> A process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs
> of all learners through inclusive practices in learning, cultures
> and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from
> education. It involves changes and modifications in content,
> approaches, structures, and strategies, with a common vision
> which covers all children the appropriate age range and a

conviction that is the responsibility of the regular system to

educate children.

In Barton's (1999) theory:

Inclusive education is not integration and is not concerned with

the assimilation or accommodation of discriminated groups or

individuals within existing socio-economic conditions and

relations. It is not about the well-being of a particular oppressed

or excluded group. Thus, the concerns go well beyond of those of

disablement. Inclusive education is not an end itself, but a

means to an end —the creation of an inclusive society. As such,

the interest is with all citizens, their well-being and security (p.

58).

The participants of this study agreed that inclusion is a "feel good idea"

but did not agree on one unified description of inclusion. Although

UNESCO documents portray inclusive education as a human right

with one fixed, universalized meaning, it can be concluded that

'inclusive education does not mean the same thing in the developing

countries as it does in the developed countries of West. The findings of

this study indicate clearly constructed inclusive educational policies

and procedures are needed immediately for a successful attitudinal

and systemic change.

The Quality of Inclusive Education

Public concern over the quality of inclusive education is evident in many of the world's richest nations, as well as the poorest. According to UNESCO (2010), in an increasingly knowledge-based world, prosperity, employment and poverty reduction, both for countries and individuals, depend increasingly on skills and capabilities delivered in the classroom. Despite the numerous national and international documents, newly adapted inclusive education policies, and a good deal of legislation, many children and young people in Turkey are untouched by these developments. We can further argue that, although there has been some progress on the number of children with special needs attending main stream schools, the quality policies of education for those children is a major nation-wide concern. Erzan (2010) indicates that: "Turkey has largely reached quantitative targets in schooling. On the other hand, the average quality of education is miserably low." Neyyir Berktay, the coordinator of the Education Reform Movement project (ERM) said that: "If Turkey can manage to get more qualified teachers and solve certain governance issues in the education sector, we can succeed at having a more productive educational system… We must equip ourselves with the needed skills and qualifications to adapt to the challenges in this fast-changing world" (Daily News & Economic Review, 2010).

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In the Turkish education system, the quality and quantity of inclusive education services vary among public and private schools. Akkok and Watts (2003) indicate that the number of guidance counselors is higher, and that psychological counseling practices are implemented more extensively in private schools than it does in public schools. Class sizes, too, tend to be lower in the private schools; many public schools still operate on a split-day basis, with some class groups coming in the morning and some in the afternoon.

According to the *EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005),* while there is no single universally accepted definition of quality education, most conceptual frameworks incorporate two important components – the cognitive development of the learner on the one hand and the role of education in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and/or creative and emotional development on the other. In the 2005 World Bank report, it is stated that: "If Turkey wants to ensure that its citizens do not become the low-paid service workers of Europe, it must provide a high-quality education to all of its young people."

It is widely discussed that many of the world's developing countries have been more successful in expanding access to education than raising quality. Although UNESCO (1994) proclaims that inclusive education must be seen as a pre-condition of bringing about

quality education for all, some researchers question the "quality education" concept and how the term has been used, especially in educational policies with arbitrary finality. Some others argue that the "quality education" concept is commonly defined by actors who are detached from the context where the teaching and learning happens. In Turkey, the disconnection between decision makers and practitioners when it comes to defining key terms and concepts in inclusive education is also observed by the participants.

Overcoming Barriers

Worldwide, deep-rooted inequalities are major barriers to inclusive education settings and marginalization in education matters at many levels. Disparities linked to wealth, gender, ethnicity, language and location are holding back progress in many countries, including Turkey. The barriers to learning, development and participation children face will vary from one child to another. Of course, there is no single formula or blueprint for overcoming the various barriers in education. And, there are limitations of borrowing inclusive educational policies from Western, high income countries. Therefore, inclusive educational policies in Turkey desperately need to address underlying causes of 'exclusion in education' such as social inequality, gender disparities, ethnic and linguistic disadvantages, and gaps between geographic areas.

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In this study, teachers, administrators, and academic advisors cite several barriers to inclusive education, such as inadequate educational infrastructures, overcrowded classrooms, lack of educational professionals and lack of collaboration among professionals, insufficient pre-service and in-service training programs, as well as negative attitudes towards inclusion.

Barriers and solutions can be seen as the flip sides of the same coin: in every barrier lies a potential solution. At the same time, addition to MONE's efforts for adopting and practicing UNESCO's and EU's inclusive education policies, it is critical that local policy makers and practitioners who are facing educational problems daily find their own solutions and so become as self-efficient as possible. As Miles (2000) stated:

> It is largely a question of attitude whether people decide to focus on what they are able to do, rather than on what they do not have. The greater the barrier, the more creative and imaginative the solution tends to be (p. 4).

Understanding marginalization of students with special needs is one of the conditions for overcoming barriers.

At the end, inclusive education is not simply about making schools available for children with special needs. It is also about being proactive in identifying the barriers some groups of children encounter

in attempting to access educational opportunities, including identifying all the resources available at national and community level and bringing them to bear on overcoming those barriers.

Social, cultural, and family background related barriers. While disabilities involve varying levels and types of impairment, it is now increasingly accepted that social, cultural, institutional and attitudinal barriers limit the full inclusion of children with disabilities. Smits and Hosgor (2006) showed that "children from families with higher socio-economic status, for children with lower birth order, with fewer siblings, with Turkish speaking and less traditional mothers and living in the more developed and urbanized parts of the country" were more likely to participate in education (p. 557). They also discuss that the levels of family involvement in children's education might vary by the inclusive education option available to them, the type and the severity of disability, the family's socioeconomic status and the nature of the parent-child relationship.

Stigmatization and discrimination of children with special needs result in locking children into cycles of low expectation and underachievement. The results of this study reflected that the Turkish society must challenge its predominant culturally embedded attitudes toward children and people with special needs.

UNESCO's full report, *Reaching the Marginalized* (2010) states that:

> Disability is one of the least visible but most potent factors in educational marginalization. Systematic under-reporting of disability is also a serious problem in Turkey. Some children with disabilities are isolated within their communities because of a mixture of shame, fear and ignorance about the causes and consequences of their impairment (p. 181).

In Turkey, it has also been extensively argued that teachers' beliefs and attitudes are critical for ensuring the success of inclusive practices because teachers' acceptance of more inclusive policies is likely to affect their commitment to implementing it (Norwich, 1994; Kagitcibasi, 2005). In this study, attitudes regarding inclusion have revealed mixed findings: some participants stressed the benefits of inclusion, while others revealed a tendency for low expectation of success of inclusive environments. Few teacher participants reported positive experiences and perspectives toward teaching children with special needs in their classrooms. Some other teacher participants were pessimistic about the outcomes of inclusion and expressed concerns about the current system: "They (referring to children with special needs) are always so behind… and I don't think they benefit academically for being in a regular classroom. Maybe socially, but not

academically." It can be concluded that the findings regarding the emphasis by teachers and administrators on social success rather than academic success is somehow problematic since both academic and social achievements are equally critical in school as well as in the larger society.

In the study, participant teachers affirmed that they have to deal with emotional struggles, such as being "scared," "fearful," or "skeptical" emerging from the new inclusive settings. The teachers reported that they often ask themselves: "Do I have what it takes to teach a child with a disability?" or "Can I handle all those situations with children with disruptive behaviors or mental retardation?" Therefore, teachers' self efficacy is very critical for strengthening teachers' positive attitudes toward inclusion and dealing with some of the problems that the participants raised.

