

Candidates' Teaching Practice Experiences in the Natural Disaster Period

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Abstract

Natural disasters cause great damage to society as they cause great destruction and risks. Educational services provided after a disaster have an important role for the children and young people to be able to cope with the trauma experienced. One of the regulations regarding the educational process after a natural disaster is related to the practice courses in higher education institutions. In the scope of regulations made by the Council of Higher Education regarding the teaching practice courses of final-year students in the Faculty of Education, students benefited from the right to complete their practices at higher education institutions in different provinces. This study was carried out at a state university in the Aegean Region. 6 special education teachers determined with purposive sampling participated in the study on a voluntary basis. The data of this study which was conducted in phenomenological design as a qualitative research were collected with the focus group interview technique. The data of the study were analyzed holistically using content analysis. In the findings consisting of four main themes which are *Information Resources Sharing and Planning, Professional Expectations and Preparation Process, Educational Life After the Natural Disaster, and About the Path Taken One Step Before the Profession*, it was stated that attention was drawn to the up-to-date information of the institutional websites through written and social media explanations of official announcements during the announcement, follow-up, and application processes. The participants emphasized the importance of institutional information and communication in the quality of accommodation, transportation, education, and training practices while making decisions. It could be suggested that teaching practices include holistic preparation based on feedback in the process one step before the profession.

Keywords

Natural disaster, special education, teaching practice, teacher candidate.

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INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters include hazardous events that disrupt the functioning of a society and cause material, human, environmental, and economic losses (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction [UNDRR], 2021). It is seen that there has been an important increase in the severity and number of natural disasters from the past to the present (Pamidimukkala et al., 2020). While the number of disasters seen in developed countries, as well as developing countries, was reported around 100 every year in the 1980s, the number of disasters was reported more than 300 in the 2000s (Pamidimukkala et al., 2020). It is known that natural disasters have caused great destruction for people since ancient times. These destructions include displacement of people, physical destruction, economic losses, and especially loss of life (Deryugina, 2022). Between the years 2000 and 2010, approximately 2 billion people were directly or indirectly affected by natural disasters and these disasters caused 960 billion dollars of loss (Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters [CREDE], 2015).

Many problems caused by natural disasters significantly affect societies. Education is one of the most effective tools for countries to cope with the social traumas experienced as a result of natural disasters (Le Brocque et al., 2017). When educational services are not ready to be implemented immediately after natural disasters, this situation causes negative effects on students (Global Campaign for Education 2016; Nicolai et al., 2016). UNESCO (2016) states that natural disasters have some negative effects on children and young people. These effects show many characteristics such as long-term interruption of education, permanent separation from the education system, low quality in learning experiences, long-term psychosocial anxiety, dealing with health problems, delays in development, early marriage and pregnancy of children, smuggling, and exploitation of labor. Besides all these, the long-term effects of natural disasters are also observed. For example, in case of the situations such as drought and elevation of sea level, the population of the region migrates to a different place, sources of income get into danger, and a sense of insecurity increases. All these factors also affect the access of children and young people to a quality education service negatively. Education services have an important role in protecting children and young people from many negative factors that arise after a natural disaster. In this regard, it is necessary to continue education services at all levels as soon as possible after a disaster (UNESCO, 2016). Schools, which have a fundamental role in education services, are institutions that significantly contribute to the welfare of society. They need to be reopened to maintain the routine after a natural disaster. One of their fundamental achievements is to provide students with their daily routines and help them get over the negative effects of natural disasters (Kilmer et al., 2010). School environments contribute to the factors such as more quality education achievements for students and society, however, the functioning of schools is disrupted, and academic outcomes, education, and health fields are interrupted by natural disasters (Fothergill & Lori, 2015). This situation causes students to have negative experiences with academic concepts and skills.

The literature includes few studies on how schools academically function in societies affected by natural disasters (Layton, 2014). The recovery process in educational services that change after natural disasters differs in all countries. Differences are observed in factors such as resuming educational services after disasters, opening schools, and time planning (Esnard, Lai et al., 2018). In the studies to academically recover schools after natural disasters, it is considered important to examine factors such as economically disadvantaged student groups, school attendance rates of students, student-teacher rates, and teacher experiences. For example, it is emphasized that the students who do not attend

school during the academic year show lower academic performances than their peers, and encounter economic problems more frequently (Morrissey et al., 2014). These students may lack financial support and family support to maintain success in school. Natural disasters also affect the institutional infrastructures of schools negatively. After the disasters, it is necessary to fight against factors such as allocation stages of communities and municipalities regarding schools, human loss, duration of education, financing, staff/students whose place has been changed, and decrease in the number of materials, and mental health that has been lost (Meier et al., 2003).

