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Transitioning to Higher Education: A Case Study of an Individual With Autism

Mahmut Serkan Yazıcı¹  | Şenay Baş²  | Mustafa Karnas³ 

¹Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University, Rize, Türkiye | ²Department of Visual Art Education, Faculty of Education, Trabzon University, Trabzon, Türkiye | ³Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education, Kilis 7 Aralık University, Kilis, Türkiye

Correspondence: Mahmut Serkan Yazıcı (mserkan.yazici@erdogan.edu.tr)

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ABSTRACT

Necessary arrangements should be made to enable university students with autism (the term “autism” is used to refer to the entire autism spectrum in this study) to improve their transition to university. The need for support may be higher in countries like Türkiye, where the number of university students with autism is relatively low, as universities have limited experience with these students. Thus, this study focuses on the transition process of an individual with autism to higher education in Türkiye. It aims to contribute to the transition processes of the student and, accordingly, of future students with autism. In this qualitative case study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with an individual with autism and members of his close circle during his transition to higher education. The study involved 29 participants: the university student with autism, two family members, eight high school teachers, eight university lecturers, and ten university classmates. These interviews were conducted during the first semester of the individual's first academic year, a critical period in the transition to university. During the research process, it was discovered that there was no transition plan for students with autism at the university where the research was conducted. Therefore, it is concluded that the experience gained by the participants during the university education process with a student with autism is not sufficient alone for his transition to university, which started with uncertainty. Over time, the process led to prejudices and misconceptions, while unrealistically high expectations resulted in disappointment. At the end of the semester, uncertainty remained. In addition, it was found that the absence of a transition plan caused cultural factors to become more dominant. In line with the research results, based on the transition process of the university student with autism in this study, suggestions that may be useful for future university students with autism are presented.

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition that emerges in early childhood and is characterized by difficulties in social communication and the presence of restricted, repetitive behaviors or interests (American Psychiatric Association 2013). Although individuals diagnosed with autism are known to experience the condition differently and possess unique characteristics (National Autistic Society 2025), the condition is typically classified into three severity levels: Level 1 (requiring support), Level 2 (requiring substantial support), and Level 3 (requiring very substantial support) (American Psychiatric Association 2013).

The number of individuals diagnosed with autism is increasing worldwide (Organization for Autism Research 2022). For instance, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States, one in 150 children was diagnosed with autism in 2000, whereas this figure increased to one in 31 children in 2022 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2025). Moreover, evidence indicates that autism prevalence is rising globally, regardless of factors such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2025). This trend is also

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Summary

- Although the sources of uncertainty changed, the absence of a structured transition plan caused the transition process for the student with ASD to remain uncertain from beginning to end, leading to ongoing anxiety driven by different factors throughout the university term.
- Pre-existing prejudices and unrealistic expectations at the beginning of the process led to misconceptions and disappointment during the university experience.
- The lack of a structured transition plan allowed cultural factors to play a more influential role in shaping the students' experience.

reflected in schooling rates (e.g., Cardinal et al. 2021). Similarly, the number of individuals with autism attending university has increased in some countries. For example, 1.8% of students with autism were enrolled in university in the United Kingdom in 2004. This rate increased to 2.4% in 2008 (MacLeod and Green 2009) and has continued to rise over time (Vincent et al. 2022). However, despite this increase, the number of individuals with autism in universities remains limited compared to global prevalence rates. This is largely due to barriers to accessing higher education (e.g., Yazıcı 2025) and a higher risk of dropout (e.g., Cage and Howes 2020). For example, there are only 29 university students with autism in Turkish universities (Council of Higher Education 2020). This highlights the need for appropriate arrangements to improve access to higher education in Türkiye.

In addition to the process of accessing university, individuals with autism require ongoing support after entering university, because the transition from high school to university is often a difficult process for many students with autism (VanBergeijk et al. 2008; Van Hees et al. 2015). Therefore, they may need a transition plan at the beginning of their university life. For an effective transition plan, several elements are essential, as identified by Constantine et al. (2022). First, individuals with autism should know how to participate in processes related to accessing individual support at universities from the outset. Second, there should be cooperation between individuals with autism, family members, and professionals. Third, the plan should be holistic and include not only academic processes but also social interaction. Fourth, mental health needs (e.g., anxiety, depression, and loneliness) should be considered, and appropriate support should be provided. Fifth, individual coaching support should be provided. Sixth, the individual's family should be informed. Seventh, independent living should be supported. Finally, the university environment should be adapted according to the needs of the student.

There are universities that provide support during the transition process and have programs for this purpose (e.g., Granitz 2016). For example, in Japan, a recent shift toward more inclusive higher education for students with disabilities, driven by new legal frameworks, has led to greater institutional awareness, a gradual expansion of accommodations, and changes in enrollment patterns

(Kondo et al. 2015). In contrast, the United States has a more structured and formalized system in this area. Specifically, Disability Services Offices operate as dedicated institutional units required by federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. As a result, these offices provide a wide range of services, including support for transition processes, the provision of individualized accommodations, the promotion of universal design, and the role of a campus-wide resource for both students with disabilities and faculty members (Gould and Harris 2019). However, these programs are not available in all universities to the same extent. Although some institutions have such plans, many others are not yet adequately prepared (Borrell 2018). This indicates a gap in support for students with disabilities during the transition to higher education. Similarly, in Türkiye, disabled student units have been established in universities with the support of CoHE to assist students with disabilities (Turkish Official Gazette 2010), but their implementation may vary across institutions. In addition, Barrier-free University Awards are given to universities in different categories, such as physical accessibility, educational accessibility, and socio-cultural accessibility. Since 2018, many Turkish universities have shown interest in applying for this award to receive a flag (Council of Higher Education 2022). This suggests that, in recent years, universities have made efforts to improve accessibility for students with special needs, which may help increase the readiness of universities for individuals with autism.

Despite all the developments mentioned above, it is known that students with autism face many social and academic problems in Türkiye (Çıkılı and Karaca 2017), as well as in other countries (e.g., Bakker et al. 2019; Sarrett 2018; Tobin et al. 2014). For example, students with autism may experience academic difficulties such as poor time management, limited communication skills, challenges in group work, and difficulties in understanding abstract topics (Anderson et al. 2017; Bakker et al. 2019; Nuske et al. 2019; Yazıcı 2025). To address these difficulties, students with autism are provided with academic support, such as extra test time, assessments in low-stimulation environments, flexible deadlines for homework, breaks during lessons, the use of technology in the classroom, and the provision of clear instructions (Sayman 2015; Sarrett 2018; Van Hees et al. 2015; Zeedyk et al. 2016). However, some students have reported that these forms of support are not sufficient due to certain limitations, such as unmet sensory needs and the absence of a neurodiversity-friendly environment in the university setting (Sarrett 2018). Therefore, it should not be assumed that the challenges faced by all individuals with autism in university life are resolved solely through such support. For instance, while 80% of students with autism who receive academic support achieve academic success above a certain average (Gelbar et al. 2015), they may still experience difficulties in their social life at university, such as anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues (Anderson et al. 2017). For this reason, it is essential to support both the academic and social aspects of university life for these individuals.

