

Bridging Theory and Practice for Early Years Education

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Editor
Prof. Dr. Abdülkadir KABADAYI

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FOREWORD

The theme of this year's book is *Bridging Theory and Practices for Early Childhood Education* with many types of research now taking on global dimensions; it is imperative to discuss theory and practices in early childhood education including the best research integrity practices. I believe that this book could catalyze strengthening international cooperation on the transfer of innovative approaches towards early childhood education.

The challenges in early childhood education are both difficult and interesting. Academicians are working on them with enthusiasm, tenacity, and dedication to develop new methods of analysis and provide new solutions to keep up with the ever-changing world. In this new age of global interconnectivity and interdependence, it is necessary to provide security practitioners, both professionals, and students, with state-of-the-art knowledge on the frontiers in early childhood education. This book is a good step in that direction.

This volume contains 10 of the chapters that were presented to editorial boards. In keeping with the formatting of the book, the papers are published in English. This year's book received a considerable number of submissions investigating a wide variety of fields in early childhood education topics.

This book provides a valuable window on early childhood education and covers the necessary components of early childhood education related to recent developments in this field. *Bridging Theory and Practices for Early Childhood Education* addresses especially educators, researchers, academics, postgraduate, parents, students, pre-service teachers, teachers, and school leaders' development. It makes recommendations to educators, parents, researchers, academics, postgraduate students, pre-service teachers, teachers, school leaders, and policymakers, and so on.

The editor would like to thank all of the authors who made this book so interesting and enjoyable. Special thanks should also be extended to the reviewers who gave their time to evaluate and to give feedback to authors of the record number of submissions with tenacity and dedication. Especially to the LVRE DE LYON Publishing House, we owe a great debt as this book would not have been possible without their consent efforts.

At this juncture, I would like to thank the authors for all of their cooperation. We hope that all of those reading enjoy these chapters of the book as much as possible.

Editor

Prof. Dr. Abdülkadir KABADAYI

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CHAPTER I

POSITIVE REFLECTIONS OF INCLUSION IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

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“The most important period of life is not the age of university studies, but the first one, the period from birth to the age of six. Childhood constitutes the most important element in an adult’s life, for it is in his early years that a man is made.”

Maria Montessori

1. Introduction

The world is witnessing some developments on the basis of human rights along with technological and scientific developments. One of the most important of these developments is the access of individuals with special needs to education. Countries now take various initiatives by developing policies for individuals born with different personal and physical characteristics to receive education in line with the principles of human rights and equality. At this point, it is very important that the opportunity of education through inclusion / integration, which enables individuals with special needs to be educated in the same environment with their peers, starts from the pre-school period. Because in this period, which covers the period from the birth of individuals to basic education, the foundation of their physical, mental, emotional and personality development is laid. For individuals with special needs, receiving education in the same environment with their peers in this period is an important factor in the formation of a society where social integration is ensured without discrimination.

There are many factors such as changing world conditions, the importance given to human beings, advances in sociology, psychology and pedagogical sciences in the formation of this thought, which develops through certain processes. In this section, first of all, the historical and legal foundations of inclusion together with the definition of inclusion will be emphasized, pre-school education and inclusive education will be explained and examples from the world will be given, and the positive reflections of inclusion in pre-school education will also be mentioned.

2. What is Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education is the activities carried out in general education institutions to increase the interaction and communication of children with typical development and children with special needs in the same environment (Moran and Abbott, 2002). In simpler terms, it means that students with special needs receive their education in the same class with their peers (Kargin, 2004, p. 25). In another definition; it is stated as a process that enables children with special needs or disabilities to receive education together with their typically developing peers, along with support services (De Boer, Pijl and Minnaert, 2010). At this point, Kargin (2004, p. 25) emphasizes that the concept of inclusion includes both the concept of co-education and the concept of supportive special education services. While co-education here means that students with special needs receive education in the same environment with their peers, supportive special education services means the supportive services provided to both the student with special needs and the teacher. Therefore, inclusion is not the direct placement of students with special needs in the general education classroom, but it is rather that these students receive education with special education support.

Diken and Batu (2020) point out that inclusion can be called a philosophical view movement, this view or philosophy aim to bring together differences and people (students, families, professionals) with their differences. In this respect, the understanding of inclusion's accepting individuals with their strengths and weaknesses can be emphasized. Ustundag, Sener and President (2021) also stated that the purpose of inclusive education is to provide support services to individuals with special needs and to integrate them into society by receiving education with their peers who do not have disabilities. Also inclusion practices aim to provide a qualified learning environment to students with special needs,

improve their social skills and enable them to benefit from equal education rights (Hanks, 2013; Salend 2005).

Based on the literature, in order to increase the social acceptance of children with special needs on the basis of human rights and equality, to ensure their belonging to the society and receive a successful education it is possible to list the basic principles of inclusive education as follows (Ainscow, 2005; Aral, 2010; Aral and Gursoy, 2007; Ceylan and Aral, 2009; Gurkan, 2010; Kargin, 2004; Odom, Buysse and Soukakou, 2011):

- Students with special needs have the right to receive education in the same environment with their peers.
- Inclusive education is a process related to the removal of barriers, and individual differences are essential.
- For a successful inclusive education, all employees, especially the school principal, should display an accepting and supportive attitude towards students with special needs.
- It is essential to start inclusive education early.
- Children in the inclusion class should be informed about their friends with special needs.
- Teacher's willingness and supportive activities for children with special needs and teachers are important for an efficient inclusive education. In this context, opportunities should be created for individuals with responsibility to develop themselves.
- An environment where all children have the opportunity to learn, play and participate in educational and social activities should be created.
- School-family-environment cooperation is essential in a qualified inclusive education. Bailey and Wolery (1992), on the other hand, stated that for a good inclusive education for children with special needs, there should be an environment where freedom is supported, adults and children feel comfortable and safe, and the teacher can make continuous observations.

3. History and Legal Foundations of Inclusive Education

The right of individuals with special needs to receive quality education together with their peers on the basis of human rights and equality has been widely adopted today. Kargin (2004, p.26), who stated that there was no widespread study on the education of individuals with special needs until the end of the 16th

century, examined the development of special education and inclusion in the world by dividing it into three periods. These three periods are; the period until the 1900s, the period between 1900-1960, the period from 1960 to the present. It is known that in the nomadic Indian tribes, elderly people in need of care were left to their fate by leaving food and fuel with them, while in some Eskimo tribes they were left to freeze on glaciers somewhere far from the village. In ancient Egypt, on the other hand, there was the belief that the disabled individuals' coming to life was as a result of the sins of their parents (Enc et al., 1987).

Systematic studies on the education of disabled people, which started in the 16th century, progressed and after a while, a school for the hearing impaired was opened in France in the mids of the 18th century. This school was followed by the schools opened in England, Germany and America (Aral, 2010, p. 40; Kargin, 2004, p. 27). Wood (1998) states that educational studies that started in Europe in the 1700s began in the USA in the 1800s. Aral (2010) states that the first individual work with mentally retarded children was started by the French Jean Marc Gaspard Itard's speech and hearing training for a mentally retarded child named Victor. Later, Italian Dr. Maria Montessori started to develop educational materials for the education of mentally handicapped children. The period between 1900 and 1960 is seen as a period in which the number of special education schools increased in the USA and many European countries. In this period, when the thought that students with special needs could not be educated in general education classrooms, services for these students were carried out in special education schools. However, in these years, special education and general education schools started to work together in England in 1928 with various efforts towards inclusion, and with the law adopted in 1944, it was accepted that the children who were in compliance should continue their education in general education classes (OECD, 1995; Lindsay, 2003).

For the period from 1960 to the present, the concept of inclusion has been much more accepted and there have been many developments. It is possible to list the factors that made the concept of inclusion more accepted in this period as follows (Aral, 2010; Kargin, 2004):

- Problems experienced through educational practices in special education classes, difficulties in children's social adaptation.
- Criticisms of education in special education classes and pressure groups formed.

- Adoption of the concept of normalization based on providing normal life opportunities to individuals with special needs and changes in attitudes towards these individuals.
- Expansion of early special education with the increase in research on inclusive education.
- Legislation on inclusion in countries.

Inclusion practices have been included in the laws of many countries since the 1970s. Examples are the laws passed in Italy in 1971, the UK in 1974, Norway in 1976, France and the USA in 1975. In Turkey, in 1983, the “Children with Special Educational Needs Law” came into force. Along with these laws, some international organizations have also influenced the policies of countries with their various studies (Nal and Tuzun, 2011). For example, in 1994, the “World Conference on Special Education” was held in Salamanca, Spain with the participation of more than 300 people from 92 states and 25 international organizations, and the Salamanca declaration on the principles, policies and practices of special education and the action framework was adopted. The Salamanca declaration is the first international recognition that students with special needs should not only be included in the education system, but the education system should include all students in accessing quality education. Similarly, ten years after the work started in 1990 within the scope of UNESCO’s “Education for All” movement, the World Education Forum was held in Dakar, Senegal to evaluate the work done in this process. In 2006, the “United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (ECHR) was accepted at the United Nations General Assembly and the right to receive education through inclusion was guaranteed in the international law by Article 24 (INICO, 2009).

The impact of all these studies carried out in the international community on the developments in inclusive education for individuals with special needs is clearly seen. In the light of these developments and studies, it can be predicted that the practice of inclusive education will become much more widespread and qualified day by day.

4. Pre-School Education and Inclusion

Pre-school education; from the birth of the child until the start of basic education, plays an important role in the future life of children. It is the education provided by the family and institutions where the physical, mental, psychomotor, socio-

emotional and language developments are largely completed and the personality is shaped (Aral, 2010, p.14). According to another definition, pre-school education is a form of education in which adults are active in the process from birth to primary school, taking into account the individual differences, abilities and developmental characteristics of children, who discover their creativity, positively affect their personalities, give them self-confidence and support their development (Zembat, 1994). In a more comprehensive expression, in the process from the birth of children until they start primary school:

- Supporting the child with holistic development,
- Focusing on developmental characteristics and individual differences,
- Offering activities according to their interests and abilities,
- Provide pre-primary cognitive, affective and social skills for primary school,
- Reflecting the culture of the society,
- Providing an environment full of rich stimulants,

it is a planned and systematic education process that can be implemented by offering different alternative programs based on domestic or institutional basis (Gulacti, 2014).

In these early years of life, where the most development in human life is experienced, pre-school education is no longer a priority but a necessity for our world (Avcı & Toran, 2015, p. 19). Compared to other periods of life, the pre-school period is the period in which the development is rapid and the areas of development are the most related to each other. It is known that physical, psychosocial and personality developments' foundations are laid in these years, which are considered as critical years in child development and develop in the same direction in later ages. Behaviors acquired at these ages greatly affect the personality structure, habits, beliefs, attitudes and value judgments in adulthood (Aral et al., 2002). Therefore, knowing the characteristics of preschool children is very important for the education of both typically developing children and children with special needs. Stating that the early childhood years are of great importance in the life of the individual, Avcı and Ersoy (1999) emphasize that the earlier children's problems are identified, the earlier they can be placed in a program suitable for their needs.

Aral (2010, p.38), who states that children with special needs can develop some skills related to life more easily through positive relationships with their peers, emphasizes that inclusion is an application that facilitates these positive

relationships, and therefore the preschool period gains importance. At the same time, she states that it is known that the development of children with special needs accelerates with early education studies. According to Salend (2011) inclusive education in the pre-school period is the starting step for succeeding in the aim to ensure that children, families, educators and other people in the society accept individuals with special needs, that these individuals see themselves as a part of the society, feel belonging, and ensure their acceptance to schools and other institutions and organizations. It is accepted that the difficulties experienced by children with special needs can be reduced or prevented with early education in this period when children acquire basic skills. In line with all this information and various sources, it is possible to list the aims of early inclusive education as follows (Darica, 1992; Ceylan & Aral, 2009; Aral, 2010):

- To ensure that children with special needs and their peers benefit from each other in the best way through joint activities and to support their development.
- To contribute to the positive self-development of children with special needs, to support their personality and social development, and to facilitate them to live as independent individuals in the society.
- To facilitate the acceptance of children with special needs by their peers, to provide better recognition and to create opportunities that will contribute to their education.
- To facilitate the living of children with special needs in the community by making the best use of their interests and talents by creating an academic, social and emotional unity together with physical unity.

5. Samples from International Approaches to Inclusion and Individuals with Special Needs

Increasingly, various activities are carried out in many countries for the education of children with special needs in the least restrictive environments. First of all, when we look at the Finnish example, it is seen that an inclusive and supportive education system and a holistic approach to school culture are adopted in Finland. In this country, it is of great importance to develop personalities as much as possible by taking into account the strengths and developmental-educational needs of all children (Nal & Tuzun, 2011, p. 14). In Finland, some steps have been taken in schools and pedagogical fields for the versatile development of

every child by receiving support in general education schools. With the principle of decentralization and flexible curriculum, local governments and schools have been given the opportunity to create their own special curriculum, provided that they adhere to a general framework. In this context, teachers have a say in curriculum planning, and cooperation with social institutions, health institutions and families are encouraged. Teachers in Finland receive quality education sufficient to meet the developmental and educational characteristics of different students. As soon as the areas where children have difficulties are noticed in the Finnish education system, early intervention is implemented and a healthy and safe school climate is created that prevents social exclusion. In addition, school-family-collaboration is considered important, and this cooperation is based on the principle of mutual respect and equality of the shareholders (Jorvien, 2007). As can be seen, inclusive steps have been taken on the basis of education under equal conditions for all, and a system has been built within the framework of early intervention and cooperation.

Reggio Emilia kindergarten, which was born in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and was selected as the world's best early childhood institution by Newsweek in 1991, is dominated by a contemporary, high-quality, and child-friendly approach (Thornton and Brunton, 2015). In Italy, one of the best mainstreaming countries since the mid-1970s, mainstreaming education became compulsory by law in 1977 (Gandini and Kaminsky, 2006). Reggio Emilia approach consists of parents' and educators' dreams of establishing an extraordinary school in Italy, children's experiences, development-learning theories, social constructivist understanding and cognitive development theory foundations. All children, including children with special needs, have a place in these schools, but all children have the right to go to school and receive a good education. In these schools, instead of labeling children with negative labels, the understanding of accepting their differences as one of any difference in the society is dominant (Malaguzzi, 1998). The fact that a child with special needs hospitalized means he wants to go to school when he says "I want to go to my family" is a good example of inclusion studies being a part of the society (Thompson, 2006). Inan (2021), who conducted a study on inclusive education in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools, emphasizes that children with special needs who receive education in these schools feel at home, and that it is possible for education centers in Turkey to create such schools, inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach.

A practice guide was prepared in 1994 so that all students with special needs in England can benefit from special education services. In this guide, it is emphasized that individuals with special needs should be identified at any stage of the education process, and that the arrangements to be made in this context require continuity as long as the individual's needs continue. At the same time, the needs of as many individuals with special needs as possible should be met within the scope of inclusion, and these individuals should benefit from the widest and most comprehensive education (Batu & Iftar, 2010, p. 15). In the example of England, it is seen that preparing an individualized education program (IEP) for the inclusive education of children with special needs and a multi-faceted and gradual evaluation system based on the acceptance of differing needs come to the fore. With these arrangements made, most of the children who would receive special education received education in general education environments. In addition, a five-stage evaluation and education system was established by realizing that the uniform evaluation and education approach was insufficient in determining and meeting the needs of children with special needs (Nal & Tuzun, 2011). In summary, the preparation of individualized education programs in the UK draws attention with a multifaceted and gradual evaluation system.

In Turkey, as in other countries, many studies are carried out for students with special needs and inclusion practices. With the 2023 Vision Document of the Ministry of National Education (MEB), it is aimed to increase the educational services that support the culture of living together with the peers of children with special needs, and various action plans have been prepared in this direction. In this context:

- Conducting screening studies to identify children with special needs,
- Coordinating special education with an inter-institutional monitoring and implementation within the Ministry of National Education,
- Supporting teachers through in-service training in order to increase the quality of inclusive education,
- Preparation of mobile education sets in order to reach every child with special needs, making arrangements for home education for families in need

are planned to develop and implement new inclusion models by conducting joint studies with both national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and institutions (MEB, 2018; Ozaydin, 2019). Many projects are carried out within the Ministry. Studies are carried out to support

the development of teachers, school administrators and other actors involved in inclusion/integration practices. In this context, the “Development of Inclusive Education Project” (BEGEP) is one of the studies carried out to contribute to an innovative, sustainable and inclusive education system. Within the scope of the “Accessible Life from the East to the West” project, inclusion and special education classes were opened with physical and equipment improvements in the selected provinces. (see <http://orgm.meb.gov.tr/>). Another project, the “Inclusive Early Childhood Education for Children with Disabilities Project”, aimed to contribute to the participation of children with disabilities in social life through quality inclusive education and facilitate their access to social life in the long run. In addition, the “Project for Increasing Quality and Access in Early Childhood Education”, which covers all children, especially disadvantaged children, is carried out in a way that supports and complements these studies. Likewise, the “Strengthening the Culture of Democracy in Basic Education Project” was implemented in order to increase awareness of democratic competencies, human rights and democracy in the society (see <http://tegm.meb.gov.tr/>). Apart from these, as one of the scientific projects of Ankara University; in order to develop a model that increases the success of students with special needs and their independent participation in the society, the “Inclusion model development project for students with special needs” was implemented. In the project, in-class individual support, peer support, source (supportive education) room with individual teaching practice, source (supportive education) room with small group practice and support service class practice were carried out for students. The findings obtained within the scope of this project were presented as papers in many meetings, the first year implementation results of the project were presented by the project manager at the 2004 Sabanci University “Good Practices” conference, and in 2007 it was presented at the 17th “Special Education Conference” (Akcamete et al., 2009). In Odluyurt’s (2007) doctoral study, in which he examined the contribution of pre-school preparation to inclusion for children with special needs, students were placed in an inclusion environment and followed for a period of time. The researcher points out that the development of preparation skills for inclusion in the early childhood period, where a very important part of learning takes place, is of great importance for children with special needs.

From the examples and practices given above, it is seen that qualified studies on the education of children with special needs have increased, inclusive

education has been handled in a wider scope in the historical process, and it has become more inclusive and integrative.

6. Positive Reflections of Inclusion in Preschool Education

When it comes to the positive results of inclusive education, the benefits for students with special needs usually come to mind. However, contrary to popular belief, students with special needs receiving education in general education classes have positive benefits not only for themselves, but also for other students in that class, educators, and all families, whether they have children with special needs or not. These benefits, which were partially mentioned above, will be discussed in detail here.

6.1. Positive Reflections for Students with Special Needs

Inclusive education contributes to the academic development of these students, their ability to communicate with other people and their socialization (Goksu & Cevik, 2004). Inclusion has benefits for students with special needs such as observing and imitating other students, communicating with them, and social competence (Iler, 2015). It is stated that these students, who study with their peers, communicate more, receive more social support and establish friendships for a longer period of time (Salend, 1998). In the long term, it is possible for these children to develop a stronger sense of self and gain more confidence and independence with inclusive education (Henninger & Gupta, 2014). In addition, the effects of these gains gained in the early period are also evident in the future education levels. At this point, Brennan (2005) states that children who receive inclusive education in the pre-school period will contribute to their readiness for inclusive practices that they will encounter at primary and secondary school levels.

6.2. Positive Reflections for Students Without Special Needs

It is known that there are some concerns that education with students with special needs will have negative academic and behavioral effects on other students. However, on the contrary to popular belief, studies show that inclusion does not negatively affect students' academic and social development, rather self-confidence develops positively with these areas. Inclusive education for students who do not have special needs provides benefits such as understanding and respecting individual differences, and understanding individuals with different

characteristics by making friends with them (Salend, 1998). In addition to this, with the acceptance of individuals with special needs; skills such as tolerance, cooperation, common life, democratic and moral understanding also develop (Goksu & Cevik, 2004).

Stating that children are ready to accept each other as they are, Thompson gives a striking example on the subject. According to this, a child whose father is dying of cancer plays doctor every day at school, wants his friends to lie on the bed like a patient and becomes a doctor. However, after a while, a child with Down syndrome is happy to play this game while his friends get bored of playing this game all the time (Thompson, 2006). This example clearly reveals how accurate these positive developments are for students with special needs to receive education in the same environment with their peers on the basis of human rights and equality.

6.3. Positive Reflections for Families with and Without Special Needs Children

Families develop school-family cooperation with inclusive education, realize their children's capacities and shape their expectations accordingly, try to help them by knowing about the needs of children and increase their feelings of trust in their children (Gurkan, 2010; Goksu and Cevik, 2004). On the subject, Guzel Ozmen (2003) states that factors such as the approach of families with and without special needs children, the approach of the teacher to the subject, the proper preparation of the environment and the beginning of the program at an early age are effective in the success of the inclusive program.

6.4. Positive Reflections for Teachers

As one of the basic requirements for a successful inclusive education, Rakap (2017) points out that teachers working in an inclusive environment should have the skills to adapt teaching according to children with special needs, to identify effective natural teaching approaches and to use these approaches. Inclusive education provides skills for teachers such as preparing a program according to the needs of students and arranging the educational environment. In addition, it provides the opportunity to communicate and cooperate with colleagues such as special education teachers and counselors (Kargin, 2004). It also contributes to the development of skills such as gaining competence in preparing IEP, respect

for individual differences, acceptance, tolerance and evaluation (Goksu & Cevik, 2004).

As a result; it should not be forgotten that individuals with special needs are a part of the society and these individuals have the right to receive education in the same class with their peers. It is possible to lay the foundations of a healthy society where there is no exclusion with a qualified inclusive education that starts in pre-school periods, for individuals to act independently, to trust themselves and each other. Contributions of all segments of society (families, teachers, NGOs, various institutions and organizations, etc.) are important for the success of this educational practice of which many positive reflections are seen.

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CHAPTER II

SOCIAL IMPACTS OF VIOLENCE IN CHILDHOOD

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1. Introduction

Violence and crime, which have existed throughout the history of humanity and caused anxiety and fear, must be explained within the scope of individuals and society and because it has many factors, it is a subject that needs to be addressed in a very wide scope from law to medicine, from psychology to sociology. It is a difficult and complex situation to understand and explain as there are many factors behind violent behavior and criminal acts. It is possible to raise the questions such as “Is violence hereditary? Is violence a learned behavior? Are kids criminal? Is it children that are pushed to crime?”. Since violence and delinquency in children depend on many factors, this study deals with the issue from a multidimensional perspective and tries to explain it in this context.

It is known that most of the children exhibit the behavior as they learn it and they learn the violent behaviors from their environment. Every child finds himself/herself in the social group which is called family from birth. Afterwards, her social circle expands with school, friends and peer groups and s/he becomes a member of those groups. The group that the child belongs to has an effect on the child’s behavior. Most children’s behaviors are affected by the groups they are in and the behavior of the people around them, and children’s behaviors shape. Kağıtçıbaşı and Cemalcılar (2014) define this situation as the behavior of conforming to the group. Children’s compliance with other members of the group they are in can be considered as a requirement for being a member of the group. Although family members and peer groups are important in influencing children’s behavior, this effect can be expressed as the social effect of the social

group. By adapting to the group they are in, children adopt their friends' behaviors and can turn their behavior into action, including violence. For these reasons, various approaches handle the delinquency of children differently. According to Yücel (2008), positivists first dealt with the delinquency of children by examining genetic factors, and then focused on psychological effects such as personality development, moral development and learning from other factors. People who support the classical approaches emphasized that the individuals commit their criminal behaviors with their free will. In the sociological approach, they tried to explain criminal behavior with economic and social class, social structure theories referring to poverty, social process theories focusing on family relations, peer and friend relations. In this regard, Bartollas and Schmallegger (2017) stated that developmental models handle the factors which lead individuals to commit crimes differently, and that developmental models explain the issue by focusing on the interaction of the individual and the environment.

Children are not born as a criminal, their violent behavior does not appear out of nowhere, and children are not dragged into crime all of a sudden. Juvenile delinquency requires a process.

Guilmet and Whited (2000) stated that the child, who is a member of the family, and the family and the school, which is a part of the society, are affected by the society in which they live. The high number of negative behaviors in the society, the existence of economic inadequacy and poverty, the absence of institutions and organizations in the society that can support children and families, or the inadequacy of these institutions cause the emergence of crimes and violence.

McCord et al. (2001) The family and school environment in which the child lives is effective in the emergence of crime and violence. Especially during adolescence, the negative conditions of the environment in which the child lives have influence on juvenile delinquency. The results of the study show that there is a relationship between the environment in which the child lives and crime rates. Environment is an effective factor in anti-social behavior and delinquency. If the environment where the child is born and lives in is poor and where crime and violence are intense, it is seen as a great possibility that the child will be adversely affected by this environment.

Regardless of which approach is used to explain the factors affecting violence and criminal behavior, it is generally accepted that childhood is the most risky period for the development of delinquency. Patterson et al. (1989)

highlighted that adequate parental control and attachment to parents during childhood decrease the tendency to delinquency while insufficient parental control and low level of attachment to parents increase the criminal tendency. Chu (2002) stated that negative child and parent relations in the early stages of life and weak attachment to parents are effective factors for delinquency, and he also stated that these have been detected by various studies.

In this study, the effect of childhood on adult delinquency are comprehensively discussed together with factors which result from family, school, peer group and out-of-school times and which affect violence and delinquency in childhood.

2. The Effect of Childhood on Adult Delinquency

It is generally accepted that there is a relationship between behaviors in childhood and criminal acts committed at later ages. For this reason, it is possible to search in childhood period the origins of the criminal acts of individuals who grow with the influence of the factors which drag children into crime and who become criminal at later ages. Risk factors in childhood affect possible delinquency at later ages. Therefore, early intervention is required to prevent delinquency in children.

Studies showed that delinquency at later ages can be seen as a continuation of anti-social behaviors in childhood, especially the family, school environment and peer group where the child grows up may have negative characteristics, and exposure to the effects of criminal peers and experiencing some negative behaviors are effective in the formation of delinquency. Mandelzys (1979), Farrington (1983), Gendreau et al. (1996) stated that the presence of behavioral problems in childhood are the best predictors of delinquency and criminal career that may develop at later ages. Ge et al. (2001) stated that some behavioral problems that occur early in human life are an important factor in the continuation of delinquency in the future.

Some important results have been revealed in studies on how violence and criminal behaviors in childhood affect delinquency at later ages and to what extent the factors, which drag children into crime in childhood, lead them to crime. McCord (1979) stated that 36% of the violent behaviors which an individual exhibits at later ages originate from childhood and revealed that factors such as insufficient parental supervision during childhood, parents'

distrust of their children, conflict between parents, and the presence of violence in the family are predictors of childhood violence.

Considering the violence and criminal behaviors experienced in childhood, it can be said that these behaviors will be observed even worse at later ages and will form the criminal career of the individual. Therefore, we can evaluate these behaviors in childhood as predictors of delinquency at later ages. In this context, Robins (1979) explained that antisocial behavior in childhood leads to adult antisocial behavior at advanced age, and therefore, predictors of antisocial personality development should be sought in childhood. Loeber and Dishion (1983) expressed that problematic childhood behaviors such as stealing, lying, exhibiting some violent behaviors, and truancy are the predictors of beginning of an individual's criminal career.

Factors that exist in childhood and lead children to crime can be evaluated as predictors and determinants of violence and crime at later ages. Welsh and Farrington (2012) found that the factors such as childhood impulsivity, attention problems, low academic achievement, insufficient parental control, parental conflict, presence of anti-social parents, low maternal age, high number of family members, insufficient economic status of the family, and coming from a broken family are predictors of delinquency at later ages. Simon et al. (1994) determined that the inadequacy of child-parent relations is among the causes of early beginning of crime and some conflicts between parents and children will push the children to be with their delinquent peers and children who are with delinquent peers will begin to feel attached to them after a certain period of time. In their studies, they also determined that there are problems which result from parents on the basis of delinquency especially before the age of fourteen and they associated the causes of delinquency at older ages with deviant peer attachment. Justice et al. (1974) emphasized that some problems experienced in childhood such as having problems at school, having problems with peers, fighting, anger, hyperactivity and urinary incontinence are the precursors of chronic aggressive behaviors that may occur at later ages. Hellman and Blackman (1966) stated that some behaviors such as deliberate arson and urinary incontinence during sleep are predictors of future violent behaviors.

The stubbornness which emerges in children leads to resistance and avoidance of authority at later ages. As a result of this situation, behaviors such as leaving home, dropping out of school and uncontrollable rebellion are seen in children. In the beginning, the delinquency adventure of the child starts with

petty lies and petty theft acts, then it continues in the form of wealth crimes and moderately serious types of delinquency. The next stage is serious crimes followed by driving with the vehicle which is stolen and more serious theft. The last stage continues in the form of violence, bullying, fighting (Lab, 2010; Brownin and Loeber, 1999; Kelly et al. 1997). It has been observed that a large proportion of criminals commit minor crimes during their childhood such as lying, fighting, exhibiting violent, negative or aggressive behaviors, dropping out of school and leaving home, having some disagreements with their parents and defying their parents. This shows that antisocial behaviors in childhood are predictors of delinquency at later ages and it also shows the importance of childhood in the development of adult delinquency (Kızmaz, 2006).

Generally, the risks of adolescence are discussed in relation to violence and criminal behavior. However, different behaviors are observed in different age groups for childhood. In the study conducted by Farrington(1997), it was stated that anti-social behaviors such as aggression, being troublesome, failing at school, truancy, reacting thoughtlessly or immediate response and hyperactivity at the age of 8 are predictors of future delinquency. Therefore, behaviors in childhood such as bullying, lying, truancy and cruelty to animals etc. are the basis of delinquency.