After the natural disaster, in the higher education process that has an important place in educational services, it is suggested to provide educational services to university students at the earliest possible period as in the other areas of education. This regulation is highly important for the recovery of students and cultural, economic, and social support of society (UNESCO, 2016). University students who are in the group affected by natural disasters encounter various problems such as access to campus, interruption of activities, interruption of classes, and damage to school buildings (Jaradat et al., 2015). However, in recent years, it is seen that universities have started to more frequently include awareness activities such as media, seminars, and sharing experiences regarding being prepared for natural disasters and risks that may arise from them. These awareness activities include various subjects such as preparation for natural disasters, minimizing their effects, factors that cause disasters, and decisions that may be made individually or collectively (Nipa et al., 2023). Although there is an increase in awareness activities, it is seen that the use of adequate planning, intervention, and methods to lighten the effects of the disaster before and after the disaster is insufficient in many universities and state schools at different levels (Safapour et al., 2021).

Higher education life provides students with an opportunity to have many academic, social, and cultural experiences. In higher education life, which is an important process in realizing universal values and gaining professional competencies, characteristics, theoretical and applied education competencies of the institution where the individual receives education are important. In the literature, it is stated that higher education institutions, with their academic, administrative staff, and administrators, are a prerequisite for effective education by taking the individual educational needs of students into account (Greere, 2023). In a higher education life that takes the needs of learners into account, students who convert scientific evidence-based practices into achievements through theoretical and elective courses are considered to have access to an opportunity for quality education in the pre-vocational process. For example, the education that teachers who have a highly important role in the success of school systems receive about the teaching profession in higher education, and the extent to which their knowledge and skills have improved constitute a very important dimension. Besides, the fact that they implement these skills when they start their profession and contribute to education and training services constitutes a determining characteristic of their pre-vocational achievements. Thus, adequate and quality practices regarding the teaching profession also affect the efficiency of teacher candidates in effective teaching, inclusiveness, student success, and learning-teaching processes positively when they start their professional life (Matts Mattsson et al., 2011). In practices regarding the teaching profession, a coherent process should be followed with components based on many structures including university, practice school, and student. An interaction is expected to be formed with the decisions made, practices, experiences, and contexts (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). The school-based and university-based vocational preparation processes have multiple stakeholders. The most important stakeholder of this processes, which consist of interaction-based professional practices within a certain structure and system, is the teacher candidates. Thus, it is

thought to be important to examine the quality and planning process of professional practices in teacher training from the viewpoints of teacher candidates. After the earthquake disaster in Turkey on February 6, 2023, teacher candidates were able to continue their education in different provinces in the scope of teaching practice courses in higher education. It is thought to be important to examine the experiences regarding this course as it provides information about the functioning of educational services after the disaster. Thus, based on the importance mentioned, this study aims to examine the special education teacher candidates' opinions and suggestions based on their experiences regarding the Teaching Practice II course in higher education institutions in the spring term of the 2022-2023 academic year. For this purpose, it is aimed to examine teacher candidates' experiences in planning their educational processes, communication and cooperation, and the teaching profession in extraordinary situations such as natural disasters.

In conclusion, as a result of decisions taken in our country to conduct teaching practices throughout the country including the higher education institutions located in the earthquake zone in the spring term of the 2022-2023 academic year, a need to examine teacher candidates' experiences in teaching practice course has arisen. As a result of this study, participants' experiences, suggestions, and opinions regarding teaching practices after the natural disaster are thought to contribute to the regulations. This study aims to examine the practice experiences of special education teaching final-year students after the natural disaster in the process one step before the profession. For this purpose, the answers to the questions below have been sought:

After the earthquake disaster of February 6, 2023:

1. What do special education teacher candidates think about information resources in planning the education process?
2. What are their experiences in the implementation of the Teaching Practice course regarding application and preference?
3. What do they think and suggest about the support areas they need in the structuring of the practice process?
4. What do they think about the implementation of the Teaching Practice course and suggest about the regulations that will be conducted on this subject?