In light of the above, the academic and social life of individuals with autism should be carefully considered, and interventions should be implemented in line with this plan to ease the transition period during their first semester at university. This study aims to explore the experiences, opinions, and suggestions regarding the transition process of a university student with autism. Therefore, in addition to contributing directly to

improving this student's transition process, the study also aims to support the development of future transition plans for university students with autism.

1 | Methods

1.1 | Research Design

This research focuses on how a new university student with autism transitions to university and aims to support that student's transition process in a faculty that has not previously enrolled a student with autism. It also aims to contribute more broadly to the transition process of students with autism who will attend university in the future. To this end, a case study design using qualitative research methods was employed in this study. A case study examines an event or phenomenon in depth, addressing 'how' and/or 'why' questions (Yin 2018).

1.2 | Participants

Purposive sampling was used to determine the study group of the research (Creswell 2009). A new university student with autism in Türkiye was selected as the main participant in the study. Then, in accordance with the principle of using multiple data sources (Yin 2018), other participants were identified to ensure data triangulation (Patton 2015). In total, four additional participant groups were included alongside the student with autism. To obtain the sample, the researcher first sought access to the students' close environment during pre-university education and to individuals likely to form part of their support network during university life. A total of 29 participants were included in the study. These participants consisted of the university student with autism, two family members (the mother and elder sister), eight high school teachers (including the head teacher), eight university lecturers, and ten university classmates. Of the participants, 11 were male and 18 were female.

1.3 | University Student Participant With Autism

The participant with autism is a 21-year-old Turkish male university student, referred to by the pseudonym 'Ali' in this study. He was diagnosed with autism at the age of three. Due to the high socioeconomic status of his family, he has received intensive interventions since his diagnosis, including special education, psychiatric support, and therapy, among others. In addition, he participated in various extracurricular activities, including swimming lessons, theater activities, and painting lessons. His mother reported that he required substantial support for independent living at the time of diagnosis; however, his social and behavioral skills have improved over the years as a result of these interventions. According to current medical and educational reports, as well as family interviews, he is described as having Level 2 autism.

In the formal education process, after completing primary and lower secondary education, he was admitted to a painting program through a special talent examination (a practical painting assessment conducted by the school as an alternative admission route to standard academic placement procedures) and

completed Fine Arts High School. Throughout his education, he studied in an inclusive classroom under full-time inclusion and followed an individualized education program (IEP). After graduating from high school, he achieved the minimum passing score in the university entrance examination and subsequently took a two-stage special talent examination (consisting of drawing from a model and imaginative drawing), which was adapted for students with disabilities, to enter the Art Education Department within the Faculty of Education in the Fall semester of the 2019–2020 academic year. Following the examination, he was admitted to the university under the disabled student quota, following an individual evaluation process. The faculty in which he studies is affiliated with a state university in the city where he has lived throughout his life, and is located on a separate campus from the main campus. He travels independently to and from the faculty by public transport from the home he shares with his mother, father, and older sister. This student is the first student with autism to study in this faculty, which also has a disabled student unit.

1.4 | Research Instruments

In order to obtain in-depth data on the student's transition process, the views and experiences of all participants were collected through semi-structured interviews. A draft interview schedule was prepared by the researcher, and then refined after evaluation by experts in methodology, grammar, and special education in terms of scope, content, consistency, and clarity. The interview included demographic questions, as well as nine main questions related to the university life of the student with autism, in order to understand his transition during the first term. These questions aimed to explore participants' views on university life, such as interactions with others, course engagement, examination performance, and academic development.

While the initial questions were based on participants' expectations during the first week of the term, similar questions were repeated throughout the term and at the end of the study, based on their actual experiences at university. For example, at the beginning of the term, the mother was asked: "How do you think Ali's interaction with his classmates at university will be?" The same question was later rephrased as: "What is your opinion about Ali's interaction with his classmates at university?" In addition, the questions were tailored according to each participant's role (e.g., lecturer or high school teacher) in the student's life. For example, in the first interview with high school teachers, the question was stated as: "Based on your experiences in high school, what is your perspective on the students' academic development at university?" However, for lecturers who did not know the student previously, the question was phrased as: "What is your perspective on the student's academic development at university?" Finally, suggestions related to the student's transition process were gathered from all participants after each interview throughout the term.

1.5 | Data Collection and Analysis

In line with the purpose of the research, the data collection process covered the first semester of the student with autism's

first year, a critical period in the transition to university. The process was conducted with the permission of both the student and his family, ensuring full respect for the personal rights of all participants. The interviews were conducted in a private meeting room during out-of-school hours using an appointment system, and all participants, including the student with autism, were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. All interviews were conducted face-to-face with participants' consent, and audio recordings were used. The first and last interviews lasted approximately 45–60 min, whereas the mid-term interviews lasted approximately 20 min, and each interview was conducted by two researchers in order to enhance the reliability of the findings. Moreover, the interviews were carried out at different time points over a 14-week period and with different participant groups, and further details regarding the interviews are presented in Table 1.

In the analysis process, data sets were first created by transcribing the audio recordings obtained from the interviews. This study used thematic analysis to identify, examine, and interpret patterns of meaning (themes) within qualitative data (Clarke and Braun 2017), following the six-step procedure outlined by Braun et al. (2012). These steps included becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. In this process, three researchers first independently familiarized themselves with the data using this framework, and then worked together to organize the data in a meaningful way. This approach made the large volume of data more manageable and helped to avoid misinterpretation, thereby increasing the trustworthiness of the findings (Guba and Lincoln 1982).

The thematic analysis produced two main themes: academic life and social life. These themes were analyzed separately across five time periods: the beginning of the first term (week 1), mid-term data (weeks 4, 7, and 10), and the end of the first term (week 14). In this way, the researcher aimed to reduce the large dataset and

provide an in-depth description of the findings (Braun et al. 2012). Later, during the writing of the research report, some findings were presented in tables, and the results were supported with direct quotations. In this report, the pseudonym 'Ali' is used to refer to the student with autism, 'H' refers to his high school teachers, 'L' to his university lecturers, 'U' to his university classmates, 'S' to his sister, and 'M' to his mother.