In connection with the subject, negative behaviors towards animals in childhood are also seen. Regardless of the age group, violence perpetrated by children against animals is an important factor in the tendency to commit a crime. As Farrington (1997), Hellman and Blackman (1966) stated, perpetrating violence and cruelty to animals in childhood are predictors of future violent behavior.

It is known that a significant proportion of criminals, though not all, exhibit antisocial behaviors in childhood, commit crimes and continue such behaviors at later ages. It is not possible to say that all criminal acts result from anti-social behaviors and delinquency in childhood (Eggleston and Lab, 2002). Although a significant proportion of adult delinquents have committed crimes during their childhood, all adult delinquency is not an extension of childhood delinquency.

Cottle et al. (2001) found that the age of committing crimes at later ages coincides with childhood. They also expressed that one-third of those who commit a crime between the ages of 10-16 committed a crime again at the age range of 17-24, and about half of them committed a crime again between the

ages of 25-32. In terms of gender, the earlier the age of first offense for boys, the higher the probability that these children will turn into repeat offenders.

3. The Effect of Family on Juvenile Delinquency

The family environment is an environment that contains both risk and protective factors for children in being dragged into violence and crime. For example, a child who is harmed by one of the family members can be protected by another family member. The family, which is a social unit in which the child is born and raised and gains basic cultural values, does not always offer positive experiences, but sometimes negative experiences are also encountered. For this reason, the family is one of the areas of life that can be associated with the causes of being dragged into crime.

The society in which the family lives and the cultural structure and values of that society directly affect the children as well as the family. The family is the primary institution in the upbringing of children. As in every developmental area of children, family is the institution where personality development is provided and most values are gained. In this respect, it is important what kind of family environment children are brought up in. It is not right to expect children who grow up in a family where there are violence, neglect, fear and conflict to grow up healthy and safe. Violence and abusive behaviors which the family exhibit to each other or to others are the source of childhood traumas. The family environment, which should be the safest place for children, loses this feature and turns into the most dangerous environment for children. For this reason, it is necessary to look for the source of the crimes that will be committed at later ages and the anti-social tendencies that will exist in the family environment where the children are raised. According to Öz (2017), traumas experienced between the ages of 0-6 have important effects on human life, and traumatic events experienced during adolescence have extremely negative effects on the life of the individual.

Children can easily learn criminal and violent behaviors by hearing and seeing them from their families, peers and friends as well as from the corporal punishment methods used by their families and close circles and the media for discipline.

Loeber (1986) examined family-related variables that increase the risk of delinquency in children under four headings: neglect, conflict, deviance and

uneasiness. Loeber stated that the fact that parents spare little time for their children and do not show the necessary attention will lead to neglect, and conflict in the family will arise as a result of parents' inconsistent or wrong discipline methods towards their children. Moreover, Loeber stated that the fact that parents are individuals who committed crimes and have criminal structures is a deviance, and that the problems in marriage and leaving the house due to the conflict in the family lead to uneasiness. According to Stouthamer-Loeber, the most effective factor in delinquency is parents who neglect their children. The least effective element is the element of uneasiness.

While communication is a basic element in order to exist and be accepted in every group and environment communication is important in the family. Insufficient communication in the family is one of the family risk factors for juvenile delinquency. The communication in the family has an effect on the delinquency of children (Thoyibah et al., 2017). The kind of communication between family members is functional communication because functional communication is tolerant, guiding and effective. This communication method enables the child to gain a positive self-perception. Dysfunctional communication causes an uneasy family environment. In families with dysfunctional communication, the rate of delinquency is high. Delinquency of boys is high among divorced parents. Although there are various reasons for this, the child living with a single parent is deprived of the functional communication environment in the family. Hirsch (2009) also defined crime as a result of the weakening of social ties and inadequate communication with children's families, friends, peers and the society in which they live.

The low level of education of the parents is an important family factor in the delinquency of children. In this regard, Akduman et al. (2007) stated that parental characteristics and the bond that parents established with their children were determinants of delinquency. For example, as the education level of the mother and father increases, the rate of adolescents' involvement in crime decreases. Education level changes parents' attitudes and behaviors about raising children. Children spend most of their life with their family. Children who grow up with educated parents and spend a long and quality time with them learn from their parents how to pose a positive approach in coping with the troubles. Many studies on this subject confirm this situation. The parents of children who are dragged into crime are alive and married (Güneş and Gökler, 2017; Karataş, 2016; Tezcan, 2015). Most of children have three or four siblings

and they live in a large family. The parents of most children who dragged into crime are primary school graduates and their education level is low.

Farrington (1997), Farrington (2003) remarked that family factors such as weak parental control, harsh and cruel discipline in the family, physical abuse of the child or child maltreatment, inconsistency towards children, negative and inadequate parent-child relationship, parent neglect of the children, conflict between parents, broken family structure, delinquent parents and delinquent siblings in the family are effective in juvenile delinquency. Social-economic factors are expressed as low income of the family, lack of a regular and permanent job, lack of housing and extended family structure.

Authoritarian parenting which is claimed to discipline children is an important factor in juvenile delinquency. Authoritarian parenting is the most ineffective parenting type in preventing delinquency (Mowen and Schroeder (2015)). Authoritarian parenting has the least deterrent effect on delinquency. Children who define their mothers as authoritarian have a high rate of delinquency, so parental support is the biggest factor in reducing delinquency rates.

Capaldi and Peterson (1996) stated that violence and aggressive behaviors are more common in children from families where harsh and inconsistent discipline was applied and they are also related to insufficient parental control and inconsistent and harsh discipline understanding of parents in the delinquency of children. Petrosino et al. (2009) stated that parental guidance and supervision were insufficient and weak, and familial characteristics that lead to weak supervision were risk factors for delinquency of children.

Factors which result from the family and lead children to delinquency in the early period also negatively affect other social environments. Antisocial tendencies that develop in the family environment also affect the relationships of the individual in school and peer environments (Patterson et al., 1989). Keeping individuals away from social relations which prevents them from socializing increases their probability of abetting or committing crimes.

The region where people live in is one of the factors that determine the behavior of families towards children and their child-rearing attitudes. Unplanned urbanization and migration mobility are among the factors which adversely affect the structure of families, their lifestyles, their intra-family and social relations, and their social-economic status. As a result of migration mobility, cities grow in an unplanned way and life standards and socio-economic opportunities decrease inversely. Children who are driven into crime

come from families with problems such as poverty, unemployment, lack of education, family conflict due to unplanned urbanization (Jaggers et al., 2016). The inadequacy of social and economic opportunities caused by unplanned urbanization brings other negativities for children. For example, factors such as socio-economic level and social class affect factors such as positive parental behavior and positive peer relationships, which protect children against crime. Poverty is not a prerequisite for crime, but poverty-related conditions contain risk factors leading to delinquency. In the regions where poverty is common, risk factors such as negative-delinquent peer relationships and careless and inadequate parental approaches are also prevalent accordingly. Poverty, unplanned urbanization, unemployment and family problems cause children to move away from the family (Karataş, 2016). Children who move away from their families are exposed to risk factors in this process. Thus, children move away from education and social life and they are faced with problems with personality development. Consequently, these children are dragged into crime in their peer groups and social circles.

Clarke (1995) stated that violence behaviors and exposure to violence are related to socio-economic variables such as age, gender and place of residence, as well as individuals' lifestyles. It is evaluated that the lifestyles of individuals are important in being exposed to crime and being dragged into crime. Regarding the subject, Miethe and Meier (1994) stated that depending on the lifestyles of individuals, the factors of time and space are related to getting exposed to violence and they also stated the effect of being in places and times where there is a risk of violence and being together with criminal individuals on being a victim of crime and being dragged into crime.

Various studies found that children living in disadvantaged areas are at greater risk of crime, delinquency and violence than children from wealthy families and areas. They stated that an important reason is that children living in disadvantaged areas are exposed to risks, especially being exposed to criminal role models such as drug dealers or gangs, and thus a negative socialization. Especially children who grow up in these regions are more easily dragged into crime. (Sampson, 1985; Sampson and Lauritsen, 1994; Elliott et al., 1996; Nicholas et al., 2005). Children living in disadvantaged areas witness more violence. Children are more desensitized to acts of violence by witnessing numerous crimes and violence (Schneider, 2015).

The inability to meet the needs of children who live in crowded families for various reasons and parents' neglect cause various behavioral problems in children. Parental relations, constant arguments and fights affect the child and create an unhappy, anxious and insecure environment for the child. These are the factors which directly result from the family and cause the child to be dragged into crime. The most effective factor in the delinquency of children is the family (Çoban, 2012). Factors such as neglect of the child in the family, starting to work at a young age, living on the street and using drugs are related to the delinquency of children. The child would easily have the same criminal and problematic behavior patterns which exist in her/his entourage. The reason why the child exhibits problematic behaviors is that s/he is exposed to violence in the family and the circle of friends.

Various studies showed that criminals differ from non-criminals in terms of family structure. In this regard, Farrington (1989) stated that the presence of an arrested parent in the family is a predictor of delinquency in the future for boys. Graham and Bennett (1995) stated that the main factor which affects juvenile delinquency and whether children have tendency to commit crimes is the quality and continuity of their relationships with their parents.

The deterioration of the family structure is one of the main factors which play a role in driving children to violence and crime. Guilmet and Whited (2000) stated that factors such as neglect of the child, increase in parental conflicts, divorced parents or loss of family members, the fact that parents do not have a job to sustain their economic life, and the fact that parents do not have sufficient income are important factors in driving children to delinquency. In particular, the absence of a father in the family, as a result of which the mother has to work, lead to the emergence of anti-social behaviors in the child. In this respect, the deterioration in the family structure generally causes a decrease in the support of families towards children.

4. School Influence on Juvenile Delinquency

Factors which result from the family about driving children to crime and violence also head the education process off in the school and these factors cause children to be dragged into crime. Children of the families whose economic level is not sufficient come to school with malnourishment and health problems. The children of the families who do not supervise adequately and do not have

control over their children come to school without their basic needs such as security and love. At the same time, families with a low level of education and who do not care enough for their children do not cooperate with the school and do not give sufficient support to the education process. Thus, various factors which result from the family indirectly neutralize the school with a similar effect and contribute to the delinquency of children.

Chung et al. (2002) stated that the school factor should be added in addition to individual, familial and peer-related factors regarding delinquency. Fager and Boss (1998) stated that the negative conditions in and around the school play an active role in the learning of crime and violence in children. Negative conditions such as extremely large and crowded schools and classrooms, inadequacies of education programs, low academic achievement, indifference of students to school and lessons, inadequacy of socio-cultural and physical facilities of the school, lack of communication between school-family and environment, gangs and violence at school lead to increased disorder and chaos in schools and the emergence of crime and violence.

One of the important problems in schools today is gangs. Human nature wants to belong to a group and to be accepted in that group. This desire is especially high during adolescence. If there are children who are driven to violence and crime in groups, it is possible that other children are also affected by them and are driven into crime.

School-age children who leave or drop out of school at an early age have a significant impact on their delinquency. Because children who leave or drop out of school lose some jobs and opportunities that they can have with education in the future. Being deprived of these opportunities, which can be obtained with the contribution of education, can be effective in the formation of delinquency.

The effects of variables such as the region of residence, school and peer group are important in the emergence of violence and crime and children's learning of violent behavior. Reasons such as low socio-economic levels of families, crowded families, unemployment of parents cause neglect of children in the family. The low number of teachers and the pedagogical inadequacies of teachers, the absence or inadequacy of psychological counseling and guidance services, crowded class in the schools cause the neglect of children and ignoring.

School and education is one of the important factors in preventing delinquency. (Bilir, 2009). Teachers and school administrators who work in schools have an active role in this regard. In particular, that teachers are

consistent in the application of school rules and have sufficient professional knowledge are more effective than other measures. School-family cooperation and the use of the school area to evaluate children's free time are important measures to prevent delinquency (Uludağı, 2011). The fact that parents do not know where and with whom their children are, what they do, whether they have a close friend or not, and whether they attend school regularly, lead adolescents to commit crimes.

School, which is one of the important risk factors for juvenile delinquency, manifests itself with the indicators such as low academic performance, school failure, and dropping out of school. In this regard, Hirschi (1969) points out that schools and academic success are determinants of criminal behavior. School dropouts and low academic achievement are strong predictors of delinquency in children according to several studies (Farrington, 1989; Lab, 2010). Likewise, the school environment is the place where the child socialises and encounters the written rules for the first time after the age of six or seven. The child establishes relationships with adults and peers after this period. School is the most important center of this relationship. A child's success or failure at school deeply affects his/her whole life. Children who are unsuccessful at school, have insufficient self-confidence, violate the rules and drop out of school are mostly driven to crime. We should be aware of this situation and pay attention to it.

The corporal punishments carried out by families and school, which they consider to impose as a correct behavior, have an important effect on juvenile delinquency. While there are schools which think that they can provide educational discipline by using violence against children, there are also parents who think that they can prevent their children from being dragged into crime by applying pressure and violence. The use of violence and corporal punishment in the family and at school also leads children to violence (Greydanis, Pratt and Hoffman, (2002). It may lead children to think that violence is an acceptable behavior because violence is perpetrated by children's role models and authority figures, and children observe this. On the contrary, corporal punishment which is carried out with the wrong idea of protecting children from negative behaviors is one of the most important factors in dragging children into violence and crime, and plays a role in the increase of violence and crime in society. The corporal punishment carried out by parents and teachers against vulnerable and weak children is misjudged by the children and children think that they can also carry out it against vulnerable and weak individuals. Children who have been

subjected to corporal punishment may think from an early age that violence is an acceptable method and that its use is normal. They can also use similar violent behaviors against people and animals around them.

In order to overcome these problems, schools today need to educate families as well as children. For this purpose, it is important to organize family education programs by schools and media organs to raise awareness of families. Teachers and principals who work alone are not enough to overcome negative behaviors at school and to prevent children from being dragged into crime. School-family cooperation should be done continuously and in a planned way. Thus, the support of families is also received and they participate in the process.

5. Peer Influence on Juvenile Delinquency

Children who live under risk factors such as harsh discipline in family, poor supervision, guidance for children and conflicts in family may move away from family and turn to a new social environment over time. For children, peer and friend groups contain both risk factors and protective factors. While peer and friend groups influence children's socialization and development during childhood, unsupervised and uncontrolled peer and friend groups are important factors in juvenile delinquency. A child who is estranged from family or has risk factors leading to delinquency in family will turn to peer and friend environments which are open to risk. Since the child moves away from the protection of family members in these environments, peer and friend groups, who are especially juvenile delinquents, will also drive the child to crime. Peer groups have a great impact on the development of children at later ages (Oto, 1998). While the positive contribution of peer groups to the rapid adaptation of child to society cannot be denied, attention should also be paid to improving and reinforcing characteristics of behavioral disorders of peer groups with dominant negative behaviors. Children accept all the behaviors which are required to be part of peer group membership without much thought, and perhaps simply not to leave the group. For this reason, the possibility of driving to criminal behaviors increases.

Having delinquent peers and friends is highly correlated with delinquency (Eassey and Buchanan, 2015). The presence of delinquent children in a peer group causes other children to display abnormal behaviors and to be dragged into crime. Crimes which are committed especially during adolescence are not

crimes which are committed single-handedly, but these are crimes which are committed in groups. These groups are friends or peers that the child or young person is in. The influence of the social environment which is acquired during childhood maintains its existence directly and indirectly in the adult life of children. Adolescents want to be independent at that age but on the other hand, they need power and the support of authority (Beşer, 2008). When they cannot find a positive role model in their family, school and social environment, they display maladaptive-negative behaviors. These antisocial behaviors cause social exclusion.

6. The Influence of Out-of-School Time on Juvenile Delinquency

The answer to the question of how children spend their out of school time is important in relation to their delinquency. Children spend most of their out of school time with friends and peers in the social environment in which they live. While peer and friend groups enable children to socialize, they allow children to be driven to crime and to learn criminal behaviors if attention is not paid. While children are expected to socialize in peer and friend groups during their out-of-school time, they may gain anti-social behaviors and be dragged into crime, get low points at school, and stay away from school due to risky social groups. In this respect, the issue of how children will spend their out-of-school time is important and it needs to be well planned.

Factors such as being accepted by family, school and friends, behaving in accordance with social norms, receiving an education, establishing a business and being virtuous protects children in the early periods from committing crimes. In the same way, spending time and energy on socially accepted traditional routine activities, planning and evaluating daily activities and leisure time well protects children in the early periods from committing crimes (Hirsch, 2009). In order to keep children away from crime and delinquency, they should be provided with rest and occupational opportunities rather than uncontrolled leisure time.

7. Result

It is seen that many factors resulting from the family, school and peer group affect children's involvement in violence and delinquency, as well as whether children's free time is well planned or not. During childhood, which is the first years of life, the family, school and society do not show the necessary sensitivity

and do not fully fulfill their responsibilities and duties. As a result, children's being driven to violence and crime does not only depend on that period, but continues throughout their lives and gains continuity. Violence and delinquency which exist in childhood due to various factors are the precursors of adulthood delinquency, and violence and delinquency continue to develop. Both parents and teachers often make mistakes in their behavior towards children. Many questions such as "How often are children observed in the family and school? How well is the student recognized by the school? or How much does the child express himself?" can be asked to the family and the school and various evaluations can be made about children's being driven to violence and crime. However, in order to prevent children from being dragged into violence and crime, first of all, their behavior should be well observed and recognized. Parents and teachers have an important role in this regard and take on a great task.

It is possible for children to be dragged into crime, especially due to the influence of their peer group. The most basic condition to prevent the emergence of socially unacceptable and undesirable situations is to keep the child away from groups that have the potential to commit crime and violence. Just as there is violence in the family and the child learns the violent behaviors from the family, it is also possible to learn these behaviors from the peer groups. In addition, it is possible that the negative behaviors learned by the child who learns violent behaviors and are dragged into crime continue in their later years as well as transferring them to future generations. Delinquency and violent behavior of children is a social reality. Preventing these behaviors is an important problem and requires a great deal of effort.

Children who start crime early are more likely to become chronic offenders than children who start later. For this reason, it is necessary to evaluate the childhood period very well, to be aware of the factors that lead children to delinquency and to neutralize them so that children are prevented from being dragged into crime. Juvenile delinquency is increasing more and more. Efforts should be made with families to transform schools into a safe and effective learning environment. Orpinas and Horne (2006) stated that in order to prevent children from being dragged into crime, the school environment should be prepared appropriately, school values should be determined and results-oriented works should be done with the rules to be created based on these values, and inappropriate forms of intervention should be eliminated by modeling personal and cultural values.

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CHAPTER III

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' SELF SUFFICIENCY BELIEFS AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS*

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1. Introduction

The way to maintain pace with our rapidly changing and expanding world is by raising individuals who question, think, and have a critical point of view. The way to raise individuals who think critically is possible by understanding what critical thinking is and when it should be used. Critical thinking is the art of establishing a different pattern by combining our thoughts with other thoughts in harmony.

Critical thinking reveals the distinction between the effective and the ineffective by filtering thoughts on specific issues. More than one beneficial or incompetent, effective or ineffective, relevant and irrelevant thoughts on the same subject interfere with each other and confuse, preventing us from making efficient results and decisions if we do not employ a critical thinking structure (Cüceloğlu, 2003).

Critical thinking definitions differ in terms of the dimensions and scope of critical thinking. The ability to see facts, examine thoughts, organize these thoughts, defend ideas, make comparisons between ideas, make inferences, defend theses, and solve present issues is categorized as critical thinking (Doğanay & Ünal, 2006).

* This study is based on the revision of the author's master thesis.

An individual who can think critically does not compromise his own opinion and attempts to evaluate other ideas in order to gain a different point of view. The individual must have critical thinking skills in order to keep up with the demands of the age.

An individual must first employ the three basic steps outlined below to be able to think critically for oneself (Aybek, 2006).

- One should be conscious of the thought process one is in; rather than viewing thought as an uncontrollable process, one should be conscious of this process and aware that it can be shaped consciously. This can be achieved with an entrepreneurial attitude.
- The individual should be able to examine the thought processes of others because examining the thought processes of others allows the individual to compare their thought processes to the thought processes of others. An individual examining the other person's thinking strategies and the steps taken to achieve the result provides more effective thinking. This approach necessitates the individual becoming aware of his patterns and staying open to new perspectives by breaking free from those patterns.
- One should be able to apply the knowledge gained in daily life because critical thinking skills cannot be developed without practice. An individual who can always think critically in life realizes that critical thinking becomes a habit without noticing over time.

People are divided into three groups in terms of critical thinking. The first group employs those who have nothing to do with thinking. The second group consists of people who have the necessary thinking skills but are unable to apply them. The third group consists of those who have strong critical thinking skills and apply them. While members of this group think critically, they consider this skill to be an ethical responsibility and fulfill it. These are individuals thinking well, and they are also quite honest with others (Doğanay, 2006).

It is not enough for individuals to simply hold a critical point of view. Other attributes that individuals display have impacts their critical thinking skills. Self-efficacy beliefs are one of the variables influencing critical thinking skills.

Self-efficacy belief develops with experience and is not a result of the individual's skills, but of the judgments that one can make by putting the skills gained into practice. The individual assesses the effectiveness of the action draws comparisons between what the action of oneself will be and what other

individuals' action will be (Pincrich & Schunk, 2010). In addition, a notification is made to the individuals by the ones around them about the extent to which the behaviors exhibited by the individual meets certain standards. Even if those who believe that they are talented do not have these abilities, this belief has a positive effect on their sense of self-efficacy. Individuals with low self-efficacy levels display more ineffective behaviors. (Lök, et al., 2009).

One of the cognitive perception factors influencing our behavior is self-efficacy. A high degree of competence is associated with healthy behavior, higher achievement, and greater social integration. Therefore, this concept takes its place in many areas such as success in school, emotional disorder, mental and physical health, career choice and the process of social-political change (Schwarzer, Fuchs, 1995).

2. Method

The information about the method of the study is addressed in this section. This title contains information about the study model, the population and sample, data collection tools, the data collection process, data analysis, and statistical techniques used in the study.

2.1. Method,

2.2. Population and Sample

This study aims to examine the relationship between preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their critical thinking skills. Therefore, the relational screening model, which is one of the screening models to be compared, was employed. This model is a research model aiming to reveal the existence and magnitude of a change in the relationship between two or more variables (Karasar, 1991).

The study examines the relationship between preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their critical thinking skills. The population consists of preschool teachers working in educational institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in İzmir during the 2015-2016 academic year. The study's sample consists of 237 pre-school teachers from various districts and schools in İzmir province who were selected with the random sampling method during the 2015-2016 academic year in institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education.

3. Findings

Do Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Differ Significantly Based on Educational Status?

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to examine the participants' self-efficacy beliefs and critical thinking skill levels based on the education levels. The obtained findings are demonstrated in Table 1.

Variables	Source of the Variance	Sum of squares	Sd	Squares Average	F	p	Significant Difference
Critical Thinking	Intergroups	2480.08	2	1240.04	.89	.40	
	Intragroup	322915.14	234	1379.97			
	Total	325395.22	236				
Self-efficacy	Intergroups	669.27	2	334.63	1.28	.27	
	Intragroup	60996.65	234	260.66			
	Total	61665.92	236				

Table 1 ANOVA Findings and Description of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs, Critical Thinking Skill Levels, and the Difference Based on Educational Status

ANOVA analysis findings on whether participants' self-efficacy and critical thinking differ significantly based on the education level, preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs levels based on the education level ($F_{\text{self-efficacy}} = 1.28, p > .05$) and critical thinking skills ($F_{\text{critical-thinking}} = .89, p > .05$) did not differ significantly in terms of the education levels of preschool teachers. Tukey analysis has not been performed as there was no significant difference in preschool teachers' education levels. However, descriptive statistics regarding the variables are given in Table 5.

Variables		N	\bar{X}	SD
Critical Thinking	Institute of Education	8	249.37	14.51
	Bachelor's	222	267.02	35.20
	Master's	7	269.71	88.99
	Total	237	266.51	37.13
Self-efficacy	Institute of Education	8	161.37	9.99
	Bachelor's	222	164.96	16,43%
	Master's	7	174.00	10,16
	Total	237	165.11	16,16

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Preschool Teachers' Education Levels on Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skills

According to Table 2, teachers who have graduated from education institutes have an average score of Table2

$\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}}=249.37$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-Efficacy}}=161.37$, the teachers with undergraduate degrees have an average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}}=267.02$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-Efficacy}}=164.96$ and the teachers with graduate degrees have an average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}}=269.71$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-Efficacy}}=174.00$. When the descriptive statistics about the variables are examined, it was seen that the critical thinking and self-efficacy beliefs of the participants increase as the education level of the preschool teachers increases although the data and the self-efficacy levels of the participants, their critical thinking skills, and the fact that there was no significant difference based on the education level of the preschool teachers. In other words, while undergraduate teachers' self-efficacy and critical thinking skills are lower than those of graduate teachers, undergraduate preschool teachers' self-efficacy and critical thinking skills are lower than those of graduate teachers. Furthermore, there are no pre-school teachers who have completed their doctorate education among those participating in the study.

Do Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Differ Significantly Based on Educational Status?

The self-efficacy beliefs and critical thinking levels of the participants based on their professional experience were analyzed by variance analysis and the findings are given in Table 3.

Variables	Source of the Variance	Sum of squares	Sd	Squares Average	F	p	Significant Difference
Critical Thinking	Intergroups	4038.43	3	1346.14	.976	405	
	Intragroup	321356.785	233	1379.21			
	Total	325395.224	236				
Self-efficacy	Intergroups	716.12	3	238.70	.913	.436	
	Intragroup	60949.80	233	261.58			
	Total	61665.92	236				

Table 3 ANOVA Findings of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Based on the Variable of Seniority Year

When the ANOVA analysis results of preschool teachers' self-efficacy belief levels, critical thinking skill levels, and whether there is a significant difference according to the professional experience variable of preschool teachers are examined, the self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers based on their professional experience ($F_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = .913$, $p > .05$) and critical thinking skills

($F_{\text{critical-thinking}} = .976, p > .05$) levels are observed to have not differed significantly. Tukey analysis has not been performed as there was no significant difference based on the professional experience of preschool teachers. Descriptive statistics for the variables are given in Table 4.

Variables		N	\bar{X}	SD
Critical	1-5 years	67	266.67	33.12.
	6-15	142	264.45	40.20
	16-20 years	12	281.91	24.73
	21 & Over	16	272.56	30.90
	Total	237	266.51	37.13
Self-efficacy	1-5 years	67	164.02	18.61
	6-15	142	165.11	15,37%
	16-20 years	12	172.33	10.99
	21 & Over	16	164.25	15.12
	Total	237	165.11	16.16

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skills Levels Based on the Year of Seniority (Professional Experience)

It was observed that teachers with 1-5 years of professional experience have an average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}} = 266.67$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = 164.02$, the teachers with 6-15 years of professional experience have an average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}} = 264.45$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = 165.11$, the teachers with 16-20 years of seniority have an average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}} = 281.91$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = 172.33$, the teachers with 21 years or more of professional experience have an average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}} = 272.56$, $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = 164.25$ and in total the average score of $\bar{X}_{\text{Critical}} = 266.51$ and $\bar{X}_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = 165.1$ when the descriptive analysis results regarding the variables in Table 7 are examined. It was seen that the self-efficacy beliefs and critical thinking skills of preschool teachers in the first 20 years of their professional life have increased and a decrease occurred in the self-efficacy beliefs and critical thinking skills of preschool teachers after their professional life (21 years and over) based on the data.

Variables		N	\bar{X}	SD
Critical	Independent Preschool	102	269.19	35.44
	Preschool within the Structure of Primary School	98	265	35.24
	Preschool within the Structure of Secondary School	24	259.83	52.94
	Applied Preschool	13	269.23	30.81
	Total	237	266.51	37.13

Self-efficacy	Independent Preschool	102	167.42	13.95
	Preschool within the Structure of Primary School	98	163.42	17.37
	Preschool within the Structure of Secondary School	24	165	12.43
	Applied Preschool	13	160	25.84
	Total	237	165	16.16

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels by Institution

It was observed that the teachers working in independent preschools have an average score of $\bar{X}_{Critical} = 269.19$ and $\bar{X}_{Self-Efficacy} = 167.42$, the teachers working in preschools within the structure of primary schools have an average of $\bar{X}_{Critical} = 265$ and $\bar{X}_{Self-Efficacy} = 163.42$, the teachers working in preschools within the structure of secondary schools have an average score of $\bar{X}_{Critical} = 259.83$, $\bar{X}_{Self-Efficacy} = 165$, teachers working in applied preschools have an average score of $\bar{X}_{Critical} = 269.23$, $\bar{X}_{Self-Efficacy} = 160$. The preschool teachers working in independent preschools have a higher average score for proficiency and critical thinking skills than preschool teachers working in primary schools, preschool teachers working in secondary schools, and preschool teachers working in applied preschools according to the data.

Do Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Levels of Critical Thinking Differ Significantly Based on the Number of Children in the Classroom?

The ANOVA results of the participants' self-efficacy and critical thinking levels based on the number of children in the class are given in Table 6.

Variables	Source of the Variance	Sum of squares	Sd	Squares Average	F	p	Significant Difference
Critical Thinking	Intergroups	9466.97	2	4733.48	3.50	.032*	10-15<21 and over
	Intragroup	315928.24	234	1350.12	6		
	Total	325395.22	236				
Self-efficacy	Intergroups	1873.39	2	936.69	3.66	.027	16-20<21 and above
	Intragroup	59792.53	234	255.52			
	Total	61665.92	236				

*p < .05

Table 6 ANOVA Results of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Based on the Number of Children in the Class

When the findings related to the self-efficacy levels and critical thinking skills of preschool teachers based on the number of children in the class are examined, the self-efficacy beliefs of the participants according to the institution they work for ($F_{\text{Self-efficacy}} = 3.66, p < .05$) and critical thinking skills ($F_{\text{Critical-Thinking}} = 3.50, p < .05$) levels were found to be significantly different.

