

*Иновации, предизвикателства и тенденции в постмодерното образование
Innovations, Challenges and Tendencies in the Post Modern Education*

MOTHERS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS UPON THE PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURS

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Abstract. The aim of the study is to compare pre-school children's behaviors according to perceptions of mothers and teachers. Also, the study examines their behaviors in terms of the socio-economical level of the family. The participants of the study were 136 mothers and 9 teachers who volunteered to be involved in the study. The research was carried out in 2009-2010 academic year, in 4 primary schools in Edirne. Being members of Ministry of National Education, these schools were located in different areas where families from different socio -economical levels lived. To gather data, for basic participant profile, „Personal Information Form“ developed by the researchers was used. For main data seeking to find answers for preschool children's behaviors at home and school, „Behavior Scale for Pre-School Children“ was used (Merrell, 2002). The Turkish version of the scale which was translated into Turkish in 2007 by Okyay and Fazlıoğlu was used. The validity and reliability issues of the Turkish version were also checked by the researchers. The data was quantitatively analyzed through SPSS 17.0 (Statistical Package Software). t-test, variance analysis, and LSD test were performed for the analysis. The significance level was determined to be as $p < 0.05$. A meaningful difference was found between pre-school children's behaviors according to mothers' and teachers' perceptions in terms of the scale's social cooperation, problem expression and learning problem sub-dimensions. Also, there is a meaningful difference between pre-school children's behaviors according to perceptions of teachers in terms of the socio-economical level of the family. However, meaningful difference was not found in terms of social expression.

Keywords: preschool education, social skill, social cooperation, social expression, learning problem.

Introduction

The effect of social development is important for an individual's attaining good relationship with the others in the society, school and workplace, adapting to social rules, having good relationship with his friends and surroundings, accomplishing

his responsibilities and acceptance by society and surroundings. Social environment of the child and the support that child has from near and distant environment is the basis for to what extent the child will progress and become a productive member of the society (Ahmetoğlu and Aral, 2004; Ahmetoğlu, 2010).

Socialization is a process starting from birth and children learn many social skills from their parents or other adults before they start preschool education. Institutes for preschool education have an important role in the child's planned and scheduled learning social behaviours (Yaşar, 2008).

Individual's exhibition of the social skills in the suitable place, time and environment shows that the person has the social capacity (Çiftçi and Sucuoğlu, 2004). His life quality and the success he will obtain in his life is directly correlated to his capacity in social skills. Inefficiency in social skills, causes short and long term problems in their social adaptation to social life, these problems result in more problems in puberty and adulthood (Gresham and Elliott, 1987; Bryan, 1991; Sazak, 2003). Research findings show the children with less social skills with compare to their peers feel themselves more lonely and exhibit more depressive behaviours (Şahin, 2006).

In preschool period, evaluation is one of the important keys for early diagnosis of children showing social skill inefficiency and problematic behaviours, protection and prevention (Winsler and Wallece, 2002) Children develop their social and emotional skills by having interactions with other individuals in both home and preschool classes (Anthony, Anthony, Glanville, Waanders and Shaffer, 2005).

Social validity of evaluated behaviors of the children gains importance when attributed by the society especially by their teachers, families and peers. Thus, evaluation of the social validity of social skills provides data for developing content validity of the measured behaviour and taking precautions against the most critical behaviours (Gresham and Elliott, 1990). For this reason, social skills of the children in preschool period need to be defined both in home and school media.

When studies about evaluation of the social skills in external field literature, social skills are observed to be researched in a detailed way by means of several invariables. When the field literature in Turkey is examined it is observed that in the preschool period there aren't many studies on evaluating social skills and it is rather for developing social skills education programs (Avcioğlu, 2003; Yukay, 2004; Vural, 2006; Kurt, 2007; Özbey, 2009), the children having normal development and need for special education are compared (Akbaş, 2005; Sucuoğlu and Özokçu, 2005; Özaydın, 2006) and in many researches the target people is generally primary or higher education level students. Moreover any research in which preschool children's both home and school media social skills are examined together hasn't been observed. Bülbül Ece, N. (2008) and Gültekin Elibol, S. (2008) have examined children's social skills in the school medium and Baran, G. (2005) has examined their social behaviours in the home medium. By performing researches for this, preschool children's behaviours can be defined in home and

school media, the variables affecting their social skills/problem behaviours can be defined and effective solutions can be presented for preschool children, their parents and teachers. That can provide positive attributions in preschool children's social adaptation and future lives. Starting from this point, in this research it has been aimed to compare preschool children's behaviours in home and school media and to investigate their family on the basis of socio-economical level.