The entire process was carried out through the collaboration of three researchers. The research team consisted of three researchers with complementary professional backgrounds: the first and third authors are special education specialists with expertise in autism, while the second author is an art education specialist with a focus on visual arts education. These different perspectives supported a more comprehensive and balanced interpretation of the data. None of the researchers had any prior personal or professional relationship with the participant (Ali) before he started university, which helped to reduce potential bias and enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. At the same time, the researchers were aware that their backgrounds and perspectives could influence the interpretation of the data, and therefore, they engaged in ongoing discussions throughout the research process to critically reflect on their assumptions and analytical decisions.

1.6 | Ethical Considerations

Ethics committee approval for the data collection process was obtained from the university where the research was conducted. In addition, formal research permission was obtained from the faculty in which the study was carried out. All research processes were regularly shared with Ali, his family, and the university's disabled student unit, to ensure transparency throughout the study. All participants were provided with full and clear information before the data collection process began, and their informed consent was obtained for participation.

TABLE 1 | Data collection process.

The time frame for data collection	Participants	The purpose of the meeting	The number of interviews
At the beginning of his first term (1st week).	Ali M and S All participating high school teachers All participating lecturers All participating students in his class at the university	The predictions for Ali's transition to university. Suggestions for improving the transition process of university students with autism.	29
In his first term (4th, 7th, and 10th weeks)	Ali, M, L3, L6	The experiences during Ali's transition to university. Suggestions for improving the transition process of university students with autism.	12
At the end of his first term (14th week)	Ali M All participating lecturers All participating students in his class at the university	Evaluations for Ali's transition to university. Suggestions for improving the transition process of university students with autism.	20

Note: M: Ali's mother; S: Ali's sister; L: Ali's lecturer.

2 | Results

2.1 | Data at the Beginning of the First Term

In this section, participants' predictions about Ali's social and academic life, in order to understand his transition, are included. Basic participant opinions on this are presented in Table 2.

2.1.1 | Data on Social Life

2.1.1.1 | Data From Ali

Ali stated that he was happy that he had come to university and that he would have many friends. He did not make any negative statements about his time at university.

2.1.1.2 | Data From Family Members

S and M stated that their primary expectation about Ali's university life was that he would be happy. Despite this, M expressed her concern about his university life. M believed that university life is more flexible than high school, and her son might have some negative experiences at university.

2.1.1.3 | Data Obtained From High School Teachers

Four participants (H3, H4, H6, and H8) stated that Ali would not have any problems with social interaction with his lecturers and friends at university and that he would be able to make friends. Despite these positive statements, four participants (H2, H3, H4, and H6) expressed their concerns about Ali's social life

TABLE 2 | Key data on social and academic life in the beginning of the first term (1st Week).

Participants' views		Participants
Social Life	If Ali were tolerated by others at university, he would likely have no social problems.	All lecturers, all classmates
	It is expected that any social difficulties Ali may face at university would result from the attitudes of others rather than from Ali himself.	L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L8, U1, U2, U3, U5, U6, U7, U9
	There may be uncertainty about what kind of social interactions would occur between Ali and others.	L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L7, L8
	There may be concern that the university environment would be more flexible and less structured than high school, which could affect Ali's social experience.	M, H2, H3, H4, H6
	Ali would have friends at the university.	Ali, H3, H4, H6, H8
	Ali would be happy at the university.	Ali, S, M
	Ali might encounter difficulties in interactions with the university administrative staff.	L2, L6, L8
	Ali is not expected to face any social difficulties at university.	L1, L7
	It is expected that other students would treat Ali well, which would help to prevent social difficulties.	L7
Academic Life	Ali would be expected to show average academic performance, similar to other students' general performance.	L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, all classmates.
	The education faculty might not be the most suitable option for Ali academically, as it is unclear whether he could reach the necessary level of teaching competence.	M, S, H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, H7, H8, L1, L6, L8, M, U2, U7, U8.
	If Ali were not given individual support at university, it would be difficult for him to achieve academic success.	M, S, all high school teachers, L1, L6, U6
	Ali could achieve the qualifications required to become a qualified teacher.	H4, L2, L3, L4, L5, L7, U1, U3, U4, U5, U6, U9, U10
	Workshop-based lessons might be more suitable for Ali than theoretical lessons.	All high school teachers, L1, L2, L5, L7
	Ali would likely achieve an above-average level of academic performance.	U1, U3, U4, U5, U6, U9, U10
	Ali might find exams difficult, like many other students do.	All classmates
	Ali would enjoy the lessons if he liked the lecturer.	Ali
	University would be more enjoyable than high school because classes would not last all day.	Ali
	Ali might not be able to locate all the classrooms across the different campus buildings.	Ali

Note: L: Ali's lecturer, U: Ali's university classmate, M: Ali's mother; H: Ali's teachers in high school, S: Ali's sister.

at the university, as the university environment is generally a more flexible and less structured setting compared to high school. For example, H2 said:

He might have negative experiences because the university environment is more flexible, unlike the protective environment of the high school. He can develop bad habits, could start smoking.

2.1.1.4 | Data From Lecturers

While two participants (L1 and L7) believed that Ali would not have any social problems, six lecturers (L2, L3, L5, L4, L6, and L8) stated that individuals with autism may experience social difficulties with other students due to being asocial, having behavioral disorders, and having tantrums. These six lecturers emphasized that the social problems that could arise might also be related to the attitudes of other individuals in the faculty. On this point, L6 stated:

For example, especially male students from other departments might laugh at him. Other individuals may joke about his obsessive behavior. In such situations, it is also a problem for him to get upset and cry on his own.

Furthermore, L3 stated:

Attitudes of other individuals could be a problem for him because our people are not accustomed to having these students [those with autism] at university.

Despite this, L7 stated:

We are an emotionally strong nation. I do not think there will be any problem, other students will treat him well.

In addition, seven lecturers (L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L7, and L8) expressed that they were not sure what kind of experience awaited them in terms of social interaction with Ali. For example, L4 stated:

We have not received any training on how to interact with individuals with autism. I have not had a different student in my class for 12 years and I feel vulnerable right now.

On this topic, L1 expressed:

I have never been trained in this. This is the first time in my life I have encountered someone with autism. I never thought I would come across this at university.

All lecturers stated that they would not have a problem themselves, because they would tolerate Ali despite the uncertainty. However, five lecturers (L3, L4, L5, L6, and L8) thought that Ali

might have problems with other lecturers, and three lecturers (L2, L6, and L8) said that Ali might have problems with the administrative staff.