Tukey test was performed to examine between which groups the difference was found. When the analysis results were examined, it was discovered that there was this difference in the critical thinking skills of the preschool teachers to whom the scale was applied, in self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers in classes with 10-15 children and 21 or more students as well as in self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers in classes with 16-20 children and 21 or more students. Descriptive statistics for the variables are given in Table 7.

Variables		<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	SD
Critical	10-15 Children	57	256.77	48.39
	16-20 Children	76	265.36	30.95
	21 & Over	104	272.68	33.10.
	Total	237	266.51	37.13
Self-efficacy	10-15 Children	57	163.05	15:21
	16-20 Children	76	162.32	16.99
	21 & Over	104	168.27	15.62%
	Total	237	165.11	16.16

Table 7 *Descriptive Statistics of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Based on the Class Size*

It was seen that as the number of children in the classroom increases, so do teachers' critical thinking and self-efficacy when the descriptive statistics of the participants' self-efficacy and critical thinking skills concerning the number of students trained are examined in Table 7. According to the data of self-efficacy belief, it was seen that teachers working in classes consisting of 10-15 children have an average score of $\bar{x}_{10-15\text{children}} = 163.05$, while the average score of teachers working in classes consisting of 21 children and above increases to $\bar{x}_{21\text{childrenover}} = 165.11$

It was seen that the teachers working in classes consisting of 10-15 children on critical thinking skills have an average score of $\bar{x}_{\text{Critical}} = 256.77$, while this score was seen as $\bar{x}_{\text{Self-Efficacy}} = 266.51$ for teachers working in classes with $\bar{x} = 21$ or more children.

Do Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Levels Differ Significantly by Age Group of Children in the Class?

ANOVA analysis was used to examine whether the self-efficacy belief levels and critical thinking skill levels of the children in the classroom significantly differ based on the age group, and the findings are presented below.

Variables	Source of the Variance	Sum of squares	Sd	Squares Average	F	p	Significant Difference
Critical Thinking	Intergroups	14688.12	3	4896.04	3.67	.013*	3-4 3-5
	Intragroup	310707.10	233	1333.50			
	Total	325395.22	236				
Self-efficacy	Intergroups	1207.96	3	402.65	1.55	.202	
	Intragroup	60457.95	233	259.47			
	Total	61665.92	236				

* $p < .05$

Table 9 ANOVA Results of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Based on the Age Group of Children in Class

In the ANOVA results on whether the students who are taught by preschool teachers' self-efficacy and critical thinking differ according to age, it was seen that there was a significant difference in the critical thinking skills ($F_{3\text{-critical-thinking}} = 3.67, p < .05$) of the participants according to the age of the students but in terms of self-efficacy ($F_{3\text{-self-efficacy}} = 1.55, p > .05$) there was no significant difference. Tukey was employed to determine the source of the difference in critical thinking levels, and the results revealed that the difference was between teachers teaching children aged 3 and 4 and 5. Descriptive statistics for the variables are given in Table 9.

Do Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Levels Differ Significantly According to Their In-Service Training Status?

Self-efficacy beliefs and critical thinking levels were examined with a t-test for independent samples on whether there was a significant difference in terms of whether teachers received in-service training or not, and the findings are presented below.

Variables	H.I.E.	N	\bar{X}	SD	Sd	t	p
Self-efficacy	Yes	136	167.08	14.06	235	2.108	.036*
	No	101	162.46	18.36			
Critical Thinking	Yes	136	270.27	32.45	235	1,818	.070
	No	101	261.44	42.27			

* $p < .05$

Table 10 *T-test Result of Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Critical Thinking Skill Levels Based on In-Service Training Status*

The t-test results, which were determined according to whether the participants in Table 10 received in-service training on self-efficacy and critical thinking skills, showed that there was a significant difference in the self-efficacy ($t_{\text{self-efficacy}} = 2.108, p < .05$) levels of the participants according to the in-service training they received. It was found that participants who received in-service training considered themselves more competent and had higher self-efficacy than those who did not. However, in terms of critical thinking skills ($t_{\text{critical-thinking}} = 1,818, p > .05$) no significant difference was found. The average self-efficacy score of participants who received in-service training was higher, although there was no significant difference in critical thinking.

Conclusion

It was observed that the critical thinking skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers are moderate. It was concluded that preschool teachers have moderate critical thinking skills and moderate self-efficacy. The critical thinking skills of preschool teachers are affected by the educational status of their teachers. It was concluded that the critical thinking skills of highly educated teachers were also highly developed.

It was concluded that the variables of seniority, age group of the children in the class, class size, and whether they participated in the in-service training have also affected critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are stronger in inexperienced teachers with more years of seniority. It was concluded that the age groups of the children in the classroom had an effect on the critical thinking skills of the teachers and that the critical thinking skills of the teachers working in the classes consisting of middle-aged students were higher.

It was observed that the critical thinking skills of the teachers who have received in-service training are high, while the critical thinking skills of the teachers who have not participated in any in-service training are lower.

It was demonstrated that self-efficacy and professional seniority, whether experienced or not, are effective. As one's experience grows, so does one's sense of self-efficacy.

As the number of children in the preschool class grows, so does the preschool teacher's level of self-efficacy. The age group of children in the classroom affects self-efficacy. As the age of the children in the classroom where the teacher works increases, so does the teacher's level of self-efficacy.

There was a significant relationship between the type of school and self-efficacy. Preschool teachers working in independent preschools have higher levels of self-efficacy than teachers working in other schools. In other words, as the number of environments that fully address pre-school education grows, so does self-efficacy.

Whether or not in-service training is received has an impact on self-efficacy. It was observed that the teachers who have received in-service training related to their profession have a high level of self-efficacy. As the number of in-service training activities increases, so does the level of self-efficacy.

Recommendations

Teachers who can meet the needs of a rapidly changing and developing world should be trained, equipped with appropriate qualifications for the age, and these qualifications should be continuously improved. Pre-school teachers should be supported continuously, from the training process to their appointment to the profession and throughout their careers, and they should receive in-service training.

The following recommendations were derived based on the findings of this study.

- Based on the conclusion that educational status affects self-efficacy and critical thinking skills, the Ministry of National Education should prioritize postgraduate education, and teachers who complete their postgraduate education should receive awards, albeit symbolically.
- The Ministry of National Education can grant the necessary permissions and support to teachers pursuing postgraduate education because the level of education affects self-efficacy and critical thinking skills.

- Given the impact of experience on self-efficacy and critical thinking skills, teachers should be trained by counselors related to their fields during internship periods, and they can not be allowed to attend classes without the supervision of a guidance counselor.
- It was concluded that the type of school the teachers work in affects their self-efficacy and critical thinking skills. It was higher for teachers working in preschools than teachers working in other schools. The Ministry of National Education can increase the number of pre-school education institutions and ensure that only these institutions provide pre-school education.
- In today's society, the number of working mothers is increasing, and families are increasingly sending their children to pre-school education institutions rather than babysitters. This causes children to begin school at a younger age. According to the study's findings, as teachers' ages increase, so do their self-efficacy and critical thinking abilities. The government can implement a professional babysitter system for families where both parents work.
- Given the impact of in-service training on self-efficacy and critical thinking skills, the Ministry of National Education can make encouraging decisions to expand professional in-service activities and ensure participation.

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CHAPTER IV

FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESCHOOLERS VIA “MEAN LENGTH OF UTTERANCE” ASSESSMENT

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1. Introduction

Language is another as complex and controversial topic of scientific literature as human brain with its undiscovered sides. One of the most discussable and searchable side of it accounts for how well acquisition process is going on or the quality or the level of the first language acquisition or development. No parent can reach easily and promptly a conclusion that his/her child has achieved the expected and desired level of development at a certain age. Exactly, this is the expertise of language pathologists scientifically. They can achieve this job by means of various scales including parents and observations of long years. However, a new and applicable trend has been on the peak for long: Mean Length of Utterance (MLU). The aim of this chapter is to discuss what language is, how it is thought to be acquired, how the level of acquisition can be assessed and what instruments can be used in this process, what MLU is, where it is used and finally how it is calculated.

Knowing the level of a child's mother tongue development is really essential from a few issues related to the future of the individual. First, language is the main vehicle for building the social life. Without interaction with the society, it is almost impossible to express needs, feelings, thoughts and etc. Then, language is

the key to build our future. School and business life becomes more challenging and more difficult with the lack of enough language mother tongue competence. Furthermore, mother tongue is the bridge to academic life. People mostly study and understand a discipline through his/her mother tongue. For example, a science or mathematics lesson can be achieved only through understanding it with the mother tongue. Last but not least, the capacity to property mental states to oneself and others, named as theory of mind (ToM) skills is associated with language development and the healthier the development is, the higher scores subjects get from both verbal and non-verbal ToM tasks (Simlesa et al., 2021). In other words, one becomes able to comprehend both himself/herself and the world outside by language. Therefore, determining any deficiency in mother tongue development at an early phase will direct us to manipulate the process and help the child to have a more fruitful language development process especially at the preschool stage.

When the importance of mother tongue acquisition is clearly explained for the future of a child, the next question appears: How can a parent or a teacher observe and conclude any problem in the mother tongue acquisition of a child? Sure, it is beneficial to consult with an expert but a practical and easily applicable method can be helpful for the adults at least to doubt any deficiency. This method is Mean Length of Utterance. MLU is a measure of linguistic productivity in children. A better MLU is taken to show a better level of linguistic capability. It is calculated in morphemes or words by isolating the number of morphemes or words by the entire number of articulations, with an expression characterized as a grouping of words gone before and taken after by altering of turn in a discussion (Deepak et al., 2009). The details will be discussed and explained throughout the chapter.

2. Theoretical Background of Language and Acquisition Process

Language is briefly characterized as “the means of expression of human thought” (Whitney, 1875). But to be superbly legitimate, language is distant as well complicated, captivating, and shrouded to be palatably clarified by such a brief definition. Furthermore, its definition has been evolving in the history of sciences associated with language. Hence, there is no point in making a clear-cut picture of what it is like but conceivable to state that we can study it in five major domains linguistically: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. These can be referred to as the component of human language.

Language acquisition advances over these components with expanding amount (e.g., sounds, words, and sentence length) and progressive refinement, and understanding of the subtler and more complex focuses of utilization (e.g., utilizing “taught” instead of “tached”) (Fromkin & Rodman, 1974).

The study of language acquisition has presented us with some theories to explain how acquisition happens. Among them are Behaviorism, Generativism, Social Interactionism, Usage-Based Theory, Connectionism. With no doubt, they can be seen with a different title in different studies but most of them stem from such more general perspectives as theories of language, theories of cognition, and theories of development. On the other hand, some divide them as “generativist” and “social interactionist” views. Such theories like behaviorism and constructivism may be regarded as separate from these roots as well. At first sight, we recall the behaviorist view that asserts that children learn through positive and negative reinforcement. In other words, language is rather like any other learned expertise – that it can be created through mimicking others’ language and picking up positive and negative criticism from grown-up careers. This theory supports the “nurture” part in the “nature vs nurture” discussion that started with Noam Chomsky’s response to B.F. Skinner’s *Verbal Behavior* in 1959 (MacCorquodale, 1970). On the “nature” part takes place the generativist approach or some call as “nativism”. Nativist scholars propose that children have an inbuilt language acquisition device (LAD) that empowers them to extricate the rules of their specific language from the words and structures they listen to. Chomsky (1965) put forward the thought that all human languages, anything their surface contrasts, share what he calls Universal Grammar. This fundamentally proposes that profound down, all human languages share comparable traits. Children are ‘pre-programmed with the underlying rules of all-inclusive linguistic use and got to be uncovered to their possess local dialect to permit the LAD to extricate the specific rules for that dialect. A colleague of Chomsky, Eric Lenneberg, has also argued that the LAD must be actuated with adequate input sometime recently at a certain point within the child’s improvement, or the child’s language acquisition will be disabled (Lenneberg & Lenneberg, 1975).

Another theory is social interactionism. It regards that language as a social phenomenon. Language acquisition occurs as a result of a child’s need to communicate with others. Not simply verbal intake, but also communicative engagement with others is critical. The language learning process is aided by

children's social-cognitive abilities. So, we can say that this theory has deep and common roots with the communicative approach. On the other hand, the constructivist approach has asserted the usage-based theory. According to it, language is a set of formulae for producing utterances that work across a spectrum of abstraction levels. The child's pattern learning abilities, together with their social cognitive understandings of speakers' intended meanings, resulting in knowledge of these formulas and the requisite linguistic abstractions. The last theory to be mentioned here is connectionism, which is associated with theories of perception, learning, and cognition. For connectionists, language is a system of patterns between smaller sounds or meaning parts. Hearing examples of patterns repeatedly causes toddlers to mentally represent an abstraction from those patterns, which is the foundation of their language expertise. This pattern-learning method is also applied in other areas of learning (Hoff, 2013; Saxton, 2017).

As seen in the views of different theorists, language acquisition progress emerges as a result of some circumstances: physical abilities, innate capacity or "language-acquisition device (LAD)" as named by Chomsky (1965), enough input through social interaction. To begin with, one should be able to hear and send sounds to acquire the language. We know that it is impossible to interiorize anything without perceiving it. So, perception of sound is the preliminary requirement. Moreover, the received sound goes through an internalization process described as an innate faculty that specifies the structural backbone of the noticed language via the LAD. However, this backbone can thrive in only a social environment rich in cultural values through interacting with others. The aforementioned input becomes meaningful in this atmosphere with ease and on its motion (Chomsky & Keyser, 1988; Saxton, 2017). Therefore, enough input is the indispensable requirement for language acquisition. This process is much deeper than can be explained here in such a short paragraph and is open to many discussions and theories for years. Anyway, it is preferable to have a few points to remember as the requirements of language acquisition.

2.1. Stages of Language Acquisition

Language development in youngsters almost always follows a regular pattern. However, the age at which children achieve a certain milestone varies significantly. Furthermore, each child's growth is typically marked by the gradual learning of specific skills. Linguistic aptitude is the ability to manipulate symbols, particularly the random symbols we call words, to generate meaning.

Of course, a developing infant does not acquire this capacity all at once. The evolution of language can be thought of as a sequence of alternating phases of fast growth interspersed with periods of stillness or consolidation. There are various stages, each with its own set of actions, that can be considered precursors to complete linguistic competence. These stages are usually classified as (1) pre-linguistic and (2) linguistic.

Pre-linguistic development refers to the stage before a child can manipulate verbal symbols, as linguistic development refers to the phase in which the kid can manipulate such symbols. As a result, this stage is also known as the pre-symbolic stage. Pre-linguistic development, on the other hand, is concerned with the predecessors to the development of symbolic skills, and it normally lasts from birth until roughly 13 months of age. Four stages can be identified:

- **Vegetative sounds (0-2 months):** a baby's natural sounds, such as crying, coughing, burping, and swallowing.
- **Cooing and chuckling (2-5 months):** These vocalizations are typically heard when the baby is relaxed and content. They usually consist of vowels and consonants.
- **Vocal play (4-8 months):** The baby makes longer, more continuous streams of vowel or consonant sounds.
- **Babbling (6-13 months):** There are at least two sub-stages: reduplicated babbling, in which the child produces a series of Consonant-Vowel (CV) syllables with the same consonant repeated (e.g. wa-wa-wa, mu-mu-mu), and non-reduplicated babbling, which consists of either CVC vocalizations (e.g. dad, pap) or VCV (e.g. umu, eenee).

Much of what the youngster generates up to this point in development is essentially just a form of linguistic play. Individual sounds and sound sequences are being practiced, and the youngster is developing the motor abilities needed to generate what will eventually be termed adult words.

When a child's linguistic development takes place, the "One Word Stage" appears. We may appropriately discuss a child's expressive language, or the words used to communicate emotions, sentiments, wishes, needs, thoughts, and so on, at this stage. This is not the same as the child's comprehension or receptive language. Of course, the two are intertwined. However, a youngster normally understands far more than he or she can communicate, and as a result, a child's expressive language lags behind comprehension by a few months.

2.1.1. Early One Word Stage (12-19 Months)

The youngster will employ specific sound combinations in specific settings before the development of the first “adult” words. Although the sound combinations are not typical adult words, they appear to be consistently utilized to convey meaning.

If a youngster says “mu-, mu-” every time he or she is given a glass of milk, it is regarded as an early word, even though the sound combination does not match an actual adult word. The term “proto words” refers to these early words. In addition, the youngster will make gestures.

2.1.2. Late One Word Stage (14-24 Months)

The child’s words are now more easily distinguishable as true adult words. To convey his or her sentiments, desires, wants, and so on, he or she uses a range of single words. This is the stage at which the infant begins to name and classify the objects and people around them, among other things. Common nouns like *cat*, *bed*, and *tea*; proper nouns like *Molly*, *Sandy*, and *Roger*; and verbs like *eat*, *tell*, and *sit* are all examples. Yes, *bye-bye*, and *hello* are some of the social words that the child may employ.

2.1.3. Two Words Stage (20-30 months)

At this point, the youngster will start to make two-word combinations like the ones below:

mommy bread

cat under

where Clara

It’s worth noting that you can mix and match different “word classes”:

- “mommy bread”, for example, is made up of two words from the same noun class: one noun (mommy) and another noun (bread).
- “cat under, on the other hand, is made up of two words from two separate word classes: nouns and prepositions: a noun (cat) and a preposition (under).
- Also, “where Clara” uses an interrogative question (where) in conjunction with a proper noun (Clara).

Nouns appear in a large fraction of these two-word combinations. This is not surprising, given how much time the youngster has spent memorizing the

names of items and people. These are the most crucial aspects of his or her surroundings, as well as the ones that are most likely to be changed, discussed, and so on. They are frequently the most tangible, permanent objects to which the child may relate. Furthermore, at the Two-Word Stage, verbs are frequently used (e.g. go, run, drink, eat).

2.1.4. *Three Words Stage (28-42 Months)*

As the name implies, children at this stage of development expand on their two-word utterances by adding at least one more word. In actuality, youngsters can add up to two additional words, resulting in utterances of up to four words. At this stage, the child uses more pronouns (e.g., I, you, he, she, they, me), e.g.

you eat apple
Alice hit cat
me kick ball

The child also begins to employ the articles the, a, and an at this age. Their utilization is erratic at first, but as the kid approaches 42 months of age, their utterances become more constant, e.g.

she read a book
you buy the dolly
he eat an egg

2.1.5. *Complex Utterance Stage (48-60 months)*

Longer utterances are characteristic of this stage, with the kid consistently delivering utterances of over six words in length. The idea of past and future time develops at this stage, and this is conveyed linguistically in a child's utterances, e.g.

she fought with Rose yesterday [past time]
Daisy is going to buy new shoes [future time]

There's a lot of disagreement over when the Complex Utterance Stage ends. According to some experts, a kid has established all of the major adult linguistic traits by the age of five, and the only true advancement beyond this point is the learning of new vocabulary items. Other studies, on the other hand, believe that children up to the age of 12 continue to develop adult sentence form (Hoff, 2013; O'Grady & Cho, 2001; Yule, 2010). Ranalli (2012) summarizes the early language development in the following Table 1.

3. Controlling the Process: Instruments to Test Language Development

All parents want their children to be healthy and successful at all phases of development, including language. However, the intended level may not be obtained due to a deficiency or disorder in any of the requirements of the acquisition process. Early diagnosis is just as critical as the treatment in such a case. The earlier a problem is identified, the better the outcome is. Parents and teachers thus require some tools or instruments in order to assess their child and student's level of language acquisition and development. To meet this need, the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC), as part of its cooperative agreement with the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, compiled a list of tools. The screening instruments cover both several developmental domains and the social-emotional developmental domain. They are further, split into those that require professional administration and those that may be completed by family members or other caretakers. There is also a

list of assessment instruments that must be conducted by specialists. A description, the age range for which the instrument was validated, the time to administer, the scoring technique, psychometric qualities, and administrator requirements are all included in the material for each instrument (Ringwalt, 2008).

Table 1: *Summary of Early Language Development*

Age (Years)	Vocabulary Size (Words)	Utterance Length (Words)	Language Use
0 to 1	Very limited	One-word utterances	Uttering first word around 1;0
1 to 2	50	Two-word combinations	Using mostly nouns together with a few verbs and pronouns Labeling objects and making simple requests
to 3	300-400	Three-word phrases	Starting to use descriptors and prepositions Beginning to follow grammatical rules Developing sentence forms Expanding the number of language uses and intentions
3 to 4	1000	Three- to four-word sentences	Beginning to embed sentence elements
4 to 5	Continued increase	Continued increase	Using articles, conjunctions, and descriptors more frequently
5 to 6	2000	Continued increase	Using fairly fluent and adult-like speech

When examining the evaluation techniques and scales provided in NECTAC's compilation, it is clear that assessing and evaluating language development levels is a complex, difficult, and time-consuming task. As instructors, caretakers, or parents of our children, we need a more straightforward and practical method,

technique, or approach for assessing and estimating their language development. That's the Mean Length of Utterance (MLU), which is determined by analyzing speech samples. Speech sample analysis is a descriptive tool for understanding and evaluating the linguistic ability of youngsters. MLU is a language test that aims to collect information on syntactic and morphologic components of the performances of children both with typical development (TD) and children with communication difficulties.

4. Brief History of Mean Length of Utterance

MLU is likely the most widely used indicator of LSA-derived language ability. Language sample analysis (LSA) entails taking a sample of child language, transcribing it, evaluating it for semantics (content or meaning), pragmatics (use of language), vocabulary, and syntax (form and grammatical structure of language), and then interpreting the results to conclude language proficiency (Leadholm & Miller, 1994).

A measurement of a child's mean duration of utterance is a standard approach in language analysis. Since the 1920s, when Nice (1925) employed "mean length of response" (MLR) to establish the predictable patterns of infant language development, the measurement of utterance length in children's speech has been the backbone of LSA. By dividing the total number of words by the number of utterances, MLR calculated utterance length. Since Nice initially established its utility, the method utterance length is computed and described has changed; one of these modifications was the renaming of MLR to 'mean length of utterance in words' (MLUw). Although MLR was renamed MLUw, the utterance length was still calculated by dividing the total number of words by the number of utterances. Researchers began modifying the way utterance length was estimated when mean utterance length measurements were proved to be a good indication of a child's gross language development. Another difference was that MLUw measured utterance length by counting the number of words while only counting those utterances that had two or more words, whereas MLU counted utterances of all lengths. The term "mean syntactic length" was coined to describe this measurement (MSL). By dividing the total

number of syllables by the number of utterances, MLU in syllables (MLUs) assesses utterance length. Syllable counts, on the other hand, are more difficult to undertake due to children's proclivity for duplicating syllables and their use of diminutives. Inflation of MLUs scores is expected to occur as a result of greater use of syllable duplication and diminutives (Hickey, 1991).

Roger Brown presented a novel approach for calculating utterance length called "mean length of utterance in morphemes" in 1973. (MLUm). The total number of morphemes in an utterance is divided by the total number of utterances to get MLUm. MLUm was described by Brown (1973) as a "good simple measure of grammatical growth." Brown's findings that most advancements in language development result in increases in length, that is, the addition of words or other linguistic features to utterances led to the adoption of MLUm as a measure of language growth. MLUm in the English language was linked to the development of morphological and syntactic skills in young children, according to Brown (1973) and Devilliers & Devilliers (1973). Brown created five stages of linguistic growth based on MLU values of 1.75, 2.25, 2.75, 3.5, and 4.0, with Stage I equating to an MLUm of 1.75 and Stage V corresponding to an MLUm of 4.0. Brown indicated that a measurement of language complexity of up to 4.0 MLUm is a good starting point. Although MLU is lower above 4.0, the value of TD children at roughly 4 years of age, MLU still increases with age. At lower MLUs, the complicity of the sentences is increased by new structures in addition to the words of the child. After that degree of evolution, a great deal of complexity increase results instead of new structures in an internal reorganization of the form of the utterance. This clarification is extremely simple and numerous relevant elements the relationship between length and complexity (Owens Jr, 2013).

5. Uses of MLU

MLU has been suggested for a variety of purposes, including determining the stage of overall language development (Bernstein & Tiegerman-Farber, 1997; Miller & Chapman, 1981); identifying children in need of further language evaluation (Miller & Chapman, 1981); diagnosing or identifying a language impairment (Bernstein & Tiegerman-Farber, 1997; Lahey, 1988; Miller & Chapman, 1981; Owens (Fey, 1986; Paul, 2000). Miller and Chapman (1981) warn, however, that utterance length metrics should be used to reflect a child's growing gross language skills rather than as a diagnostic tool in and of themselves.

Because the spontaneous language utilized for the language sample is likely more indicative of a child's true language capabilities than language elicited in testing scenarios, this technique is a helpful alternative to standardized testing. Because this method depends on spontaneous speech rather than manufactured experimental conditions, it may be a more valid assessment than standardized testing because it employs abilities that the kid uses in everyday life to measure ability.

MLU is used by many speech-language pathologists to compare children's language abilities. It is reasonably straightforward to calculate and compare normative data, other children, and past results when compared to other measures of language development. MLU appears to be a valid and reliable indicator of overall language development, as well as a suitable grouping variable for children aged 3 to 10. MLU matches' developmental stability is indicative of underlying 10 growth pathways that are common (Rice et al., 2010). Rice's findings were comparable to those of Rondal et al. (1987) and others, such as Blake et al. (1993), Miller and Chapman (1981), and Rice et al. (2006), who found that MLU was substantially linked with age and grammatical development. Studies like these have bolstered the case for MLU's continued use as a tool for categorizing and comparing language usage.

MLU is also a prominent tool for defining stages of typical development in order to better understand how children acquire language and to group participants in studies of child language skills into similar groups. The MLU was utilized as the language maturity index so that in the longitudinal study children and other children reported in the literature were compared with each other (Bloom et al., 1975). Many, notably Leonard & Finneran (2003), used and supported this technique as well. Speech pathologists have developed a broad-ranging method to measure the overall linguistic capacity of children. The approach has been further strengthened by the adoption of similar applications by Blake & al. (1993), Miller & Chapman (1981), Rollins et al. (1996), Rondal et al. (1987), and Scarborough et al. (1991).

The concept of utilizing MLU to assess whether child language is disordered is related to the idea of placing children in groups based on MLU. MLU is part of several definitions of child language which are disordered or delayed. In the case of a specified language impaired (SLI), a delay in the language without any known cause is connected strongly with Low MLUs for a given age. Children

with SLI, especially those older than six years, have lower scores on language sample measures, including MLU, than usually developing children, according to Hewit et al. (2005), who evaluated 54 children of various ages (both typically developing children and children with SLI). Rice et al. (2010) examined data from 306 children, some of whom had language impairments and others who were developing normally, and concluded that MLU is a useful tool for determining whether language meets developmental standards or is disordered. The researchers concluded that children with SLI often have a slower increase in MLU that lasts past the ages when MLU is typically used as an index of language. Furthermore, MLU has been widely used to assess the progress of therapy for children with language disorders and to establish appropriate treatment goals for individual clients.

6. Calculation of MLU

The calculation of MLU is not far different from calculating the mean of the results of an ordinary group. That is to say, the scores are added and the sum is divided into the number of group members. What makes MLU calculation complex stems from the problem of how we should count the words, syllables, or morphemes. It is better to mention types of MLU scores.

When we investigate the literature of MLU, we can see at first sight such variations of MLU as MLUw (MLU in words), MLUs (MLU in syllables), MLUm (MLU in morphemes) (Marques & Limongi, 2011). In addition, some scholars proposed alternative methods like MLU2 (Johnston, 2001), MLU3-m, and MLU3-w (Ezeizabarrena & Garcia Fernandez, 2018). Many others conducted studies to verify the validity and reliability of MLU (Chabon et al., 1982; Dethorne et al., 2005; Klee & Fitzgerald, 1985; Rice et al., 2006; Rondal et al., 1987). According to research results, MLU is widely used for quantitative assessment of children's syntactic development (Hickey, 1991; Klee & Fitzgerald, 1985).

Though different types and alternatives with the acclamation of more precise assessment have been proposed, the calculation of MLUw and MLUm will be explained with examples and with some guidelines. Brown (1973) developed the most widely used "rules" for calculating MLUm, which include sample length criteria (100 utterances), selection of utterances within a sample (all utterances except those that are unintelligible), and counting of individual morphemes (e.g., omit stuttered word repetitions, count catenatives as single

morphemes). Once the language sample has been transcribed, you can calculate your client's MLUm. The first step is to count the number of morphemes in each utterance. Lund and Duchan (1993) provide specific guidelines for calculating mean length of utterance in morphemes.

Exclude from your count:

- *Imitations* that immediately follow the model utterance and which give the impression that the child would not have said the utterance spontaneously.
- *Elliptical answers* to questions that give the impression that the utterance would have been more complete if there had been no eliciting question (e.g., "Do you want this?" "Yes." "What do you have?" "My dolls").
- *Partial utterances* are interrupted by outside events or shifts in the child's focus (e.g., "That's my—oops").
- *Unintelligible utterances*, that contain unintelligible segments. If a major portion of a
- child's sample is unintelligible, a syllable count by utterance can be substituted for morpheme count.
- *Rote passages* such as nursery rhymes, songs, or prose passages that have been memorized and which may not be fully processed linguistically by the child.
- *False starts and reformulations* within utterances which may either be self-repetitions or changes in the original formulation (e.g., "I have one [just like] almost like that"; ([We] we can't").
- *Noises* unless they are integrated into meaningful verbal materials such as "He went xx."
- *Discourse markers* such as *um, oh, you know* not integrated into the meaning of the utterance (e.g., "[Well] it was [you know] [like] a party or something").
- *Identical utterances* that the child says anywhere in the sample. Only one occurrence of each utterance is counted. If there is even a minor change, however, the second utterance is also counted.
- *Counting or other sequences of enumeration* (e.g., "blue, green, yellow, red, purple").
- *Single words or phrases* such as "hi," "thank you," "here," "know what?"