METHOD

This section includes information about the study's method, design, participants, researchers, data collection tool, data analysis process, validity and reliability studies, and ethical principles that were taken into account in the study.

Study Design

In the study, phenomenological design was used as the participants' experiences, opinions, and suggestions based on a phenomenon were examined. In the study carried out in the qualitative research method, purposive sampling and focus group interview technique were preferred to determine special education teacher candidates' opinions and suggestions about the teaching practice process after the earthquake disaster (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). In studies

carried out in phenomenological design, the experiences of the participants about the subject of the study are taken as a basis and it is aimed to define their experiences as they lived (Hoover, 2021; Patton, 2014; Tenny et al., 2022).

Participants

The participant group consists of teacher candidates who were special education teaching final-year students in the 2022-2023 academic year and applied to and completed the Teaching Practice II course in the spring term in a different higher education institution other than the one they were registered after the earthquake disaster in February 2023. In accordance with the purposive sampling method, the following criteria were sought in the study: a) being an active final-year student in the Faculty of Education in the 2022-2023 academic year, b) having completed the Teaching Practice II course in the spring term of the program in a different higher education institution, c) being a volunteer to support the study. 6 special education teacher candidates participated in the study. The participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions that will be asked in the focus group interview process and their approvals for volunteer participation were obtained. Besides, they were informed that they had a right to withdraw at any stage they wanted. Demographic information of the teacher candidates is shown in Table-1.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Study Group

Code Name	Age	Gender	Is the Education Institution he/she is registered in the Earthquake zone?	Does he/she Have a Computer/iPad etc.?	The institution where she/he Teaching Practice	Continued
Ebrar	22	Female	Yes	No	Fall Term Special Education Practice School Stage III	Spring Term Special Education Practice School Stage II
Esma	23	Female	No	Yes	Special Education Practice School Stage I	Special Education Practice School Stage II
Hasan	23	Male	No	Yes	Special Education Vocational School Stage I	Special Education Practice School Stage II
İzzet	23	Male	Yes	No	Special Education Practice School Stage III	Special Education Practice School Stage II
Tuana	22	Female	No	Yes	Special Education Practice School Stage I	Special Education Kindergarten
Nalan	22	Female	No	Yes	Special Education Practice School Stage I	Special Education Practice School Stage II

As seen in Table-1, the age average of the participants is 22.5, 4 of the participants are female, and only four teacher candidates had personal computers in the distance education and face-to-face education processes. The higher education institution where Ebrar and İzzet were registered is located in the earthquake zone and the higher education institution where Esma, Hasan, Tuana, and Nalan

attended until the last term is not in the earthquake zone. The participants who generally continued teaching practice in the Special Education Practice School at the Primary School level in the first term participated in the teaching practice courses in Special Education Practice School Stage II in the second term. The students were asked about their accommodation conditions in the period until spring term and it was determined that Ebrar, Hasan, İzzet, Tuana, and Nalan stayed in the dormitories of Student Loans and Dormitories Institution (KYK) and Esma stayed in a private student dormitory. In the spring term, Hasan, Ebrar, Nalan, Tuana stayed with their family, and Esma and İzzet stayed with a relative.

Researchers

This study which is based on the participants' experiences in the preparation and process of the teaching profession after the disaster period is teamwork carried out by two researchers. Both researchers contributed to the planning, obtaining ethical permissions, conducting pre-interviews with the participants and receiving their consent, preparing data collection tools and conducting focus group interviews, data documentation, validity and reliability analysis, writing the findings, and discussion and conclusion stages. Both researchers received their undergraduate degrees in classroom education (classroom teaching) and have teaching experience within the Ministry of National Education for 7-15 years. The researchers, who completed their postgraduate education in primary school and special education fields, have been working in the faculty of education and conducting special education teaching practices. Both researchers took courses on the qualitative research method during their postgraduate education and have thesis consultancy and research practice experiences as academic members. The study was planned in the spring term of 2023 and the interviews were carried out in an online environment after the graduation of the participants.