Since most inclusive educational policies have been and are developed and established in a top-down fashion, they may face challenges or resistance from practitioners and parents. As one of the teachers in the study suggested: "I do not know a lot about policy making process or how they (policy makers) come up with all those unrealistic regulations… I don't understand they expect us to work with students that we haven't been trained for?" Although and educational change may be activated from a top-down fashion, the

participants referenced the importance of a collaborative process. The involvement and active participation of diverse stakeholders including administrators, teachers, parents, and children in inclusive educational policy making is crucial to create a more bottom-up level educational change.

Inclusive education, economy, and inequalities. In UNESCO's *Guidelines for Inclusion* (2005), the "cost-effectiveness" of inclusive education policies and practices was emphasized. In the report, it was explained that the privatization of inclusive education might lead to cost-cutting in education. Although once hailed as a way to increase achievement while decreasing costs, it is obvious that full inclusion does not save money, reduce students' needs, or improve academic outcomes in the case of Turkey. Evidence from both developed and developing countries suggests that inclusive education services are relatively costly to provide. It is estimated that providing educational services for students with special needs could cost 3 times more than their typically developing peers. Internationally speaking, developing countries struggle to maintain a suitable funding structure to support inclusive programs and reform existing education systems, despite UNESCO's funds through World Bank.

World-wide, poverty is both a potential cause and a consequence of disability. Inclusion International's 2006 global study on poverty

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and people with disabilities and their families found that lack of access to education was one of the key factors that result in not having opportunities later in life for education, trainings, jobs, and stable incomes. Young children with special needs from low-income households potentially have the most to gain from good early intervention, early childhood care and inclusive primary school education, yet they are the least likely to have access. Poverty strongly influences prospects for regular school enrollment of children with special needs, because schooling competes with providing other basic needs, such as health care and food. The heightened risk of never attending to school associated with low household wealth underlines the importance of public policies to ensure that poverty does not automatically lead to educational disadvantage. On the other hand, the critical challenge is not just getting children with special needs into school but ensuring that they complete a good-quality education.

In Turkey, the Government provides 98.5 percent of educational services by hiring teachers, building and running schools. As this study's results revealed, public schools even at the capital city lack basic educational materials and equipment to provide a sufficient education for their students with special needs. Additionally, in big cities in Turkey (such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Adana, etc.) where the population is changing rapidly because of immigration,

providing equal educational opportunities and services is a serious

problem due to both economic difficulties of providing necessary

curricular materials to schools and planning educational activities. As

a result, it is not difficult to picture that many children with special

needs who live in rural areas do not have access to any form of

education due to financial and transportation problems. In remote

rural areas, distance to school is often greater than urban settings and

is a major security concern for parents of young children with special

needs.

> UNESCO's *2010 Education for All Full Report* suggests:
>
> Patterns of inequality in education raise concerns for the future
>
> course of Turkey's social and economic development. High levels
>
> of education inequality are holding back efforts to strengthen
>
> economic growth, expand employment and create a more equal
>
> society. Migration from eastern to western regions, usually from
>
> rural to urban settlements, spreads the legacy of education
>
> disadvantage across the country. Large numbers of rural
>
> migrants to Turkish cities settle in squatter areas called
>
> *gecekondular* districts, which are centers of social
>
> marginalization and educational disadvantage (p.71).

 As discussed in Chapter 4, equal access to education is still an existing

social equity problem among regions and social classes in Turkey. Non-

government organizations often play an important role in extending access to hard-to-reach populations in Turkey, including children with special needs. However, the provision of non-government organizations is most successful when it is integrated into national systems, allowing children with special needs to continue their education in public inclusive schools (UNESCO, 2010). Therefore, the Turkish government needs to create more efficient ways to regularly support non-governmental organizations.

As discussed in Chapter 5, although a compulsory and free education is guaranteed by the constitution, parental out-of-pocket spending is around 1.36 billion USD and this translates to an average of 39,000 USD of annual private contribution per public primary school. For that reason, the Turkish government needs to remove school fees and lower indirect costs associated with uniforms, textbooks, transportation, and informal fees. Additional resources are needed to provide teachers specialized training and provide children specially designed learning materials to realize their potential. As one of the participants explained:

> I think if the school is financially supported and there is cash, and there are enough teaching resources and experts to teach a child with severe disabilities, let's say with a mental retardation, who is normally wouldn't be placed in a general

education classroom, I think that's fine. But the money and resources have got to be there, otherwise nobody should expect us to take care of that child.

The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) includes a promise by donors that "no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources." However, a large portion of these resources has not been forthcoming and donors have a mixed record in delivering on the promises made at Dakar. For instance, while some countries, including Spain, Ireland, Sweden, the Netherlands, have exceeded their fair share of the donor commitment, Japan and the United States fall well short of their fair share (UNESCO, 2010). Furthermore, the recent global financial crisis has been adding to pressure on national education budgets.

The primary focus of the 2010, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* is the most recent and most severe global economic crisis since the Great Depression. The report concludes that education systems in many of the world's developing countries are experiencing the aftershock of a crisis that originated in the financial systems of the developed world. In Turkey as well, while the impact of the recent economic slowdown is being felt across society, it has fallen most heavily on the young children and children with disabilities (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2009).

Clearly, the pressure of the financial downturn on both national and international charities is widening and deepening while demand for services is increasing.

To achieve universal primary education and the wider international development targets set for 2015 by UNESCO. At the same time, financial challenges at varied levels are faced by many developing countries that try to reach their 2015 goals. According to the *2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report*, Turkey is in danger of failing to achieve the 2015 target, "largely because of deeply entrenched national inequalities" (p. 6). Additionally, even if all necessary financial resources were readily available, it would be physically almost impossible to provide the necessary infrastructure and associated inputs (teachers, administrators, etc.) during the next five years to cater to all children of primary school age.

Public schools across the country suffer from a familiar combination of underinvestment in equipment, low pay for teachers and problems recruiting qualified practitioners. According to the *Education Monitoring Report* (2010), currently around 4 percent of the state's budget goes to education, a figure they say must be increased to 6 percent. Although never mentioned by the participants in this study, Murat (2000) and Dursun (2000) state that public school teachers in Turkey are earning a very little salary while having to teach in very

large crowded classrooms. Demir's study (1997) results demonstrated that the most stressful factor related to job structure for teachers and principals was the inadequate salaries.

Teacher preparation & in-service training programs. Teachers are the single most important educational resource in any country and according to UNESCO (2010), from early childhood through primary and secondary school years, the presence of a qualified and well-motivated teacher is vital for effective learning. From UNESCO's perspective (2010), the "universalization" of basic education, although a right reserved to all, has generated new demands to include children with special needs in the regular classrooms. Prior research studies in other countries (Cobb, 2000; Kochan, 1999; Walling & Lewis, 2000; Wesson, Voltz, & Ridley, 1993) have found it much more effective to ensure that changes in professional development are sustained over time and that they are accompanied by changes in other aspects of the system - funding support, for instance, or assessment procedures - so that newly-trained teachers are enabled to work on the application of new practices.

According to MONE's report (2007):

Every teacher commissioned in the primary schools drafts and implements annual and daily plans in compliance with the curriculum, signs 'teacher working (education) hours attendance

track book, prepare necessary educational material for activities, ensures protection, maintenance and repair of educational materials, fills in 'personal info forms' of the children and 'attitude evaluation forms' enclosed in the primary school curriculum, keeps development and health care records of the children, drafts year – end development reports and student files, participates planning of studies related to education of families and implements the same, plans and implements special days to be celebrated in schools, attends to general education activities in schools, takes necessary measures for education of children in need of special care, fulfills work shift duties in compliance with shift schedule, examines and undersigns the law, statute, directive, circular and 'communications journal', attends to the meetings of teacher's board and branch teacher's board, assumes the function of assessment officer in case of commissioning and necessity, undertakes all other functions related with education to be commissioned by the administration, attends to the breakfast and lunches in schools together with students as being one of the principal functions and ensures regular nourishment for children (p. 55).