Count as one morpheme:

- Uninflected lexical morphemes (e.g., *run*, *fall*) and grammatical morphemes that are whole words (articles, auxiliary verbs, prepositions).
- Contractions when individual segments do not occur elsewhere in the sample apart from the contraction. If either of the constituent parts of the contraction is found elsewhere, the contraction is counted as two rather than one morpheme (e.g., *I'll*, *it's*, *can't*).
- Catentatives such as *wanna*, *gonna*, *hafta* and the infinitive models have the same meanings (e.g., *going to go*). This eliminates the problem of judging a morpheme count based on the child's pronunciation. Thus *am gonna* is counted as two morphemes.
- Phrases, compound words, diminutives, reduplicated words which occur as inseparable linguistic units for the child or represent single items (e.g., *oh boy*; *all right*; *once upon a time*; *a lot of*; *let's*; *big wheel*; *horsie*).
- Irregular past tense. The convention is to count these as single morphemes because children's first meanings for them seem to be distinct from the present tense counterparts (e.g., *did*, *was*).
- Plurals that do not occur in singular form (e.g., *pants*; *clothes*), including plural pronouns (*us*; *them*).
- Gerunds and participles that are not part of the verb phrase (*Swimming* is fun; He was *tired*; That is the *cooking* place).

Count as more than one morpheme:

- Inflected forms: regular and irregular plural nouns; possessive noun; third person singular verb; present participle and past participle when part of the verb phrase; regular past tense verb; reflexive pronoun; comparative and superlative adverbs and adjectives.
- Contractions when one or both of the individual segments occur separately anywhere in the child's sample (e.g., *It's* if *it* or *is* occurs elsewhere).

Here is an example by Williamson (2009):

Suppose we have heard a 48-month old child produce the following utterances.

go home now

I live in Billingham

mummy kissed my daddy

I like your dogs

We can calculate the MLUm as follows. Taking each utterance in turn, we count the number of morphemes in the utterances. So, we would analyze the utterances as follows:

go		home		now				
1	+	1	+	1				= 3
I		live		in		Billingham		
1	+	1	+	1		1		= 4
+								
mummy		kiss		-ed		my		daddy
1	+	1	+	1	+	1	+	1
								= 5
I		like		your		dog		-s
1	+	1	+	1	+	1	+	1
								= 5
TOTAL								= 17

As a result, there are 17 morphemes in all. To calculate MLUm, divide the total number of morphemes (17) by the total number of utterances (4). As a result, the MLUm is $17/4 = 4.25$.

Many physicians like Rom & Leonard (1990) and Peccei (2006) also divide the number of words by the number of utterances to get the MLU in words. The use of bound morphemes (e.g., -ing, -ed, -s, etc.) is not taken into account in this calculation, so the MLU in words will always be equal to or smaller than the MLU in morphemes. When we calculate MLUw with the same utterances, MLUw would be $15/4 = 3.75$.

go home now	= 3 words
I live in Billingham	= 4 words
mummy kissed my daddy	= 4 words
I like your dogs	= 4 words
Total	= 15 words

Now we must compare the result of our example with the standardized results in Table 2. This is referred to as the “age equivalent”. This is accomplished by reading the age equivalent from Table 2. According to the table, an MLUm of 4.25 falls between 4.09 and 4.40. We can therefore conclude that an MLUm of 4.25 would be expected in a child aged 45-48 months. Given that our child is 48 months old, the average length of the child’s utterances appears to be age-appropriate. As a result, this child’s expressive language skills appear to be developing normally.

Table 2: *Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) by Age*

MLU	age equivalent (within 1 month)
1.31	18
1.62	21
1.92	24
2.54	30
2.85	33
3.16	36
3.47	39
3.78	42
4.09	45
4.40	48
4.71	51
5.02	54
5.32	57
5.63	60

(Miller, 1981)

7. Bene its and Limitations

Having a normally developed language acquisition is what all parents desire for their children since language is the basic means of discovering the outside world. However, parents and teachers may not be aware of any deficiency or disorder in their children or students. Also, it is not always easy to consult any expert or clinician about any doubtful situation in our child's language. Yet, a more practical solution can be suggested when they face such a problem. It is MLU.

As explained in detail above, MLU can be counted by either teachers and parents easily. Yet, it is not the sole and precise way to determine any problem but can be used as the first step of a control process. On the other hand, scholars have carried out several studies and searches to find out what are the average results of children with normally developed language levels in a certain language. The fundamental aim of these studies is to emerge a list of criteria for normal language development and compare the results of any doubtful case according to this list regarding age. One of the most common of these is Brown (1973)'s stages of language development in age. This study was carried out in English Language and regards the morphological and syntactical structures of

it. Of course, there are other studies in other languages but they are limited (Ege et al., 1998; Hickey, 1991; Rakhlin et al., 2020).

Because of the advantages it provides, MLU can be considered a good tool for determining a child's language level. For starters, it is dependent on language sample analysis, which may have higher sensitivity and specificity in identifying infants with language problems. In addition, compared to formal testing, language sampling provides better ecological validity. Language sample analysis appears to be less susceptible to dialect and cultural differences than typical formal assessments. Furthermore, language sampling offers the advantage of capturing children's normal behavior, whereas formal testing may require children to participate in activities that are unfamiliar to them (Hewitt et al., 2005). Another benefit of MLU is that parents can be included in the process, particularly while gathering language samples. Children feel more at ease and create a more natural language for the analysis when their parents are at work. Last but not least, MLU is a practical tool that can be simply implemented by parents and teachers when they have been informed about the procedure. However, in terms of language features, it is required to establish whether one, MLUm or MLUw, is the best to utilize.

Aside from these advantages, MLU has significant drawbacks. To begin with, MLU is most commonly utilized with toddlers and preschoolers. It is not recommended for older children because language growth after the age of seven is measured in terms of size rather than complexity and quality. Few clinicians commonly employ other sorts of methods to examine preschool language samples, such as the index of productive syntax (Scarborough, 1990). For children beyond the preschool years, language sampling is even less common, and there is a tendency to rely largely on formal testing, both for diagnosis and the establishment of intervention goals. Lack of adequate reference data sets contributes to clinicians' reluctance to employ routine language sample techniques to detect children with language problems beyond the preschool years. Reference data for a variety of measures, including MLU-m and the number of different words, was published by Leadholm and Miller (1994) for a range of measures up to age 13 for a variety of measures, including MLU-m and the number of different words (NDW). Eisenberg et al. (2001) investigate some of the data set's flaws, underlining the data set's key concern. More information about utilizing MLU-m and other measures as normative measures for preschoolers is needed, according to Eisenberg et al. (2001). Even for school-

aged youngsters, the information available is insufficient. While the value of these measures is widely accepted, their application is frequently limited to toddler and preschool assessment. Concerns about obtaining an appropriate and representative sample, as well as selecting appropriate metrics that would allow normative comparisons, are among the challenges that restrict the utility of linguistic sample analysis beyond the preschool years (Hewitt et al., 2005). Furthermore, gathering sufficient data is both complex and time-consuming. To collect a hundred utterances, the researcher must interview at least a hundred students and chat for at least half an hour. Parents in some areas object to the interview or the process. Transcribing the recorded statements is a time-consuming and exhausting job as well. If a checklist of DOs and DON'Ts has not been established, the process of assessing and counting may be perplexing.

In conclusion, despite its shortcomings, linguistic sample analysis offers several advantages over formal testing, such as increased ecological validity. Language sampling measures, unlike formal assessments, are applied to natural communicative actions. Regardless of how time-consuming and exhausting MLU is, it may be a beneficial approach for parents and teachers to check for any failures in language development without requiring much knowledge.

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CHAPTER V

LEARNING TO “FORGIVE” IN CHILDHOOD PERIOD

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1. Introduction

The subject of forgiveness, which has been mentioned since ancient times in the field of religion and philosophy, was unfortunately not encountered in the education or psychology literature until the last quarter-century. Negative attitudes and behaviours are handled with priority especially in the early stages of the psychoanalysis approach, which leads the psychology theories of our age. In the field of literature, especially concepts such as “aggression, intolerance, stress and anxiety” are emphasized more than the concepts of “forgiveness, cooperation, love and tolerance”. However, the positive effects of the basic concepts of positive psychology in all fields are discussed more and more in recent years. Forgiveness is defined as the voluntary renunciation of negative emotions that harm oneself and others, the neutralization of these emotions, and even transformation into positive emotions. The essence of forgiveness should be considered as a pro-social change in the motives of a person towards the committed crime. Forgiveness becomes the subject of many scientific types of research, such as its improvement of social relations, its importance in social and world peace, and its positive effects on physical and mental health. However, there are very few studies on the importance of forgiveness in childhood. However, like adults, children’s feelings can be hurt when they have conflicts with siblings, families or peers. For this reason, forgiveness is an important phenomenon for children as well as adults. In

the absence of forgiveness, children experience resentment, anger, bullying, anxiety, depression, sadness, guilt, stress, and other possible bad emotions. Children who can forgive, on the other hand, get rid of their negative emotions and focus on positive emotions and have a more positive outlook on themselves and life. Because they focus on the positive, these children can cope with conflict and disagreement situations more healthily and it is easier for them to achieve harmony in their relationships. Therefore, the psychological resilience of forgiving children also increases. Studies also reveal that forgiveness learned in childhood gives them an academic advantage and they are more successful thanks to their positive social relationships, as they do not keep their minds busy by planning revenge as a result of anger and unforgiveness, they can organize information more easily and think creatively. Children need to understand compassion, kindness, and forgiveness. Teaching children to how to forgive at an early age is an important life tool that will facilitate their childhood, adolescence and adult life. Forgiveness is a repetitive action throughout life and in all areas of life, and children need to understand and internalize it.

1.1. The concepts of “forgiveness”

It is seen that the forgiveness concepts of researchers are quite different from each other and there is no commonly accepted definition of forgiveness.

However, theorists and researchers share the view that the term “forgiveness” should be kept separate from the following concepts. These concepts are:

Pardoning: Legal pardon for a crime committed against the law. (It is a legal term);

Condoning: Ignoring a crime or fault. (It can be understood that the excuse of the crime is reasonable);

Excusing: Tolerating an excuse, a fault. (It can be inferred that the perpetrator has a good reason for the crime);

Forgetting: Not giving due importance, not dwelling on it. (It can be understood that the crime is simply erased from the memories or not in conscious awareness);

Pleasure: To accept behaviour that will be resented or reciprocated. (Here, it is seen that the issue is not given enough importance to be found worthy of forgiveness for the victim);

Tolerance: Ignore, connivance, indulgence (same with pleasure);

Tolerance: To tolerate a crime, a fault, tolerance, margin of error (same with pleasure);

Denying: Hiding, ignoring a witnessed situation (it can mean that there is a reluctance to perceive the injuries that have happened to and harmed someone);

Reconciliation: To agree by removing the difference of opinion or interest between the parties with mutual concessions. (Reconciliation can mean that a relationship is back to normal).

It has been the common opinion of almost all academics working in this field that these concepts, the definitions of which are given above, do not fully include the real meaning of “forgiveness”. However, the fact that researchers agree on what forgiveness does not do not mean they agree on what forgiveness is. (McCullough, Pargament and Thoresen, 2001, s.10).

Enright wrote extensively about this in the early years of forgiveness science. According to Enright, The hardest part of forgiveness is its complexity, which arises because it is an integration of behaviour, cognition, and emotions. Enright is in favor of replacing negative thoughts, actions and emotions with positive thoughts, actions and emotions.

Enright, Freedman, and Rique (1998) describe forgiveness as undeserved qualities, including feelings of compassion, generosity, and even love for that person, by giving up remorse, negative judgment, and recklessness towards someone who has hurt them by treating them unfairly. Forgiveness is defined as the reduction or elimination of resentment and motivations to take revenge, in situations where we hope to forgive a person with whom we do not want a permanent relationship (Enright Freedman and Rique, 1998, p.46-47).

McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown and Hight (1998) define the essence of forgiveness as a prosocial change that occurs in a partner’s motives for the crime committed. (McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown and Hight 1998, p.1586).

DiBlasio (1998) defines forgiveness as a process of change that occurs in the direction of one’s will to avoid mistreating someone who has committed a crime. According to the definition of DiBlasio (1998), forgiveness is a change that occurs in the direction of one’s will to avoid mistreating someone who has committed a crime. DiBlasio defines conscious forgiveness as “forgiveness based on the decision” (DiBlasio, 1998, p.77).

Forgiveness is defined by Tibbits (2002) as the process of reshaping individuals' anger and resentment from the past in order to gain peace in the present and revitalizing their hopes with their future purpose.

Forgiveness occurs in an interpersonal context. Some theorists (eg Augsburger, 1996), clinicians (eg Hargrave & Sells, 1997) and scientists emphasize the interpersonal aspects of forgiveness (eg Baumeister, Exline & Sommer, 1998; Exline and Baumeister, 2000; Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro and Hannon 2002).

Hargrave and Sells (1997) define forgiveness from the point of view of marriage and family therapy as:

- (1) Allowing the person to re-establish trust in the relationship by displaying and reassuring behaviour towards the victim;
- (2) Encouraging the victim and perpetrator to openly discuss the violation in the relationship to have a better relationship (Hargrave & Sells, 1997, p.41).

Other researchers and theorists also offer different definitions of forgiveness. These different definitions of forgiveness have some similarities as well as important differences on some issues. For example, some of the researchers, who define forgiveness, have the same opinion that this forgiveness is conceptualized as a phenomenon that occurs over time. On the other hand, other researchers are agnostic about whether there is a gradual or developmental aspect to the definition of forgiveness. Similarly, while some hold the view that effort and intention are essential components of an adequate definition (simply, forgiveness requires effort), some scholars are agnostic about the necessity of awareness or the willingness and effort for forgiveness.

Although there are many differences between the definitions of forgiveness currently used by various researchers, nevertheless there is a consensus definition of forgiveness. All existing definitions seem to converge on one core trait: When people forgive, their reactions to the person who hurt them (or, in other words, what they think, feel, want to do, and do about that person) are more positive and less negative. Although a certain crime or a series of misdemeanors committed by a certain person or groups of people caused negative thoughts, feelings, motivations, or behaviours towards the offender these reactions can be turned into a more positive form over time. Therefore, forgiveness can be defined as a pro-social, positive change towards the individual in behaviour towards a perceived rule-violator in a particular interpersonal context.

As stated at the beginning, the concept of forgiveness is not received any systematic attention from psychologists dealing with this science in the period covering most of the short history of psychology. In terms of Freud's many academic findings and the light he sheds on almost everything psychological, it is striking and surprising that he wrote nothing about forgiveness. The same can a thing be said for innovators like William James, G. Stanley Hall, E.L. Thorndike, Lewis Terman, and Gordon Allport. In the field of mental health, little attention has been paid to human forgiveness by Carl Jung, Karen Horney, Alfred Adler, or Viktor Frankl (McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2001, p.1).

On the other hand, there may be other important reasons for this neglect of forgiveness in the early years of scientific psychology. Some researchers mention that forgiveness is neglected not only in social sciences but also in the whole academic world (Enright & North, 1998, p.4). Particularly in an age where scientific psychology insists on analyzing behaviour based on observation, it is difficult to gather reliable data on forgiveness. Since the 20th century is the bloodiest and possibly the least forgiving period in human history, it can be concluded that this issue cannot go beyond sentimentality. All of these factors may play a role in discouraging systematic questioning of the psychology of forgiveness. In any case, it is necessary to wait years and years for the continuous and systematic examination of the concept of forgiveness.

Although there is no consensus yet for a psychological definition of forgiveness in the research literature given above, it may be possible to try to reach a common definition by listing the common features of forgiveness accepted by all researchers in the light of the information describing the forgiveness process.

1. Forgiveness is a process. For forgiveness, a certain period is required, depending on the subject and the aggrieved victim.
2. Forgiveness is not about forgetting. On the contrary, it means recognizing the hurt (especially for victims who have experienced severe trauma) exactly what happened.
3. Forgiveness does not mean minimizing guilt. Forgiveness requires the victim to admit to himself/herself that the experience of the crime or victimization is really bad.
4. Forgiveness does not mean weakness, naivety or stupidity. On the contrary, forgiveness requires a strong character.

5. Forgiveness is important for mental and physical health. Forgiving others for their quilts are primarily in the best interest of the forgiver.
6. Although it affects forgiveness, there is no requirement to confront the offender, to take revenge, to express remorse and express this to the offender, or to apologize to the offender in order to forgive.
7. In order to forgive, the same quilt must not be repeated. For this reason, conscious measures should be taken by the forgiver in order not to be exposed to the same situation again.
8. In order to forgive, the anger and the resentment must be completely removed. Forgiveness is the end of such unhealthy feelings.
9. . Forgiveness requires positive emotions are hope, compassion, empathy, understanding, tolerance, acceptance, faith, courage, and love.
10. Saying “It takes talent to forgive someone if you’re not their parent.” is wrong. The people we are most angry with are those closest to us. The people we cannot forgive are the people closest to us (or closest to us in the past).
11. Forgiveness must be conscious and sincere.
12. Forgiveness is not always reconciliation or compromise. Maintaining the relationship with the forgiven is another decision.
13. Forgiveness does not mean ignoring guilt. However, it is necessary to overcome hatred and abandon the feeling of revenge. The offender is still guilty, and the crime is still a crime. It is necessary to reduce grudge and hatred in forgiveness.
14. When forgiveness occurs, negative emotions are replaced by positive emotions, and there is a hope that more positive developments will occur in the person. So as a common saying: “Forgiveness does not change the past, but opens the way to the future.”

About the forgiveness, the beliefs we hold, the open or closed possibilities for us, determine the willingness to forgive and this deeply affects the emotional tone of your life” (Casarjian, 1992, p.12).

1.2. Phases of Forgiveness in Children

Learning to forgive from the point of children is mostly discussed within the framework of mental development and moral development. If the developmental

stages of forgiveness in children are briefly summarized that children at the age of 0-3 do not have any idea about what forgiveness is. However, at the age of 4-5, children begin to form a general view about forgiveness. From the age of 6-7, children can be involved in forgiveness processes (Table 1) (as they can now understand the causes and effects of people’s actions). At the age of 8-13, children can internalize themes such as forgiveness, reconciliation and improving relationships, and by the age of 14-18, they can forgive in a sophisticated way by following the steps in the forgiveness process model. Of course, this “forgiveness” is possible for adolescents who can internalize this action, just like adults. It is known that unforgiving children, like adults, engage in anger, resentment, bullying, or even retaliation. For example, in 2017 study conducted by Reine van der Wal and colleagues stated that “retaliation” may be the “first reaction” of children to those who offend or hurt them. According to these researchers, children who retaliate may feel like they’re just giving the same response, or they may think they’re warning people who might provoke them in the future. In many societies, it is natural and even encouraged for a child to respond to injustice by retaliating. On the other hand, studies state that children who are acting with revenge and not forgiving has consequences such as not being accepted by their peers and not being able to establish and maintain positive friendship relations (Rose and Asher, 1999). However, choosing forgiveness over retaliation can stop a cycle of conflict and preserve the friendship of children.

Forgiveness stages occur gradually in children as in adults (Ulus & Sezgin, 2020, p.45).

Table 1. Stages of Forgiveness in Children

Stages	Observed Effect
Stage 1: Exploring	In this stage, the child experiences negative emotions such as anger, resentment and revenge because of the feeling of pain and injustice. First of all, the quilt and the offender should be evaluated as objectively as possible. As a result of this assessment, the child becomes aware of the emotional pain caused by a deep, unjust injury. The child may have feelings of shame, guilt, obsessive thoughts about guilt, and even feelings of anger and hatred.
Stage 2: Deciding	In this stage, the child thinks about what is the event and what does the mistake that he/she made mean for him/her. At this stage, the child realizes that continuing resentment is useless and may cause unnecessary suffering, and begins to understand that a change must be made in the situation. Forgiveness has not yet happened, but the aggrieved child decides to take the first steps towards forgiveness here. This is an important first step at this point and avoids taking revenge against the damaged area.
Stage 3: Trying to forgive	In this stage, the child thinks about what is the event and what does the mistake that he/she made mean for him/her. At this stage, the child realizes that continuing resentment is useless and may cause unnecessary suffering, and begins to understand that a change must be made in the situation. Forgiveness has not yet happened, but the aggrieved child decides to take the first steps towards forgiveness here. This is an important first step at this point and avoids taking revenge against the damaged area. Amnesty may or may not involve reconciliation. The later relationship of the child and the person to be forgiven—the way they maintain their relationship—is not important here. The relationship can be maintained or ended by forgiving. Ending or maintaining the relationship is not the determinant of “forgiveness”.
Stage 4: Deepening	In this stage, which is the last stage of the forgiveness process, the child consciously gives up the emotions that may negatively affect him/her such as temper, anger and revenge with the new perspective that he/she has gained. At this stage, the forgiving child realizes that she/he is gaining emotional relief from the process of forgiving the wounded.

As it can be understood from these stages, the development in the understanding of forgiveness is directly affected by the developments at the mental level. As it is mentioned at the beginning, it may be difficult for children to complete this process detailed above in a trice. However, it is also possible to make children realize the importance of forgiveness as early as possible and to encourage this behaviour in the early years. So, what are the ways for children to acquire this important life skill?

1.3. Important Tips for Children to Learn How to Forgive

Children learn to forgive in their families: A study done by Van der Wal and colleagues (2007) shows the importance of children learning how to forgive in their family. Children who see their parents forgiving each other are more likely to imitate that forgiveness. Children, whose parents forgive each other or their children and other people more easily, may also be more forgiving to their peers. For example, due to the marital conflict parents may display destructive behaviour and their children are more likely to behave negatively towards others (Fincham, Grych, & Osborne, 1994). On the other hand, parents who behave positively towards each other have children with more social behaviour and stable relationships at later ages (Ackerman et al., 2013). How conflicts with parents or siblings are resolved in the family can be a good model for children in the future.

Children are more likely to experience social problems when they are in a different environment: Children also start to have problems with their peers from the first year they leave the family. These problems first arise in kindergartens. From kindergarten onwards, children may be physically injured, thrown out of play, or frustrated in their attempts to get hold of the desired toy. These are very normal. The important thing is that the child learns to cope with these problems. In all cases where children have conflicts with their siblings or peers, parents or teachers should allow the children to resolve the issue before intervening in this issue. In the slightest problem, children who resort to adult mediation instead of solving this problem with their friends can make this behaviour a habit. If there is a problem that the children do not agree with, the parent or teacher should listen to both children and have a neutral point of view first. Instead of instilling hostile feelings on the child, it may be appropriate to first create a realistic opportunity for “self-expression” on the real intention of the other party and the

possible consequences of the situation. After conflict resolution, children should not be forced to apologize regardless of whether they are right or wrong, and an apologetic child should not necessarily apologize without understanding why they are apologizing. It should not be forgotten that forgiveness is a voluntary action. Children are often taught that “I forgive you” response after “I am sorry” statement can resolve any conflict. This is because, as parents and educators, they may want to find a quick resolution to interpersonal conflicts. Whether in the family or at school, apologizing for big and small mistakes made by children causes apology to lose its importance. It is normal for the “victim” child to feel offended or angry for a while because the other child sustains anger or sadness. Sometimes it takes some time to forgive and repair the relationship. If the child says “I apologized but he/she didn’t forgive.” In that case, it should be said that the child’s apology is not insignificant, but the other party needs some time. Children should not be forced to accept apologies, just as they should not be forced to apologize. A sense of ingenuousness and sincerity are essential in both apology and acceptance of the apology.

Children rarely reflect on their peers’ intentions when they experience conflict:

Some children tend to interpret harmful situations as “accidental”, but others tend to attribute hostile intent (Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1990; Katsurada & Sugawara, 1998). Hostile prejudices put young children at risk for the development of aggressive behaviour problems (Orobio de Castro et al., 2002). Therefore, it is important to understand the origins and mouldability of these biases in early childhood. A major source of young children making hostile judgments lies in how parents discuss conflicts with their peers. Studies show that the content of parent conversations affects children’s social development. Parents who support the use of prosocial strategies and evaluate peer interactions and conflicts with peers objectively and positively have socially competent preschool children (Laird et al., 1994; Ruffman, Slade, & Crowe) 2002). First of all, it should be embraced that people have a unique value as an individual regardless of their different characteristics. Attitudes of parents about valuing people (regardless of their characteristics) are of great importance for children. Parents full of hatred and vengeance should not expect their children to be peaceful and forgiving.

Children should be encouraged to express their feelings from a young age:

Dialogues should be created that will lead children to talk about their feelings. For example, can you tell me what is the most upsetting thing about this issue?

The child’s answers should have been listened to sincerely, and care should be taken not to be judgmental, condescending or critical, regardless of their feelings. Statements, such as “look at it? Is that what you’re upset about, I can’t believe you’re so angry about this”, create some kind of feeling that parents are ignoring the child’s emotion. Instead, feedbacks such as “I see how upset you are, I understand you, you resent this situation” comfort the child in the first stage. After that, the child should be allowed to experience his/her feelings in case of this negative situation. This does not mean leaving the child alone, on the contrary, the child’s behaviours such as crying, introversion, and being alone should be monitored. Regardless of the subject (although it is perceived as quite simple for an adult), the child’s reaction is an indicator of how much he/she is affected by this situation. It must be known that expressions like “Forget it, never mind, it’s not worth it” have no meaning here. The child must experience her/his feelings for a while. Saying like “I see that you are very upset. It saddens me that you’re crying, but you’re hurt.” creates a feeling of being understood in the child.

Children should be allowed to express their feelings to the other victim:

If possible, it should be ensured that the other party knows why the child is sad, angry, or offended. There is a beautiful saying in Turkish culture for resentments of unknown peevish; “the rabbit was offended with the mountain, but the mountain wasn’t aware of it.” If the victimizer does not know the caused emotion, there is no opportunity to make up for it. Therefore, this information creates an opportunity for the other party to correct their mistake or perhaps apologize. Even if the other party does not admit their mistake, does not apologize or does not attempt to make amends, the child should be allowed to express it. This is important in two respects. First, the child may be wrong about being aggrieved. The child can tell from the feedback she/he gets after expressing it – misunderstandings happen every day. Second, the other party can realize his/her mistake and go to a compromise. Even if neither situation will happen, it will be comforting to express their feelings-thoughts.

Empathy facilitates forgiveness: The best way to take revenge and replace it with forgiveness is to make people feel empathy for the person who hurt them. The study by McCullough, Worthington and Rachal, (1997) shows that when people begin to empathize with a rule-violator, it becomes harder to stay in a vengeful attitude, and instead, forgiveness often emerges. It is stated

that individuals with low empathy ability, such as narcissists and those with antisocial personality disorder, could not establish the necessary empathy for forgiveness and therefore, empathy appears to be one of the important mediators for forgiveness. In this case, for example, a child who gets angry with a guest child who plays with his toy without his permission and expects an apology. This child can be reminded that he/she would be in the same situation and ask "Don't you want to be forgiven if it was you?".

Forgiveness isn't always easy: Children are generally more willing to forgive their close friends rather than an ordinary peer (Peets, Hodges, & Salmivalli, 2013). But it's never easy to forgive when a child still feels hurt. It may take some time to do this. After a short-term conflict, the parent-teacher tells two siblings-friends to kiss and make peace up, meaning of such a sentence is that the parent-teacher is ignoring the feelings of both children there.

Forgiveness doesn't mean the sustaining relationship as before. Is that possible to forgive tort-feasor without trusting that person? Of course, it's possible. As it is mentioned in the stages of forgiveness (Table 1), forgiveness may not mean maintaining the relationship between individuals-children. Forgiveness is only the alleviation of feelings such as anger, temper, resentment, and victimization related to that issue. Continuing the relationship, keeping the friendship is another decision. In this sense, children should not be forced. A child, who says "I don't want to play with Ayşe anymore, she changes the rules of the game whenever I play with her", should not be pressured or indoctrinated like "keep your friendship with Ayşe". Along with life, a child might meet people who make him/her feel bad because those people don't play the game by the rules all the time. Perhaps the most appropriate method to avoid harm is to keep a distance from the possibility of undamaged. Forgiving someone doesn't mean that person chooses to reconcile with him/her. Children must distinguish between forgiveness and reconciliation.

Forgiveness and its importance should be taught in schools. And from a very young age. Starting from pre-school institutions, they should talk about the destructiveness of emotions such as grudge, hatred, revenge, retaliating, etc.; also values education studies should be carried out in the classroom on topics such as love, empathy, trust, compassion, and tolerance. We think that especially educators should attach great importance to this important life skill.

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CHAPTER VI

THE PARENTS' VIEWS ON DISTANCE EDUCATION IN PRESCHOOL INSTITUTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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1. Introduction

Novel Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has taken a toll on every aspect of life. It has changed how healthcare systems operate and dramatically affected people's thoughts, expectations, lifestyles, and economic status. Countries have taken drastic measures (lockdowns, school closures, and stay-at-home orders) to prevent the spread of the virus, curtailing many social activities and trapping people in their homes for weeks, even months. However, the pandemic has claimed millions of lives and caused economic and social instability worldwide despite all those measures. Health refers to a state of complete mental and physical wellbeing [World Health Organization (WHO), 2020b], which positively affects the quality of life and living standards. On the contrary, bad health has adverse impacts. Therefore, the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) that broke out in Wuhan/China at the end of 2019 has been a major threat to health and living standards (WHO, 2020b). Interaction and communication are key to social life. However, the pandemic has made social distance a necessity because the coronavirus spreads through airborne transmission. The pandemic has put a damper on social activities and paralyzed all key sectors. In other words, the pandemic has taken a toll not only on the global economy but on all aspects of life (Ayseli Aytekin et al., 2020). Therefore,

each country has taken various social restrictions and measures to prevent the rapid spread of the virus (WHO, 2020a). However, those preventive measures are against human nature as they prevent us from socializing and interacting, which are indispensable parts of today's world. Preventive measures have caused disruptions in all areas of life (education, economy, social and cultural life, etc.) (Bozkurt, 2020; Karademir et al., 2020; TEDMEM, 2020).

