

THE OPINIONS OF THE STUDENT'S PARENTS RELATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAM IN EDIRNE CITY

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Abstract. It is necessary for students to spend a long and exhausting period for the university entrance exam. This period has some certain negative effects on the students and the parents. Both parents and students are directly affected by those negative problems. This situation causes physical and moral damages for the families, who sometimes get exhausted.

In this study, a questionnaire consisting of 38 questions on “A research on the University Entrance Exam in Turkey” was given to 400 parents whose children were still attending different high schools or private teaching institutions or graduated from those schools or institutions in Edirne and then the data collected were analysed.

Keywords: students, University Entrance Exam, parents

Introduction

There are exams to be taken and passed in one's lifetime in Turkey. The most important exam is the one that has to be taken when a person graduates from a high school.

Both students and parents have some certain responsibilities during the preparation period of university entrance exam. The most important role of the parents is to support and motivate their children.

Families have an effect on the level of children's motivation consciously or unconsciously. This effect has a positive, but sometimes has a negative effect on them. The statements expressed and the behaviours criticized may affect the children in a negative way, and increase the level of anxiety by lowering their motivation. This situation causes the students to be unhappy, unproductive and nervous during the period of university entrance exam. The first requirement that is necessary to have a positive effect on children is to understand what they want.

There are a lot of scientific researches that show the relationship between the parent-child and the children's school performance. In those studies, it is pointed out that the attitudes of the parents have a positive or negative effect on children's social competence due to the support given or discipline?. It is stated

that the attitudes of the parents, especially the attitudes of a mother who spends much of her time together with the child when compared with those of a father, play an important role in the development of one's personality (Baumrind, 1968; Maccoby and Martin, 1983). The interaction between the family members is very important according to the descriptive studies conducted so far (Amato, 1989).

Most of the parents have the idea that children should be forced in order to get a good education. However, the parents could be a model for children if they take the following points into consideration:

- Appreciation
- Openness
- Sharing the feelings mutually
- Live and let live
- Giving opportunities to children to develop their abilities and skills.

The parents could be a good model and also help develop their children by taking the above mentioned points into account (Tausch, 1991; Gramer, 1994).

Problem

The purpose of this research is to provide necessary data for discussion about the determination of the problem concerning measuring the expectancy level of the university entrance exam and finding out the possible ways of solving anxiety problems.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research are:

1. The whole system starting from the primary education up to high school is focused on the university entrance exam.
2. The components of the university entrance exam has emerged a new system. That is private courses given by the private schools. The function of those private schools has become the most important factor in education.

The Universe

The population of this research includes the parents of the senior year students attending the high schools and the high school graduates taking private courses, and of those first year students at university.

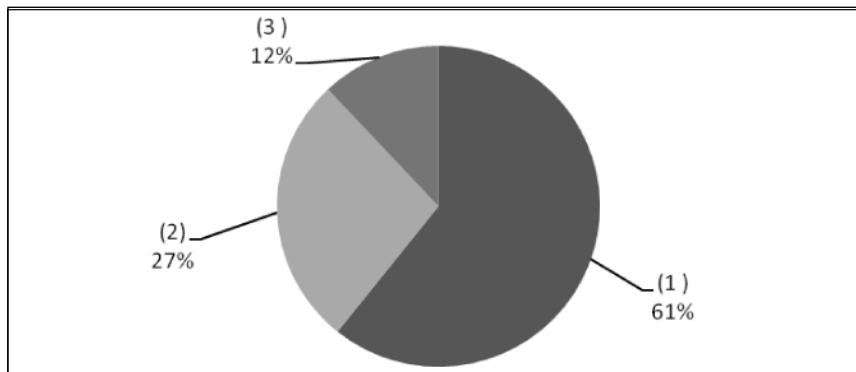
The questionnaire consisting of 38 items was answered by 400 parents whose children were high school students and the first year students at universities, and were also the high school graduates taking private courses.

The data was evaluated using Excel program. All the data were converted into graphics. Short explanations and interpretations are given under each graphic.

Findings

1) What is the education level of your child?

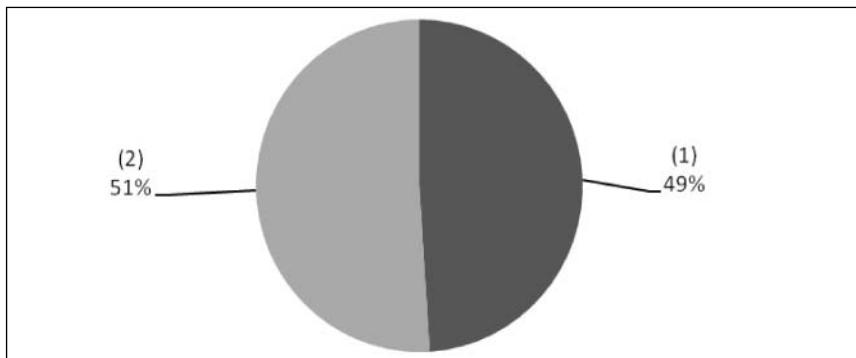
(1) Senior highschool student	243
(2) Highschool graduaten preparing for university	109
(3) Registered in a University	48



61% of the children of the parents participated in the study were senior highschool students, the 27% of the children were reported to be getting prepared for the university exam, 12% were registered in the university this year.