To implement successful inclusion practices, the Salamanca Statement (1994) also highlights that teacher education programs, both pre-service and in-service, should address the provision of special needs education in inclusive schools. As discussed in previous chapters, when there is a new educational demand, in this case to make inclusion of students with special needs possible, it is mainly schools and teachers responsibility to develop new skills and methods, and adjust their conceptions accordingly. With the newly adopted inclusive education policies and practices in Turkey, already overwhelming responsibilities of regular classroom teachers have increased enormously. They not only have to start including the students with disabilities in their classrooms, but they also have to prepare Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), and follow the students' paperwork (Ozhan, 2000; Sahbaz, 1997). Findings of this study revealed that most teachers did not feel well prepared or confident in their own teaching abilities, professional trainings, or experiences to meet individual needs of children with special needs in their inclusive classrooms. Participant teachers also reported that they constantly struggled to dedicate the extra attention and time necessary for children with special needs.

In Turkey, the MONE seeks to regulate contents and teaching practices in order to improve teachers' abilities to respond to needs of

diverse children. Higher enrollment rate since 1999 has gone hand in hand with an increase in the recruitment of primary school teachers. Every year 17,000 candidate teachers for primary education are graduating from the teacher education programs (MONE, 2000). MONE has also put in effect arrangements that make it possible for retired teachers to return to service on a voluntary basis. Since Turkey's teacher education programs do not provide adequate special education training for regular education teachers to work in inclusive settings, there is a demand for new inclusive education pre-service and in-service programs and special needs specialists. Kagitcibasi (2005) indicates that ongoing teacher training and professional development is a crucial element for successful inclusion. In the same way, the participant teachers in this study reported that they felt ill-prepared when they were first introduced students with special needs in their general education classrooms, and although they had sufficient subject knowledge later, they needed more generic teaching skills, teaching strategies, an adapted curriculum, and more consultancies from external specialists to deal with needs of a more diverse population.

On the other hand, special education teacher candidates in Turkey get their undergraduate degrees from the special education departments at nine public universities. These undergraduate programs are designed to prepare their candidates to specifically work

with children and adults with intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, visual impairments, and those who are gifted (Cavkaytar, 2006). Because of an insufficient number of special education teachers, graduates of other related disciplines, such as psychology, social work, counseling, elementary education, and early childhood, can work as special education teachers in public schools after completing a six-month certification program. Although these short-term certification programs have been successful in increasing the number of special education teachers nationwide, qualifications of those teachers have been questioned due to their limited training and experience.

Research on Turkish teachers' attitudes towards students with special needs suggests a need for enhancement of the teacher training in inclusive education practices. For example, Rakap and Kaczmarek (1992) reported that 65 percent of Turkish teachers did not support the placement of students with mental retardation and severe disabilities in regular education settings and would not accept these children in their classrooms. In this study, most teachers and administrators favored more traditional educational placement and services – namely, self-contained special classes and pull-out programs over full inclusion. Legally, Turkish administrators and teachers cannot deny a child admission to their schools or classrooms. In practice, however, children

with significant disabilities have been turned away from schools and regular classroom teachers have an option to refuse children with special needs.

Moreover, the numbers of speech therapists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, child psychiatrists are inadequate to meet the needs of students with special needs and experienced professionals mainly exist in the private sector. The participant teachers and administrators in this study frequently indicated that there is a lack of human resources and professional support within the classroom to implement meaningful and successful inclusion. MONE is responsible for funding services in its schools and institutions, and universities make disbursements for their guidance services from the budgets allocated to them by the State. Currently only one percent of the urban schools have an employed counseling teacher and MONE is in the process of developing source references for pre-school and primary education teachers and school administrators and it plans to incorporate training for counseling in its in-service training programs (MONE, 2000).

As one of the academic advisors from Hititler University explained, collaboration among educational professionals under the current circumstances in Turkey can help "sharing expertise and delegating responsibilities."

Exclusion of 'Un-educable' Children

'Disability' is a generic term covering a multitude of circumstances and varying levels. Children with disabilities face many challenges in education at different levels. For instance, children with severe autism are likely to face very different education-related challenges than children who are partially sighted, or who have physical impairments. It is widely accepted that impairments that affect the capacity to communicate and interact in ways common in regular education classrooms can impose particularly high practical and social obstacles to participation in education. While the participants of this study were supportive of inclusive theories, findings have suggested that their support depends on the severity of the students' disability. As one of the academic advisors indicated: "Some regular education teachers refuse the placement of the disabled in their classes… Unfortunately, the rejection is stronger with those children with severe disabilities than those with learning disabilities or less severe disabilities." As discussed in Chapter 5, almost without exception, the notion of inclusive education in Turkey has been limited to students with mild disabilities.

Today, Guidance and Counseling Centers in Turkey typically divide children with special needs into two categories; educable and uneducable. As pointed out in chapter four, children who did not fall

within the existing range of cognitive abilities or IQ levels based on Counseling and Guidance Service Centers criteria are labeled as 'uneducable.' Uneducable children, particularly children with mental retardation, are often excluded from public school attendance. As mentioned in the policy analysis chapter, the special education laws do not require schools to educate all children with disabilities or specify how schools are to educate children with disabilities.

In the international arena, the most commonly provided inclusive education support services are instruction conducted in a resource withdrawal setting, in-class support, and special education consultation (Kircaali-Iftar, 1994). In parallel, the majority of students with special needs in Turkey are getting educational services in segregated settings. From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that students with moderate and severe disabilities are excluded from the inclusive educational settings in Turkey, while those with milder disabilities in the "educable" category are often marginalized.

Children in Rural Areas

Prior research studies suggest that the interaction between language, ethnicity and location is a potent source of marginalization in education. In general, living in a rural area often puts children at greater risk of being out of school and prospects for attending school

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are also heavily conditioned by household location and wealth.
According to UNESCO's 2010 report, in most regions in Turkey 2% to
7% of those aged 17 to 22 have fewer than four years of education.
However, in the Eastern region the figure rises to 21%. Although the
educational problems of marginalized groups based on gender and
ethnicity were not one of the main purposes of this study, it is worth
noting that young women speaking a non-Turkish home language –
predominantly Kurdish – are among the most educationally
marginalized in Turkey, averaging just three years of education.

Additionally, experienced and well-trained teachers are more
likely to choose to work in urban areas. In rural areas in Turkey, it is
often very difficult to recruit well-qualified teachers for available
teaching positions. Opportunities for professional development are also
more likely to be concentrated in urban areas, enabling urban teachers
to gain qualifications more readily than their rural colleagues. Teacher
education and ongoing support and training are therefore crucial for
any changes introduced in education, if the rural areas are to be fully
included in those changes.

In recent years, the Turkish government has given priority to
economic and social infrastructure projects (e.g., Southeastern
Anatolia Project, Eastern Anatolia Project and Konya Plain Project)

aiming to eliminate the differences among regions (World Bulletin, 2010).

The Tension between the Global and the Local

In their book, *Policy, Experience and Change: Cross-Cultural Reflections on Inclusive Education* (2007), Barton and Armstrong argue that debates about inclusive education policies and practices are mostly "controlled and given meaning by those in power" (p. xv). The determination of what is "true" or "acceptable" or "best" in a particular social (or educational) system is typically made, in the end, by those with the power to make the determination "stick." In the words of a phrase suggested by Michel Foucault (1980), these "regimes of truth" thus operate in an inherently circular manner, with the "legitimate knowledge" of the gatekeepers and decision-makers depending for its legitimacy on the assent of those whose "legitimate" expertise has put them into positions of power in the first place (Novak, 2007).