The pandemic has posed a great threat to global public health and had adverse implications for people of all ages. However, it has particularly had devastating effects on children (Brooks et al., 2020). Children need to socialize to develop peer relationships and a sense of self and to channel their energy into outlets in free and autonomous environments. However, the pandemic has put a stop to this and confined children into their homes, resulting in devastating consequences (UNESCO, 2020b-2020c; WHO, 2020a). Schools play a vital role in this process because they allow children to socialize with their peers and meet their academic needs. The pandemic has been such a serious health problem that countries have had to close all schools and switch to distance learning. School closures have prevented almost all children from accessing face-to-face learning (The World Bank, 2020). They have had to enroll in distance education courses and stay away from their schoolmates and teachers. The pandemic has affected every level of education differently. However, preschool is particularly a critical period based on active communication and interaction. Since the pandemic, preschoolers have been deprived of social interaction and left to their own devices to sustain their education within the confines of their homes, which has had adverse repercussions (Akbas & Dursun, 2020). For example, the pandemic has kept preschoolers tethered to their electronic devices and away from face-to-face social interaction, preventing them from developing a sense of confidence. Since the pandemic, preschoolers have had poor social interaction with peers and teachers, and parents have had to take on more responsibility for their children's education at home (OECD, 2020a). However, this has created inequality in education as not every family has the same resources and access to technology to support learning at home (Zippert&Rittle-Johnson, 2020). Research shows that state-sponsored and institution-based preschool education provides equal opportunities for children. Disadvantaged children are much more adversely affected by educational activities during the pandemic (Yildiz & Vural, 2020) because distance learning requires a great deal of family involvement (Mustafaoglu et al., 2018). However, organizations report that

parental involvement in children's education is less than expected (UNESCO, 2020a; UNICEF, 2020). Some studies in Turkey focus on the effect of the pandemic on psychosocial development, distance learning, and play at home separately (Mart & Kesicioğlu, 2020; Baysal et al., 2020; Demirbas & Kocak, 2020; Tuzcuoğlu et al., 2021). However, the present study adopted a broader perspective to look into the multifaceted effects of the pandemic on children and their parents.

The study was conducted to investigate what parents thought about distance preschool education during the pandemic. This study focused on how parents with different sociodemographic backgrounds coped with the pandemic. The study sought answers to the question, "How were the opportunities provided by parents affect the way they meet their children's needs?"

2. Method

2.1. Design

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological research design. Researchers employ phenomenology to disclose people's subjective views and experiences. Phenomenological research focuses on seeking answers to how we bring together the phenomena we experience to make sense of the environment we live in (Patton, 2014).

2.2. Participants

Data were collected online using interviews forms (Google Forms). Participants were recruited using snowball sampling. Participation was voluntary. The sample consisted of 79 parents from seven regions of Turkey. Participants had a mean age of 33.8 years. The majority of the participants were women (97%). Most participants were living in apartments (76%). Table 1 shows the participants' sociodemographic characteristics.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics

Main Theme	Subtheme	Category	Code	
Demographic Information	Place of residence	City	Muş: 29	
			Nevşehir: 26	
				Gaziantep: 8
				Kastamonu: 6
				Van: 4
				Ankara: 2
				Istanbul: 1
		Housing type		Apartment: 60
				House with a garden: 19
	Demographic Information	Child	Child's Gender	Boy: 42
			Girl: 37	
Child's Age (years)		3-5: 68		
			6-7: 11	
Demographic Information	Education		Teacher: 10	
			Academic: 2	
	Official		Public official: 5	
			Correction officer: 1	
			Doctor: 2	
			Veterinary: 1	
	Health		Medical technologist: 1	
			Healthcare staff: 1	
	Demographic Information	Consultant/Guide		Sales consultant: 1
				Claims advisor: 1
			Tourist guide: 1	
Demographic Information	Father's Job:	Staff	Banker: 5	
			Office staff: 1	
			Fireman: 1	
			Accountant: 1	
			Shopkeeper: 7	
				Self-employed: 6
				Unemployed: 4
				Worker: 4
		Others		Construction engineer: 2
				Electrical technician: 2
			Businessman: 2	
			Operator: 1	
			Oil sector worker: 1	
			PVC/Aluminum: 1	
			Butcher: 1	
			Computer technician: 1	
			Technician: 1	

		Military technician: 4
		Police officer: 3
		Security: 2
	Law Enforcement	Master sergeant: 1
		Military personnel: 1
		Petty officer: 1
	Others	Housewife: 39
		Officer: 6
		Ramsey machinist: 1
	Health	Doctor: 2
		Laboratorian: 2
		Nurse: 2
		Medical secretary: 1
	Education	Teacher: 22
		Academics: 3
		Student: 1
		Cleaning and hygiene: 44
	Method	Mask-distance-disinfectant: 43
		Social-physical isolation: 35
	Protection	TV: 49
		Internet: 44
		Couple-friend-neighbor: 5
	Source of Information	Media-Commercials: 2
		Ministry: 2
		School: 1
		People who recovered from COVID-19: 1
Pandemic General Information	Having Financial Difficulties	No: 50
		Yes: 29
	General situation	Loans and bills: 19
		Food: 18
	Financial Difficulties	Unemployment: 16
		Rent: 14
		Cleaning and hygiene: 6
	Having been quarantined	No: 68
		Yes: 11
	Having tested positive for COVID-19	No: 74
		Yes: 5
	Who has tested positive for COVID-19	Father: 4
		Mother: 2
		Child: 2
		Brother/Sister: 1

Psychosocial Impact	Having mental problems	Yes: 49
		No: 30
		None: 48
	Having received counseling	Teacher support: 12
		Psychologist: 2
		Social media: 2
		National education: 2

Seventy-two participants were mothers. Participants lived in Muş (n=29), Nevşehir (n=25), Gaziantep (n=8), Kastamonu (n=6), Van (n=4), Ankara (n=2), or Istanbul (n=1). Sixty participants lived in apartments, while 19 participants lived in houses. Participants had 79 children in total. Thirty-seven children were girls. Sixty-eight children were between the ages of 3 and 5. Eleven children were between the ages of 6 and 7. Fathers were educators (n=7), public servants (n=7), healthcare professionals (n=4), consultants (n=3), personnel (n=6), or law enforcement officers (n=8). Mothers were educators (n=26), healthcare professionals (n=9), or housewives (n=39).

Participants maintained personal hygiene (n=44), used masks and disinfectants and kept their distance from others (n=43), and took social and physical isolation measures (n=35) to protect themselves from the coronavirus. Television (n: 49), the Internet (n: 44), close circle (n: 5), commercials (n: 2), and official institutions (n: 3) were the source of information for participants. Twenty-nine participants had financial difficulties during the pandemic due to cleaning and hygiene (n: 6), loan and bill payments (n: 19), unemployment (n: 16), rent (n: 14), and food expenses (n: 18). Eleven families had been quarantined. Five families had members who had tested positive for COVID-19 [father (n: 4), mother (n: 2), sibling (n: 1), and child (n: 2)]. Forty-nine families had mental problems. Sixteen families received counseling and support from teachers (n=12), psychologists (n=2), or media and national education (n=2).

2.3. *Data collection*

The researchers developed Google Forms. They first checked the surveys for scope and content validity and then developed a pool of items. Afterward, four experts (one expert in assessment and evaluation, two experts in preschool education, and one linguist) checked the items. The researchers revised the items based on their feedback.

2.4. Data analysis

The researchers turned the data into codes and then developed themes, subthemes, and categories (Yildirim & Simsek, 2008). The data were analyzed using second-cycle coding, which is used in qualitative research. In the first cycle, they coded some of the data separately and then compared them to develop themes and categories. They discussed the codes and developed new themes and categories to make them conceptually dense and free from biases and assumptions. In the second cycle, they used the constant comparison method to code the remaining data (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). They used the NVIVO 8 to develop themes and subthemes and then interpreted and expressed the findings. After coding, they consulted a different expert who had experience in the field to check the codes and themes. They finalized the codes and themes based on expert feedback and presented them in Tables. Lastly, they determined intercoder reliability by using the formula [Reliability = (number of agreements) / (number of agreements + number of disagreements)*100] suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The interrater agreement was $r = .86$, indicating high reliability.

3. Results

Themes, categories, and codes were presented as tables for each research question. Salient quotations were used to provide an accurate and coherent picture of participants' views and to allow readers to analyze and interpret the findings easily. Participants were assigned codes, such as P1, P2, P3, etc. Table 2 shows the results regarding participants' views of the impact of the pandemic on distance learning.

Table 2: Distance Learning

Main Theme	Subtheme	Category	Code	Quotes
Education	Distance Education Process	Enrolled in distance education	Yes: 50	
			No: 29	
		Means of communication	WhatsApp: 42	
			Education Information Network (EIN): 35	
			Phone calls: 24	
			Zoom: 15	
			TV: 11	
			Instagram: 4	
			Others: 3 (Teamlink, Coloring books, I operated it myself)	
			No disruption in education: 4	P51 "The good part of distance learning was that my kid was able to continue his education."
Positive example	Feasible activity: 4	P54 "The educational process was positive because the adults in the family managed the situation well."		
	Involved teachers: 4	P70 "We are very lucky with our teacher. We did all the school stuff at home. Our teacher was very much involved in the process."		
	Sibling harmony: 2	P31 "I think that kids can socialize more with their parents and fight less with their siblings."		
	Separation from school environment: 14	P42 "Bad thing was that my kid couldn't socialize with her peers at school."		
Negative example	Inadequate education: 9	P60 "Distance learning was inadequate."		
	Inadequate parenting: 8	P34 "Our kids can't get enough education."		
	Boredom: 4	P22 "She was a little nervous because she was bored."		
	Attention: 4	P19 "For my kid, I can't say he's particularly interested in distance learning."		

Education		Falling behind: 3	P21 "My kid is worried that he'll fall behind."		
		Becoming ill-tempered: 2	P23 "Not only was he not interested in distance learning, but it made him irritable."		
		Homework: 2	P69 "We just can't get her to do any of his homework or activities, like painting and whatnot."		
		Access to EIN: 2	P14 "We had a hard time logging into EIN. It was quite a challenge."		
		Education with technology: 2	P8 "He's been spending much more time on his tablet and phone."		
		Access to technological devices: 1	P73 "Her brother could not attend his online classes because we did not have a phone."		
		Motivation: 1	P42 "He was pretty demotivated because he couldn't receive face-to-face education with his peers at school."		
		Book: 1	P36 "We read the book less."		
		Family	Positive experience	No difficulty: 29	P6 "We didn't have much problem with his education because he's just a preschooler."
				Lack of motivation: 15	P14 "It's been an unproductive period. My kid was too halfhearted."
Negative experience	A feeling of inadequacy: 12		P50 "I felt inadequate when it came to supporting my kid's education."		
	Not being taken seriously: 11		P68 "The kids didn't take us seriously; they just couldn't concentrate."		
	No planning: 6		P57 "It was an unorganized and unplanned process."		
	Boredom: 4		P13 "The kids are bored with distance learning."		
	Missing deadlines: 3		P64 "My wife is illiterate, so the whole thing is on me. I got and still get nervous coming from work and dealing with my kid's schooling."		
	Not understanding activities: 1		P74 "I couldn't understand the science activities."		

Educa- tion	Teacher	Positive	Teacher involvement and support: 52	P12 " My kid's teacher was very supportive and involved."
		Negative	Lack of teacher involvement and support: 21	P50 " My kid's teacher wasn't very supportive and involved."
		Others	No need: 4	P64 " There was nothing to get support for."
	Expecta- tions from teachers	Communica- tion and interest	Involvement/ support: 14	P30 " I wish the teacher was more involved."
			Contacting and briefing :10	P49 "I wish they would call my kid once in a while."
			Patience/ Understanding: 6	P40 " I wish my kid's teacher were more understanding and patient."
			Socializing Online: 6	P58 " I wish the kids interacted with one another for an hour a week in online classes..."
			Geniality: 2	P66 " I wish my kid's teacher was more patient, understanding, and friendly."
		Education process	Effective education: 10	P66 " I wish my kid's teacher was more involved and efficient."
			Homework: 3	P20 " I wish my kid's teacher sent some activities."
			Evaluation: 2	P51 " I wish my kid's teacher gave some homework and then feedback about it."
			Less homework: 1	P78 " I wish my kid's teacher gave less homework."
			No limits: 1	P79 " School is not the only place to learn; education can take place anywhere."
	Others	Distance learning: 1	P79 " Education shouldn't be trapped withinwfour walls; so I think we should shift to distance learning completely."	
		Doing one's best: 21	P19 " The teacher is doing her best about stuff we've got to do at home when it comes to my kid's education."	
		No expectations: 16	P4 " We had no expectations."	

Educa- tion	Child	Willingness	Longing: 45	P65 " My kid misses her school so much."
			Interested: 18	P16 " My kid is less interested in education and school."
			No change: 10	P45 " My kid is as enthusiastic about schooling as he was before."
			Others: 10	P28 " He has a hard time keeping his distance from friends."

Fifty children continued their education through WhatsApp (n: 42), phone calls (n: 24), EIN (n: 35), Zoom (n: 15), TV (n: 11), Instagram (n: 4), or Teamlink (n: 1). Seventeen participants focused on the positive aspects of distance learning. They stated that they experienced no disruption in education (n: 4) and were able to perform simple activities (n: 4). They also noted that the teachers were very much involved in their children's education and that their children collaborated more with their siblings and enjoyed learning during distance education (n: 2). Fifty-three participants focused on the negative aspects of distance learning because their children were away from school (n: 14) and bored (n: 4), distracted (n: 4), irritable, and unmotivated. They found distance learning (n: 9) and themselves inadequate (n: 8). They noted that their children fell behind (n: 3), had difficulty accessing technological devices and concentrating, and avoided reading books. They believed that distance learning was not completely compatible with the technology.

Participants who believed in the benefits of family-supported distance learning stated that they experienced no difficulty throughout the process. As for the disadvantages of distance learning, participants stated that their children were demotivated (n: 15), distracted (n: 11), and bored (n: 4). They also noted that their children felt inadequate (n: 12) and had difficulty understanding some activities (science activities), fulfilling the tasks they were supposed to do (n: 3), and planning at home (n: 4). They also thought that there was a shortage of educational materials (n: 2).

Some participants claimed that the teachers were very much involved in their children's education (n: 52). However, some others argued that teacher involvement and support were inadequate (n: 21). Four participants stated that they did not need any support from teachers. Participants expected the teachers to communicate better with their children (n: 38) and provide effective education (n: 18). However, some participants believed that the teachers did their best and met their expectations (n: 16). Forty-five participants noted that distance learning made their children more

interested in learning and more willing to spend time with their schoolmates. Eighteen participants argued that distance learning made their children less interested in education. Table 3 shows the results regarding participants' views of the impacts of the preventive measures on their lives and the lives of their children.

Table 3: Life with Preventive Measures

Main Theme	Subtheme	Code	Quotes
Quarantine	Experience	Room confinement: 3	P3 "My kid got bored in his room because he was far from family."
		Boredom-difficulty: 3	P5 "At first, we dealt with the disease, but then they got bored and wanted to go out."
		Home confinement: 2	P2 "We were put in quarantine due to contact with a COVID-19 patient."
		Sadness-nightmare: 2	P2 "It was very upsetting for me to stay indoors all the time and not being able to get close to my kid."
Family plans	Technology	Movies-TV: 13	P7 "We watched movies on TV as a family."
		Internet-Tablet: 2	P "We played games on the tablet for a while."
		Game: 47	P3 "We spent time playing games at home."
	Child-centered activities	Activities: 25	P5 "We had fun doing some school activities at home."
		Drawing pictures: 6	P3 "We drew pictures."
		Reading books: 6	P3 "We had reading hours."
		Painting: 4	P6 "We painted."
		Indoor activities: 4	P "We did some activities at home."
		With activity books: 3	P1 "We worked on the activity books."
		One-to-one attention: 3	P4 "We spent one-to-one time with our kid; we did whatever he wanted."
		Growing plants: 2	P1 "We grew flowers in the garden; we worked the garden."
		Distance learning: 2	P5 "We monitored our kid's distance education closely."
		Puzzle: 1	P "We solved puzzles."
Giving responsibilities: 1	P "We give our kid household responsibilities."		

Others	Nice-Efficient: 11	P4 "We spend quality time with our kid; we do things that she loves doing."	
	Hiking: 6	P1 "We took a walk outside in secluded places."	
	Doing house chores: 5	P2 "We did house chores together, and we cooked together."	
	Eating: 3	P6 "We kept eating; we spent so much time in the kitchen."	
	Making no time: 2	P1 "I couldn't spend time with my kid. We had to deal with patients."	
Open space	Nature walk: 7	P2 "We took walks in nature and got fresh air."	
	Growing plants: 5	P5 "We grew plants."	
	Picnic: 2	P6 "We went on picnics."	
	Swimming: 2	P3 "The kids wanted to go for a swim, so we went to the seaside."	
	Going out to parks: 2	P3 "We went to the park; they played games there."	
	Grubbing: 1	P7 "We grubbed in the garden."	
	Toys from dirt: 1	P7 "We made toys out of the dirt."	
	Taking care of pets: 1	P "We bought a bird; we took care of it at home."	
	Biking: 1	P6 "We hiked and biked."	
	Activities with children	Drawing pictures – Painting: 26	P2 "She loves painting. We painted together."
School activities: 14		P2 "We did school activities."	
Reading books: 13		P4 "We read fairy tales before going to bed."	
Number-Letter activities: 5		P2 "We did activities together, like learning letters and numbers."	
Activity book: 2		P1 "We worked on activity books."	
Recycling activities: 2		P5 "We played games with recycling materials at home."	
Experiment: 2		P5 "We used the materials at home to do experiments."	
Origami: 1		P7 "We made animal origamis."	
Board games		Brain teasers: 9	P5 "We played mind games and had fun."
		Puzzle: 7	P4 "We solved puzzles and bought new ones."

	Boardgames?: 6	P5 "We played a lot of board games."
	Playing cards: 2	P7 "We played cards."
Active games	Game: 24	P7 "We spent time with our kid playing games and solving puzzles."
	Song-Dance: 6	P6 "We danced, read books, and sang songs."
	Ball playing: 4	P4 "We threw colored balls into the basketball hoop and tried to guess who threw the most balls."
	Holding breaths in water: 2	P1 "We put water in a washbowl and had breath-holding contests."
	Show-drama: 2	P5 "We did animal impressions."
	Horse riding with dad: 1	P7 "The kids played with their dad. He let the kids ride on his back like he was a horse."
	Sports: 1	P6 "Doing sports together in the morning, etc...."
	House chores	Cooking: 12
Cleaning-tidying up: 5		P6 "Doing house chores together..."
Games with materials	Playdough: 9	P "We played with playdough."
	Playing with toys: 7	P7 "We played with Legos and made different shapes."
Others:	Movies-TV: 9	P4 "Watching TV, playing games, chatting, etc...."
	Inattentiveness: 2	P7 "I didn't have any time for my kids because of the house chores."
	Chat: 2	P4 "Watching TV, playing games, chatting, etc...."
	Hand games: 2	P "We taught our kids the hand games we used to play when we were small."
	Desire to go outdoors: 22	P2 "Our kid wanted to go out all the time."
	Desire to go to parks: 9	P1 "My kid wanted to play in the park, but I didn't let him go because there were COVID-19 patients in the neighborhood, which was upsetting."

Need for time outdoors	Missing friends: 5	P70 "Our kid wanted to have friends over or wanted to go and visit them."
	Boredom/Crying: 5	P35 "Yes, although they were bored, they were aware of the disease and so did not want to go out."
	Limited space: 3	P6 "Yes, there was no space to play; we had little space."
	A game at home: 2	P5 "We played games at home instead of playgrounds and parks."
	Being cautious: 2	P2 "Our kid wanted to go out; So I took some precautions and let him out."
	Home accident: 1	P4 "She was more active at home and had minor accidents (often hitting her arm and leg, falling, etc.)."
	Not allowing the child to go out alone: 1	P7 "I've never let my kid out alone."
	Vacation: 1	P5 "Our kid always wanted to go on vacation."
	Market: 1	P3 "Our kid wanted to go to the market for shopping."
	School: 1	P3 "Our kid wanted to go to school because she missed it so much."
Outdoor games	Jump rope: 1	P7 "Our kid wanted to jump rope outside when she was bored at home."
	Ball playing: 1	P7 "Our kid played balls with his dad."
	Swing: 1	P7 "We set up a swing in the garden."
	Park: 1	P7 "We went to secluded parks."
Spending time in nature	Trekking: 3	P7 "We often took walks in nature."
	Village: 1	P7 "We went to the village and spent time there."
	Garden: 1	P1 "We let our kid go out into the garden and play there."

Spending time in nature	Flower picking: 1	P7 "We picked flowers in the garden."	
	Grubbing: 1	P7 "Our kid grubbed in the garden and blew off steam."	
Meeting the need for time outdoors	Speech-Suggestion: 13	P "We constantly talked to our kid about the pandemic and why the bans were imposed."	
	Attending to children at home: 12	P1 "Having fun at home..."	
	Others	We could not cope: 2	P4 "I'm afraid I couldn't cope with it."
		Driving around: 2	P1 "We sometimes drove our kid around."
		Going out following the rules: 2	P2 "We went out, but we followed the pandemic rules."
		To the workplace: 1	P7 "Her dad took her to his workplace."

Participants who were quarantined (n: 11) felt like they were confined to their rooms (n: 3) or homes (n: 2). They also experienced challenges (n: 3) and sadness (n: 2). Participants spent their time watching TV (n: 13) or surfing the Internet on their mobile devices (n: 2). They played games with their children (n: 47), such as reading books and drawing pictures (n: 6), solving puzzles (n: 1), and growing plants (n: 2). They gave their children responsibilities (n: 1) and encouraged them to participate in distance learning (n: 2). They also performed indoor (n: 4) or school activities (n: 25) and worked on activity books (n: 3). They spent one-to-one time with their children (n: 3).

Participants and their children performed nice and productive activities (n: 11), took walks (n: 6), did house chores (n: 5), and had meals (n: 3). Two participants did not spend any time with their children. In general, participants did outdoor activities with their children, such as taking walks in nature, planting trees, doing picnics, swimming, and going to parks. Some participants and their children did school activities at home, such as painting (n: 26), reading (n: 13), working on activity books (n: 2), doing experiments (n: 2), and learning numbers and letters (n: 5). Some participants preferred to play hide-and-seek (n: 6), dance and sing (n: 6), and play balls with their children (n: 4), while others played board games, such as mind games (n: 9), puzzle (n: 7), and cards (n: 2).

Some participants did house chores (n: 11) and cleaning-tidying up (n: 5) with their children. They also played with Legos (n: 2) and playdough (n: 9) and watched motives (n: 9) or chatted (n: 2) with their children. Two participants did not spend any time with their children. Participants stated that their children wanted to go out (n: 22) and spend time with their friends (n: 5). However, their children were bored (n: 3) and cried (n: 2) because they could not go to parks (n: 9) and did not enjoy the games they played at home (n: 2). Participants also noted that their children were frustrated because they did not have enough personal space at home (n: 3). One participant talked about home accidents (n: 1). One participant stated that they did not let their children out alone (n: 1). They also noted that their children wanted to go on a vacation (n: 1), to the market (n: 1), or school (n: 1) and wanted to ride a bike (n: 1).

Participants played outdoor games with their children to quench their desire to go out. They got their children to jump rope (n: 1) and play with balls (n: 1). They set upswings (n: 1), took their children to secluded parks (n: 1), or got them out in nature (n: 2). They took walks (n: 1), picked up flowers (n: 1), and grubbed (n: 1) together. Thirteen participants talked to their children and gave them advice. Twelve participants paid special attention to their children (n: 12), drove them around (n: 2), let them go out (n: 2), and took them to their workplaces (n: 1). Three participants stated that they had difficulty coping with the situation. One participant noted that they gave their children love and affection during the pandemic. Table 4 shows the results regarding the changes children went through during the pandemic.

Table 4: Changes in Children during the Pandemic

Main Theme	Subtheme	Category	Code	Quotes
Changes related to games		Playmate	Missing friends: 10	P "They want to see their friends; they miss their friends as any child does."
			Playing alone: 9	P5 "She played by herself at home."
			Playing with parents: 6	P2 "Our kid played more with us."
			Keeping toys to oneself: 5	P1 "Our kid kept his toys to himself; he didn't want to share them."
			Bored with toys: 4	P6 "Our kid got bored with her toys after a while because she was home all the time."
			Getting bored of playing alone: 3	P "Our kid got bored of playing alone."
			Cleaning the toys: 2	P5 "Our kid has some sort of distance with everything, I mean, she even wipes up her toys."
		Games	Playing with siblings: 2	P4 "Our kid's been separated from his friends, so he ended up playing with his brother."
			Virtual game: 9	P7 "Our kid ended up spending much more time playing games on her tablet or phone."
			Coming up with games: 4	P7 "He and his elder brother came up with games."
			Brain training games: 1	P "My daughter played memory games, and so her memory got stronger."
			Fear: 1	P6 "You could tell by the games she played that she was afraid."
			Spending more time with toys: 14	P4 "She spent more time with her toys."
			Playdough: 5	P5 "He played with playdough."

Changes in children	Toys and Materials	Notebook-Paint-Crayon: 3	P1 "Our kid drew pictures with his crayons."
		Puzzle: 2	P1 "He solved tons of puzzles."
		Materials at home: 2	P1 "We came up with games at home. We even made toys from stuff at home."
		Game cards: 2	P1 "She played with the cards we bought from the supermarket."
		Ball games: 1	P6 "He played balls."
		Grubbing: 1	P "She spent more time in the garden in front of the house."
		Personalizing the toys: 1	P7 "She named her dolls after her friends; she tried to create a classroom atmosphere at home."
	Setting for games	Mask: 1	P2 "She puts masks on her dolls."
		Park: 8	P7 "We couldn't go to parks."
		Games at home: 3	P1 "He kind of learned to spend time at home."
		Room: 1	P7 "She tried to create a classroom environment in her room; she turned her room into a classroom."
	Others	No change: 13	P "There was no change."
		Getting bored: 1	P1 "He is just bored at home."
	Positive	Cleanliness: 1	P2 "Whatever she does, she thinks about the virus."
Hygiene and Cleaning: 4		P "Since the pandemic, she has been very careful about hand hygiene; she washes her hands when she gets home or when she feels like she has to."	
Having fun at home: 2		P7 "We had so much fun at home."	

Changes in
behavior

Negative

Cautious: 1	P1 "Our kid has developed awareness about the pandemic; she knows what she's supposed to do to protect herself; she puts on her mask without being told to."
Anger- Aggression: 20	P3 "She was very aggressive and irritable; I had a hard time calming her down."
Boredom: 16	P6 "She was very bored because she couldn't go out; she became edgier."
Anxiety - Fear: 15	P4 "He was very worried about us."
Screen Addiction: 6	P2 "She became too aggressive. Unfortunately, she ended up spending too much screen time."
Passivity: 4	P1 " He became more passive."
Crying: 4	P5 "She cries because she is scared of her dreams."
Sleep problems: 4	P5 "We have trouble sleeping."
Edginess: 4	P6 "She was very bored because she couldn't go out; she became edgier."
Negative attitudes towards going out: 3	P4 "She did not even want to hear the word 'virus' because she knew she couldn't go out because of it."
Hyperactivity: 2	P "He misbehaved and was extremely frustrated."
Anti-sociality: 2	P60 " He has become antisocial."
Obsessed with cleanliness: 3	P3 "She's been obsessed with cleanliness; she just cleans everything."
Lack of appetite: 1	P1 "He has become aggressive; he just wouldn't eat anything."

Changes in areas of interest	Others	Loneliness: 1	P1 "She was feeling alone at home."
		Stress: 1	P4 "She got stressed because she was doing the same things over and over."
		Restlessness: 1	P59 "He was bored and restless because he was cooped up at home."
		Not caring about the rules: 1	P12 "The rules just flew out the window; there was chaos at home."
		Self-confidence: 1	P62 "She's had less confidence and more fear."
		Dissatisfaction: 1	P70 "Nothing was making him happy; he was just restless because he got stuck at home."
		No change: 29	P7 "There was no change, no."
		Spending time painting and drawing pictures: 6	P5 "She paints and draws pictures all the time."
		Impersonation: 4	P65 "He's been great at doing impersonations. He can impersonate anybody."
		Neatness: 3	P5 "She uses too much disinfectant."
		Legos: 2	P "He became more interested in Lego-type games."
		Imagination: 1	P7 "Her imagination has improved."
		Not wanting to go out: 1	P "She didn't want to go out after a while."
		Increase: 38	P2 "She spends much more time online."
		Technology	Spending time on TV- Tablet-telephone: 35
No change: 12	P3 "He uses technological devices as much as he did before."		