2.1.1.5 | Data From University Classmates

Seven of the participants (U1, U2, U3, U5, U6, U7, and U9) stated that any potential problems that might arise between Ali and other students would not be caused by Ali, but rather by the other students (e.g., their lack of understanding towards Ali). All participants stated that if Ali was tolerated, he would not have problems with anyone. They emphasized that this was a necessity due to Ali's lack of skills. For example, U6 said:

Some students may not want to be friends with Ali because of his lack of social skills, and Ali may be lonely.

2.1.2 | Data on Academic Life

2.1.2.1 | Data From Ali

Ali said he enjoys lessons if he likes the lecturers. He also said that university is more enjoyable than high school because lessons do not run from morning to night as they do at high school. The only negative that he mentioned was that he could not find all the classrooms in the different buildings

2.1.2.2 | Data From Family Members

Family members stated that if Ali was not given individual support at the university, it would be difficult for him to achieve academic success and that this could increase his anxiety. For instance, S said:

In high school, he was afraid that his exam grades would be worse than those of his friends. It will be the same at the university, I think, if he does not pass exams.

In addition, M was not sure that Ali could reach the proficiency of being a teacher, while S stated that their brother could not reach this proficiency. However, M stated that Ali's first choice was not this university, but that he had to join the faculty of education here for specific reasons, including the inability to go to university alone in another city, the existence of a quota for disabled students in the education faculty, and the individual aptitude test that was given to him.

2.1.2.3 | Data Obtained From High School Teachers

All high school teachers expressed that it would be difficult for Ali to be successful academically if he had not received individual support at university. Moreover, although all the participants stated that workshop lessons might be more successful than theoretical lessons, H3 explained:

He would not have graduated if I had not awarded additional points and shown tolerance. For example, students with autism have limitations in perceiving and constructing the abstract. So, whether he did well

academically or badly, we passed him. This was the case for all teachers, such as a maths teacher.

While one participant (H4) was unsure about Ali's ability to reach the standard required for the teaching qualifications at the university, seven participants (H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, H7 and H8) believed that he could not reach this level of competence. The main reason given for this was that the chosen department was not suitable for him. For example, H5 stated:

He cannot teach as a teacher. I have spoken to his family about this before. I was in favor of directing him to different fields, such as graphic design and handicrafts.

2.1.2.4 | Data From Lecturers

Seven of the lecturers (L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, and L7) stated that Ali would show average or near-average success in general. Four lecturers (L1, L2, L5, and L7) said that Ali would be more successful, especially in workshop classes, though to achieve this success, two participants (L1 and L6) suggested that it would only be possible with individual support. In this regard, L6 said:

He came to the department due to the advantage of having taken an individual exam. So, it is clear that he will need individual support for all classes.

At the end of the first term, five of the lecturers (L2, L3, L4, L5, and L7) stated that Ali could achieve the qualifications to be a teacher, and two lecturers (L6 and L8) said that they were not sure whether Ali could reach teaching proficiency. Unlike the others, L1 alone expressed negativity in this regard:

He will graduate and become a very good artist. But he cannot be a teacher. He is in the wrong department.

2.1.2.5 | Data From University Classmates

The other students generally believed that Ali was as likely to achieve academic success as they were, and that he could even surpass them in some courses. Only U6 stated that Ali might need support. In regard to the exam process, all participants believed that Ali would face difficulties like everyone else.

While three participants (U2, U7, and U8) believed that the university process would show whether Ali could become a teacher or not, seven participants (U1, U3, U4, U5, U6, U9, and U10) stated that he would achieve average or above average performance; therefore, they believed that he could obtain the teaching qualification. For example, U5 stated:

He is the same as me. If he can come to this department, he will be successful and then achieve the teaching qualification.

TABLE 3 | Data on social and academic life in the fourth, seventh, and 10th Weeks.

Participants' views		Participants		
		4th week	7th week	10th week
Social Life	Ali socializes with his friends at the university.	Ali	Ali, M, L3, L6	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Ali is happy at the university.	Ali, M	Ali, M	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Ali's social life is under his mother's control	Ali	Ali, M	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Ali meets with friends outside of the university	—	Ali, M	Ali, M
	Everyone treats Ali with extra understanding at university.	—	—	L3, L6
Academic Life	Ali is trying to catch up with his friends academically.	Ali, M, L6	Ali, M, L3, L6	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Classes are difficult for Ali.	Ali, M	Ali, M, L3, L6	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Ali is bored in class.	Ali, L3, L6	Ali, L3, L6	Ali, L3, A6
	Ali's family helps him with his homework.	Ali, M	Ali, M, L3, L6	Ali, M
	Ali cannot focus on the course content.	L3, L6	L3, L6	L3, L6
	Although Ali does not interrupt the lesson much, he says meaningless things outside of class.	L3, L6	L3, L6	L3, L6
	Ali needs individual support.	L6	M, L3, L6	M, L3, L6
	Ali has exam anxiety.	—	Ali, M	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Ali has grade anxiety.	—	—	Ali, M, L3, L6
	Ali's family or someone else does his homework.	—	—	L3, L6

Note: M: Ali's mother; L: Ali's lecturer.

TABLE 4 | Key data on social and academic life in the end of the first term (14th Week).

Participants' views		Participants
Social Life	Although Ali has exhibited some inappropriate behaviors, his social life remains positive due to the supportive attitudes shown toward him.	L1, L6, L7, all classmates
	Ali is happy at the university.	Ali, M, all classmates
	Ali's social life is good because of his warm personality.	L1, L4, L5, L6, L7, U1, U2, U3, U4, U6, U7, U8
	Ali socializes with his friends at the university.	Ali, M, all lecturers
	There have been no problems in Ali's social interactions at the university.	All classmates
	Social interactions with Ali in the faculty may also be beneficial for other students, as they will become future teachers.	L1, L2, L4, L5, L6, L7
	It may be more appropriate for individuals with autism to study at university alongside other students with special needs.	U1, U3, U4, U5, U7
	Ali's social life is progressing under the control of his mother.	Ali, M
	Ali meets with friends outside of the university.	Ali, M
	Ali could not achieve the academic level required for teaching and may be better suited to another department.	M, all lecturers, all classmates
Academic Life	Ali has anxiety about whether he will be able to graduate.	Ali, M, all lecturers, U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, U6, U7, U9
	Concerns were expressed about Ali's academic performance.	All lecturers, all classmates
	Ali has exam anxiety.	Ali, M, L3, L6, U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, U6, U7, U9
	Ali had difficulty understanding the lessons.	All classmates
	Lecturers' lack of knowledge and skills in teaching Ali contributed to his limited academic progress.	All lecturers
	Ali's condition was the main reason for his lack of academic success.	All lecturers
	The lecturers did not know how to evaluate him properly.	All lecturers
	Since Ali was required to take the same exams as other students, it was difficult for him to succeed.	All lecturers
	Ali did not show academic progress during the term.	All lecturers
	Ali had a negative impact on classroom management.	L1, L2, L6, L7
	Lecturers evaluated Ali's exams with positive discrimination.	L1, L6, L7
	Ali is in this department because there is no transition plan.	L3

Note: L: Ali's lecturer, M: Ali's mother; U: Ali's university classmate.