The problems that have been extensively discussed in the inclusive education literature are about educational change done to children and in general individuals with disabilities. Yet, the views and opinions of people with disabilities remain marginalized and silenced, both internationally and in Turkish context.

In the *2010 Education for All Global Monitoring Report* (UNESCO), Bokova indicates that "only inclusive education systems

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have the potential to harness the skills needed to build the knowledge societies of the twenty-first century" (p. i). As a result, she concludes that UNESCO should continue to vigorously advocate for increased investment in inclusive education and should take the lead in the monitoring of member government budgets and official statistics on school attendance and drop-out rates. Barton and Armstrong (2007) discuss that any claims to be inclusive at any level "always be greeted with skepticism" and added that "equality, rights, participation, and social justice are ideals to be worked towards, not products to be claimed" (p. xv).

While the philosophy of inclusive education has been discussed and enforced globally, mostly through the UN and its agencies and particularly through UNESCO, each individual country must reach its own understanding of how it can be incorporated into its own culture. Since inclusive education had its origin largely in Western education systems, it is critical to consider some of the conflicts that can arise when it comes to it being adopted in different cultural contexts.

In most Western societies, the initiatives and the push for an inclusive education system, despite quite different understandings and perspectives, came from a bottom-up process and were followed by a long period of public discussions. Some politicians, bureaucrats, and teaching unions were actually against change in the established and in

most cases dual special education systems in the late 60's and 70's (Emmanuelsson, Haug, & Persson, 2009). Today, there are still segregated special education schools and classrooms in most European countries, generally because of the political disagreements and the conflicting interests of different institutions and professionals in the field. Commonly, the supporters of segregated system want everything to be planned and prepared before students with special needs are allowed into the general education schools to ensure "quality education" and to prevent the child from having difficulties in school.

Armstrong and Barton (2007) pointed out that developments in social systems, concepts, and language are historically situated and culturally specific. Since inclusive education has grown out of the special education systems of developed Western countries during the twentieth century. They further argued that educational concepts and terminology cannot be exported and imported across different settings as if they have a universal meaning and value. Similarly, educational terms like "special educational needs," "integration," and "inclusive education" do not have one fixed and universal meaning and interpretation.

Clearly, inclusive education is one of the most controversial and multifaceted topics in educational research. Where educators and other professionals do not share common understanding of the aims and the

processes, implementation tends to be inconsistent from region to region (for example, urban/rural), from system to system (for example, private/public) and even from school to school or classroom to classroom within the same system in a given community (Lutfiyya & Van Welleghem, 2002). Educational researchers, policy makers, and professionals around the world still debate what inclusive education really means and whether this Western model will work in developing countries or not. Armstrong and Barton claim that "the term 'inclusive education' has been colonized, hollowed out and transformed into an 'empty signifier' (Laclau, 1996), with powerful interest groups, including successive governments, committed to the continued role of special schools, struggling to invest and shape it with their own values and agendas" (p. 42). Armstrong, Armstrong, & Spandagou (2010) suggest that we should consider the more complex picture in relation to ideas of social inclusion and inclusive education. In their latest book, they stated that:

> It needs to be recognized that the everyday experiences of people in the developing world are marked by the history of colonialism. The end of the colonial period towards the end of the twentieth century certainly did not eradicate the impact of that domination. In the post-colonial those countries start from a position of economic disadvantage. They frequently lack the

resources, the infrastructure, and as their educated children

leave for highly paid jobs in the North, they so often also lack of

the skills base and leadership to challenge the new world order...

Colonial education systems have largely been built upon models

taken from the colonial powers, and little has changed in the

post-colonial world (p. ix).

From the post-colonial theory perspective, education was at the cutting

edge of "the modernist project of assimilation" (p. 16). The history of

colonialism, now globalization, controls the socio-political landscape of

inclusive education and related struggles of developing countries. The

authors continued their arguments by saying that although the

inclusive education movement has been "distorted, colonized, and rein

scribed" (p. 28) by the developed countries of West and although the

big picture seems pretty depressive, there are real possibilities and

opportunities to learn beyond the traditional classrooms.

  According to Bartlett and Vavrus (2006), vertical case studies

strive to situate local action and interpretation within a broader

cultural, historical, and political investigation. In a vertical case study,

understanding of the micro-level is viewed as part and parcel of larger

structures, forces, and policies about which the researcher must also

develop a full and thorough knowledge. This study's interview results

at the micro-level have demonstrated that such educational outcomes

depend largely on the context, the type of education provided, and the local reception of educational efforts. The results of this study also made it clear that the meaning and politics of inclusive education vary radically in different contexts and that the potential opportunities afforded by inclusive education are profoundly constrained by locally-relevant social, political, and economic structures and power relations.

Although some inclusive education policies have been recently adopted in Turkey, they have been established in a "top down" fashion by policy makers, in most cases without necessary funds or information to implement such policies. Akkok (2000) discusses that although a considerable change have been achieved on the inclusive education policy level, we can hardly see a significant impact on educational practices for children with special needs. For thousands of children with special needs entering regular primary schools, the journey through the system continues to be delayed, hazardous and short-lived. Interviews with teachers and administrators who participated in this study corroborate this assumption and demonstrate that the schools have no appropriate physical space or structures to support active participation of students with special needs. As one of the teachers interviewed in this study indicated that some parents fear that their children with special needs can get injured or get lost at regular schools among their typically developing peers.

Furthermore, in his 2009 article, Hinz concludes that "the inclusion movement has to learn that the real issue is not about children with disabilities or any special children, but about fostering a welcoming school for all" (p. 312). In this approach, inclusive education is about the well-being of all learners and their active participation, not only a particular group of students. Ainscow (2004) argues that the paradigm shift implied by the Salamanca Statement primarily focuses on the development of schools, rather than simply involving attempts to integrate vulnerable groups of students into existing arrangements. It is, therefore, essentially about those within schools developing practices that can "reach out to all learners" (p.112).

This approach assumes that the regular classroom environment is superior to the other configurations that are often available to children with special needs—special education, resource rooms, or pull-out programs—because it offers a more integrated education environment. The majority of students with special needs receive services in separate educational settings in Turkey. According to the *Ministry of National Education 2007 Special Education Report*, 28% of these students were placed in inclusive classrooms, 5% in self-contained classrooms, and 67% in segregated special education schools.

Conclusions

In his 2001 study Kyung-Chul stated that: "No social products, including educational change, can be transferred directly from one area to another. They are products of the social context and cannot be separated from their unique place and time" (p. 260). Since the 1990's, Western concepts and approaches of inclusive education have influenced Turkish special education system and approaches at a great extent. The findings of this study revealed that the dilemma between pursuing the Western ideology of inclusive education and adopting more realistic and pragmatic solutions for students with special needs in practice is not resolved. Although Turkey has made considerable strides toward making inclusive education a possibility, there is much work to be done. First of all, advocacy for children with special needs should move beyond the political realm. The main focus should be on the diverse and specific educational needs of the children with special needs in Turkey. The many cultural facets of Turkish culture(s) in addition to personal choice among various demographic profiles and how this affects education— aside from inclusion issues, which remains a very contentious topic— has been given very little attention. Taken together, contextual factors, such as social, cultural, political, economic, demographic, and geographic factors, provide some understanding for the delay and resistance of Turkish educators to

fully accept a Western model of inclusive education. Therefore, the country's membership and commitments in UNESCO, EU, and other international organizations, while critical for meeting all the expectations at the state level, leaves much to be done at the local level.