Data Collection Tool

The data collection tool of this study consists of demographic information and an interview form consisting of seven (7) open-ended questions which took their final form by taking the opinions of two experts. The participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions with the written consent form and they were also reminded verbally at the beginning of the meeting. It was explained that they could only answer the questions within their personal opinions and thoughts, their answers would provide data for scientific research if they agreed to participate in the study, and their personal information and the information about the institutions they continued would not be included, their opinions would be included in the study report in accordance with the ethical principles and would not be shared with any person or institution. When preparing the data collection tool, firstly, a) The effect of natural disasters on educational processes, b) Implementation decisions regarding extraordinary situations for the students who continue higher education in distance education and face-to-face education practices, c) Conducting the theoretical and elective Teaching Practice courses by taking effective teaching processes into account, d) The Council of Higher Education and Ministry of National Education's official decisions and legal regulations regarding the period after a natural disaster regarding the pre-vocational processes of teacher candidates were examined. National and international information resources were examined by scanning the studies based on this subject in the literature. An interview questions pool was created, opinions of a (1) Practice Teacher who has been conducting special education teaching practices in the classroom for at least five (5) years and who gave teaching practice courses in the classroom before and after the disaster and opinions of an (1) expert who conducts teaching practice course in the Department of

Special Education Teaching and has a doctoral degree in special education were received. In the form submitted to the experts' opinions, their feedback is categorized as "*appropriate, not appropriate, and should be changed*". After the feedback, the interview form took its final form. Written information about teacher candidates' age, gender, whether the higher education institution where they continue their undergraduate education is located in the earthquake zone, whether they have a device such as computer-iPad, etc., type of the school where they carried out their practices in the Fall-Spring Terms, and the school level was obtained and seven (7) open-ended questions were asked. The open-ended questions aim to obtain their opinions and suggestions about how they followed the regulations regarding higher education institutions, how they decide on their educational preferences according to the official decisions after the natural disaster, and their spring term teaching practice course experiences.

Data Collection and Analysis

In the study, the data were collected through the focus group interview technique, both researchers made preliminary preparation, shared information with the participants, controlled the functioning of technical equipment and connection accounts, and planned and reminded the participants about the day and time. 6 teacher candidates and 2 researchers attended the focus group interview. 3 participants (Ebrar, Tuana, and İzzet) had problems in obtaining healthy participation due to technical problems such as the power of connection. When these technical problems could not be solved, the researchers received written opinions from all three participants about the subjects discussed, they also completed the interviews through mobile devices in August. In online participation, the focus group interview lasted 65 minutes and 29 seconds, the interview with Ebrar lasted 17 minutes (09-.00-09.20), written opinions of Tuana and İzzet were received after the meeting, and interviews were completed. Thus, the interviews lasted 82 minutes and 29 seconds in total. Code names were given to each participating teacher candidate as well as practice teachers, academic members, and administrative staff (Practice Teacher Özlem, Instructor Neşe). The total transcription of the interviews was converted into a descriptive document of 57 pages, 1830 lines. After the data were converted into written text, inter-evaluators reliability calculations were made for accuracy. The consistency of the transcript of 29 minutes voice record obtained from the total data of 82 minutes and 29 seconds and voice record of this transcript was examined. Confirmation of the participants was obtained for the transcript of voice records. In the analysis of the research data in the form of descriptive documents which was proved to be consistent with the voice record, content analysis technique was preferred. The data were read repeatedly by both researchers and repeating statements were determined to reach the concepts, attention was paid to the relationship of similarities and differences in the codes. Main themes and sub-themes were obtained by bringing together the codes that are related to each other. The method of systematic examination and organization of the data were followed during the content analysis. Firstly, the data were prepared for analysis (converted into written transcript), after reading all the data, their conceptual infrastructures were examined and tried to understand, themes and sub-themes were reached by coding (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Lastly, the data were interpreted and explained to create the findings of the study. In coding studies, thematic coding was conducted and an inductive approach was adopted (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Seidman, 2006; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). As a result of data analysis, 4 main themes and 10 sub-themes were obtained by bringing together the codes related to each other.