Methodology

Research model

This research in the relative survey model has been performed in order to compare preschool children's behaviours according to perceptions of mothers and teachers and examining them in terms of the socio-economical level of the family.

Participants

Children having education in the National Ministry of Education schools in the center of Edirne province and their mothers and teachers constitute the environment of the research.

The research was carried out in 2009–2010 year in Edirne city center in regions where families from different socio-economic status live and with total 145 people voluntarily involved in the research, 9 teachers and 136 mothers of 136 children having preschool education in kindergarten classes in 4 primary schools in these regions.

0.53 % of the children of mothers involved in the research were daughters while 47% of them were sons. 69.8% of the mothers in the research were below the age of 35 where 20.6% of them were between 36–40, 7.4% of them were between 41–45 and 2.2% of them were between 46 and 50, 47% of the mothers were literate or graduated from primary school where 11.8% of them were secondary school, 29.4% of them were high school, 10.3% of them were university graduates, 1.5% of them were post graduates or doctorate graduates, 75.7% of the mothers were housewives while 18.4% of them were private sector workers and 5.9% of them were state officers, 29.4% of the mothers stated that they lived in a low socio-economic status where 30% of them were from medium and 40.4% of them were from high socio-economic status.

Instruments

To be able to gain the socio-demographic information of the participants, "Personal Information Form" developed by the researchers was used. Together with this, Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales-PKBS-2 were used.

Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales (PKBS-2): It is the behaviour scale which was designed to evaluate the problem behaviours and social skills of preschool and kindergarten students of 3-6 age. It was developed by Kenneth W. Merrel in 1994, re-revised and adapted in 2002, translated into Turkish in Okyay and Fazlıoğlu (2007) and its validity and reliability study was done. The scale is

comprised of two scales as Social Skills scale (28 madd) and Problem Behaviour Scale (42 madd). Social Skills Scale contains entries which define the wholly characteristic positive social skills of the children of 3–6 age. On the other hand, Problem Behaviour Scale contains the entries which define several behaviour problems that can generally be observed among the children of this age group. Focus point of the scale is typical, general and accustomed social capacity and problem behaviours of the little children. The maximum score that a participant can obtain is 84, minimum is „0“. Obtaining a high score is an indicator of the good social skill level of the participant and a rise in the scores obtained from problem behaviour scale is an indicator of the rise in the magnitude of the problem behaviour. Internal consistency number of Alpha which is calculated for the reliability of the Social Skill Scale is 0.93 for the subdimension of social cooperation and it is 0.96 for the social expression subdimension. The internal consistency number of Alpha which is calculated for the Problem Behaviour Scale is 0.96 for the expressing problem subdimension and it is 0.89 for the learning problem subdimension.

Data collection

In the research, primarily necessary permits have been obtained by written application to Edirne Governor's Office and Directorate of National Education of Edirne Province. A list of schools from regions where families from different socio-economic levels are inhabited has been taken through consulting with the Directorate of Education in Edirne City Center. By telephoning to kindergartens within four elementary schools randomly selected from this list, appointments have been taken from principals and teachers and interviews have been realized and they have been informed about the research. The phone numbers of children's mothers have been taken from classroom teachers and an appointment has been requested. In the interview with mothers and teachers, the aim of the research has been explained and they have been told the information can be used for research purposes only. The preschool children's mothers and teachers, who agreed to participate in the study as a volunteer, have been thanked for their contribution.

Data were collected between 8 February 2010 – 27 February 2010.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, standard deviation, mean values, percentages, Pearson moment correlation, t-test, ANOVA and post hoc LSD were conducted. The level of significance was adopted to be .05.

Findings and Discussion

Findings obtained from the study performed with the aim of comparing preschool children's behaviours and investigating them according to the socio-economic status of the family have been presented in the tables below.

Table 1. t-Test results of the preschool children's home and school media social skills

| Sub-Dimension | Medium | N | \bar{X} | S | r | Sd | t | P |
|---------------|--------|-----|-----------|-------|--------|-----|-------|---------|
| Social | Home | 136 | 27.53 | 4.22 | 0.126 | 135 | 3.494 | 0.001** |
| Cooperation | School | 136 | 29.62 | 6.11 | | | | |
| Social | Home | 136 | 44.21 | 4.80 | 0.176* | 135 | 0.206 | 0.837 |
| Expression | School | 136 | 44.05 | 8.69 | | | | |
| Expressing | Home | 136 | 20.23 | 10.28 | 0.141 | 135 | 5.704 | 0.000** |
| problems | School | 136 | 12.63 | 13.20 | | | | |
| Learning | Home | 136 | 13.57 | 6.78 | 0.127 | 135 | 8.075 | 0.000** |
| Problem | School | 136 | 7.33 | 6.85 | | | | |

**p<.001

When Table 1 examined, a significant positive correlation has been defined between preschool children's social expression skills in home and school media. It has shown that mothers 'and teachers' assessments are similar in terms of children's social expression skills.