As heard from the participants, most educators at public schools who are already overworked and under compensated, now must contend with levels of frustration and confusion about how best to serve the needs of special needs children in their overcrowded classrooms. Clearly, inclusion issues elevate educators' concerns and frustrations to another level. Therefore, meaningful pre-service and in-service training opportunities are very clearly needed to enable educators to expand their skill base and confidence in working with children with special needs and support them to create more meaningful and quality inclusive settings. Additionally, the participants of this study put in plain words that the ideal inclusive education support system would offer school-based resources, community-based specialists, and a supply of assistive devices.

It is evident that every child is unique, different and special. They have different abilities, learn in different ways, and at different paces. In an education system, every child has something to offer. To enable all children in Turkey to develop to their full academic, social,

emotional, and physical potentials and overcome stereotypes of what children with special needs can achieve, there should be children-friendly and barrier-free educational environment options. Even though a family may ultimately decide that a non inclusive setting is more suitable for their child, the culturally sensitive inclusive education options must exist in the school system.

Parameters of the Study

From the discussion of this study, it is clear that globally circulating inclusive education policies and their impacts and implications in Turkey are filtered through a variety of contextual factors, including social, cultural, political, economic, demographic, and geographic dynamics. These components are all interrelated and their interaction between and among stakeholders change over time. Therefore, only limited generalizations can be made across such a diverse and rapidly changing country. Additionally, the exploratory analysis of this study was based on a small sample size of participants from urban schools in Ankara, Turkey and thus it restricts the generalizability of the findings to other cities and regions. Furthermore, respondents in the interviews were volunteers who may possess characteristics that separate them from other teachers, administrators, and academic advisors.

Interviews with policymakers from MONE focused on how both special education and inclusive education systems function in Turkey. They seemed hesitant to discuss the impacts of recent inclusive education policy changes, so only limited information on the enactment challenges was available to the researcher.

However, despite the study's acknowledged limitations - and although it represents only an initial foray into the situation in Turkey - it does appear that we can draw some preliminary implications regarding inclusive education policy and practices in Ankara, Turkey.

Implications

The findings of this study have several implications for research, policy and practice. The data provide insights into teacher preparation and professional development priorities, including further training for general education teachers on how to help students with special needs succeed in inclusive classrooms. Research studies that address the implication of inclusive education on the ground with teachers, administrators, and other practitioners remain a major void in policy planning and making. The participants made it clear that all the key stakeholders need to focus on some very fundamental, very crucial, yet untouched issues and problems about inclusive education in Turkey. Issues of social and educational exclusion still need research and widespread discussion, including who the excluded are in the

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educational system, why they are excluded, and what exactly we mean by inclusive education in the Turkish context. Another critical question that needs to be addressed relates to the ways to link development of inclusive education to wider change efforts to create a more effective education system and a more inclusive society. Those educational changes should target not only students with special needs, but also other marginalized groups of students in the society as a whole.

The recent research studies on inclusive education have been mainly focused on administrators' and teachers' attitudes toward inclusion in Turkey. Although parents' involvement and voice is a very important element in creating inclusive education settings, the role of families was not one of the focuses of this study. Therefore, the interviews were exclusively conducted with educators (teachers, administrators, academic professionals, and policy makers from MONE).

Future studies conducted with families, students with special needs, and typically developing students are urgently needed because a logical next step is for parents and students with special needs to become more involved in supporting inclusive education projects in schools. Additionally, future research studies with the children and their families would be very critical to involve individuals with disabilities, their families, and organizations in all phases of policy

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planning and implementation and to emphasize their experiences,

interpretations, and suggestions for improving current inclusive

education system in Turkey.

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APPENDIX A

REVIEW OF ELEVEN MAJOR UN POLICY DOCUMENTS AND

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948)

The UN involvement with inclusive education issues began in 1948 with the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". Right after the devastating World War II, the 58 members of the United Nations at the time unanimously adopted the declaration with 8 abstentions. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights marked the first time that the rights and freedoms were recognized and set forth in detail. The declaration also aimed to provide "the fundamental normative bases on which international norms and standards related to persons with disabilities have evolved" (UN, 1998, p.1). The UN General Assembly called upon all member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and display it principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.

Today, the declaration continues to be cited, praised, and criticized by academics, international lawyers, and constitutional courts. Some UN meeting reports show that mostly Islamic countries, like Sudan, Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, repeatedly criticized the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for "its perceived failure to take into account the cultural and religious context of non-Western countries" (Littman, 1999, p.55).

Nevertheless, the protests from the Middle East did not stop the international community from creating the Convention against Discrimination in Education, which was adopted by UNESCO in Paris, December 1960. The convention contains 19 articles. Although none of them openly mentions children with special needs, it still plays a critical role in defining the measures to be taken against the different forms of discrimination in education, and UNESCO's position to ensure equal opportunities and treatment in education.

Peters (2007) claimed that the "social origin" factor under this article may address "disability" as well. Furthermore, Article 3 requires Member States to eliminate and prevent discrimination in education. Articles 4 and 6 oblige that Member States promote equal opportunity and treatment in education.

Article 1 of the convention states that:

For the purpose of this convention, the term "discrimination" includes any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference which, being based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth, has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing equality of treatment in education.

In Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(1948), the following statement appears:

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at

least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary

education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional

education shall be made generally available and higher

education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Education shall be directed to the full development of the

human personality and to the strengthening of respect for

human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote

understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations,

racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the

United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be

given to their children. Supported by the "normalization movement"

first developed in Sweden and then the US civil rights movement

during the 1960s and 1970s, parents started to demand equal rights

for their children with special needs. In the same era, the UN's

"welfare perspective", which focused on disability prevention and

rehabilitation, shifted towards a "rights-based approach" (Peters,

2007). As a result, regular schools started to open their doors to children with special needs.

The Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons (UN, 1971)

In the 1970s, UN initiatives embraced the growing international concept of human rights of people with disabilities and equalization of opportunities for them. Recalling the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this declaration specified that "mentally retarded persons" are accorded the same rights as other human beings, as well as specific rights corresponding to their needs in the medical, educational, and social fields.

This 1971 declaration stated that "the mentally retarded person has a right to proper medical care and physical therapy and to such education, training, rehabilitation and guidance as will enable him to develop his ability and maximum potential" (Article 2). The seven articles in the declaration include Article 4, which calls for promoting the mentally retarded persons" integration in the society. It informs that "if care in an institution becomes necessary, it should be provided in surroundings and other circumstances as close as possible to those of normal life".

Although this declaration focuses on one specific disability category, it is still perceived as a landmark document for recognizing the rights of children and youth with disabilities to education. Emphasis was put on the need to protect disabled persons from abuse, and provide them with proper legal procedures. Also importantly, the document introduces the concept of "developing maximum potential" of its time. However, some academics critiqued the way economic conditions of each State Member became the basis for "integration of people with disabilities" in this declaration.

The Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (UN, 1975)

The General Assembly adopted this 13-Article declaration in December 1975, recalling the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and emphasizing the Declaration on Social Progress and Development. This declaration was also a landmark document under the circumstances of its time, by setting the standards for equal treatment and access to services, which helps the developing potential of children and youth with special needs, and in assisting their social integration.

In Article 1, the term "disabled person" defined as "…any person unable to ensure by himself or herself, wholly or partly, the necessities of a normal individual and/or social life, as a result of deficiency, either

congenital or not, in his or her physical or mental capabilities." The specific areas of integration of people with disabilities outlined in this declaration included family and social life, employment, and economic opportunities. The main emphasis is on supporting the individual to develop "abilities, capabilities, and self-reliance" and Article 9 declares that "if the stay of a disabled person in a specialized establishment is indispensable, the environment and living conditions therein shall be as close as possible to those of the normal life of a person of his or her age."