Ethical Principles

In line with the aim of the study, ethical principles were taken into account in all stages including planning, implementation, participant rights, confidentiality of personal information, data analysis, and converting opinions into findings. Ethical Committee Approval of the study was obtained and the working plan and research schedule were determined. Pre-interviews were conducted with the participants, participants were informed personally in the pre-interviews carried out online or through mobile devices, and their written consents were received in advance. A mutual day and time were determined with the teacher candidates who accepted to participate in the study and the day and time for the focus group interview was determined based on the preparations of the researchers and information sharing. Information about the day, time, and online (zoom platform) meeting address was shared with all participants through their personal e-mail addresses. In the first stage of the study, a mobile device online instant messenger (WhatsApp) account was created to have healthier group communication and to be able to see preferences and similar suggestions. It was committed that personal information would not be included, code names would be used, and information regarding province, institution, school, practice teacher, and practice classroom students would be protected with ethical and confidentiality principles and would be described in the findings; this information was shared in written form and verbally.

In the data of the study, the inter-coder reliability coefficient regarding the themes was calculated based on Miles & Huberman's (1994) "agreement/ (agreement + disagreement) x 100" formula. According to the coding by two researchers, the inter-coder reliability rate was calculated as 94%. In the study, both researchers made independent coding and completed this process with an inductive understanding. The written texts that were descriptively documented were sent to the participants and their confirmations were received. Processes such as preparing the question form by receiving the opinions of experts, conducting pre-interviews, preparation, and the process are the studies that were conducted for the credibility and consistency of the process. For this study, ethical permission has been obtained from Zonguldak Bulent Ecevit University Human Research Ethics Committee (20.07.2023-250).

FINDINGS

Regarding the teaching practices after the natural disaster, teacher candidates drew attention to the information sources sharing and planning processes in the first theme and drew attention to the professional expectations that affect the preparation process and institutional cooperation in the second main theme. In the third main theme, they emphasized that it is necessary to pay attention to professional roles, responsibilities, and equality of opportunity in planning educational processes in natural disaster periods; in the last main theme, they emphasized the importance of providing feedback to teacher candidates, holistic assessment, and roles of the stakeholders in conducting teaching practices in the period one step before the profession. The following section includes the themes and sub-themes of the study respectively.

Table 2*The Main Theme of Information Sources Sharing and Planning and Its Subthemes*

Main Theme	Subthemes
Information Sources Sharing and Planning	Reliable institutional announcements
	Priorities and conditions
	Decision-making process

The participants stated that they followed the statements of the authorities on social media and national press most intensely as well as the officers and advisors at the higher education institutions where they were registered after the natural disaster. The teacher candidates whose institutions were in the earthquake zone stated that they needed the information from their friends and relatives who continue their education in different provinces more intensely and followed the institutional websites and announcements instead of social media. They stated that they followed these addresses as they are official and accountable.

For example, **Ebrar** stated that she encountered different statements regarding the official statements of the institution staff and following academic and administrative processes and expressed that the variables that mostly affected herself and her family in the decision-making process were accommodation, transportation, financial opportunities, being safe as well as continuing practice courses. She said: *I saw it on the official website of ... University and I started to prepare my documents with the help of student affairs. ...communication in every institution... they were not informed about the script but how? My family says how could such a thing happen, I am going or I am not going? The staff doesn't know... Let's see if there is a document like this in their province, it was sent... Oh, how come the document hasn't come yet... they said... I experienced uncertainty, I contacted many institutions then because my school was in the earthquake zone.* Regarding the decision-making priorities, she said: *I had relatives and friends in..... As it was a city I know, I certainly made my decision in this way.*

Tuana expressed her opinions by saying: *After the natural disaster, I followed the news that regards higher education institutions from the news that was broadcasted on TV, higher education institutions, and official social media accounts of ... university where I continue my undergraduate education... As I mentioned previously, the information sources I applied/received support were the news on TV and official social media accounts. The reason why I followed these sources is that access to these sources is easier and that I find the announcements that were made by the relevant people reliable.* She mentioned that the instant notifications of official institutional accounts and the authorities in the institution where she continued her education made consistent explanations.

Similarly, **Nalan** emphasized the importance of interaction with the authorities of the institution and written and verbal feedback by saying: *I received information from the television and my instructors from the university where I continue my education in this process. I mostly followed social media accounts that give information in the same direction as the news channels. After I submitted my documents in line with the information on the websites, I waited for feedback from the universities I applied to get results.*

Table 3*The Main Theme of Professional Expectations and Preparation Process and Its Subthemes*

Main Theme	Subthemes
Professional Expectations and Preparation Process	Institutional characteristics Interaction and cooperation

The participants stated that their professional expectations were effective in their decisions for continuing education and planning the process after the natural disaster.