2) What is your gender?

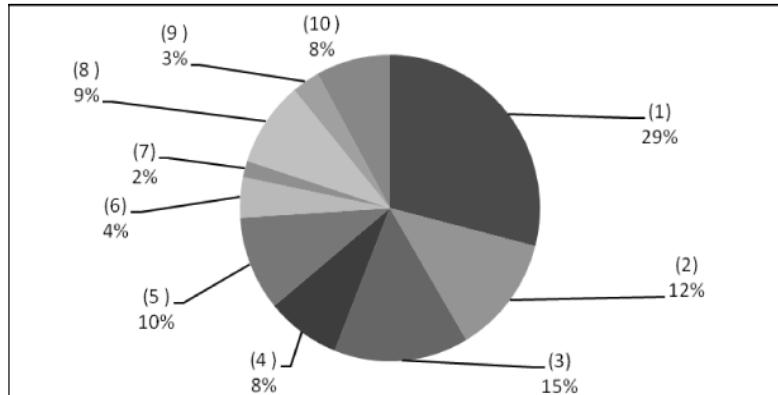
(1) Female	196
(2) Male	204



51% the parents participated in the study were male, and 49% of them were female.

3) Occupation

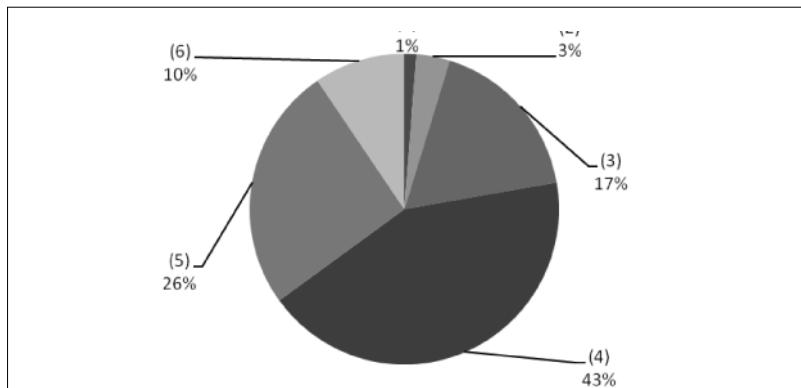
(1) Civil servant	116	(5) Self-employed	40	(9) Unoccupied	12
(2) Worker	50	(6) Merchant	17	(10) Other	32
(3) Retired	58	(7) Manufacturer	7		
(4) Craftsman	32	(8) Farmer	36		



29% Of the parents participated in the study were civil servant, 12% of them were worker, 15% were retired, 8% were craftsman, 10% Self-employed, 4% were merchant, 2% were manufacturer, 9% were farmer, 3% were Unoccupied and 8% were stated to be appertaining to ather jobs.

4) Income per month?(Turkish Liras-TL)

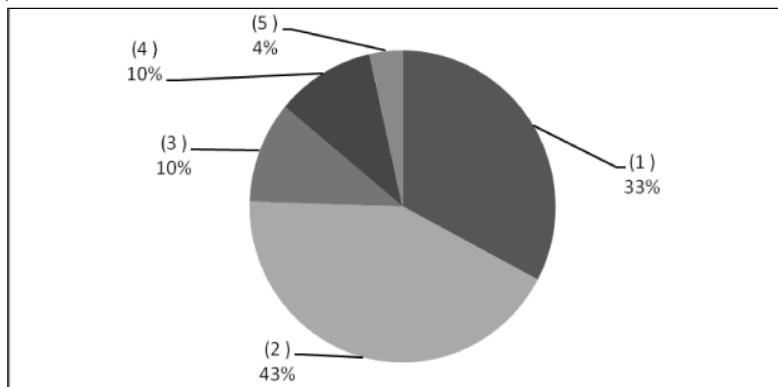
(1) Less than 300 TL	5	(5) Between 2000-4000 TL	102
(2) Between 300-600 TL	14	(6) More than 4000 TL	38
(3) Between 600-1000 TL	70		
(4) Between 1000-2000 TL	171		



The results related to the occupation and income indicate that the parents are mostly in the middle-class in terms of social.