Changes in social relationships	Negative	Did not allow: 3	P4 "We didn't let him use the phone or the tablet."
		Keeping under control: 2	P5 "If we don't put a quota, he spends too much time on screen, so we put a quota."
		Reduced social interaction: 17	P32 "We couldn't meet anyone in person. We just met people online; we were frustrated because we couldn't go out."
		Anti-sociality: 13	P5 "She says she doesn't miss her relatives as much as she used to, and even though she misses them, she doesn't want to go visit them because of the virus."
		Longing: 12	P25 "She says she doesn't miss her relatives as much as she used to, and even though she misses them, she doesn't want to go visit them because of the virus."
		Aggression: 7	P12 "My kid's been aggressive."
		Negative effect-depression: 6	P2 "The way he looked at friendship changed, and he felt depressed."
		Loneliness: 3	P7 "She felt lonely because she was alone at home."
		Being cautious: 1	P4 "She's more cautious now."
		A desire for social interaction: 3	P4 "She wanted to meet her friends and cousins."
Changes in routines	Positive	Communication with parents: 2	P21 "He was bored at home, so we got him to do more activities, which he liked. We did stuff together."
	Negative	Sleep: 18	P "He had sleep problems."
		Boredom: 17	P "She was bored because she couldn't go out."

Changes in routines	Technology use: 9	P2 "They spend much more time watching TV or playing with their phones."
	Planning: 9	P1 "There was no planning; we were trapped in a routine."
	Open space: 4	P4 "We couldn't go out, so we did everything at home."
	Need for peers: 4	P6 "He wanted to spend time with his friends."
	House chores: 3	P28 "I worked at night when everyone was asleep to spend more time with him; my workload has increased."
	Eating habits: 3	P1 "He did not want to eat; he just had junk food."
	Positive	Homework: 1
Communication with family: 27		P7 "We were in contact with our family more."
Affected positively: 21		P21 "I spent more time with them; they were more important than the house chores."
Spending time with children: 11		P56 "We spent more time with our kid."
Communication with siblings: 2		P5 "He couldn't go to kindergarten; he played games with his brother."
Distribution of tasks: 1		P5 "She helped with the house chores, which was something new to her."
Eating habits: 1		P7 "Mealtimes have been more regular."
Others	Child-nature relationship: 1	P7 "She was afraid to go out in nature, but she started to like it when she had to."
	No change: 21	P5 "There was no change; everything was the same."
	Playing in the balcony: 1	P6 "We spent almost all of our time in the balcony, playing games and having meals."
	Technology: 1	P24 "I tried to keep her off the screen as much as possible."

During the pandemic, children could not play with their peers. Therefore, they either played alone (n: 9) or with their parents (n: 6). Some children played online games (n: 9) or came up with games (n: 4). One participant stated that her child brought his fears to his games. Children played with their toys (n: 14) or used whatever they found at home to play (n: 2). Some children played with playdough (n: 5) and drew pictures (n: 3). Some children played at home (n: 3) and turned their rooms into classrooms (n: 1) because they could not go out. Some participants reported no change in how their children played games (n: 13), probably because they were used to spending time indoors as they lived in apartments (Kocyigit & Baydilek, 2015).

Some children developed positive behavior during the pandemic. For example, they paid more attention to hygiene (n: 4), came up with games (n: 2), talked more to their parents (n: 1), learned to spend quality time at home with their parents (n:2), and became more careful about their wellbeing (n:1). On the other hand, some children developed negative behavior. For example, they became more frustrated and aggressive (n: 20), passive (n: 4), bored (n: 16), and easily offended (n: 4), experienced anxiety and fear (n: 14), had sleep problems (n: 4), cried (n: 4), developed a screen addiction (n: 6), and did not want to go out at all (n: 3). Forty-two children spent more time using technological devices during the pandemic than before the pandemic. Some children drew pictures (n: 6), did impersonations (n: 4), and came up with games (n: 1). However, some others were bored of drawing pictures (n: 1) and developed an aversion to going out because they were afraid of the virus (n: 1). Twelve participants reported no change in their children's interests. Those parents lived in apartments where their children spent most of their time on technological devices. Participants who reported no change in their children's interests and lived in houses stated that their children spent most of their time in the garden. They also noted that they put a limit on how much time their children could spend online.

Almost all participants stated that the pandemic put a crimp in their children's social life (n: 76). Children were less socially involved (n: 3), developed anti-social (n: 13) and aggressive (n: 7) behavior, and missed their friends (n: 12). On the contrary, some children communicated better with their parents (n: 2) and were more involved with their surroundings (n: 3). Children experienced sleep (n: 17) and eating problems (n: 3), had much more screen time (n: 9), had difficulty planning their day (n: 4), and stayed away from their peers (n: 4). Some participants stated that they communicated better with their children

as they spent much more time at home together (n: 27). Eleven participants noted that they made more time for their children. Two participants remarked that their children played more with their siblings. One participant claimed that her child adopted better eating habits, while another stated that she assigned tasks to her children. Due to the lockdowns and other preventive measures, children could not go out to entertainment centers. Therefore, they spent much more time in nature. During that period, they overcame their prejudices and fears. One participant noted that she let her children play on the balcony, while another stated that she limited her child's access to technological devices. Table 5 shows the results regarding the impact of the pandemic-related restrictions on participants and the solutions they found to problems during the pandemic.

Table 5: Coping Strategies

Main Theme	Subtheme	Category	Code	Quotes		
		Positive	Father-child communication: 2	P "Good thing was that we got to spend more time with our dad."		
			Understanding the child: 1	P7 "Very positive, now I understand better what they want."		
			House chores: 2	P7 "I did less cleaning and kept the house tidy because there was no one visiting."		
		Changes in parents	Changes in routines	Negative	House chores: 4	P2 "My kids and husband came first, so I ended up having more house chores."
					Making time: 2	P5 "People just used to go to work, and all they had to do was do their job. But, since the pandemic, they've had to juggle between work and children. They did both poorly; that's how they went through the pandemic."

Psychological	Mood	Stress and stress: 64	P2 "I had anxiety, stress, and sleep problems."
		Fear: 25	P1 "I was stressed out because I couldn't see him or take care of him during the quarantine."
		Fatigue: 8	P7 "There was just too much stress and fatigue."
		Sleep problems: 6	P1 "I was exhausted, and I had difficulty sleeping."
		Depression: 4	P4 "I was nervous and depressed and was negative towards life."
		Lack of appetite: 2	P1 "I was not in a good mood, I didn't want to eat, and I was tired but had trouble sleeping."
		Anger-Aggression: 2	P2 "I was crying, and I had some sort of aggression that I couldn't understand why."
		Indecision: 1	P7 "I was indecisive about many things; I just didn't know what to do."
		Crying: 1	P2 "I was crying, and I had some sort of aggression that I couldn't understand why."
		Others	Having problems: 4
Inability to cope with problems: 2	P6 "I still haven't gotten over what I've been through."		

Solutions	Means of interaction	Speech-Suggestion: 41	P6 "We told our kid what was going on; we talked to him and played with him."
		Attention-Game-Activity: 23	P2 "I tried to be as attentive as I could; we did activities together."
		Social environment-School: 16	P5 "With the social environment, when our kid went to school."
		Being patient: 7	P4 "We were calm and patient."
		Videocall: 9	P3 "I get my kid to video call her cousins. She is happy talking to them."
		Activity: 5	P3 "We played games at home; we did different activities."
		Open space: 5	P1 "I took my kid out so he'd get some fresh air."
		Toy: 4	P7 "I bought her the toys she wanted and got her to play with them."
		Tolerance and empathy: 3	P "We tried to be calmer and listen to him; empathy is important."
		Child-parent communication: 3	P7 "We played games with our kid, and we became friends."
		One-to-one communication: 3	P7 "We just talked to one family."
		Going on vacation: 1	7 "We took the kids on vacation."
		House chores: 1	P "Household activities and chores. helping in the kitchen."

Support	Professional support: 3	My brother is a psychologist. We asked him for help. I and my husband constantly evaluated the situation and thought about how to respond to our kid.
	Pandemic: 17	P7 "Everything is going to be all right when things go back to normal, I mean when the pandemic is over."
Others	Rule-Punishment-Resentment: 7	P4 "Sometimes we talked, sometimes we got angry, and sometimes we punished her for discouraging misbehavior."
	Problem: 5	P5 "We had no problems."
	Technology: 3	P4 "We kept him away from technology. We didn't watch the news at home."
	Time: 2	P4 "It'll get better with time."
Suggestions	School: 8	P1 "I hope the school will reopen soon."
	Distance learning: 1	P3 "To ensure equality, education should be interrupted instead of sustaining it."
	Making one feel important: 1	P4 "We wanted to make children feel like they mattered."

Children spent more time with their fathers (n: 2). Participants were able to do house chores (n: 1) and keep their homes in order (n: 1). Some participants did

not have time for their children (n: 2) due to the increased workload at home (n: 4). Half the participants experienced stress (n: 32) and fear (n: 32). Some others had depression (n: 3), fatigue (n: 8), sleep problems (n: 6), anxiety (n: 2), and aggression (n: 2). Some participants were obsessed with hygiene (n: 1), had difficulty making decisions (n: 1), lost their appetite (n:2), and had crying episodes (n: 1). Only four participants reported no psychological problems.

Participants coped with pandemic-related problems by talking to their children and relatives (n: 41), playing games and performing activities (n: 23), video calling their children and friends (n: 3), buying toys for their children (n: 2), spending time outdoors (n: 4), seeking professional support (n: 4), and implementing rules and inflicting punishment on their children (n: 7). Participants believed that the problems would go away with time (n:2) when the pandemic was over (n:13). They also followed the rules (n: 1), avoided talking about the pandemic, and kept their children away from technological devices (n: 1) to cope with pandemic-related problems. Eight participants stated that they wished the school would reopen soon. One participant suggested that distance learning be terminated, while another noted that parents should make their children feel like they mattered.

4. Discussion

More than half the participants attended distance learning with their children. Research also shows that participants would like their children to participate in distance learning during the pandemic (Novianti & Garzia, 2020; Gundogdu, 2021). Participants stated that teachers contacted them through WhatsApp, EIM, and phone calls. Research shows that distance learning is conducted online or through phone calls (Balci & Tezel Şahin, 2018; Novianti & Garzia, 2020; Gundogdu, 2021; UNESCO, 2020c).

Participants were happy that teachers were doing their best to keep their children engaged in distance learning and choosing activities according to their needs and levels. Gundogdu (2021) also maintains that teachers who provide activities for parents to perform together with their children are more likely to achieve effective education. Most participants noted that distance learning adversely affected their children's education because it kept them away from the school environment. A guide published by the Ministry of Education of China also reports that distance learning is not as effective as face-to-face learning because students receiving distance learning have difficulty monitoring and

evaluating themselves and lack experience. It also argues that distance learning is problematic due to unstable network signals and a lack of opportunities in rural areas. This shows that experts and parents think alike about distance learning. Some participants were in favor of distance learning involving parents. They remarked that they had no problems with family-supported distance learning. On the other hand, some other participants were against distance learning because they thought it made their children reluctant, bored, and distracted. However, Jiao et al. (2020) argue that it is a natural part of distance learning to which all stakeholders should pay particular attention. However, participants considered themselves inadequate in terms of supporting their children's education. Parents are as responsible as schools for helping their children actualize themselves and achieve high academic performance (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2013, p.10). Teachers also play a key role in this process. Most participants stated that teachers paid enough attention to their children's education. However, some participants were unhappy about teachers' insufficient involvement in their children's education. Not only does insufficient teacher involvement jeopardize education, but it also prevents parental involvement in education (Kocyigit, 2015, p.142). Therefore, it is only natural that parents have some expectations from teachers. Almost half the participants expected teachers to communicate more effectively with their children. Gundogdu (2021) also points to this problem and claims that poor communication on the part of teachers reduces the effectiveness of parental involvement. The researcher suggests effective communication between schools and parents to ensure better parental involvement in children's education. Participants also expected teachers to provide balanced and efficient education. Half the participants expected nothing from teachers because they believed teachers did their best to provide distance education. This shows that activities provided by teachers increase the quality of distance learning. Teachers communicating effectively with parents pave the way for more efficient parental involvement in children's education. This, in turn, helps children develop more positive attitudes towards education. Half the participants noted that their children had been more enthusiastic about education since the pandemic because they missed their schools. However, some participants remarked that their children had lost interest in education and developed negative attitudes towards education since the pandemic. Therefore, schools and parents should collaborate to ensure that children go through the distance education process smoothly and effectively (MoNE, 2013, p. 10).

Participants who had been put in quarantine described the process as home confinement. People use the term "confinement" to describe the situation in which they have to change their routine and live their lives with little interaction and socialization. Research shows that people in quarantine experience sadness and boredom and suffer from nightmares (Sprang et al., 2013; Brooks et al., 2020). Our participants who had been put in quarantine also reported feelings of sadness and boredom, and nightmares. Participants who had not been put in quarantine noted that they spent their time watching movies and TV and surfing the Internet on their technological devices. Participants who complied with the pandemic-related restrictions remarked that their children wanted to go out and meet their friends. However, children stuck at home were bored and cried. Participants satisfied their children's desire to go out by playing outdoor games with them, taking them out in nature, talking to them, and letting them out. Participants generally played games with their children, performed school activities at home, and encouraged them to draw pictures, read books, and work on their activity books. They also focused on home activities and paid particular attention to their children to help them go through the pandemic. Some participants and their children spent some time outdoors, did house chores, and played board games. Participants regarded them as nice and productive activities that could be performed at home. Experts recommend those activities. Pediatricians in China's Shoonvi province have developed strategies to combat the psychological problems caused by the pandemic. They suggest that parents and children communicate more effectively and engage in fun and productive activities that mitigate loneliness. From a different perspective, although participants tried to keep the situation under control, children could not interact with their peers and ended up spending time alone. Children mostly played online games and brought their fears to the games they came up with. Poletti et al. (2020) argue that school closures put children at risk of isolation and make them more prone to screen addiction. Participants' children used whatever they found at home to play games. However, they did not have enough personal space. Some children turned their rooms into classrooms. All these changes in behavior are since they spent a great deal of their time indoors because of the pandemic (UNESCO, 2020b). Participants living in apartments did not report any change in their children's behavior. This is probably because those children already spent a great deal of their time at home even before the pandemic.

More than half the participants stated that their children spent much more time on technological devices during the pandemic than they did before the pandemic. Research shows that too much screen time causes mental and behavioral problems (Kahraman & Demirci, 2018; Duan et al., 2020). This can lead to relationship problems and mood disorders. This negative change in the field of interest can affect behavior as well. More than half the participants reported negative behavior in their children since the pandemic, such as anger, aggression, boredom, anxiety, fear, passivity, crying, and sleep problems. Some participants remarked that their children became more easily offended and lost interest in going out during the pandemic. Research shows that pandemic-related restrictions and technology addiction are the causes of those changes in children's behavior. Researchers even argue that those changes may be permanent (Dubey et al., 2020; Jiao et al., 2020). Some participants stated that their children turned the restrictions into opportunity and developed positive behavior. They noted that their children became more careful about their hygiene, came up with games, spent time doing impersonations and drawing pictures, talked more to their parents, and learned to have fun at home during the pandemic. Only a few participants and their children spent quality time at home during the pandemic, which might predict communication problems in the future. Participants who lived in apartments and reported no change in their children's behavior noted that they spent most of their time watching TV or cartoons on their tablets (OECD, 2018). Those who lived in houses stated that their children spent most of their time in the garden. This shows that where one lives determines one's interests and lifestyle (OECD, 2020c). Almost all participants reported negative changes in their children's social relationships. They stated that their children interacted less and developed anti-social behavior, such as aggression (OECD, 2020b). Courtney et al. (2020) argue that the pandemic takes a toll on social relationships and that social withdrawal adversely affects interaction. Participants also remarked that their children became more isolated and missed their friends during the pandemic.

Half the participants saw the changes in their children's routines as something negative. They stated that their children had sleeping and eating problems, too much screen time, difficulty planning their days, and no opportunity to spend time with their friends. Research shows that children cooped up at home change their routines, leading to various problems, such as disruptions in sleeping and eating habits, excessive screen time, and limited access to friends, teachers, and games (Brooks et al., 2020; Patra & Patro, 2020). On the other hand, half the

participants saw the changes in their children's routines as something positive. They noted that they could communicate better with their children and spend much more time with them. They also remarked that their children got along better with their siblings, developed healthier eating habits, and fulfilled their assigned tasks. They added that their children developed more positive attitudes towards nature as they could not visit entertainment centers due to the pandemic. This result suggests that sociological structure and home practices determine how parents and children experience the pandemic (Han & Lee, 2018).

For participants, the good part of the pandemic was that fathers got to spend much more time with their children. In addition, mothers made more time for house chores and were able to put things in order at home. However, some participants stated that the pandemic had been problematic for housewives as they had much more responsibilities which prevented them from spending time with their children. Therefore, we can argue that the pandemic has affected working mothers and housewives differently. In other words, sociological and economic status affects parents' attitudes and home practices (Han & Lee, 2018).

Almost all participants reported psychological problems since the onset of the pandemic. Almost half the participants experienced stress, fear, depression, fatigue, sleep disorders, anxiety, indecisiveness, lack of appetite, anger, and aggression. It is no surprise that the pandemic causes anxiety and depression. On the other hand, parents are expected to help their children overcome their stress. All stakeholders should manage the situation effectively to develop better communication skills to get through the pandemic with as little damage as possible (Courtney et al., 2020).

Lastly, participants stated that they dealt with the pandemic-related problems by talking, doing activities and playing games, video calling their friends and relatives, spending time with their children, going out in nature, seeking professional help, and implementing rules and reward-punishment methods. They also argued that they could get over their problems after the pandemic by avoiding talking about it and staying away from technological devices. Researchers also propose similar strategies to overcome the challenges of the pandemic with as little damage as possible.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

The results indicate that the adverse impacts of the pandemic on children are related to how teachers and parents approach the issue and in what kind

of environment children live. Positive relationships protect children from the adverse effects of the pandemic. The results also show that every family has its strategies to cope with the pandemic. Based on the results, we can make the following suggestions:

- a) Educators and parents should employ positive communication channels to relieve children's fear and anxiety.
- b) Educators and parents should perform cooperative activities with children who feel lonely.
- c) Parents and children should focus on social-emotional problems rather than academic concerns.
- d) Routines (eating, sleeping, cleaning, etc.) are important for healthy development.
- e) Parents should collaborate with psychological counselors and preschool educators to develop productive activities to reduce the stress experienced by family members.
- f) Educators should recognize parents' and children's needs and bring resources together for effective distance learning and present them in a way that meets children's needs.

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CHAPTER VII

EARLY LITERACY SKILLS AND EARLY MATH SKILLS

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1. Introduction

Many studies in the field of education and medicine have revealed that the fastest time for mental, social and physical development in children is the preschool period (Kađıtcıbaşı, Sunar & Bekman, 2001). In the preschool period, very important and future-determining features are acquired in terms of physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language development. One the skills attained in this period is early academic skills. Early academic skills in the preschool period include early literacy skills and early math skills (Uyanık & Kandır, 2010). These two areas form the basis for the acquisition of other academic skills (Brown & Murray, 2005). Moreover, the correlation between the two academic fields is often very high (Piastra, Purpura & Wagner, 2010).

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) state that high-quality, engaging and accessible mathematics education for children aged three to six is a critical foundation for children’s future mathematics learning (NCTM, 2000). Early math skills include instant cognition from counting, size comparison, classification of objects, counting skills, knowledge of numbers, memorization of numbers, sequencing and quantity skills acquired before formal mathematical learning. Many studies in this field confirm that teaching mathematical concepts in the preschool period facilitates the transition to formal mathematical knowledge by laying cognitive foundations for children’s ability to master the systematic teaching of “real” mathematical concepts in

later educational steps (Balfanz, Ginsburg & Greenes, 2003). Moreover, early mathematical competencies are not only highly relevant for later mathematical abilities but also all education outcomes (Duncan et al., 2007). Watts, Duncan, Siegler and Davis-Kean (2014), also pointed out that math knowledge is a strong predictor of the later mathematic and reading skills for academic achievement.

As with the development of early math skills, studies also emphasize that there are critical periods in the acquisition of literacy skills, and that the knowledge, skills, and experiences that children acquire in the literacy process at an early age form the basis for their literacy. Furthermore, in the studies conducted, it has been determined that children who receive an effective early literacy education in the preschool period acquire literacy skills at the desired level when they start primary school (Erdoğan, Özen-Altınkaynak & Erdoğan, 2013). Early literacy skills often include verbal language, phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabet and letter knowledge, vocabulary, and writing skills (Muter, Hulme, Snowling & Stevenson, 2004). In this context, it has been found that children with delays in early literacy skills generally have delays in early math skills (Krajewski & Schneider, 2009). In addition, studies have revealed the percentages of the relationship between early literacy and mathematics. It was determined that 11% to 56% of children with reading problems had math problems and 17% to 70% of children with math problems had reading problems (Landerl & Moll, 2010)

It can be assumed that supporting children's early math skills and early literacy skills together will contribute to not only their early math and early literacy skills but also other academic domains. Thus, it has a critical importance to develop early math and early literacy skill in preschool period.

2. Links Between Early Math Skills And Early Literacy Skills

According to the opportunity-propensity model (O-P Framework), antecedent factors (socioeconomic status, parental expectations, school policies, gender, ethnicity, and opportunities) and opportunities to learn mathematic (exposure to content and teaching approach) affect a child's mathematic achievement. Moreover, according to this model, antecedent factors affect mathematic learning opportunities as well as mathematic achievement (Byrnes & Wasik, 2009).

Predictors of early math skills are identified, including numeracy, counting ability, behavioral inattention, and working memory (Cirino, Child & Macdonald, 2018). Mathematic is about both conceptual and procedural counting (Aro, Eklund, Nurmi & Poikkeus, 2012). Counting is usually demonstrated verbally. Therefore, it is not surprising that language is as much about mathematic as vocabulary (Koponen, Aunola, Ahonen & Nurmi, 2007), rapid naming (Geary, Hoard, Byrd-Craven, Nugen & Numtee, 2007) and phonological process (Krajewski & Schneider, 2009). Besides, early math and reading skills predict each other, even middle and high school (Hooper, Roberts, Sideris, Burchinal & Zeisel, 2010). There are also evidences of a unique role played by certain early literacy skills in the development of later math skills (Jordan, Hanich & Kaplan, 2003).

In addition to the fact that the predictors of mathematics and language are the same, the difficulties are also found to be the same. Landerl & Moll (2010) Furthermore, studies have found that the determining factors of mathematics and reading are the identical (Cirino, Child & Macdonald, 2018).

Intrinsically, much of the application of mathematical knowledge to basic computation and comparison skills depends on children's understanding of language. For instance, in addition to understanding the concepts of "more" and "less," language skills may be important for understanding that some mathematical words can mean the same thing and they are often interchangeable (for example, add plus, and, together) (Purpura, Hume, Sims & Lonigan, 2011).

Krajewski and Schneider (2009), examined the importance of measures of phonological awareness, short-term memory, and quantity-number competences (QNC) in kindergarten in predicting children's mathematical school success in the third grade in a longitudinal study on 91 German children. Children who could speak German fluently were included in the study. Children were tested three times in the kindergarten, in September, January and July, and once in the third grade, a total of four times during the study. Through quantity-number competence, children's phonological awareness and visuospatial working memory, assessed at age five, were found to affect their third-grade math achievement.

Moreover, it has been observed that phonological awareness did not have an effect on higher numeracy competences, but basic numeracy competences were effective in the relationship between early literacy development and the development of mathematical competences.

Additionally, De Smedt, Taylor, Archibald and Ansari (2010), examined the relationship between phonological awareness and math skills of 37 children in the fourth and fifth grades with an average age of 10. Collaboration was made with the University of Western Ontario Developmental Psychology Participant Pool and the Thames Valley District School Board to involve participants from different socioeconomic groups in the study. All the participants were children whose mother tongue was English and who did not have learning difficulties. To measure mathematical skills, a test consisting of 160 questions in total, which included subjects such as division and addition, and whose problem length was determined by certain standards, and Phoneme Elision subtest of the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing was used to measure phonological awareness. In the control measures, the Nonword Repetition Test for phonological short-term memory and The Sight Word Efficiency subtest of the Test of Word Reading Efficiency for reading and Woodcock-Johnson III Test of Achievement's Calculation subtest was used for calculation. The result of regression analysis has showed that phonological awareness was uniquely related to minor math problems. In addition, it is stated that phonological awareness affects individual differences in mathematic in the light of current findings.

The effects of parent-performed math and reading activities on children's basic mathematic and reading acquisition were also examined in a longitudinal study by Huntsinger, Jose, and Luo, (2016). 200 children aged between four and five and their parents participated in the study. One year later, 97 of these children participated in the study. At both times, children's reading and math abilities were measured using TERA-3 and TEMA-2, and parents answered the Encouragement of Academic Skills in Young Children (EASYC) questionnaire. T1 Formal Mathematics Activities (for example, addition-subtraction in single-digit numbers) were the strongest factor in children's reading and mathematics scores after their age. It has been

observed that the reading activities done by parents affect the reading skills of the children. However, it has been found that the math activities done by the parents affect both the math and reading skills of the children and also the math grades one year later.

3. Conclusion

According to Purpura et al., (2011), an understanding of certain language terms is inherently necessary for the completion of basic mathematical tasks. Thus, it may be linked to early language and early math skills. Duncan et al., (2007) also state that reading and math skills are interrelated. Children who have difficulties in one area are more likely to have difficulties in the other (Barbarese, Katusic, Colligan, Weaver & Jacobsen, 2005)

Furthermore, certain math tasks, such as basic arithmetic reasoning, are often expressed in story problems, which require reading ability or having sufficient language development to understand spoken story problems (Purpura et al., 2011).

As children develop and their experience with mathematic increases, their logical reasoning abilities increase as well (Churchman, 2007; cited in Alisinanoğlu & Uyanık, 2016). It was also found that the relationship between reasoning, mathematic and reading is high (van der Sluis, de Jong & van der Leij, 2007). Therefore, it is possible to say that with the development of mathematical skills in children, literacy skills also show a direct improvement. Besides, it has been shown that early mathematic proficiency is a better predictor of later reading success than early literacy proficiency (Duncan & Magnuson, 2011).

Additionally, there is evidence that the common variance between early math and literacy skills due to general cognitive processes or experiences that are presumed to affect both (Simmons & Singleton, 2008).

As a result, early literacy skills and early math skills are two important early academic skills that share the same cognitive processes, affect each other's development significantly and contribute to their development. Therefore, the development of these two early academic skills

should be given critical importance in preschool period as well all education process. In the light of all this information, activities and programs should be planned to develop these skills of children.

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CHAPTER VIII

NEXT-GENERATION PARENTING: HELICOPTER PARENTING

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1. Introduction

Family emerges as the main factor in the development and education of the child. It is a social unit that provides the development and academic progress of the child with general education, provides religious and moral education, provides economic support, and has responsibilities such as job and sexual functions. Socialization of the child, formation of healthy personality development, healthy mental and emotional structure, maximization of cognitive development, and physical development can only be achieved with the right family approaches. Parents have an important role in making children a member of society. Thus, it is closely related to the behaviors and approaches of the parent towards the child and the young person to feel themselves as a member of the society in the formation of identity and personality. (Tezel-Sahin & Özyürek, 2017). Parental attitude is the behaviors that develop in line with the past life and psychological tendencies of the parents and reflect their unconscious experiences and needs. Parental attitudes generally include verbal and physical communication that parents apply to in raising the child. These attitudes and behaviors have serious effects on individual psychology. The main factors in the child-parent relationship in the family are the behaviors of the parents and the verbal and non-verbal communication they establish. The behaviors and attitudes of parents towards their children are the most basic factors that determine the personality structure of the child. Parental attitudes are an environmental factor that affects children from early childhood to adulthood. This factor greatly affects children's self-care skills as well as their cognitive, physical, social-emotional and language development. Parents have a key role in

raising children physically and socially. Because together with the mental health of individuals, the basis of their character and personality is based on childhood. The most important people that children take as models are their own parents in the preschool period and at the beginning of the primary school years. Parents' attitudes and behaviours towards their children have undeniable importance on their spiritual world, psychological structure and personal development along with all their developmental areas (Checa & Abundis-Gutierrez, 2017). Then the parent is replaced by the teacher and then friends. While the positive attitudes of the mother and father allow the child to develop a unique self, they actually determine the forms of interpersonal relationships and future parental attitudes and roles.

Creating a balanced and harmonious personality structure of children and young people and being a healthy individual is directly related to the healthy family environment in which they grow up. The fact that his/her relationship with his/her parents has been based on trust and health since the moment he/she came to the world and meeting his/her needs constitute the basis of the child's perception of the outside world and the relationships he/she will establish with the outside world in the future.

When we look at the individuals who have a healthy relationship with their parents, it is seen that they are generally sociable, able to express their thoughts freely and confident. Healthy relationships with the child and a positive and correct attitude towards him/her ensure that the child has high self-esteem. It helps to develop a sense of responsibility. It ensures that the child is a self-sufficient individual with improved self-control. On the other hand, negative attitudes cause low self-esteem, insufficient assertiveness skills, low independence and auto control, and may result in high levels of aggression and insecurity in childhood and advanced ages. The child does not develop a sense of responsibility. The child may be an addicted and passive individual who cannot cope with difficult situations and whose problem-solving skills are not developed.

Although an institution that generally positively affects the development of individuals comes to mind when it comes to family, positive effects cannot always be left on the child. Parental attitudes are a concept that affects children from childhood to middle age of the person. Therefore, attention should be paid by parents and educators. Children and young people whose parents exhibit democratic attitudes have been shown to be more successful in school, have

higher self-confidence, are less anxious, and less prone to depression than those whose parents exhibit authoritarian attitudes. Studies have shown that self-acceptance, adaptation to the environment and high self-esteem are higher than non-democratic parents (Kuzgun, 1973; Kılıççı, 1981; Güneysu & Bilir, 1989; Kızılaltan, 1982; Bilal, 1984; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Durnbysch, 1991). The repressive and strict discipline applied by the parents is also an important factor in the child's low self-confidence and developing an anxious and negative personality. It is stated that young people whose parents are authoritarian are more susceptible to depression, guilt and substance abuse and less confident in social issues (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Durnbysch, 1999, Kandel & Lesser, 1969; Pardeck & Pardeck, 1990). It is the first step and priority for the child to fulfill his/her duties and responsibilities within the family as well as school success. In this regard, the family has important duties. The definition of "helicopter parenting" was added to the parental attitudes that emerged as democratic, authoritarian, child-centered, indifferent and unstable, reassuring-tolerant attitude in 1969. In the developing and renewing world, attitudes and behaviors also differ with the influence of parents, which is reflected in child education. Among the new generation of parents, parents who exhibit "helicopter parenting attitude" are frequently encountered. The desire to do what is best for their children and the greatness of love, which is actually very well-intentioned, lead to this attitude. The fact that parents also encountered this attitude in their own childhood and learned this from their parents led them to adopt the helicopter parenting attitude.