2.2 | Mid-Term Data From Three Time Points

Although the participants' views were positive regarding Ali's social life in the mid-term period, this was not the case for his academic life, as shown in Table 3.

In the interviews held during the first term, no negative statements about Ali's social life were made by the participants. On the contrary, it was emphasized that Ali socialized and was happy at the faculty. Ali himself stated:

I love my friends and the university. Everyone knows me, I have many friends.

Ali's university social life is controlled by his mother, which Ali does not see as a problem. About this, M stated:

His WhatsApp is under my control. I tell him how to contact people via WhatsApp. Otherwise, he disturbs people.

Similarly, L6 said:

If his mother does not check his phone, he tires us out on the phone.

The fact that Ali's social life at the university is improving gradually shows that he meets up with his friends outside the university. At this point, Ali's mother emphasized that the therapeutic support he received was effective. L3 and L6, on the other hand, emphasized that Ali's social interaction skills were different to other students, even if there were no significant

problems, and the extra understanding of all individuals in the faculty played a role in ensuring this harmony. On this point, L6 stated:

I think there is a lack of empathy in Ali's friendships. For example, his friends decided not to attend the classes after exam, which he told me about. If anyone else had done this, their friends would be angry at them for telling the lecturer.

In terms of academic life, this is seen as a process that becomes increasingly difficult, unlike social life. At week ten, Ali stated:

I cannot listen to the lectures well; I cannot follow them.

According to L3 and L6, the reason for this is Ali's lack of understanding and attention, and his impatience. For instance, L6 stated:

He gets nervous when he gives feedback and is asked to do it again. He wants all the work to be finished immediately.

M said that Ali's academic inadequacies were known from the beginning and that they had private workshop lessons starting from week ten of the term. However, she also stated, "This support for workshop classes is insufficient for all his university courses. I do not know if a private teacher can be hired for each lesson."

2.3 | Data From the End of the First Term

This section includes participants' ideas gathered at the end of the first term to understand Ali's social and academic life, in order to better understand his transition. Basic participant opinions on this are presented in Table 4.

2.3.1 | Data on Social Life

2.3.1.1 | Data From Ali

Ali did not say anything different from what he said in the previous interview. He stated that he is happy at the faculty because he knows everyone and is treated well by them.

2.3.1.2 | Data From the Mother

M stated that she did not have any different views than those she had expressed in week ten, though she stated that her anxiety in terms of Ali's social life had decreased to almost non-existent.

2.3.1.3 | Data From Lecturers

All lecturers stated that Ali's social skills at university had been better than they expected. Five lecturers (L1, L4, L5, L6, and L7) believed Ali's warm nature to be the reason for this. For instance, L5 said:

It was very nice of him to come to me in the faculty and ask about my life. A lot of students do not do that.

Despite this, three lecturers (L1, L6, and L7) stated that although there were no serious problems, they had observed some behavioral problems in Ali. However, they also said that they used positive discrimination with Ali, so they did not see these behaviors as a problem. For example, L7 said:

Sometimes he [Ali] sleeps in class. I have said, 'Please, get up' a few times, but then he went back to sleep. I did not give any more warnings, as I thought it might be inconvenient if I intervened more than once. If another student had done this, my attitude would have been different.

Regarding positive discrimination, L6 said:

I celebrated his birthday with a cake, but I would not celebrate any other student.

In terms of social life in the faculty, all respondents, with the exception of L3, expressed that having Ali in the faculty may be beneficial to the other students, as they will be the teachers of the future. L3 said on this subject:

It would be different if it was the main campus, but this is a small place. Differences are more noticeable in this environment. For example, some people thought it was weird because I was wearing sweatpants as a lecturer. I do not like pants, I like sweatpants, but I do not wear sweatpants anymore. It is the same for him [Ali]. When I look from the outside, I know that people say that this place does not look like an education faculty, it has turned into a playground.

2.3.1.4 | Data From University Classmates

All participating university students stated that they did not have any problems with Ali and that he seemed happy at the faculty. Seven people (U1, U2, U3, U4, U6, U7, and U8) stated the reason for this was Ali's sympathetic attitude. However, despite this positive opinion, they stated that Ali exhibited inappropriate behaviors such as laughing on his own and running around the faculty, displaying extreme emotions, and sometimes moving left and right during the lesson. In addition, all the candidates stated that they ignored Ali's behaviors due to his diagnosis of autism. They also stated that all people, including lecturers, apply positive discrimination to him and that this is normal.

For example, U6 reported that:

He [Ali] stated that there was 15 min left and asked if we could leave now. The lecturer said wait a little longer, we will be leaving soon anyway. If I asked the lecturer this, his reaction would definitely be different.

Although all classmates stated that Ali did not cause any problems in the social life of the faculty, five of them (U1, U3, U4, U5, and U7) stated that it would be more appropriate for individuals with autism to study at university with other students with special needs like themselves. As the reason for this opinion, U1 said:

He observes other individuals at the university. He is a very pure person, but he might learn bad habits such as smoking or other negative things from them.

2.3.2 | Data on Academic Life

2.3.2.1 | Data From Ali

At this point, Ali was focused mainly on the anxiety related to exams, stating:

When I get lower grades than my friends, I get very sad and cry.

He often compared himself to his classmates who had failed exams in a subject, and said that they had also been unsuccessful and that it was not only him who failed to succeed.

2.3.2.2 | Data From Ali's Mother

M believed that her son had improved since day one and that this would increase over time. However, she stated that she worries about her son's grades. The reason for this is that low grades will increase her son's anxiety. At this point, she stated that they were considering increasing the intensity of support training. Despite this, she expressed a belief that Ali did not have the skills to become a teacher.

2.3.2.3 | Data From Lecturers

All of the lecturers stated that although Ali attended classes regularly throughout the term, they thought that he had an understanding and attention problem and that he did not show much academic progress. Indeed, seven lecturers (L1, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, and L8) stated that they thought Ali would not be able to progress academically in the future. For example, L2 said:

I ask him questions so he can focus on me in class. I am trying to add to the lesson. But he's either busy with his phone or someone else. He needs to work one-on-one.