The Sundberg Declaration (UNESCO, 1981)

The World Conference on Actions and Strategies for Education, Prevention, and Integration was held in Torremolinos, Spain, in November 1981. The conference was organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the Spanish Government; and at the end, the Sundberg Declaration was agreed upon by 103 Member Countries that participated. Sixteen Articles in the declaration aim to emphasize the importance of "rehabilitation and integration as far as possible of disabled persons," in order to "bring about the maximum possible integration of disabled persons and enable them to play a constructive role in society" (p.1).

In the literature, normalization in education is described as making maximum use of the regular school system, with the minimum use of separate facilities. Kisanji (1999) argues that the concept of normalization gave rise to integration in education. At the time, integration was seen as a reasonable arrangement to respond to some weaknesses in special education system; and was recognized as a continuum of services from separate special schools and classes to regular classes with or without support.

Overall, it can be concluded that the emphasis at the Torremolinos Conference was on integration in education; and Sundberg Declaration aimed to allow integration for a continuum from locational, to social, to functional. Since, most of the UN declarations have supported special education as a continuum of provision.

Article 2 indicates that;

Governments and national and international organizations must take effective action to ensure the fullest possible participation by disabled persons. Economic and practical support must be given to actions aimed at the educational and health-care needs of disabled persons, and for the establishment and running of associations of disabled persons or their families. These

associations must take part in planning and decision-making in

areas that concern disabled persons.

Article 4 introduces the concept of "a global framework of lifelong

education" for disabled persons and highlights its importance. Article 6

states that "education, training culture and information programs

must be aimed at integrating disabling persons into the ordinary

working and living environment," by changing a previously preferred

term "normal" into the term "ordinary." As a first time, this declaration

draws attention to the criticality of receiving "early detection and

appropriate treatment" from "early infancy" and "as long as

necessary."

Furthermore, Article 9 indicates that the training of educators

and other professionals must "be qualified to deal with the specific

situations and needs of disabled persons;" and Article 15 talks about

the necessity of setting up data banks and regional centers for personal

training and preparation.

The World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (UN

Enable, 1982)

In 1976, the General Assembly announced 1981 as the

"International Year of Disabled Persons." A major outcome of this year

was the formulation of the World Programme of Action Concerning

Disabled Persons (WPA), adopted in December 1982. The three main goals of the program, which concentrated on full participation of people with disabilities in "social life and national development," were prevention, rehabilitation, and equalization of opportunities. "Equalization of opportunities" was the central theme on the WPA, which highlighted issues concerning people with disabilities "should not be treated in isolation, but within the context of normal community services." The three chapters of WPA underlined the need to approach disability from a human rights perspective one more time.

United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability became operational in 1980, following the 1981 observance of the International Year of Disabled Persons. Since then, its resources have supported further implementations of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons provided nearly $1 million for 35 disability-related projects in first ten-year period.

The 1982 WPA has been reviewed in every five years. The fourth and most recent review of the WPA was submitted in 2002 after the plenary meeting in 2001. The first report, *Review and Appraisal of the World Programme Action* (UN, 2002) introduced by Secretary General has two parts: 1) Progress in implementation; and 2) Recommendations establishing links between millennium development

goals and disability development. The new concepts that introduced in Part 1 include "inclusive universal design" and "new universe of disability." Those relatively new two principles attempted to address people with HIV/AIDS and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The same section refers to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health classification of disability (WHO, 2001), indicating that "disablement is viewed as a dynamic interaction between health conditions and other personal factors (age, sex, level of education) as well as social and physical environmental factors." Second part of the report identified three priorities for the new millennium: accessibility, social service and safety nets, and employment and livelihoods.

The second report, entitled as "*Let the World Know*" (UN, 2000), was the UN's *Special Rapporteur Report*, which presented the outcome of an international seminar on human rights and disability, held in November 2000, Stockholm, Sweden. The purpose of the seminar was to draft guidelines for more effective identification of people with disabilities, and reporting violations and abuse of human rights concerning the same populations. "Inclusive education" section of the report suggests guidelines in seven areas: 1) law and policy; 2) choice and availability of services; 3) barriers to accessibility; 4) portrayal of

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people with disabilities in school environments; 5) curriculum and materials, 6) school governance; and 7) teacher training and competencies.

It can be concluded that these two reports referring to 1982 World Programme for Action reflected the earlier concern of societal attitudes as barriers to participation. Furthermore, all seven fields mentioned above proposed for future monitoring all focus on the environmental factors.

The following statement took place in the introduction section of the action plan:

> Persons with disabilities should be expected to fulfill their role in society and meet their obligations as adults. The image of disabled persons depends on social attitudes based on different factors that may be the greatest barrier to participation and equality. We see the disability, shown by the white canes, crutches, hearing aids and wheelchairs, but not the person. What is required is to focus on the ability, not on the disability of the disabled persons (p.4).

In this statement, "focusing on the ability, not on the disability" part represents an important shift in the disability paradigm. The Action Program specifically addressed concerns related to statistically

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growing numbers of people with severe disabilities, and also the number of young children with disabilities who were mostly segregated from their peers in separate special education systems. It also mirrors the concerns of general educators, who were experiencing the first wave of inclusive education laws and policies and, who also perceived their classes as "dumping grounds for those children considered difficult to teach" (Peters, 2007).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989)

This convention sponsored by UNICEF and aim to set out the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children. All member states of the United Nations, except the United States and Somalia, have ratified this 54-article convention. The convention contains a number of articles that require governments to undertake a systematic analysis of their laws, policies, and practices in order to assess the extent to which they currently comply with the obligations they impose.

Article 23 of the convention directly addresses "mentally or physically disabled children" and their right to "access and integration." By participating in this convention, States Parties committed to recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy "a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity,

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promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child's active participation in the community." However, using a medical approach, these rights are depended on "available resources" and "the child's condition." Hurst and Lansdown (2001) later argued article 23 reaffirmed that "[an] unhealthy child should be changed to fit society rather than society changed to welcome and include the child" by focusing on the individualized provisions of special needs.

Article 28 of the convention asserts the basis right of every child to education and requires that this should be provided on the basis of equality of opportunity. Articles 28 and 29, together with Articles 2, 3, and 23, highlighted that all children have a right to inclusive education, irrespective of disability. The United States has signed the Convention, but not completed the ratification processes so far, in part due to potential conflicts with the U.S. constitution; and because of opposition by some political and religious conservatives to the treaty.

In the last part of Article 23, the following statement appears: Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods

of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim

of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and

skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this

regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of

developing countries.

The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993)

The Standard Rules which were adopted in 1993 were an

outcome of the Decade of Disabled Persons (1983 to 1992) and

consisted of 22 rules summarizing the message of the World

Programme of Action. Ainscow (1994) argues that the Standard Rules

provided a "globally recognized framework" for the formulation of

rights-based disability legislation by governments (p. 24). Although the

Standard Rules and the World Programme of Action shared the same

philosophy, the responsibility of member state governments in the

implementation process was more clearly outlined in the Rules.

Additionally, the most obvious new element in the Standard

Rules was the establishment of an active and separate monitoring

mechanism. The purpose of the monitoring mechanism explained as to

"assist each State in assessing its level of implementation of the Rules

and in measuring its progress". A special "rapporteur" selected to do

the actual monitoring work, report it to the Commission, and share the results with NGOs in the disability field.