Nalan said: *I think that face-to-face implementation of teaching practice is highly important for the teacher candidates. Learning any job or skill by seeing and experiencing it makes this skill and job even more memorable. There are a lot of differences between academic knowledge and practice. Academically, how to treat a student and what to use in teaching are taught but when we meet a student face-to-face, academic knowledge is not sufficient...* and stated that practice is her priority and she preferred institutions where the staff who gave feedback according to their calendar planning and contacted her worked.

Hasan said: *.... University and... University student affairs that I received support while applying... I used student affairs as the information source because the information I would receive through student affairs would be more reliable and clear. While making decisions... I wanted to do my internship in the province I was in because I live there. Accommodation, transportation, and the fact that I wondered about the Department of Special Education Teaching at University were effective in my decision. First of all, ... University works very well on this subject. They informed and helped us and made cooperation with us from the beginning of the application process to the end of the process. They dealt with our problems as if we were their own students.* He stated that their professional priority was face-to-face practice in the process and mentioned the importance of institutional characteristics, characteristics of the staff, interests, communication, and interaction. In this regard, teacher candidates stated that getting information before the application and interaction and information sharing with the authorities during the application process highly affected their preferences.

Table 4*The Main Theme of Education Life after the Natural Disaster and Its Subthemes*

Main Theme	Subthemes
Education Life After the Natural Disaster	Professional roles and responsibilities Preparation and equality of opportunities (technology, materials, sharing, etc.)

The participants, stating that orientation and preparation are one of the most distinguishing factors in educational life after the natural disaster, expressed that they frequently communicated through mobile devices in the application and follow-up processes after they made their decisions, they needed to receive responses to e-mails and institutional contact information. They stated that it was a great

contribution for the institutions to start the orientation programs before the practices by becoming quickly organized, to register students in the platforms where courses are given by introducing the technological infrastructure, and to carry out online meetings to provide planning with all instructors.

Esma, emphasizing the roles and effects of teachers for preparing for the profession, said: *My instructor used to always say something to us. Develop as many materials as you can, children, so much more? If you are creative and develop materials, it will be better for you. He/she provided us with such an experience.* She mentioned the differences between the classrooms where they carry out their practices and stated that teacher candidates are exposed to more intense and effective teaching processes in some classrooms while they experience limitations in observation and practice opportunities in some classrooms in the preparation for the profession stage.

Similarly, **Hasan** stated his opinion by saying: *This subject should be interpreted from a broader perspective because it is a broad problem, I mean, let me tell you, the institution where I did my internship in the first term and the institution I did it in the second term were different. My work environment was so different. First of all, my instructor in the first institution where I did my internship was not originally from special education teaching. All responsibilities, I mean totally, were on the teacher candidates, everything was, you know, actually, without receiving much support...*The teacher candidates emphasized preparatory aspects of institutional preparations and many factors such as material, the effect of the staff, and physical equipment.

Table 5

The Main Theme of About the Path Taken One Step Before the Profession and Its Subthemes

Main Theme	Subthemes
About the Path Taken One Step Before the Profession	Self-confidence, sense of belonging, role of stakeholders Holistic assessment (roles of all stakeholders and follow-up) Teaching practice in different conditions

Participants, emphasizing the duration of the undergraduate education program which they continue in the faculty of education one step before the profession, mentioned that the institutions should be holistically prepared for different extraordinary situations such as natural disasters and pandemics. For example, **Esma** stated that she had concerns when she came to a different province and continued teaching practice at a different school, however, she saw that all preparations and information sharing were made even for half a semester... *My instructor was from my field of practice, I mean, my classroom was very good. I was in Özlem teacher's (code name of the practice teacher) classroom, she had an intern student for the first time but she was very easygoing, I mean she hmm was solution-oriented even the slightest, well, for example, what could I do... I wanted to face with the student. Well, she helped me more with this, she was good, I mean, she didn't actually force me...*