Again, in Table1, while no significant difference has been found in the social expression sub-dimension of the social skills scale [$t_{(135)}=0.206$, $p>.05$], in social cooperation sub-dimension [$t_{(135)}=3.494$, $p<.001$] and in the expressing problems [$t_{(135)}=5.704$, $p<.001$] and learning problems sub-dimensions [$t_{(135)}=8.075$, $p<.001$] of the Problem Behaviour Scale, a significant difference has been found. As it has been understood from this evidence, while there has been a significant difference in social cooperation dimension between assessments of mothers and teachers on their children's social skills, no significant difference has been found in social expression dimension. Teachers have evaluated children's social cooperation skills more positively than the mothers. Also from these findings, it has been understood that, between assessments of mothers and teachers on their children's problem behaviours, there has been a significant difference in the subdimensions of problem expression and learning problems. Teachers have evaluated children's problem expression skills and learning problems more negatively than the mothers. The reason for this finding can be either because the child acts differently at home and school media or it can be a reflection of high expectations of mothers for their children's social skills. Besides teacher's positive attitudes and behaviours, a well-organized and positive classroom environment and a social medium where the rules are explained to children as they can understand, child's forming positive behaviours as a result of feeling himself safe as a valuable individual may cause a higher score average in Social Cooperation in the school medium.

Similarly as a result of Galloway and Porath's research (1997) in which families and teachers evaluate social skills of 23 children aged between 3–6, it has been concluded that there hasn't been any significant difference between the evaluation of the teachers and the families. However, differences have been observed in their specific social skills. (Özbey, 2009).

In the researches of Winsler ve Wallace (2002), Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales, PBKS–2 has been carried out by the families and teachers of 47 preschool children showing normal progress. Rather than the teachers, families have qualified their children as possessing external problem behaviours.

Table 2. Anova Results of Preschool children's Social Skills in Home and School Media according to the socio- economical level of the family

| Sub-dimension | Medium | | Additon of the square | Sd | Average of the squares | F | P | Significant difference |
|---------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------------|
| Social cooperation | Home | Between-groups In-groups Total | 89.520 2310.362 2399.882 | 2 133 135 | 44.760 17.371 | 2.577 | 0.08 | |
| | School | Between-groups In-groups Total | 440.104 4594.014 5034.118 | 2 133 135 | 220.052 34.541 | 6.371 | 0.002* | High>low High>medium |
| Social expression | Home | Between-groups In-groups Total | 76.254 3034.562 3110.816 | 2 133 135 | 38.127 22.816 | 1.671 | 0.192 | |
| | School | Between-groups In-groups Total | 842.98 9361.66 10204.64 | 2 133 135 | 421.490 70.388 | 5.988 | 0.003* | High> low High>medium |
| Expressing problems | Home | Between-groups In-groups Total | 375.554 13894.380 14269.934 | 2 133 135 | 187.777 104.469 | 1.797 | .170 | |
| | School | Between-groups In-groups Total | 2853.925 20649.950 23503.875 | 2 133 135 | 1426.962 155.263 | 9.191 | 0.000** | Low>medium Low> High |
| Learning Problem | Home | Between-groups In-groups Total | 23.583 6179.821 6203.404 | 2 133 135 | 11.792 46.465 | .254 | .776 | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------|---------|-------------------------|
| | School | Between- groups In-groups Total | 777.384 5562.727 6340.110 | 2 133 135 | 388.692 41.825 | 9.293 | 0.000** | Low>Medium Low> High |
|--|--------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------|---------|-------------------------|

*p<.005 **p<.001

When Table 2 is examined, while there hasn't been any significant difference in the preschool children's behaviours in the home medium for the subdimensions of social cooperation [$F_{(2-133)}=2.577$; $p>.05$], social expression [$F_{(2-133)}=1.671$; $p>.05$], expressing the problems [$F_{(2-133)}=1.797$; $p>.05$] and the learning problem [$F_{(2-133)}=.254$; $p>.05$] according to the socio-economical level of the family, their behaviours, their behaviors in the school medium have been observed to change significantly in the subdimensions of social cooperation [$F_{(2-133)}=6.371$; $p<.005$], social expression [$F_{(2-133)}=5.988$; $p<.005$], expressing problems [$F_{(2-133)}=9.191$; $p<.001$] and learning problems [$F_{(2-133)}=9.293$; $p<.001$].