Particularly, Rule 6 on education contained 9 provisions that included a call for improvements at the school level in the areas of policy, adapted curriculum, materials, and teacher training. Later, most of the UN Standard rules were criticized by some researchers in the field for focusing on access and equality of educational opportunities without addressing the quality of the services which a child with disabilities might have access (Peters, 2007).

At the same time that the UN Standard Rules were being publicized, the World Conference of Human Rights, held in Vienna 1992, formulated its own Program of Action (OHCHR, 1992). This program of action recognized that "all human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal and thus unreservedly include persons with disabilities" (p.16).

"A new approach to disability" agreed by member states and explained as:

> The old attitude regarded disabled people as dependent invalids, in need of protection. It understood disability as a stigma, or a stamp, allowing society to send persons with disabilities to the appropriate address in the social structure, which,

unfortunately, too often was the address of special institution…

But times are changing… The new approach stresses abilities,

not disabilities; it promotes disabled persons" rights; freedom of

choice and equal opportunities; it seeks to adapt the

environment to the needs of persons with disabilities, not the

other way round. It encourages society to enhance its attitudes

towards persons with disabilities and assist them in assuming

full responsibility as active members of society".

Education for all (EFA) for People with Disabilities

A world conference on "Education for All" (EFA) was sponsored

by UNESCO in March 1990, Jomtein, Thailand. Participants, who

represented 155 governments, and160 governmental and

nongovernmental agencies at the conference, approved a "Framework

for Action". The framework focused on children who may be excluded

from or marginalized within education systems, because of their

apparent differences. World Declaration on EFA contains 10 articles;

and a social model of disability with inclusive education concepts were

still included, although the framework intended to address not only

educational needs of people with disabilities, but also refugees, women

and girls, people from "economically poorer countries", large illiterate

populations, and people with little or no access to basic learning opportunities.

Article 3 of the declaration is entitled as *Universalizing Access and Promoting Equity* and stated that "basic education should be provided to all children, youth, and adults. To this end, basic education services of quality should be expanded and consistent measures must be taken to reduce disparities" (p.3). The fifth and last section of the article indicated that the learning needs of the disabled demand special attention; and some steps need to be taken "to provide equal access to education to every category of disabled persons as an integral part of the education system."

At Jomtien, each member country invited to determine its own intermediate goals and targets, to design a "plan of action" for achieving them, to set a timetable, and to schedule specific educational activities. It is also indicated that regional and international action would need to be scheduled to help countries meet their goals on time. Some of the major regional programs established through UNESCO to provide consultation on policy issues and technical issues include Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL), Regional Programme for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education and the Eradication of Illiteracy in the Arab States by the

year 2000 (ARABUPEAL), Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Carribean, and Regional Programme for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Africa.

After discussing priority actions at the national and regional levels, the third and last chapter of the EFA framework, "priority action at world level," aimed to address four issues: 1) cooperation within the international context; 2) enhancing national capacities; 3) providing sustained long-term support for national and regional actions; and 4) consultations on policy issues. In the last section, in terms of "creating a supportive policy environment," member governments and organizations urged to "design the means to adapt information and communication media to meet basic learning needs" and "mobilize resources and establish operational partnerships" (p.13). Additionally, developmental agencies, which were responsible to establish policies and plans for the 1990s, were required to provide long-term support for national and regional actions and increase their financial and technical assistance accordingly.

EFA Forum, consisting of the UNESCO, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Funds (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and later the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, was decided to guide

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and coordinate the work, to monitor progress, to assess achievements, and to undertake comprehensive policy review at regional and global levels.

On the inclusive education issue, the EFA document emphasized 'universal access and equity' concepts. Specifically, the declaration asserted that children with disabilities should have equal access through an education that is 'integral to' general education, but not particularly integrated with general education. Moreover, organizations and governments held accountable for providing resources and funding solutions to access and equity, a totally different perspective from the earlier 'Convention on the Rights of the Child', which stated that 'access' should be 'subject to available resources and dependent on the child's condition.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994)

More than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, to review Education for All, by considering the policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, explicitly enabling schools to serve children with special needs. The Salamanca Statement (1994) is unique among all of the UN's educational policy documents, because in

this analysis, education of children and youth with disabilities is its main focus, rather than background study or addition to Article 23 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Vislie (2003) indicated that this document set the policy agenda for inclusive education on a global basis and represented a linguistic shift from integration to inclusion as a global descriptor. Based on the Salamanca Statement:

Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning;

Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs;

Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs;

Those with special education needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them with a child-centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs;

Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building and inclusive society and achieving an education for all; moreover, they provide an

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effective education to the majority of children and improve the

efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire

education system (UNESCO, 1994, p. viii-ix).

Before Salamanca Statement, in most western countries "integration"

had served as a descriptor of a particular policy concern during 1970s

and 1980s. At the beginning of 1980s, UNESCO adopted the term

"inclusion" as a descriptor for the organization's main activities in the

field, and those activities had a global orientation. Vislie (2003) argued

that UNESCO needed a new label to avoid giving the wrong signals to

significant actors in the international arena. Furthermore, segregation

of disabled people was mainly embedded in the Western European

history and "integration" was a difficult descriptor for the new actions

in the developing countries.

This statement on principles, policy, and practice in special

needs education contains 57 Articles and in Article 2 it is stated that:

Those with special educational needs must have access to

regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-

centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs. Regular

schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective

means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating

welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and

achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system. (p.ix)

In Article 3, all governments urged to adopt "as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise", and "[to] develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools.

UNESCO, as the United Nations agency for education, was specifically responsible for mobilizing "the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education as regards provision for special educational needs". UNESCO was also in charge of funds which mainly used for expanded inclusive schools, community support programs, and pilot projects.

In the framework, the term 'special educational needs" referred to all children and youth "whose needs arises from disabilities or learning difficulties" (p.6). It is explained that the challenge confronting the inclusive school was that of developing a child-centered pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. It was discussed that

the well-established special education schools for specific impairment categories could serve as training and resource centers for regular school staff, although they might continue to work with a relatively smaller number of children with disabilities who could not be "adequately served in regular classrooms or schools". The new and expanded role of special education schools was including creation of curricular content and method depending on each individual child's special needs. Member countries that had few or no special schools advised to concentrate their efforts on the development of inclusive schools, teacher training in special needs education, and the establishment of equipped resource centers.

The Salamanca Statement added the following on inclusive education:

> Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the more effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building and inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (p.2).

Guidelines for action are outlined in seven areas at the national level and six at the regional/international level. The "school factors" chapter of the declaration defined changes in "curriculum, buildings, school organization, pedagogy, assessment, staffing, school culture, and extracurricular activities" as necessary contributors of the success of inclusive schools. "Appropriate preparation of all educational personal" is recognized as a key factor in promoting inclusive schools by the committee. Specifically, the declaration asserted that teacher certification programs should required skills to respond to special educational needs. Article 43 addressed the need of written materials and seminars for local administrators, supervisors, head-teachers, and senior teachers to develop their capacity to provide leadership in the area. The training of special education teachers reconsidered to enable them to work and play a key role in inclusive settings. In Article 47, the advisory role of universities described as preparing and evaluating teacher certification programs, designing training programs and materials for inclusive education. The importance of sharing information on relevant research findings, pilot experiments, and in-depth studies is highlighted by this framework of action. The dissemination of examples of "good inclusive practice" among the member countries is also encouraged.

In "external support services" section of the statement, it is suggested that education services would benefit significantly if "greater efforts were made to ensure optimal use of all available expertise and resources" (p. 32) and external support by resource personnel from various agencies (such as, educational psychologists, speech and occupational therapists, etc.) should be coordinated at the local level. The value of "decentralization and local-area-based planning" emphasized for greater involvement of communities in education and training of people with special needs.