In addition, four lecturers (L1, L2, L6, and L7) stated that situations caused by Ali had a negative impact on their classroom management. In particular, L1 and L6 expressed their reservations about Ali's behaviors while working individually in the workshops. L1 explained:

He reacts when he needs to improve his work. He got angry with me once, saying, 'You do not like anything'. When I hung some of his friends' work on the wall, he scolded me, 'Why do you not hang mine?' His work was not good. It

would not have been fair if I hung his work on the wall as well. Even though I told him this, he didn't understand.

Despite these reactions from Ali, L6 said:

"I write simple instructions on his paper that he must do, and ask him to follow them in order. I say tick them off and wait for me. When he works individually, his tension decreases.

Regarding exams, all of the lecturers stated that they gave Ali the same exams as other students and that it would be difficult for him to succeed in these exams, both now and in the future. At this point, three lecturers (L1, L6, L7) stated that they evaluated Ali's exams with positive discrimination. For example, L6 explained:

I gave additional points to his work, due to his condition. Because he worries a lot. I know that this is not right. However, if there is no system, some lecturers do this out of an emotional response. Thus, only the grade changes. Not the person himself.

Similarly, all lecturers stated that if they continued to give Ali low grades in the future, his anxiety would increase. However, they also said that they did not know how to evaluate him. At this point, five lecturers (L1, L2, L3, L5, and L6) who had given him homework stated that he got high grades for his homework, but that homework was not the right way to assess Ali. L2 explained:

"It is obvious that he receives support at home. As far as I have heard from his friends, he must be going to a course at the weekend. I think he corrects his mistakes with the intervention of his teacher there. His homework performance appears much better than his performance in class.

All of the lecturers stated that as a result of their experiences during the term, Ali could not achieve the academic development required to be able to enter the teaching profession and that it would be more appropriate for him to be in another department. L7 stated:

We should not use the word 'discrimination' for everything. He [Ali] not coming here does not mean there has been discrimination. He should be in a place that suits his skills. Being a teacher is not possible for him. There are many skills required for teaching.

Furthermore, L3 explained:

The fact that he [Ali] is here is proof that there is no plan for transition to university. We are giving unnecessary hope to him and his family.

All the lecturers said that although Ali's inadequacy was the key reason for this conclusion, the fact that they also lack sufficient knowledge and skills on how to teach him may also be a factor.

TABLE 5 | The Suggestions of the participants for the transition process.

The suggestions	Participants	The number of participants (n/f)
Awareness studies should be carried out in universities.	All participants	29 (100%)
The adequacy of lecturers for the education of students with autism should be increased.	All participants	29 (100%)
Individual support should be given to students with autism during the education process.	Ali, M, S, H1, H2, H3, H4, H6, H5, H8, L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, U3, U6, U8	20 (69%)
All students and lecturers at the university should be informed about students with autism.	Ali, M, H3, H4, H8, H6, H5, L1, L4, L5, L6, L7, L8, U1, U3, U4, U8, U9, U10	19 (66%)
While making arrangements, students with autism should not be made to feel that they are different.	L2, L4, L5, U1, U6, U7	6 (21%)
Special adaptations should be made for students with autism during the assessment and evaluation process.	Ali, M, H7, L2, L6,	5 (17%)
Students with autism should have expert counselors who can intervene immediately in university life.	Ali, L2, L4, U1, U4	5 (17%)
The individual education program should be created and implemented in universities as in formal education by the ministry of national education.	M, H8, H5	3 (10%)
Students with autism should be treated with privileges in their university life.	U1, U3, U8, U9	3 (10%)
Students with autism should be encouraged to participate in social activities.	M, U9	2 (7%)
The transition process should not be left to the individual attitudes of lecturers but should be supported by legal regulations.	H6, L8	2 (7%)
Environments should be created to prevent students with autism from learning negative behaviors at university.	M	1 (3%)
Universities with students diagnosed with autism should communicate with each other and share suggestions.	H6	1 (3%)

Note: M: Ali's mother, S: Ali's sister, H: Ali' teachers in high school, A: L: Ali's lecturer, U: Ali's university classmate.

2.3.2.4 | Data From University Classmates

All of Ali's classmates expressed their concerns while evaluating Ali's academic process. They stated that although Ali was more active in the field courses, he generally had difficulties in understanding the lessons. They also stated that he sometimes interrupted the lessons, but that no one let this be a problem.

Furthermore, all of Ali's classmates stated that he got very low grades. They believe that his perception problem had a great impact on this situation. Eight of the other students (U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, U6, U7, and U9) also stated that he would become very unhappy and anxious if his exam results continued to be low.

For example, U3 mentioned:

When he gets low grades, he gets angry with himself and the lecturer. He asks why he cannot do it. We say to him that we also have low grades, to help him calm down.

Despite being aware of this grade anxiety situation, all participants except for two (U1 and U10) stated that Ali should not be given a separate exam because this would be a privilege. Also, with the exception of three participants (U5, U9, and U10), Ali's classmates believed that he would not be able to become a teacher because of concerns regarding his skills.

On this point, U8 explained:

It is not about his low grades. He does not have the skills to be a teacher. He should have gone to another department.

2.4 | Suggestions for Improving the Transition Process of University Students With Autism

At the beginning of the first semester, all participants stated that they did not know what would happen in the future. Similarly, the participants stated that there was uncertainty about what would happen in the future during the interviews held at the

end of the term, despite their experience with Ali. Table 5 shows the participants' suggestions for the transition process of university students with autism, based on their particular experience with Ali.

3 | Discussion

Transitioning to new environments is often challenging for individuals with autism, and they require appropriate support during these processes (Autism Society 2020). Therefore, an effective transition plan should be developed to support the transition from high school to university for individuals with autism (Szidon et al. 2015). However, it was found during the research process that such a plan was not implemented during the first semester of university for the student with autism, referred to here as 'Ali'. In other words, the student entered and continued his university life in the same way as a typically developing student. This situation may negatively affect the university experience of students with autism. For example, some individuals with autism may display aggressive or irritable behaviors (Fitzpatrick et al. 2016). In such cases, it is important to inform others in the university setting that these behaviors may be related to autism within the scope of a transition plan. This is because, while individuals with autism awareness may understand these behaviors as being related to the condition, those with limited awareness may interpret them as rudeness or actual aggression (Bates 2022). Such perceptions play an important role in the successful transition of individuals with autism into new environments. In this study, the absence of a structured transition plan, including awareness-raising activities for the university transition process, meant that the student's experience was largely left to chance and lacked systematic support.