İzzet said: *... They should teach the student all kinds of documents, etc. that she/he will encounter in the profession, should see the students as a teacher and show respect, should behave as she/he is a teacher... If such a negative situation occurs again, students who study teaching should receive practice*

courses like the health students when other students receive online courses and he stated that school climate, professional roles, and institutional characteristics are important in teaching practice. He mentioned the importance of feedback and systematic follow-up in theoretical and practice courses.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study that aims to examine the opinions and suggestions of teacher candidates about the "Teaching Practice II" course they took in different provinces after the natural disaster are gathered around four main themes. Discussion of the themes obtained from the study in relation to the literature is given below. It is seen that teacher candidates stated their opinions under three subthemes regarding the first theme of the study, "*Information sources sharing and planning*". They also drew attention that there were differences between their universities and practice institutions in other universities in terms of teachers, technological equipment, administrative practices and they mentioned the support of teachers in the institutions in terms of the richness of practices. Another point that the teacher candidates drew attention to and stated positive opinions in the scope of this theme is the fact that not only their peers in the earthquake zone changed their practice schools but also other teacher candidates all over the country benefited from this right. According to the declaration of the United Nations (2010) earthquakes are among the natural disasters whose time and destructive effects are uncertain. In these disasters that deeply affect social processes as well as people's health, it is stated that it is possible for the students to continue their daily routines when the educational services are provided in the earliest period possible (Le Brocque et al., 2017). In our study, in terms of providing educational services as soon as possible after the earthquake, it is stated that the authorities planned and organized the official process for teacher candidates to take practice courses in any state university outside the earthquake zone in the country. However, it is seen that teacher candidates had some problems in access to information and communication in this organization. It is thought that the fact that there was not enough time for a planned organization to quickly get rid of the negative effects of the earthquake may have caused these difficulties. It is seen that the participants have positive opinions about conducting practices in different universities and institutions in the scope of the Teaching Practice II course. In the literature, this situation is included in the factors that are important for decreasing the psychosocial anxiety of teacher candidates, providing a faster recovery, and continuing education without interruption (Jaradat et al., 2015). Thus, it is seen that the teacher candidates are satisfied because they continued their education without interruption, did not have problems in access, and did not face any negativities in participation in activities. It is also seen that teacher candidates drew attention to the institutional structures of the universities and stated that they conduct better practices in environments where they can express themselves easily in terms of communication.

According to the second theme of the study, "Professional expectations and preparation process", it is seen that teacher candidates drew attention to the characteristics of institutions where they conduct their practices, cooperation between practice schools and faculties, and interaction. Besides, they stated that the teachers in the institutions must be experts in their fields and have a supportive attitude. In the literature, Kayhan & Işıkdoğan-Uğurlu (2022) stated that cooperation of teachers, students, practice schools, and faculties is effective for teacher candidates to receive effective educational services. It is stated that it is important for teacher candidates to experience effective

teaching methods and make observations in order to be successful in their professional life (Güzel-Özmen et al., 2012; Kayhan & Işıkdoğan-Uğurlu, 2022). Similarly, it is seen that teacher candidates drew attention that teachers in practice schools should be well-qualified in terms of knowledge and skills, include different sample practices, and provide feedback. Another point that the teacher candidates drew attention to in terms of cooperation is the cooperation of faculties with the teachers in practice schools. It is stated that receiving feedback from the instructors/faculty members in the faculty and practice teachers will provide the development of skills such as determining more effective teaching methods/techniques, and preparing, implementing, and assessing plans in this respect. The literature includes similar studies that mention the positive effects of cooperation (Friend & Cook, 2010; Griffin, 2012).

Regarding the third theme of the study, "educational life after the natural disaster", teacher candidates stated that face-to-face education of teacher candidates should continue, uncertainties related to practice courses should be eliminated, the technological infrastructure should be provided in all practice schools and home environments, and opportunities to reach and effectively use materials should be increased. In the literature, it is seen that it is stated that the materials got lost/decreased in number in educational environments, the environment was not appropriate for education, technological opportunities could not be provided for a certain period of time, and many problems were seen in the functioning after the natural disaster that occurred (Meier et al., 2003). Besides, it is stated that the educational period started later according to the characteristics of the natural disaster and the structure of the society, and many troubles were temporarily encountered in education (Esnard, Lai et al., 2018). The findings of this study that state similar processes were experienced shows similarity with the literature. The fact that the earthquake disaster that occurred in our country was effective in a highly broad area had effects on places, materials, instructors' starting teaching, and planning education services. Thus, the opinions of the teacher candidates about the situations experienced after the natural disaster show similarity with the studies in the literature in many aspects.