2. Helicopter Parenting

2.1. Description of Helicopter Parenting

The instinct to protect the child, which emerges in the parents with the birth of the child, sometimes goes a little further and shows itself as supporting the child in order to make his/her life easier and to prevent him/her from being sad and tired, and making decisions on his/her behalf. The main behavior and attitude that draws attention here is to be a propeller around the child to make the child's life easier.

This concept, which entered the scientific literature in 2011, was included in the book published by Haim Ginott in 1969 for the first time. Helicopter parenting, which emerged when a child said "my mother spins around me like

a propeller”, was conceptualized by Haim Ginott (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; cited in Yılmaz, 2020). The concept of helicopter parenting was expressed as excessive parenting according to Kuppens & Ceulemans (2019), as lawn mowing parenting according to Locke, Campbell, & Kavanagh (2012), as tiger parenting according to Juang, Qin, & Park (2013), and as bulldozer parenting according to Sharma & Sarna (2018) (cited in: Yılmaz, 2020). As can be understood from all these terms, an excess is noted as a parenting attitude and the child is treated as the center of attention in every way. In fact, it is the parent who prefers to live a child-centered life.

According to Berger & Luckmann (2008), helicopter parenting is the parents who are overly interested in their children, live child-centered, and help their children even if they do not request it. It is a concept that defines the parent who makes their plans and programs even though they do not request children and who has perfectionist personality traits. Kwon, Yoo & Bingham (2016) defined these parents as parents who keep their children under their control and often make decisions on their behalf. These parents are parents who interfere with their children’s lives and personality formation (Duygulu, 2018). It is about trying hard to remove the obstacles in his/her life, offering him/her an easy life, avoiding struggle and problem solving and preventing him/her from being forced. These parents revolve around their children as if they were living for them. It is possible to define their children as parents who have put them at the center of their lives. It is a concept that defines obsessive, perfectionist and overprotective parental attitudes.

2.2. Characteristics of Helicopter Parenting

Helicopter parents are perfectionist parents. In this success-oriented parental attitude, where children do not have the chance to make mistakes, children are not given the opportunity to learn their lives. They cannot stand to see their children make mistakes. They do not even allow them to experience new jobs and activities or responsibilities in order not to make mistakes. Most of the time, the parent undertakes these jobs and engagements themselves, thinking that they will not be able to fulfill this task exactly or will spend unnecessary time for it or will be tired for it. This situation may cause the child to think “My parents do not trust me, they do not believe that I can do this” and lose their self-confidence. According to Yılmaz & Büyükcebeci (2019), parents who exhibit helicopter parenting attitudes have distinctive characteristics. These characteristics are

listed as the fact that the focus of the parents is on the child, that the parents help more than the child needs, and that the parents exhibit an interventionist and perfectionist attitude as a result of programming and even trying to manage the lives of the children. In the activities in which their children are involved, it is observed that they make decisions on behalf of their children, set targets on their behalf and eliminate the obstacles they face instead of their children.

According to Odenweller, Booth-Butterfield, & Weber (2014), one of the characteristics of families with helicopter parenting attitude is that they expect a high level of academic achievement from their children. In addition to academic success, the child's adaptation to society is also important for these parents. Their most prominent feature is that they make their children the sole focus of attention in their lives. They stated that the reasons for this were their own egos.

According to Hesse, Mikkelsen, & Saracco (2018), the prominent feature of helicopter parenting attitude is that parents are overly concerned about their children and their future. These parents exert excessive effort to prevent problems and try to keep their children away from all dangers.

Helicopter parents try to fill every moment of the child with activities. The most common behaviors in parents with this attitude are dealing with the child's school life and problems to an uncomfortable extent (Fingerman, Cheng, Wesselmann, Zarit, Furstenberg and Birditt, 2012; Bradley-Geist and Olson-Buchanan, 2014). Doing the tasks and responsibilities that the child can do for him/her, trying to solve the problems for the child, and doing his/her homework are usual behaviors. It is very common to call teachers very often and give information to the teacher and sometimes advise the teacher on what to do. Even in their games, they direct about making friends and making games. They say, "Why don't you play house with your friend and have a chat with your friend?"

Parents' communication styles and conversations give clues about these attitudes. The "we" subjects and words they use inform us that they are helicopter parents (Segrin, Wosizdlo, Givertz, Bauer & Murphy, 2012). They usually speak for their children in their conversations. Usually, they start to talk as us and prefer to use plural subjects such as "we worked hard today", "we were a little sick today" (Kelly, Duran. & Miller-Ott, 2017). Although these parents are thought to communicate effectively with their children at first glance, there are in fact expectations from the child, responsibilities assumed, suggestions given to the child, and excellent behaviors expected from them (Gottlieb, 2011). It is seen that helicopter parents' intervention leads to family communication problems

and therefore has too many conflicts with the child (Lemoyne & Buchanan, 2011). Helicopter parents seem to be in intensive communication with their children, but in fact, this communication is very shallow. Giving continuous instructions, reminding duties and responsibilities go beyond suggestions to be a perfect person.

According to Yoo, Liu & Cho, (2016), helicopter parenting continues in future years. Helicopter parents also intervene in their children's decisions in their future academic years. They dictate to their children which university they will go to and which department they will choose. Choosing the profession that the young person will have, choosing the person to marry, listing the determinants of having children are among these parental attitudes. After marriage, he/she can direct his/her new family and life, and the helicopter attitude can continue with the interventions related to the place where he/she will live and his/her spouse relations.

Parents with this attitude start to exhibit this attitude at a very young age. Helicopter parenting begins with constantly standing next to the child with the child walking in the first childhood period and following him/her like a shadow. It continues with directing his/her behaviors and games in childhood. At school age, it manifests itself by finding reliable teachers who can maintain this attitude at home, choosing the children's friends and determining the activities they will participate in. Doing homework for the child is very common in these parents (Hong; Hwang,; Kuo & Hsu, 2015; Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014; Bristow, 2014)

According to Bristow (2014), helicopter parents are aware of these attitudes. The reason for these attitudes and behaviors is stated as academic competition, economic and social system, increase in crimes against children (cited in: Avcı & Şatır, 2020). According to some experts, the reasons for these behaviors are the compensation of their own goals and the desire to realize this in their children. According to some experts, it is the parent's satisfaction with mother or fatherhood.

In summary, helicopter parenting characteristics are:

- A child-centered family structure
- Over-focusing on the child
- Exhibiting overprotective attitudes
- Being overly controlling

- Being in a perfectionist expectation from the child
- Being within reach of the child
- Assuming that the child cannot make the right decision on his/her own
- Directing and /or intervening in the child's choice of school, profession, job, friend, spouse
- Expecting high academic achievement from the child
- Overwhelming the child with too many courses and activities for academic success
- Extremely frequent communication that disturbs the teacher
- Being too interested in the child's friendship relationships
- Assuming the responsibilities and assignments of children and young people
- Helping the child without child's request
- Not allowing their children to struggle with life and solve problems
- Trying to keep the child away from all hazards
- Worrying about the child's present and future life
- Fear of separation from their children
- Providing continuous advice on the physical and mental health of the child
- Intervening in or planning for their children's plans and goals.

2.3. Factors Affecting Helicopter Parenting Attitude

Changes in family structure have led to a change in roles and responsibilities within the family, a change in the place and status of women and children in the family with the industrial revolution, and a decrease in the number of family members with the nuclear family. As the woman entered the working life, the number of children decreased. With the decrease in the number of children, the time allocated by the family for the child increased. The desire of each family to provide a good future to their children has led to the idea of offering a good life and future to children. As the number of family members living in the same house decreased, it was possible for parents to lead a life that focused on their children. At the same time, the duties and responsibilities that the child can take at home have decreased. Thus, it has not been difficult for some families to focus on their children and to assume their duties and responsibilities.

Helicopter parental attitude has been observed in different geographies in recent years and this concept is encountered in many segments, especially in families with high socioeconomic levels. It is noteworthy that the number of

children of these parents, who mostly have a high level of education, is relatively low. This attitude, which is more common in young generation parents, is more common in families with high socio-economic and educational levels (Kwon, Yoo&Gagne, 2017; Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). Some of the new generation parents offer all kinds of economic opportunities in order to benefit their children from their economic opportunities at the maximum level or with the thought of “I had difficulty, my child should not have difficulty”. In this case, everything is already accessible to the child.

With the development of mobile technology, easy access to children, increased control over children and knowing what their children do, especially as a result of phones creating an invisible connection between the child and the family, have led to an increase in helicopter parenting (Lemoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Kelly et al., cited in 2017: Avcı & Şatır, 2020). The increase in economic level and education level has been reflected in the development of technology and especially mobile technologies, which has provided accessibility to the child and proximity to the child. Being close to the child has brought about attachment and intervention to the child. Economic prosperity has provided parents with easy access to their children, as well as a comfortable life for their children.

According to Hesse, Mikkelson, & Saracco (2018), it has become inevitable for parents to protect their children due to the distrust they feel towards the world market, their economy, and these concerns. However, news and situations that threaten the safety of the child, which are constantly in the media, social media use, media and social media, increase the instinct to protect their children in families. Therefore, parents are sometimes concerned about the safety and future of their children. They exhibit more protective and control-oriented attitudes with the concern of offering them a safe life, offering them a better future, and therefore, with the concern of the future.

Helicopter parents support their children to live with them. It is also seen that there is more interest in girls and the younger child (Jill and Julie, 2014). The thoughts that these children need more help and support in terms of physical strength lead them to a more protective and protective attitude. They are worried about their independence and make excuses to be close all the time.

Among the factors affecting helicopter parenting, the parents who think that they are not loved, neglected or ignored in their childhood lives may want to compensate for this (Rousseau & Scharf, 2017). Parenting is learned by taking a role model. Therefore, parents with helicopter parents also apply parenting

attitudes that they observe and model from their own parents over time. In other words, it can be said that individuals with helicopter parents are helicopter parent candidates.

3. The Effect of Helicopter Parenting Attitude on Children

It has been emphasized that the effects of helicopter parental attitude on the child are not always possible to be observed in childhood, but these effects manifest themselves in adolescence and especially in adulthood life (Stafford, Kuh, Gale, Mishra and Richards, 2016; Yılmaz & Büyükbeci, 2019). Although this attitude, which also affects future life years, causes some positive results, it has a negative effect on the individual in all life periods and sometimes negatively affects personality development. While it negatively affects the attitudes and behaviors of the individual, it will actually negatively affect the family structure to be established in the future, the roles to be taken and, most importantly, the parenting attitude to be adopted.

Even if the wishes and interests of parents with helicopter parenting attitudes are fundamentally positive, this concept has a negative effect on children. It is seen that children who grow up with helicopter parental attitudes have backward problem-solving skills. Dependent personality development is observed that they are more prone to depression in adulthood. In addition, low self-esteem narcissistic personality traits can be counted among the negative effects of helicopter parenting attitude (Kantrowitz & Tire, 2006; Gibbs, 2009; LeMoyné & Buchanan, 2011; Walker & Nelson, 2012; Shoup et al., 2009; Rutherford, 2011 cited by: Avcı & Şatır, 2020).

In children with helicopter parents, tantrums, depression and anxiety problems are more common than their peers. It is stated that this approach of parents increases the child's feeling of inadequacy and anxiety. It is stated that it is difficult for the child to get out of the shadow of the parent (Fischer, Forthun, Pidcock & Dowd, 2007; Çırakoğlu, 2017). Negative psychological problems such as painkillers and anxiety-depression drugs (LeMoyné & Buchanan, 2011), psychological instability and destructive behaviors (Gottlieb, 2011) can be seen. Psychological resilience may be less, and psychological well-being may be lower in these children and individuals. Mental and emotional problems are more common in these children.

Children who grew up with helicopter parenting have developed dependence on the parent. These children often experience the fear of separation

from their parents. Therefore, attachment problems have been one of the inevitable effects for these children (Farley & Kim-Spoon, 2014). Likewise, the parent is in a relationship dependent on the child. They are experiencing mutual attachment problems and they are actually unaware of this negative emotional nutrition. This dependence of the child on his/her parents can be directed to those close to him/her, such as his/her spouse and children, whom he/she will be in close contact with in the future. Therefore, this individual constantly needs to be attached to someone.

When considered throughout life, working life comes after education life. Working life is the life period in which the functionality, which is accepted as an extension of self-realization for individuals, will be revealed the most. Studies on the work life satisfaction of individuals who have grown up with helicopter parenting attitudes give negative results. The most obvious reasons for this situation are not the areas where children are educated as a result of their own choices. However, the opportunities offered by working life do not satisfy the individual. For individuals, working life is seen as a means of providing material return and as an obligation imposed by the society.

In a study trying to reveal the relationship between the results of personality tests applied during job application and the attitudes of these individuals, it was reported that inactive and reactive personality traits were frequently encountered in individuals raised by helicopter parents (Howe and Strauss, 2008; Tyler, 2007).

Children with helicopter parents may also have problems in the future when they start their business life. One of the biggest reasons for this is that people are independent and not competent to solve the problems they face. As a result, a lack of self-confidence is encountered (Lemoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Odenweller, Booth-Butterfield & Weber, 2014). In their study, Yılmaz & Büyükcebeci, 2019, found that helicopter attitudes of mothers and fathers, especially on basic life skills, were more harmful to self-efficacy compared to other helicopter attitudes. In fact, this addiction is not only limited to business life but is reflected in home and family life. Individuals who show commitment to their spouses can also show commitment to their children in the following years. These individuals, who have always received help and whose problems have been solved, need someone to solve the problems. They could not develop coping skills with life and could not provide emotional stability. This leads them to the desire to meet the need for attention and to be approved in their behavior.

There are studies suggesting that individuals with helicopter parents have problems in transition to adult life. Okant's 2018 study also supports this. In this study, the participants also stated that they cared about gaining economic freedom. While they stated that the lack of ability to cope with problems caused deterioration of well-being, they also stated that they received help from their families in solving this problem. The answers given to the questions are consistent with the findings that helicopter parents do not support the development of their life skills and that individuals tend to need the help of others. However, it is one of the results that individuals were raised by middle and middle-upper socio-economic families and wanted to provide similar living standards.

Helicopter parents prevent their children from being independent, which causes the child to feel worthless and to grow up to be self-sufficient and unable to stand on their own feet, which also prevents their identity development. In a study conducted by Yaşın & Demir (2020) on the generation Y, it was shown that participants who thought that they had helicopter parents felt unsuccessful, thought that they could not realize themselves, and that they could not set a goal and focus on that goal.

Perfectionism is observed in parents with this parental attitude. Best grade, best outfit, best profession. It is known that the expectations from the child are high. In order to meet this expectation, the child lives under more pressure than his/her peers (Dönmez, 2019). This pressure, which the parent unconsciously exerts, may cause the child's self-confidence and low self-esteem. The fact that their homework is done by someone other than themselves (which is usually their parent) prevents the child from knowing their limits and realizing what they can and cannot do. For this reason, these children avoid entering into a new trial and taking responsibility. They usually have anxieties that they cannot achieve and overcome. Because they have always been deprived of experiencing them. This causes them to lose their self-confidence about what they can do. Low self-confidence and lack of self-esteem is actually an expected natural result.

The helicopter, which draws a limiting and preventive profile when it comes to the academic success of the child, is sufficient to meet the expectations of the child's success and getting good grades for the parents. Academic success for these families is far ahead of the child's development and happiness. In this parental attitude, which ignores the child's need to play and have fun, it is considered very normal to put pressure on studying, to run the course for academic success, and to devote all of their time to activities and trainings for academic success. For them,

having fun and resting the child is not a priority. The child will be happy when he/she is already successful, and this will be enough for him/her.

This attitude, which does all these things instead of the child without allowing the child to make an effort for any phenomenon, to be patient, and to express his/her own feelings, actually harms children in the long term. Children who have grown up with a helicopter parenting attitude continue their lives as adults who cannot make decisions on their own, cannot apply their decisions, and have no initiative skills. They have little faith in themselves to start and continue a business.

Children who are not accepted as part of daily life and who are not accepted as a partner in housework with helicopter parenting attitude do not have a sense of responsibility. Helicopter parents do not allow the child to do certain tasks that are actually the responsibility of the child, such as room cleaning, personal care, bed cleaning, and helping with household chores (Dönmez, 2019). This attitude causes the child to develop as an insatiable adult who has no sense of responsibility and achieves everything. Adult ages of children who grow up with this attitude emerge as an employee who cannot meet his/her workload in working life and as an irresponsible and selfish individual in his/her private life.

Parents who exhibit helicopter parenting attitudes want to know the places their children go, their friends' environment, and their working environment and can intervene. This time causes them to be a child or an individual who cannot manage events and who has problems that go to personality disorders that cannot cope with their personal problems (Dönmez, 2019).

Although the protective attitudes and behaviors of the helicopter parent seem to solve the problems of their children in the short term, they can negatively affect all their development, especially their emotional development and well-being levels in the long term. These children, who are far from struggle and whose problem-solving skills have not been developed, may be adults whose self-efficacy is low who cannot make their own decisions alone.

4. Recommendations for Parents with Helicopter Parenting Attitudes

Parenthood is really a difficult craft that takes place with the directing of emotions and instincts. All creatures act with the instinct of protecting their offspring from evil and in adverse environmental conditions by having different love for their offspring. Mankind, compared to other creatures, is able to combine this instinct with its mind and do what is best and right for its offspring. Therefore,

parents first have to decide what is best for their children. In order to ensure a healthy personality and identity development of their children and to create a healthy mental and emotional structure, they should allow their children to be their own. Families can start by reviewing their own attitudes and behaviors and noticing the attitude of the parent. Creating awareness about this issue and being able to self-criticize when necessary will lead them to do the right thing for their children. Thus, when the parent realizes that he/she exhibits a helicopter parenting attitude, taking action to change this attitude by knowing the negative consequences that may arise in this regard, it is the best thing he/she can do for his/her child.

Parents should be a guide, a guide for their children. He/she should be able to constantly advise, assume the duties and responsibilities of his/her child, and guide him/her when he/she wants the child, not make decisions for the child. The child should be able to become independent from the family and make decisions appropriate for his/her age. The child should be able to make individual decisions especially in choosing spouses, professions and jobs. If they have already been given the opportunity to make a decision and make the right choice until that day, these children have little risk of making the wrong decision when they are adults. In fact, it can be given to the child at a young age with the guidance of parents, where no one can make mistakes or make wrong decisions.

Parents should also be able to live their lives freely and should not make their plans and programs indexed to their children. They should not plan their lives in line with their children's lessons, exams, courses, and activities they participate in for their development. Parents who find leisure activities will not have time to focus on their children and assume their responsibilities. While this situation gives the child the opportunity to be his/her own, it also gives the parent the freedom to live his/her own life and prevents him/her from getting tired of it in the future. Because after a certain point, the parent gets tired and exhausted. This makes the parent angry and nervous, and can cause their relationship with their child to deteriorate. In addition, the child will apply the characteristics of the parent he/she takes as a role model to his/her own children in the future. Thus, helicopter parents will have raised new helicopter parents.

It is one of the responsibilities of the parent to protect the child from possible dangers and to teach him/her to ensure his/her own safety. A parent should know that he/she cannot always be with his/her child, and should teach the child to

protect himself/herself instead of protecting him/her. Giving responsibility to the child, encouraging him/her to increase the limits of independence, leaving him/her alone with the consequences of his/her actions will contribute to the learning of the struggle and the development of his/her self-esteem. For this reason, parents should not assume the responsibilities of their children and should not do homework or projects instead.

When children experience an emergency or problem, parents should leave the child alone with the situation instead of intervening. This will enable the child to learn to deal with difficulties and increase his psychological well-being and self-confidence. However, the problem faced by the child here should not be a problem that he cannot solve. For example, a child who is bullied by peers at school may not be able to overcome this problem alone. In order to leave the child face to face with events and situations, the child does not necessarily need to have problems. Preventing him/her from having problems also causes great harm to the child. The child has to know what he/she does and what he/she cannot do. Knowing his/her limits will contribute to increasing his/her self-efficacy belief. This is only possible by experiencing.

For parents, the happiness and health of their children should come first. Success is important. But it must come after them. Failure is a feeling that almost everyone can experience and be encountered in every aspect of life. Often, the frustration and sadness experienced as a result of this should be able to be absorbed by the child and learn to cope with it. So, in fact, families should create opportunities for their children to fail, even to be disappointed. The child will thus learn to overcome it and will endeavor not to fail in fact.

It is stated in the literature that helicopter parenting can cause stress and anxiety in the preschool period, in addition to these, it can negatively affect psychological health in childhood, cause high anxiety and depression in adolescence, and cause low self-efficacy and low life satisfaction in adulthood (Yılmaz & Büyükcebeci, 2019). In a study in which it was determined that helicopter parents negatively affected students' self-regulation, goal setting and self-regulation learning (Hong, Hwang, Kuo and Hsu, 2015, cited in: Yılmaz & Büyükcebeci, 2019), researchers stated that the level of helicopter parenting should be reduced in order for future generations to grow up healthy. These studies show that educators have awareness and concerns about helicopter parenting and its possible negative consequences.

In line with this information, teachers who are with the individuals in every period of their school life and come together with children should also observe the attitudes of the parents and the behaviors of the children. Helicopters can prevent their students from being negatively affected by identifying and raising awareness of families with parental attitudes.

5. Conclusion

Recently, many studies have been conducted in the international literature to measure the concept of helicopter parenting and this attitude. This difference has been observed significantly in studies involving the comparison of Asian and American societies (Kwon & Bingham, 2016; Kwon, Yoo, & Gagne, 2017). Helicopter parenting attitude is an intense and applied parental attitude that leads to negative consequences in the lives of individuals and has a high level of involvement (Schiffrin, 2017). Both the research and the studies on the subject abroad show that helicopter parenting is becoming increasingly widespread. It is seen that the studies focus on the negative consequences of helicopter parental attitude. However, there are a very limited number of researchers who argue that this approach may have positive consequences (Cutright, 2008; cited by Florida State University, 2016; Yılmaz, 2020). In the study conducted by Yılmaz, 2020, it was observed that one-third of mothers and one-seventh of fathers in Turkey had helicopter parental attitudes, and mothers exhibited more helicopter attitudes than fathers. The results obtained in line with the studies in the literature show that helicopter parenting attitude aims to reduce increased anxiety and depression levels. However, it is a fact that the individual aims to increase the level of well-being and satisfaction with life. There are studies on developing scales that measure helicopter parenting attitudes and revealing these attitudes and taking necessary precautions. However, it is important to inform the parents about helicopter parenting and to inform them about the negative consequences that may occur. The reason for this is that parents want to be supportive can be interpreted as controllable and sensitive by their children. The ability to assess and respond to a child's needs is a key predictor of child-related outcomes in the developmental literature. Supporting the child to make age-appropriate decisions and take responsibility as an individual, and giving him/her the opportunity to experience will contribute to the development of self-confidence and self-esteem. It is important for families to be aware of their

attitudes and to make efforts to change these attitudes if they have helicopter parenting attitudes.

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CHAPTER IX

ANALYZING PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCES

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1. Introduction

Many people, who differ in terms of age, gender, religion, language, ethnic origin, culture, education and lifestyle, live together in the world. There is a wide spectrum of “differences” between individuals, consisting of biological, environmental, physical and cultural differences (Hubbard, 2004; Surgevil, 2008). These different characteristics of people make life meaningful and enrich social life. One of the basic elements that keep a society alive is the spirit of unity and solidarity among individuals. Individuals in society contribute to the unity and solidarity of the society with their differences. The spirit of unity and solidarity can only be realized when the individuals in the society respect each other within the framework of tolerance.

Respecting differences is one of the requirements of secular and democratic life. In other words, democracy is an effort to embrace and respect differences. Respect for differences is one of the important indicators of the steps taken by society in the democratization process. Because democracy is not only a form of government but also a prerequisite for living together. Being able to live together in a situation that can be possible and valuable by being aware of the differences (Baştürk & Yiğit, 2019). Regardless of religion, language, color, race, gender, nationality, or geography, it should not be forgotten that an individual is primarily a human being. Being aware of and respecting differences is a compulsory behavior expected from every contemporary person.

Accepting differences enables societies to live together in peace and tranquility. In order for societies to live together in prosperity, they must live by adopting each other's cultures and respecting their differences (Topcubaşı & Polat, 2018). It is important to respect all differences in the environment we live in and to live together (Başal, Sarı, Çelik, Şeker & Şahin, 2019). Being aware of the differences in human nature and not looking at them with prejudice makes society more peaceful (Atasoy, 2012).

Some differences between individuals turn into discriminatory attitudes due to prejudices. This situation causes disagreements and conflicts among individuals. Prejudice and discrimination prevent societies with differences from living peacefully and happily (Topcubaşı & Polat, 2018). However, differences are a natural phenomenon that is an indicator of the individual's self-existence and uniqueness. At the same time, differences are the main source of existence. As a natural consequence of living together, there will inevitably be differentiation and similarity (Öksüz & Güven, 2012).

The phenomenon of differences has an important place in social life (Memduhoglu, 2007). Ignoring differences in ensuring social harmony is a major obstacle to social order (Sürgevil, 2008). In order to increase the level of welfare in social life and to create a more tolerant and respectful environment, individuals need to recognize differences and be sensitive to them (Topcubaşı & Polat, 2018). It is necessary to adapt and learn to respect differences to ensure that different races, different cultures, people and communities with different characteristics live together happily and peacefully (KEDV, 2006).

Differences are characterized as a mixture of individuals' different identities, geographical and ethnic origins, background, experience, belief, value judgments, age, gender, demographic structure, work experience, physical ability, educational status, family status, personality, lifestyle and the like (Caposwki, 1996; Foxman & Easterling, 1999). Respect for differences means accepting individuals from different backgrounds living in a society, regardless of their language, religion or race (Gormez, 2019). It is also to see the differences naturally and to respect the individual based on being human without ascribing the differences to the person (Pekdogan, 2018).

Individuals have the freedom to embrace and appreciate some differences as a result of their subjective existence. However, this situation is taken under protection with the effect of respect directed to the individual from the environment and ceases to be a cause of conflict. For an individual to develop

a healthy personality, the need for respect, which is one of the basic needs, must be met. (Öksüz & Güven, 2012). Respect requires valuing other people, understanding them sincerely, evaluating them according to their actions, not their physical appearance or their ethnic origin or social group, and knowing that everyone has equal rights (Yazıcı, 2008). Respect for differences requires a certain value attitude towards the respected object and person, being aware of the fact that this value directs the person to perform a certain behavior, and communicating with the respected object or person in an appropriate way (Raz, 2001).

Respect for differences emerges as an attitude needed to maintain both inner peace and social order (Öksüz & Güven, 2012). Respect for differences is an important value that should be acquired at an early age. The people who will bring the value of respect for differences to the individual at a young age are the parents in the family and the teachers in the school. The positive or negative reactions of the adults around the child to the differences are taken as an example by the child. In the preschool period, children ask their parents' various questions to understand the differences and also observe their parents' behavior. Parents' attitudes towards these questions and their behavioral patterns affect the child's self-respect and perception of differences (Ekmişoğlu, 2007).

Children learn to form prejudices against people and groups different from them primarily from their families, adults and peer groups. These prejudices cause children to discriminate against people based on their appearance, race, gender, and ethnicity. Children learn from their parents early on to like people who are similar to them and not to like people who are not like them. Because adults voluntarily or involuntarily transfer their stereotypes against differences to children (Topcubaşı & Polat, 2018). The behavior patterns of parents affect their children's behavior patterns. For children to approach differences with tolerance, not prejudice, first of all, parents should develop a positive attitude towards differences. Therefore, parents need to have a positive attitude and perspective on differences, in terms of being role models for children. Parents need to accept and tolerate differences to raise individuals sensitive to differences.

In the literature there were studies examining the level of respect for differences of pre-school (Aktaş, 2020; Başal et al., 2019; Eren, 2015; Polat & Özkabak-Yıldız, 2018; Yıldız, 2019; Yüksek-Usta, 2019), primary (Topcubaşı & Polat, 2018) and secondary school (Görmez, 2019; Köç & Duygu, 2018) students, teachers (Ekmişoğlu, 2007; Pekdoğan, 2018; Üner, 2011;

Yıldırımçakar, 2018) and teacher candidates (Baştürk & Yiğit, 2019; Çatlak, 2017; Güven, 2012; Kacar, 2018; Öksüz & Güven, 2012). However, no study hasn't been found examining parents' perceptions on respect for differences. The lack of a study on the perceptions of parents and the shaping of children's attitudes in the early childhood period in line with the perceptions of the parents constituted the starting point of this study. The study was aimed to examine the perceptions of parents who had children between the ages of 4 and 8 with respect for differences in terms of some variables.

For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. What was the level of perceptions of parents who had children between the ages of 4 and 8 on respect for differences?
2. Was there a significant difference in the perceptions of parents who had children between the ages of 4-8, regarding respect for differences, according to their gender, age, occupation, education level, and several children?