The most important deficiency contributing to the uncertainty identified in the transition process was the lack of cooperation, which plays an essential role in any transition plan (Crane et al. 2019). Due to the absence of collaboration between individuals who had prior knowledge of the student and those involved in his university education, no systematic information was shared about the student at the university level. This research identified that this situation gives rise to two key risks. The first is social bias. For example, although individuals who knew the student before his transition reported that his social skills were adequate and that he did not have anger-related difficulties, some lecturers expressed concerns about a lack of social interaction (e.g., being asocial or showing tantrum-like behaviors) in the incoming student with autism. This indicates that, despite having no direct information about the student, assumptions were made about his characteristics in advance. Although individuals diagnosed with autism may present certain symptoms associated with the condition, they should be considered on an individual basis, as these symptoms vary widely between individuals (Pratt et al. 2017). However, the findings showed that the student's characteristics were generalized solely on the basis of his diagnosis, which contributed to the formation of prejudiced views. Although the social prejudices observed in this study were ultimately proven to be misconceptions, this still represents a significant risk, as social prejudice can form the basis of discrimination against

individuals or groups (Webster et al. 2022). As such, this risk may lead to serious consequences.

Another risk arising from poor cooperation in the transition process is unrealistic expectations, particularly in relation to academic life. High expectations can be beneficial, as they may increase motivation and support the development of skills in individuals with autism (e.g., Sansosti and Sansosti 2012). Therefore, in the interviews conducted at the beginning of the semester, it may be considered positive that the lecturer and classmates held high expectations for Ali's academic performance. Indeed, as one participant classmate stated, the view that "if he can come to this department, he will be successful and then achieve the teaching qualification" can be interpreted as a positive perception of his academic potential. However, this perspective is problematic, as these expectations were formed before the student's actual abilities and potential were fully known.

By contrast, in the interviews conducted at the beginning of the semester, the majority of Ali's high school teachers expressed concerns about his academic progress, limitations, and need for individual support. For this reason, it is concluded that setting realistic expectations that match the student's actual level is important in facilitating the transition process. Otherwise, as observed in this study, the initially high and unrealistic expectations held by the university environment may turn into very low or no expectations by the end of the semester. This shift may result in disappointment when expectations are not met. It is known that when individuals expect a potentially disappointing outcome, they may lower their expectations in order to reduce disappointment (e.g., Carroll et al. 2006). On the other hand, unrealistically high expectations can increase anxiety in first-year university students, such as the student with autism in this study, which may negatively affect academic performance and may even lead to dropout (Pathar and Booi 2019). Therefore, cooperation between individuals with autism, family members, and professionals during the transition process is considered important in preventing these negative outcomes.

The other disappointment arising from unrealistically high expectations due to the lack of cooperation is reflected in views regarding the student with autism's potential to achieve teacher proficiency at the end of his university education. Both Ali's family members and his high school teachers stated at the beginning of the process that he would not be able to reach teacher proficiency and that he had not enrolled in an appropriate department. On the other hand, although the participant lecturers and classmates expressed at the beginning of the semester that they believed Ali could achieve this competence, most of them had changed their views by the end of the process. It is highly problematic for a student within a faculty of education to be perceived as unable to achieve teaching competence at the end of the process. Rather than being explained solely in terms of disappointment caused by unmet unrealistic expectations, this situation also reflects a guidance-related issue in identifying an appropriate academic pathway for the student. It is important for individuals with autism to be placed in university programs that align with their competencies (Owiny 2022). In Ali's case, it may be argued that both his own

and his family's awareness of program suitability, as well as access to appropriate guidance, were limited. However, this situation cannot be explained by this factor alone, as there were also limited options in program selection due to high entrance requirements for some departments and his difficulty in relocating to another city for education. Although he was considered unlikely to achieve teacher proficiency, he was admitted to the department through an individual aptitude test and a disability quota. At this point, it is evident that the main issue lies in insufficient higher education guidance policies, which require improvement.

In addition to the risks created by the lack of cooperation, the absence of individual support at the university for Ali posed another barrier to an effective transition process. Individuals with autism should be supported on an individual basis, in line with their developmental and educational needs across different age groups (World Health Organization 2022). This support should extend to both their social life (Kuder and Accardo 2018; Zeedyk et al. 2016) and their academic life (Wheeler 2011). However, in this study, it was observed that no social support specific to the student with autism was provided, and academic support was mainly left to his family. While some lecturers did not refer to individual support at all, those who stated that they would support the student academically did not provide such support within a structured program, but rather relied on individual and informal efforts. The fact that all lecturers stated that they did not know how individuals with autism should be educated indicates a significant gap in knowledge and skills. Although required by policy, no lecturer made individual arrangements for Ali during examinations; thus, the student with autism was assessed under the same conditions as neurotypical students. However, the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) provides opportunities for adaptations such as modifying exam content for midterm and final examinations and granting additional time in a separate exam room (Council of Higher Education 2011). Despite this, no such arrangements were implemented for Ali during the research period, and as a result, his anxiety in academic life increased.

The fact that this situation occurred within a faculty of education is also noteworthy and concerning. In particular, the lack of awareness among lecturers responsible for training future teachers who may work with students with autism represents an important deficiency. However, it is not appropriate to interpret this situation solely as a lack of awareness. For example, although lecturers stated that individuals with autism might experience limitations and difficulties at university, there was no evidence of any intervention being implemented to address or prevent these challenges. Therefore, it is necessary to consider not only awareness but also quality assurance and institutional support mechanisms. In this regard, it is evident that more systematic and well-functioning disabled student units are required in Türkiye.

In addition to the elements mentioned above, cultural factors should also be considered in the transition process, as the absence of a professionally designed transition plan that includes basic components such as awareness-raising activities appears to increase the influence of cultural factors in the transition process. Türkiye is generally considered a collectivist

culture (Göregenli 1997; Imamoglu et al. 1993), in which emotions directed towards others, such as sympathy, tend to be more prominent than in individualist cultures (Markus and Kitayama 1991). In this study, instances of positive discrimination arising from sympathy were observed, where most participants at the university appeared to show a high level of concern for the student with autism, and he was, at times, treated more favorably than neurotypical students. This cultural feature may be considered beneficial for individuals with autism, as reflected in the findings where the student frequently reported feeling happy within the faculty. However, a more detailed examination of the cultural context suggests that this situation may also pose risks over time and may require careful intervention, as sympathy is an emotional response that can involve feelings of pity or sadness towards another person's difficulties (Eisenberg et al. 2006). In Türkiye, such forms of privilege may emerge through pity and compassion (Yazıcı and Uzuner 2021). The use of expressions such as “we are an emotionally strong nation” by participants in this study indicates that this risk may also be relevant for Ali. A form of inclusion based on pity and compassion may not lead to genuinely inclusive or high-quality educational practices. Indeed, some participants perceived him as a typical student and, at the same time, overlooked his individual differences. For example, the view that “while making arrangements, students with autism should not be made to feel that they are different” reflects this perspective. This attitude is also related to collectivist cultural values (Markus and Kitayama 1991) and may contribute to stigma within such contexts. It is already known that stigma towards individuals with autism is higher in collectivist cultures than in individualist cultures (Papadopoulos 2016), and this pattern may also be relevant in university settings. For instance, university students in Japan, which also has a collectivist culture, experience higher levels of autism-related stigma compared to the USA, which has a more individualist culture (Someki et al. 2018). Similarly, in this study, one lecturer suggested that some people might say the university “does not look like an education faculty; it has turned into a playground” because of the presence of a student with autism. Such views may increase the risk of stigmatization. For all these reasons, cultural factors should be considered when developing and implementing transition plans, and interventions addressing these factors should be included where necessary.