According to the results of LSD test which is performed to determine where the difference in school medium behaviour scores comes from, according to social skills children from high socio- economic status families have higher scores for social cooperation in the school medium ($\bar{X}=31.80$) than those from medium ($\bar{X}=28.20$) and low ($\bar{X}=28.08$) status families and they have higher scores of social expression in the school medium ($\bar{X}=47.07$) than those from medium ($\bar{X}=42.02$) and low ($\bar{X}=41.98$) status families. According to Problem Behaviour children from low socio- economic status families have higher scores for problem expression in the school medium ($\bar{X}=19.70$) than those from medium ($\bar{X}=10.17$) and high ($\bar{X}=9.31$) status families and they have higher scores for learning problems in the school medium ($\bar{X}=10.95$) than those from medium ($\bar{X}=5.12$) and high ($\bar{X}=6.35$) status families.

Similar researches from the examination of the literature have been supporting this evidence. In the study Seven (2008) carried out children from high socio-economic status families appear to have higher levels of social skills with compare to the children from lower socio-economic status families. Avşar and Öztürk Kuter (2007) have concluded that social skill levels of medium and high socio-economic status pupils are higher with compare to the lower socio- economic status pupils.

Belsky, Friedman and Hsieh (2001) emphasize there is a strong bond between a child's upbringing environment and his social characteristics.

Although many factors can be effective in behaviour problems in children, parental attitudes may have a great impact on long term behaviour problems. The family's firm or ineffective disciplinary practices, poor supervision, domestic stress, the presence of conditions such as depression, the family's inefficiency in supporting the child's emotional and social aspects and not fulfilling its function, can be a predisposing factor for the emergence of problem behaviors in the preschool period

insecurity in infancy, stubbornness and the reaction to the first problem behaviour reflected out, low birth weight, father's lack of attention and affection, and factors such as low socio-economic level and environment is shown as the cause of this behaviour (Gimpel and Holland 2003; Trunzo, 2006).

Children from low socio-economic status homes are found to be most at risk for behavioral difficulties (Tolan and McKernan, McKay, 1996). They are at the greatest risk of experiencing school failure and behavioral issues at kindergarten entry (Schulting, Malone and Dodge, 2005). Low-income children are infrequently ready to watch more television, and have less access to books and computers. Children from low-income environments have greater exposure to levels of violence, family disruption, and separation from their families, further increasing their at risk behaviors (Evans, 2004). Sinclair, Pettit, Harrist, Dodge, and Bates (1994) note that low-income 2 to 4 year olds interact with aggressive peers 40% more often in their neighborhood and 25% more often in child care settings, and this age group has 70% more contact with friends who are aggressive than their middle-class peers. Net household income is negatively related to preadolescent's deviant behaviors. The level of income and at risk behavior is connected (Brody, Ge, Conger, Gibbons, Murry, Gerrard and Simons, 2001). The level of parental educational attainment and job status level are negatively connected to high parental rejection of adolescents and influences their behaviors. Educational level and job status influences behavior (Felner, Brand, DuBois, Adan, Mulhall, and Evans, 1995). Corwyn and Bradley (2002) found that maternal education had the most reliable and direct impact upon children's cognitive and behavioral outcomes. Mothers of lower socioeconomic status offer less emotional support, stimulation, and enrichment to their young children (Evans, 2004). Evans reports among a representative sample, 38% of low-income parents read to their 3 to 5 year olds daily, and 22% of low-income parents had taken their children, at least once in the past month, to the library. Low-income children reportedly watch significantly more television than their wealthier peers do (Larson and Verma, 1999).

Results and Suggestions

As a result of the research, in a positive sense a significant relationship has been determined between preschool children's social expression skills in home and school media.

Preschool children's social skills have been found to show difference in social cooperation, expressing problems and learning problems dimensions whereas they don't indicate any significant difference in social expression dimension. While evaluating children's social cooperation skills more positively, the teachers have evaluated their skills of expressing problems and learning problems more negatively than the mothers.

Besides significant differences in the child's school medium behaviours have been found in terms of the socio-economic status of the family. In terms

of their social skills, the school medium social cooperation and the social expression scores of the children from higher socio-economic status families have been observed to be higher than those from medium or low socio-economic status. In terms of Problematic Behaviour, in expressing problems and the learning problem scores of the children from low socio-economic level have been observed to be higher than those from medium or high socio-economic status.

According to the findings obtained; it can be investigated whether or not children's social skills are affected by the characteristics of their mother and teachers. New and different scales can be devised on this subject and studies can be carried out in order to enhance their validity and reliability. Preschool teachers and the families can be given training to acquire social skills and to prevent problem behaviors and school- family collaboration on this subject can be increased. Teachers can contribute to the children's proper learning of the cultural values of the society in which they live through the social skill training activities they planned.

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