The declaration also highlighted the importance of coordination between educational authorities and health, employment, and social services. Article 73 stated that:

Pooling the human, institutional, logistic, material, and financial resources of various ministerial departments (Education, Social Welfare, Labour, Youth, etc.), territorial and local authorities, and other specialized institutions is an effective way to maximize their impact. Combining both an educational and a social approach to special needs education will require effective management structures enabling the various services to co-operate at both national and local levels, and

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allowing the public authorities and associative bodies to join
forces (p. 42).

At the international level, a priority was given to support the
launching of pilot projects aimed at trying out new approaches,
especially in developing countries. Another important task for
international cooperation was described facilitating exchange of data,
information, and results of pilot programs in inclusive special
education between countries and regions. UNESCO and other
intergovernmental agencies held responsible for providing advanced
training seminars for educational managers and other specialists at
the regional level and fostering cooperation between university
departments and training institutions.

Dakar World Education Forum (2000)

Ten years after Jomtien, The UN convened a follow-up meeting
in Dakar to draw up a balance sheet of what had and had not been
achieved. Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, the participant
countries reaffirmed the vision of the World Declaration on Education
for All (Thailand, 1990) adopted ten years earlier. There is no specific
mention of children with special needs in this document, but many of
the same concepts and guidelines for action developed in the
Salamanca Statement were essential to EFA.

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The World Education Forum is sponsored by a range of international agencies, including UNESCO and the World Bank, argues that EFA is strongly linked to national economic development and hence to the world economic and political order:

In UNESCO workshop reports, inclusive education is defined as a "process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and of reducing exclusion within and from education." In their terms, inclusive education aims to enable both teachers and learners to feel comfortable with diversity and to see it as a challenge and enrichment in the learning environment, rather than a problem.

Briefly, UNESCO's mission in promoting inclusive education policy and practices is visibly set out in the World Declaration on Education for All and the Salamanca Statement. The Dakar Framework for Action welcomes the commitments made at major education conferences throughout the 1990s and urges the international community to continue working towards delivery on these goals. Ainscow (2004) stated The Salamanca Statement was prepared to emphasize goals of EFA and called upon the international community, in particular the partners of EFA movement, to endorse the approach of inclusive schooling. It also called upon the

International Labour Organization, UNESCO, the United Nations

Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization

(WHO) to strengthen their technical assistance inputs and reinforce

their cooperation and networking for more efficient support to

expanded and integrated provision.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Semi-structured Interview Protocol (Teachers)

School:

……………………………………………………………………………………

Teacher's Name:

………………………………………………………………………………...

Gender:

……………………………………………………………………………………

Education Level:

(High School)   (College)   (Master's)   (PhD)

Teaching Experience

0-1 yr   2-5 yrs   6-10 yrs   11-15 yrs   more than 15 yrs

Socio-economic status of the teacher (social class):

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Socio-economic status of the students:

…………………………………………………………………………………..

# of students with special needs:

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Grade taught:

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Date:

……………………………………………………………………………………

1. Tell me a little bit about your school and classroom… How long have you been teaching? How long with this grade level – and with children with special needs?

2. Explain what you know about inclusive education (in Turkey). Where have you got this information?

3. What do you do to ensure that students with special needs are included in your classroom?

4. Tell me about inclusive education policies in Turkey.

5. Tell me about school policies that support inclusive education in your school.

6. How is your school environment/classroom organized to include students with special needs?

7. How does the school/classroom environment allow students with special needs to attend
your classroom and/or school?

8. Can you give me specific examples of ways you may have adapted your curriculum or classroom activities to better include students with special needs?

9. Have you had specific training/professional dev. in working with children with special needs?
If yes, have these been helpful in helping students with special needs in your classroom?

10. How comfortable do you feel working with students with special needs?

11. Tell me about any assistance you may get from other teachers, including senior teachers and the school administrators, for the education of students with special needs in your classroom?

12. Do you interact with parents? How often and what capacity? What reactions have you received from the parents of students with disabilities and without disabilities regarding your inclusive practices or the changing policies in Turkey?

13. What things facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs in your classroom?

14. What changes would you make to better accommodate the learning needs of students with disabilities in your classroom? How could the government (or MONE) provide support for you in order to make those changes?

15. What do you believe are the advantages & disadvantages of inclusive education?

Semi-structured Interview Protocol
(School Administrators)

School:
……………………………………………………………………………………

Administrator's Name:
…………………………………………………………………………………...

Gender:
……………………………………………………………………………………

Teaching Experience
0-1 yr   2-5 yrs   6-10 yrs   11-15 yrs   more than 15
yrs

Education Level:
(High School)   (College)   (Master's)   (PhD)

# of students with special needs:
…………………………………………………………………………………...

Date:
……………………………………………………………………………………

1. Tell me a little bit about your school… How long have you
been working as an administrator? How long with children with
special needs?

2. Explain what you know about inclusive education (in Turkey).
Where have you got this information?

3. What do you do to ensure that students with disabilities are
included in your classrooms?

4. Tell me about inclusive education policies in Turkey.

5. Tell me about school policies that support inclusive education
in your school.

6. How is your school environment organized to include students
with special disabilities?

7. How does the school environment allow students with
disabilities to attend your school?

8. Can you give me specific examples of ways you may have adapted your school policy or activities to better include students with special needs?

9. Have you had specific training/professional dev. in working with children with special needs and guide their general education teachers?
If yes, have these been helpful in helping teachers/staff who have students with disabilities in their classroom?

10. What are your responsibilities towards encouraging the learning of students with special needs?

11. How comfortable do you feel working with students with special needs, their teachers and parents?

12. Do you interact with parents? How often and what capacity? What reactions have you received from the parents of students with disabilities and without disabilities regarding your inclusive practices or the changing policies in Turkey?

13. What things facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs in your classroom?

14. What changes would you make to better accommodate the learning needs of students with disabilities in your school? How could the government (or MONE) provide support for you in order to make those changes?

15. What do you believe are the advantages & disadvantages of inclusive education?

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT LETTER

RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR TEACHERS

Date:

Dear Participant:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Beth Blue Swadener in the College of Education at Arizona State University. I am doing research to investigate and conduct a case study of the processes of local adaptation and modification of UNESCO's inclusive education policies and the consequences of the implications of those policies in Ankara, Turkey from local educators' views.

I am requesting your participation, which will involve a 30 minute interview session. This interview will consist of questions regarding your understanding of the role of the government and UNESCO in providing appropriate services for the children with special needs in inclusive settings as well as the social compatibility of UNESCO's various inclusive education policies and classroom applications.

There are no unforeseen risks or discomforts involved in this study. All data will be kept confidential and no personal identifiers will be used. The data will be identified with a number code only. A master list containing your number code and personal identification will be kept in a locked cabinet separate from the questionnaires. All materials will be kept in locked files and only I will have access to it. The data sheets will be destroyed through paper shredding after completion of the study.

Please initial here to acknowledge you have read and understand the information on this page _____

This research will provide us with insightful information on teachers' and administrators' interpretations and perceptions of UNESCO's inclusive education policies and applications, as it describes the current situation, teacher training opportunities, the level of parents' participation, and research and development in inclusive education in Turkey.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you have any questions concerning the research study, you can e-mail me at aysegul.ciyer@asu.edu or call (312) 396-8018.

Sincerely,

Aysegul CIYER

By signing below, you are agreeing to participate in the above study.

_____
Signature   Printed Name   Date

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Research Compliance Office, at (480) 965-6788.