4 | Implications for Practice

The absence of a transition plan for the student with autism in this study, including cooperation and awareness-raising activities, represents a major limitation and created initial uncertainty from the outset regarding how the transition process would unfold. This uncertainty shaped the entire process by contributing to social prejudices and unrealistically high academic expectations, which, as the study progressed, evolved into misconceptions and disappointment, respectively, while uncertainty re-emerged at the final stage regarding the continuation of support and planning. Overall, although the sources of uncertainty changed over time, the process remained consistently influenced by uncertainty, which in turn contributed to anxiety throughout the transition period. In addition, the

lack of a structured transition plan during Ali's first term also amplified the influence of cultural factors, including positive discrimination, within this uncertain context. The "Continuum of Uncertainty", as illustrated in Figure 1, captures these longitudinal patterns across the study period, beginning with uncertainty in week 1, followed by the emergence of prejudice and unrealistically high expectations leading to misconceptions and disappointment during weeks 4, 7, and 10, and continuing with uncertainty in week 14.

From Figure 1, it is clear that experience alone is not sufficient to improve the transition process. For this reason, efforts to enhance the process based solely on experience, without an individualized transition plan, are inadequate. This limitation had negative consequences for Ali, including the family being left largely alone in providing individual support and increased concerns regarding his future. The study shows that individuals with autism require appropriate guidance after high school, as well as a structured and high-quality transition plan to support their integration into university life. In addition to this general recommendation for practice, participants' suggestions regarding the transition process are presented in Table 5.

All of the findings and suggestions obtained within the scope of this research were shared with the university where the study was conducted and contributed to the implementation of necessary arrangements. Although the data were shared with the disabled student unit during the research, which typically supports students with disabilities by coordinating academic accommodations and facilitating communication between students and academic staff, the planning and implementation of the required interventions took time. However, the unit had no prior experience or preparation in supporting a university student with autism, and as a result, its involvement remained

limited during the first term. In other words, support processes did not begin before the student's arrival; instead, they started after enrollment, and the first semester was largely devoted to planning. Consequently, the interventions introduced within the scope of the research were implemented at the beginning of Ali's second semester. Specifically, an autism awareness seminar focusing on Ali's case and cultural prejudices was delivered by an expert to all lecturers and classmates in Ali's course. In addition, adaptations were made to the content of Ali's midterm and final examinations, and an individual adviser from the special education department was assigned to him. Routine meetings and family collaboration were also established through this adviser. However, current higher education policies remain insufficient to support the development and implementation of a fully individualized and high-quality education plan. Furthermore, more research is needed on cultural factors and their influence. In order to ensure effective implementation of such initiatives, the university's disabled student unit should become more active in monitoring and managing the process. This is also important for the future, as the abolition of the university entrance threshold in Türkiye (Council of Higher Education 2022) may play a key role in increasing access to higher education for individuals with autism and, consequently, in the number of students with autism in universities.

5 | Limitations and Future Research

The research was based on a single university student with autism; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized. For this reason, future studies could include a larger number of participants with autism and conduct empirical research to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the transition of

Continuum of Uncertainty in the Transition Process of a University Student with Autism

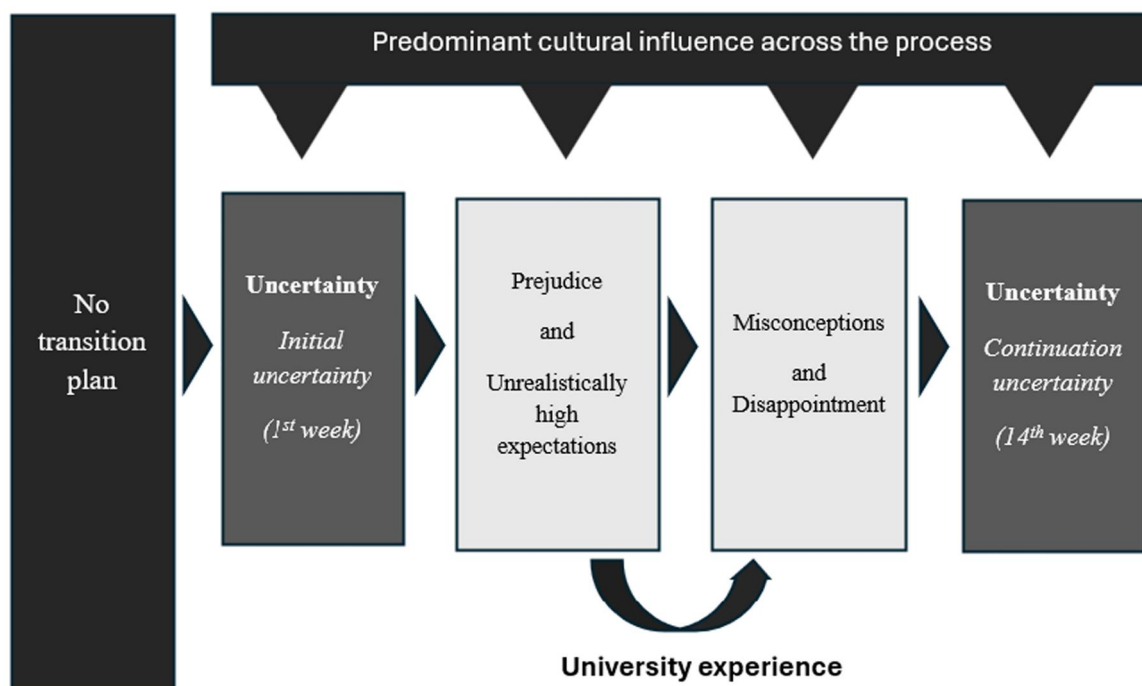


FIGURE 1 | Continuum of uncertainty in the transition process of a university student with autism.

individuals with autism to higher education. Additionally, conducting studies in countries such as Türkiye, where the number of students with autism in higher education is limited, could be important for a broader and more global understanding of their higher education experiences.

Ethics Statement

This study was approved by the Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University Ethics Committee.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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