2. Method

2.1. Model of the Research

The survey method, one of the quantitative research methods, was used in this study, which was conducted to determine the views of parents who have children between the ages of 4 and 8, regarding respect for differences in terms of some variables. The survey method is "research in which the views of the participants regarding a subject or event, and their characteristics such as interests, skills, abilities or attitudes are determined" (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2016). In this study, parents' perceptions were taken to examine the issue of respect for differences.

2.2.1. Study Group

The study group of the research consisted of 563 parents with children aged 4-8 years. The "convenience sampling" method was used in the selection of the study group. In this method, the researcher chooses the study group that is close and easy to access (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2011).

When the demographic characteristics of the parents in the study group were examined, it was observed that 85.08% of the parents were female and 14.92% were male; 57.02% of them were in the age range of 20-30, 42.98% of them were between the ages of 31 and above; 10.87% were primary school

graduates, 26.14% high school graduates, and 62.99% university graduates; 44.58% were unemployed, 36.77% were civil servants, 8.53% were workers, 10.12% were self-employed; 49.56% had a single child, 32.50% had two children, and 17.94% had three or more children.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form and The Respect of Differences Scale were used as data collection tools in the research.

2.3.1. Personal Information Form

This form, developed by the researchers to collect the personal information of the parents, consists of questions including the gender, age, education level, occupation and number of children of the parents.

2.3.2. The Respect of Differences Scale (RDS)

The Respect for Diversity Scale determines the level of respect for differences of individuals. The scale was developed by Öksüz and Güven (2012). RDS was prepared in the form of a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. The scale consists of 30 items and three sub-dimensions (informational, social categories, and value). The lowest 30 and the highest 150 points are obtained from the scale. As the scores obtained from the scale increase, the level of respect for differences of individuals also increases. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale developed by Öksüz and Güven (2012) was calculated as 0.94. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.84.

2.4. Data Collection

The data of the study were collected from parents with children aged 4-8 years. A link containing information about the scale and the purpose of the research was created on the "Google Form". A link was sent to the parents via message and information on how to fill in the scale was given. Data were collected from March 1, 2021, to May 31, 2021.

2.5. Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages were used. The Kolmogorov Smirnov test was used to determine

whether the data obtained from RDS showed normal distribution. As a result of the Kolmogorov Smirnov Test, it was determined that the data showed normal distribution. When examining the difference between groups in normally distributed variables, the T-Test, which is one of the parametric tests in paired groups, and the Anova Test in groups of more than two, were used. When examining the difference between groups, the level of significance was accepted as 0.05.

3. Results

The results obtained from this study, which was conducted to determine the views of parents with children between the ages of 4 and 8, regarding respect for differences in terms of some variables, are presented in the tables below.

Table 1: The Mean Scores of Parents from the Respect of Differences Scale

RDS	Min	Max	Mean	sd
Information	33.00	80.00	60.51	9.24
Social categories	16.00	45.00	33.47	5.79
Value	7.00	25.00	19.08	3.83
Total	56.00	147.00	113.06	16.94

When Table 1 was examined, the mean scores of parents from RDS were 60.51 ± 9.24 from the “Information Difference” sub-dimension, 33.47 ± 5.79 from the “Social Category Differences” sub-dimension, 19.08 ± 3.83 from the “Value Differences” sub-dimension, and 13.06 ± 16.94 from the whole scale. Considering that the lowest 30 and the highest 150 points could be obtained from the scale, it was observed that the scores of the parents are close to the highest score.

Table 2: Comparison of Parents’ Gender and Scores from the Respect of Differences Scale

RDS	Gender	Mean	Sd	t	p
Information	Female	61.32	9.09	5.100	<0.001
	Male	55.87	8.77		
Social categories	Female	33.94	5.81	5.281	<0.001
	Male	30.80	4.88		
Value	Female	19.33	3.76	3.793	<0.001
	Male	17.63	3.95		
Total	Female	114.60	16.77	5.260	<0.001
	Male	104.30	15.19		

When Table 2 was examined, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between genders of the parents and “Information Difference” ($t=5.100$, $p=0.001$), “Social Category Differences” ($t=5.281$, $p=0.001$), “Value Differences” ($t=3.793$, $p=0.001$) sub-dimensions and the whole scale ($t=5.260$, $p=0.001$). The significant difference was in favor of female parents.

Table 3: Comparison of Parents' Ages and Scores from the Respect of Differences

RDS	Age	Mean	Sd	F	p
Information	20-30	64.23	8.97	1.939	0.145
	>30	62.87	7.44		
Social Category	20-30	36.46	5.93	1.056	0.349
	>30	37.34	5.14		
Value	20-30	20.05	3.72	0.875	0.418
	>30	19.73	3.50		
Total	20-30	120.74	16.60	0.263	0.769
	>30	119.94	14.22		

When Table 3 was examined, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference between the ages of the parents and the sub-dimensions of RDS and the whole.

Table 4: Comparison of the Parents' Occupations and the scores from the Respect of Differences Scale

RDS	Occupation	Mean	sd	F	p
Information	unemployed	61.02	8.74	0.726	0.537
	civil servants	60.25	9.66		
	workers	60.58	9.86		
	self-employed	59.14	9.35		
Social Category	unemployed	33.65	5.60	2.352	0.071
	civil servants	33.80	6.00		
	workers	33.40	6.07		
	self-employed	31.58	5.33		
Value	unemployed	19.29	3.56	1.901	0.128
	civil servants	19.22	3.93		
	workers	18.44	4.37		
	self-employed	18.16	4.05		
Total	unemployed	113.96	15.81	1.430	0.233
	civil servants	113.27	18.04		
	workers	112.42	18.23		
	self-employed	108.88	16.24		

When Table 4 was examined, it was determined that there was statistically no significant difference between the occupation of the parents and the sub-dimensions of RDS and the whole.

Table 5: Comparison of Parents' Educational Levels and Scores from the Respect of Differences Scale

RDA	Education Level	Mean	sd	F	p	Multiple comparisons
Information	Secondary	58.89	7.58	5.093	0.006	high-university
	high	58.95	9.09			
	university	61.48	9.47			
Social Category	secondary	31.49	5.00	8.782	<0.001	secondary- university high-university
	high	32.53	5.87			
	university	34.23	5.76			
Value	secondary	19.39	3.09	4.806	0.009	high-university
	high	18.27	3.70			
	university	19.38	3.97			
Total	secondary	109.77	13.92	6.683	0.001	high-university
	high	109.74	16.47			
	university	115.08	17.36			

When Table 5 was examined, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between parents' education level and "Information Difference" ($F=5.093$, $p=0.006$), "Social Category Differences" ($F=8.782$, $p=0.001$), "Value Differences" ($F=4.806$, $p=0.009$) sub-dimensions and the whole scale ($F=6.683$, $p=0.001$). The significant difference was in favor of university graduate parents.

Table 6: Comparison of the Parents' Number of Children and the Scores from the Respect of Differences Scale

RDA	Number of Children	Mean	Sd	F	p	Multiple comparisons
Information	1 child	62.36	9.50	12.327	<0.001	1-2,1-≥3
	2 child	59.20	8.59			
	≥3 child	57.77	8.62			
Social Category	1 child	34.43	5.73	9.754	<0.001	1-2,1-≥3
	2 child	33.04	5.62			
	≥3 child	31.62	5.77			
Value	1 child	19.44	4.01	2.645	0.072	
	2 child	18.78	3.51			
	≥3 child	18.59	3.81			
Total	1 child	116.23	17.39	11.122	<0.001	1-2,1-≥3
	2 child	111.02	15.74			
	≥3 child	107.99	16.09			

When Table 6 was examined, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the number of children of parents and “Information Difference” ($F=12.327$, $p=0.001$), “Social Category Differences” ($F=9.754$, $p=0.001$) sub-dimensions, and the whole scale ($F=11.122$, $p=0.001$). The significant difference was in favor of parents with only one child. There was statistically no significant difference in the “Value Differences” ($F=2.645$, $p=0.072$) sub-dimension.

4. Discussion

In the current study, parents' respect for differences was examined in terms of various variables. When examined, there were no studies that examined the level of respect of parents for differences. Attitudes and views of parents on respect for differences are effective in children's acceptance of differences from an early age. Teachers also have an impact on parents' respect for differences with the family involvement programs they organize. The results obtained for these reasons were examined in line with the researches made with children and teachers.

In the study, it was concluded that parents had a high level of respect for differences. Studies exposed that secondary school students had a high level of respect for differences (İlğan, Karayığit, & Çetin, 2013; Köç & Duygu, 2018), pre-school children had a moderate level of tolerance (Aktaş, 2020), and primary school students had a high tolerance tendency (Çalışkan & Sağlam, 2012). In the studies conducted with teachers, it was found that the teachers' level of respect for differences was above the medium level (Yıldırımçakar, 2018), their thoughts towards individuals with differences were positive (Ekmişoğlu, 2007), school administrators and teachers were positive about respect for differences (Memduhoğlu, 2007), and prospective teachers' perspectives on cultural differences were positive (Çoban, Karaman & Doğan, 2010). In addition, in the study conducted by Görümez (2019), it was concluded that secondary school students approach people who do not think like them with tolerance, put themselves in the place of people with different characteristics, and that it is important to respect people to live in harmony with other people in society. In this study, the educational status of the parents may have been effective in the high level of respect for differences of parents who have children between the ages of 4-8. Approximately 60% of the parents participating in the study are university graduates. University graduate parents develop a more respectful and tolerant perspective towards differences.

In this study, it was concluded that the perceptions of parents on respect for differences differ significantly according to their genders. It has been determined that female parents' views on respect for differences are more positive. This result is compatible with the results of studies conducted with pre-service teachers (Baştürk & Yiğit, 2019; Güven, 2012; Kacar, 2018). Leek (2000) concluded in his study that female teacher candidates have more positive attitudes towards language differences. As a result of Aktaş's (2020) study, no significant difference was found in children's respect for differences by gender. Similarly, in Eren's (2015) study, it was seen that the scores of the children in the experimental group and the control group obtained from the respect for differences scale did not differ significantly according to gender. The results obtained do not coincide with the results obtained from this study. The effect of gender on respect for differences is related to gender stereotypes of society and social culture. For this reason, gender differences in the study are related to social value judgments. The reason why female parents are more positive about respect for differences may be the maternal instinct. With maternal instinct, female parents may be more emotional, sensitive towards differences and they try to empathize more with differences.

In the study, it was concluded that the perceptions of parents on respect for differences did not differ significantly according to their age. As a result of Korkmaz's (2020) study, it was stated that the scores of the participants from the Respect for Diversity Scale did not differ according to their age. This result is in parallel with the result of this research. It is important to respect people to live in harmony with other people in society. Respect is a behavior that individuals of all ages should show towards each other. Not everyone has to love everyone; but regardless of the age of the individual, everyone has to respect each other. Therefore, it can be thought that the age of the individuals does not affect the people's perspective on differences.

In the study, it was concluded that the perceptions of parents on respect for differences did not differ significantly according to their profession. An individual's profession, status or position in the social structure does not affect the level of respect for the differences that the individual has.

In the study, a significant difference was found in the perceptions of parents, regarding respect for differences, according to their educational status. It was determined that university graduate parents had more positive views on respect for differences. In the studies, it was found that the education level of the

mothers of the teacher candidates affected the discriminatory attitudes (Vural & Kapaksiz, 2010). It was concluded that there was no significant difference between the level of respect for differences and the education level of the teachers (Yıldırımçakar, 2018), the education level of the parents of the teacher candidates (Kacar, 2018) and the mother's education level of the preschool children the variable (Başal et al., 2019). The fact that the majority of parents with children between the ages of 4 and 8 who participated in the study were university graduates may have contributed to the significant difference. As the education level of the individual increases, more democratic, humane, fair, respectful and egalitarian behaviors towards people and differences increase.

In this study, it was concluded that the perceptions of parents on respect for differences show a significant difference according to the number of children. It has been determined that parents with only one child have more positive views on respect for differences. As the number of children, the parents have, their tolerance levels towards individuals with different characteristics decrease.

5. Conclusion

Turkey has diversity in terms of different cultures due to its cultural structure and immigration. The impact and permanence of education on children's respect for differences in early childhood and parents' being positive models on children is inevitable. For this reason, the results obtained from this study, which examined the level of respect for differences of parents with children between the ages of 4 and 8, are important.

In line with the findings obtained as a result of the research, the following suggestions could be made:

- To improve the flow of parents' perspectives on differences, respect for diversity training program could be prepared.
- Various activities could be carried out in schools where teachers cooperate with parents and family participation is ensured concerning differences.
- Since no study has been conducted on parents about respect for differences in the literature, it could be encouraged to conduct new research on differences for parents.
- The quantitative research method was adopted in this study. To determine the views of parents on respect for differences, new studies using qualitative or mixed methods could be conducted.

- This research was conducted with parents who have children between the ages of 4 and 8 years. New research could be done with parents who have children in different age ranges such as 2-6 years old, 6-17 years old, 17-25 years old.

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CHAPTER X

THE ROLE OF REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH IN PRESCHOOL PERIOD

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1. Introduction

The Reggio Emilia Approach takes its name from a town located in Italy. This approach originated in Reggio Emilia town with the efforts of an educator whose name was Loris Malaguzzi and the townspeople (Malaguzzi, 1998). Reggio Emilia includes 33 schools accepting different age groups, from infants a few months old to children aged 6 years (Dalhberg and Moss, 2010). The Reggio Emilia Approach that leaves its mark on early childhood education and sets an example for community-based education models, regenerates in many countries of the world. As researchers, educators, and those working in preschool education institutions witness the activities and achievements of children in Reggio Emilia schools, they endeavor to comprehend the principles of this approach and its implications in practice and to ensure that it regenerates in their schools (İnan,2012).

Reggio Emilia is a city founded by the Romans in the 2nd century BC, located in the north of Italy in the center of a region influenced by Etruria and Gauls. The city is located on the historic Roman Road, which crosses the entire Emilia-Romagna region from east to west. This region is the richest and largest region of Italy with a population of four million. Moreover, this region is the most developed region and the one that receives the most social assistance.

News began to spread that people started to construct a school for small children in a small village called Villa Cella, 50 kilometers northwest of Reggio Emilia in the spring of 1945, six days after the end of the Second World War. As soon as Malaguzzi, a twenty-year-old young teacher, hears this news, he immediately jumps on his bike and arrives upon the scene to witness what happened with his own eyes. When he arrives at the village, he sees women picking and carrying the solid brickbats and asks what they are doing. The women respond, “We are constructing a school for our children”. The villagers plan to build the school by selling a tank and a few trucks that the Germans left behind when they retreated and working at night and on Sundays. The land is donated by the farmers, the bricks and beams are removed from the bombed houses, and the sand is brought from the river. Women say that “our children are as smart as the children of rich people.” When they learn that Malaguzzi as a teacher, they want him to work with them. Malaguzzi smiled and said, “I don’t have much experience, but I promise I will do my best. I’ll learn as we improve together, and I’ll teach them everything I’ve learned while working with the children.” During the forthcoming days, the children’s families, especially all women, work hard and the school is completed after eight months. Meanwhile, Malaguzzi decides to leave the teaching post that he has performed for seven years, in reaction to the government’s approach ignoring the differences of the children and not tolerating them, and goes to Rome to study psychology at the Center of National Research (CNR). When he comes back to Reggio Emilia, he starts working at the psychological counseling center of the municipality for children having problems at school. Malaguzzi continues his studies in this center in the mornings, and he works in small schools established by the families in the afternoons and evenings in due course of this period. In these schools, Malaguzzi works with teachers who have received education from several educational institutions, are quite different from each other, but with extraordinarily high motivation, with unlimited thoughts and energies. During this period, the idea that “things related to the children can only be learned from children” begins to take root among Malaguzzi and his friends and the foundations of Reggio Emilia philosophy are laid (Edwards, Gandini, and Forman, 1998).

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Reggio Schools was established when families began to build their schools in the ruins of the Second World War. Psychologist Loris Malaguzzi, the founder of philosophy started to create a system destroying the traditional structures in schools that the municipalities and families built. Thanks to the rise of the birth rate in the 1950s and migrations from the south, the need for schools for small children augmented (www).

This movement led by Malaguzzi reached Reggio Emilia city after a while, and the Italian government decided to support pre-school education in 1968. Today, Reggio Emilia municipality gives supports 22 pre-school education institutions and 13 nursery schools. 2,776 of the 2,812 children living in Reggio Emilia take advantage of pre-school education following a report published in 1991. 50% of these children participate in the schools of the municipality (Aslan, 2005).

According to the Reggio Emilia approach, the child is faced with a wall preventing the child's development in due course of the growth process. This wall consists of uncontemporary and stereotyped strict rules, outdated behavior patterns, and traditional educational methods adopted by adults but are quite difficult to understand by children. Therefore, it is primarily necessary for the children to be supported to learn new cultural values and roles in the society in which they live. After this support is ensured, the children should be able to overcome this "wall" on their own, which hinders their development and consists of old value judgments (Aslan, 2005).

2. Philosophy Of Approach

The Reggio Emilia preschool education approach puts forward that children are faced with a wall restraining their development in due course of the growth process. This wall consists of stereotyped, old, and strict rules, out-of-date concepts, behaviors, and attitudes that have been adopted by adults but are difficult to understand and comprehend and have lost their validity and traditional education methods. First of all, children should be supported to learn new cultural values and roles in the living society in the development process.

Then, the children must be able to cope with this “wall” on their own when they encounter the “wall” consisting of old value judgments hindering their rapid development (Temel,1997:16).

The Reggio Emilia approach has been the center of interest from early childhood educators all around the world (Eileen, 1991). The progressivism of J. Dewey and the effects of educational opinions of thinkers such as J.J. Rousseau, H. Pestalozzi, F.W.A. Froebel, and M. Montessori has been found out in the Reggio Emilia approach (Dündar, 2007:129).

Malaguzzi (1998) indicated that they were influenced by new and different ideas concerning children’s development and education. After living under the fascist regime for twenty years, Malaguzzi and his team followed new developments and ideas with great enthusiasm. Fundamentally, they examined the works of leading intellectuals of the time such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Erik Erikson, Urie Bronfenbrenner, Henri Wallon, Edward Chaparade, Ovide Decroly, Anton Makarenko, Pierre Bovet, Adolfe Ferriere, Celestine Freinet. They followed theorists in different fields (e.g. psychology, philosophy, neurology) such as Wilfred Carr, David Shaffer, Kenneth Kaye, Jerome Kagan, Howard Gardner, David Hawlins, Serge Moscovici, Charles Morris, Gregory Bateson, Heinz Von Foerster, Francisco Varela in the 1970s.

L. Malaguzzi’s image of *a social, intelligent, and curious child from birth*, his relational-based education idea focuses on the relationship of each child with other children, activating and supporting children’s mutual relations with family, teacher, society, and environment. Another basic characteristic of his approach is to provide opportunities for children to break new grounds by presenting tangible experiences to them. Because the children are faced with a wall that intervenes their development during the growth process. This wall consists of stereotyped strict rules, behavior patterns that have been adopted by adults but are difficult to understand by children and have lost their validity, and traditional education methods. Children should be given opportunities to be free, to research, to try, to make mistakes, and to correct their mistakes on their own in the learning process. This approach encourages active interaction with the environment to develop children’s natural curiosity and creativity and to enable them to create knowledge by the way of educational experiences. For this reason, the environment is of great importance. It can even be seen that the physical and social environment is defined as the form of the *teacher*

himself/herself (Dündar, 2007:129). Malaguzzi refuses Piaget's stages idea as being "too restrained". Malaguzzi images "a child who is social, clever and curious from birth". His idea of relational-based education centers upon each child's relationship with other children and upon motivating and encouraging children's mutual affinities with other children, family, teachers, society, and the environment. These skillful children make changes within the system in which they become the producers of truths, values, and culture (www).

The Reggio Emilia approach justifies that the children need to be brought up as active, independent, creative, observers and individuals who can use their mental potential to oppose the stereotyped, strict, out-of-date value judgments and traditional education methods that deter their development and creativity (Demiriz et al., 2003).

2.1. Piaget In Reggio Emilia

Malaguzzi (1998) and other Reggio Emilia teachers led their educational activities based on Piaget's studies that he researched to comprehend the cognitive development and learning process of the child at the stage of shaping the Reggio Emilia Approach. In the beginning, they studied issues such as the acquisition of classification, measurement, and conservation principles by young children by analyzing the examples that Piaget gave and after they realized that children could learn them, they gave up the theory of Piaget. However, later, Malaguzzi designated that it was necessary to look at the epistemology of the original theory, not individual examples and that the main point of Piaget was epistemology while using the theory of Piaget and they continued to benefit from Piaget in this direction (Malaguzzi,1998:81).

2.2. Vygotsky In Reggio Emilia

Vygotsky studied the relationship between language and cognitive development while trying to figure out the learning process of children (Mooney, 2000). The relationship between language and cognitive development allows us to apprehend how children construct knowledge and how and in which environment learning takes place. Malaguzzi (1998) mentions Vygotsky in the Reggio Emilia Approach that Vygotsky describes us how thought and language work together to form ideas, plan, and then he explains how he put them into practice. This is a very important clue for education, how education should be, and how people learn (İnan,2012).

2.3. *The Hundred Languages of Children*

The self-expression of the children takes place thanks to “The 100 Languages of Children”. Malaguzzi (1998), describing “The 100 Languages of Children” with a poem, clearly put into words the difference of the Reggio Emilia Approach with this experience. In short, there are a hundred or more ways for children to express themselves. The expression of children in the early childhood period, who have not yet completed their language development, is not limited to the “language” tool. The use of different ways other than verbal expression was highlighted for children to explain themselves and opportunities were provided for children to benefit from these ways.

Malaguzzi’s poem named “100 Languages of Children”

The child has
 A hundred languages
 A hundred hands
 A hundred thoughts
 A hundred ways of thinking
 Of playing, of speaking.
 A hundred always a hundred
 Ways of listening
 Of marveling, of loving
 A hundred joys
 For singing and understanding
 A hundred worlds
 To discover
 A hundred worlds
 To invent
 A hundred worlds
 To dream
 The child has
 A hundred languages
 (and a hundred hundred hundred more)
 But they steal ninety-nine.
 The school and the culture
 Separate the head from the body.

They tell the child:
 To think without hands
 To do without head
 To listen and not to speak
 To understand without joy
 To love and to marvel.
 They tell the child:
 To discover the world already there
 And of the hundred
 They steal ninety-nine.
 They tell the child:
 That work and play
 Reality and fantasy
 Science and imagination
 Sky and earth
 Reason and dream
 Are things
 Those do not belong together.
 And thus they tell the child
 That the hundred is not there.
 The child says:
 No way. The hundred is there.

3. Organizational Structure In Reggio Emilia Schools

3.1. General Information About The Functioning Of Schools

3.1.1. Opening and Closing Time:

Although schools provide service between 08:00 and 16:00 on weekdays, the hours of delivering children to school and picking up children from school may include between 07.30 and 18.20 because of the work situation of some families.

3.1.2. Academic Year:

Schools are active from September 1 to June 30. However, some centers sustain this service for a month, including July, to help parents.

3.1.3. Work Schedule of the Personnel:

Personnel in Reggio Emilia schools work from 24 August to 13 July. The whole personnel is present at schools to organize the environment and meet new children and their families between August 24-30 and July 1-13.

Teachers work for a total of 36 hours a week, 30 hours for children, and 6 hours for other studies (professional development, planning, preparation of materials, management, meetings with families and other meetings, etc.) in schools for the 3-6 age group. This weekly working hour is organized as 31 hours for children and 5 hours for other activities for teachers in kindergartens where children from 3 months to 3 years old attend (Temel et al., 2012).

3.2. Number of Children and Personnel

Kindergartens (3 months-3 years old): A kindergarten has an average of 70 children divided into four age groups. (3-9 months, 10-18 months, 19-24 months and 24 months and above). The number of personnel in this kindergarten is as follows: 11 teachers, a cook, three full-time assistants and three part-time assistants.

Pre-school Education Institutions (3-6 years): The average number of children in a Reggio Emilia pre-school education institution that consists of three separate classes (3-year-old children's class, 4-year-old children's class, and 5-year-old children's class) is stated as 78. The number of personnel is as follows: Six teachers, a part-time teacher working after hours, an art teacher (atelierista), a cook, two full-time assistants and three part-time assistants. If the institution consists of two classes, the average number of children is 52, if it consists of four classes, it is indicated as 104. The number of personnel also varies according to the number of classes in these schools (Temel et al., 2012).

4. Main Characteristics Of The Approach

4.1. The Image of the Child

Pre-schoolers are treated with deep respect in Reggio Emilia. They dignify children as supporters of effective community members. This influence adopted together is evidence across the entire school organization (Firlik, 1994).

All children are accepted as skillful, curious, imaginative, creative individuals and individuals who have the will to act cooperatively by communicating with others and their environment in the Reggio Emilia school

(Gilman). Children build their knowledge through their actions and interactions with other children. Hence, the quality of the emotional, social and mental relationships that children establish with other children and adults is at the center of all areas of their development. The child is not seen as a blank slate to be filled with the knowledge in Reggio Emilia schools. It is accepted that they are ready to learn when the most accurate, best, and most appropriate opportunities are offered for them to learn (Akdağ, 2006).

Malaguzzi (1994) underlines the significance of the social dynamics between the children, the adult, and the environment while explaining the image of the children. He examines and defines the children in their natural environment. For instance, the children ask questions concerning the world and their environment, and the people around them can ask questions about them. Thus, the image of the child corresponds with a dynamic system with more than one aspect. Moreover, Malaguzzi emphasizes that children are unpredictable, so the education that will be given to them needs to be flexible. In brief, childhood care and education should be adapted to the child who will receive care and education by the child image of Reggio Emilia.

It is expected that the children will use that information as a tool in the project process, instead of giving the information to the children didactically. Therefore, children gain experience the experiential learning. For example, it bears importance for the children to be able to paint to express themselves and to indicate their ideas to their friends within a project instead of painting subject-oriented in the painting lesson. At this juncture, “painting” is used as a language (www).

Another main characteristic of the Reggio Emilia approach is to provide opportunities for children to make discoveries by presenting tangible experiences. The children go through the stages of research, production and testing their hypotheses in turn. They find the opportunity to express themselves in many symbolic ways such as drawing, sculpture and dramatic representation. This point of view that Reggio educators call “a hundred languages of children” refers to the multitude of languages in which children transform concrete experiences into symbolic expressions. Children work with their peers in solving their problems while the teacher helps them. Drawings or ideas are sometimes reviewed and corrected (Aslan, 2005).

The first thing that draws attention as the main characteristics of the system is that it is a “collaborative” learning system. The concept of “learning through

dialogue” is emphasized within a social structure by emphasizing the notion of cooperation. The concept of “collaboration” is one of the significant cornerstones of the Reggio Emilia approach. The message intended to be given to children, as well as to all adults and personnel, is “the ability to learn to act together”. Thus, children sustain their education within the concepts of participation and democracy (www).

Learning occurs in the form of the development of the ideas that children create by themselves, under the name of “project”, in the period framed by the educators and through mutual interactions, not in the form of one-way information transfer. Teachers, workshop managers and parents are involved in this process (www).

The image of children in Reggio Emilia is impressive since Reggio Emilia teachers regard children with special needs as “individuals with rights” rather than just “individuals with needs” (Rinaldi, 1998a:114). The image of the child as weak and helpless has been replaced by a strong image as the Reggio Emilia Approach is not requirement-driven. Furthermore, McCarthy (1995) expresses that “Teachers do not regard the child as empty boxes that need to be filled in Reggio Emilia”. It reveals again that there is no idea that “the teacher relays information to the children” in this image of a Reggio Emilia child. The children with disabilities and incapacities are not “disordered” but simply different according to the Reggio Emilia Approach. From a historical point of view, the weakness of children in this situation has been brought to the forefront in Turkey, the United States and many other countries, and their strengths have always been put on the back burner. Nevertheless, this kind of view now gives its place to the view that “the children should be mentioned with their strengths, not their weaknesses” (Akt. İnan,2012).

5. Discussion and Suggestions

It is known that heredity and environment are effective in the development of intelligence. In the past, there have been debates about whether heredity or environment is more effective in the development of intelligence as a percentage. Contemporary approaches are at the point that both of them contribute significantly to the development of intelligence rather than such a ratio. The period in which the development is the fastest is known as the 0-6 age preschool period. The abundance of environmental stimuli accelerates the development of the child. At this point, material richness is very important in the

Reggio Emilia approach. In particular, an environment where strong stimuli are constantly given with materials that activate the child's imagination and where the child is at the center contributes greatly to the development of the child's intelligence.

The philosophy that the Reggio Emilia approach was influenced by and educators such as Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bronfenbrenner, who pioneered this process, focused on the impact of environmental conditions on the development of the child. Especially in the concept that Vygotsky calls the Proximal Zone and in Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, it is important to see the environment, especially the adults around the child, as people who contribute to the CHILD'S education. This view, which acts with the argument that education is not preparation for life but life itself, is equivalent to accepting the environment of the child as a third teacher in the Reggio Emilia approach. The environment acts as a catalyst in the difficulties experienced by the child. As it is known, a catalyst is a component that accelerates the chemical reaction but does not direct the reaction. At this point, the environment is a structure that facilitates but does not prevent the development of the child. In the Reggio Emilia approach, the idea that some dogmatic, stereotyped and anachronistic perspectives build a wall in front of the child and that this wall can only be overcome with the support of an adult stands out. This basic assumption of the Reggio Emilia approach in gifted education is particularly important. Gifted children do not like stereotypical, ordinary and stable situations. Educators should be informed about contemporary approaches during their undergraduate education about this situation, which the Reggio Emilia approach calls the "wall" and which is, unfortunately, an open wound of our education system. In my opinion, one of the important elements of this "wall" is the existing laws and regulations. I had the opportunity during my teaching years to observe that the understanding that does not consider the best interests of the child, and that focuses on the legislation and adults rather than the principle of the child, has almost taken our education system hostage.

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