Regarding the last theme of the study, "About the path taken one step before the profession", it is seen that teacher candidates stated opinions about receiving feedback, being happy to take practice courses at different universities, equality of opportunities in practice, cooperation of faculty advisor, practice teacher, and the school, and proof-based assessment in the practice courses. Fernandes, et al. (2021) stated that students must implement the courses that they theoretically take and they should be supported in terms of teaching by feedback. Thus, teacher candidates have the opportunity to conduct more effective practices by receiving feedback in appropriate environments. It is seen that the teacher candidates who participated in our study want to receive feedback about their practices to conduct quality and effective teaching and start the profession in a well-qualified way. It draws attention that they want to cooperate with their advisors in the faculty and the practice teachers to gain experiences that will prepare them for the profession and they want to implement the theoretical information they learn about different disability groups. In the studies in the literature, it is seen that the teachers, who play an important role in community, social, and economic development, directly affect the success of the students (Husain, 2022). Thus, providing educational services based on professional competencies in pre-vocational teacher education enables the integration of well-qualified teachers into society (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Regarding professional competencies, teachers provide effective services to students by having many characteristics such as professional skills, experience, professional values and attitudes as well as field knowledge. As with all teacher candidates, the professional knowledge and skills of special education teacher candidates are aimed

to develop with practice courses in addition to theoretical education. Thus, besides having an opportunity to implement their knowledge on different disability groups, teacher candidates correct and reinforce their knowledge with feedback (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Similar to the literature, in our study, teacher candidates draw attention that although they obtain an opportunity to implement their knowledge, there are different methods for different disability groups and they need to receive feedback. It is thought that this situation varies according to the characteristics of teachers in the schools where they continued before and after the disaster and the support of advisors in the universities. Participants, drawing attention that teachers in the institutions where they continue should graduate from the field of special education, stated that they improve themselves more in terms of their profession in this way.

Based on the study findings, it is seen that the teacher candidates experienced some uncertainties about information and access to information in the period when they conducted teaching practice courses in different universities and institutions after the natural disaster and they tried to eliminate negativities by following university board's decisions through their friends, social media, and official websites. Some differences were observed in the experiences of teacher candidates who took teaching practice courses in different universities and institutions in terms of the institutions' structure, functioning, equipment, teachers who work in the institution, and advisor of the course. Regarding these differences, they stated that they need the field knowledge of the teachers in the institution, variety in materials, and guidance of the advisors in the university. They also stated that interaction with the teachers and staff in the institutions where they conduct their practices and with the advisors in the university will enrich their learning and contribute positively to their professional life. Regarding the transition to the profession period, they emphasized that equality of opportunities should be provided by taking into account the differences such as physical equipment, material, and lack of staff in the institutions where they conduct their practices. They stated that the feedback should be provided immediately after the activities/practices and different teaching methods used in the special education field should be included. Based on the results of this study, the following suggestions are presented for the field and further research.

- Natural disasters have continued with an increase in severity and frequency. It can be suggested to plan the educational services at the earliest period possible and prepare action plans for unexpected natural disasters.
- It can be suggested that intervention-based courses such as emergency medical aid courses can be compulsory in all departments of universities.
- It can be suggested that information, planning, and implementation stages about what to do before, during, and after the natural disasters can be converted into educational content in educational services and they can be shared with the staff and students through seminars and courses.
- Regarding transition to the profession period, accessible materials can be prepared for the implementation of teaching practices.
- It can be suggested to increase cooperation between higher education institutions and practice schools.

- In institutions' preparation to teaching practices process, characteristics such as physical equipment, material, sufficient number of personnel should be taken into account and planning should be made to provide equality of opportunities.

For further research;

- In this study, the opinions and experiences of special education teacher candidates were examined; in further studies, it can be suggested to plan the same study for different teacher groups.
- It can be suggested to examine the experiences of teachers working in education institutions regarding children with special needs after the disaster. It can be suggested to conduct studies on the practices of universities before and after the disaster.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited to the opinions of special education teacher candidates who applied to a different university after the natural disaster in the scope of practice courses about their experiences in the practice courses in the last term in a different higher education institution. In further studies, practice course and theoretical course experiences of last-year or other grade students who continue their education in different undergraduate programs can be examined. Studies can be conducted based on the opinions of practice instructors, practice teachers, and institution administrators by broadening the participant group and adding different data collection methods.

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