5) From which of high-school did your child graduate?

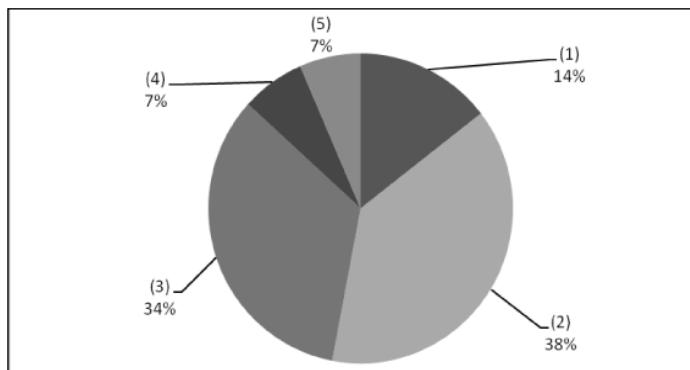
(1) State high school	131	(4) College school	42
(2) College	171	(5) Other	14
(3) Technical school	42		



The children of 43% of parents participated in the study were graduates of college and 33% of them were students of state high school.

6) Who was effective to choose the your child's high school?

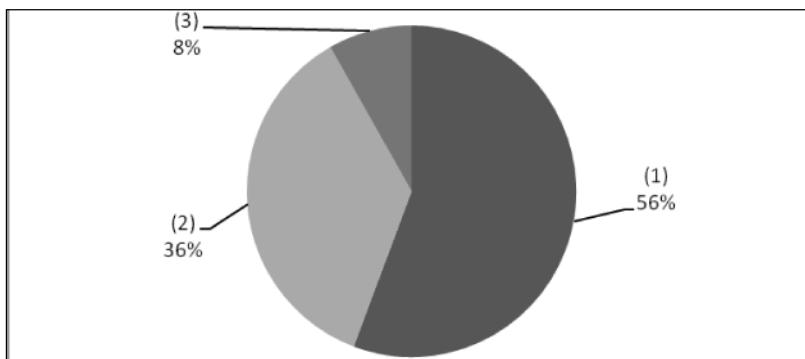
(1) Completely our (parents') decision	58
(2) My child's decision	154
(3) We decided all together	135
(4) The recommendation of the teachers	27
(5) By chance	26



38% of the parents who participated this study implied that they had chosen the high school of their children by themselves. 34% of them implied that they had decided together. This chart shows both the children and their parents' decision is effective to determine the children's high school.

7) Are you happy with your child's high school?

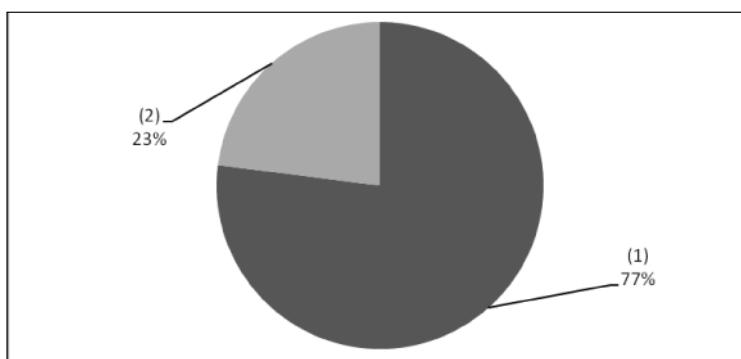
(1) Yes	224
(2) Partly	145
(3) I'm contrite	33



More than half of the parents indicate that they are happy about their children's high school.

8) Do you believe that your child must study at the university in order to be successful in life?

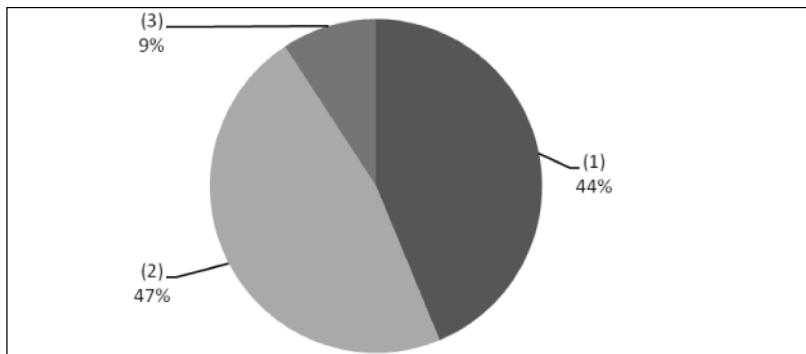
(1) Yes, I do	308	(2) No, I don't	92
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A great part of the parents in this study believe that their child must study at the university to be successful in life.

9) How do/did getting ready for the university entrance exam affect the life of of your child?

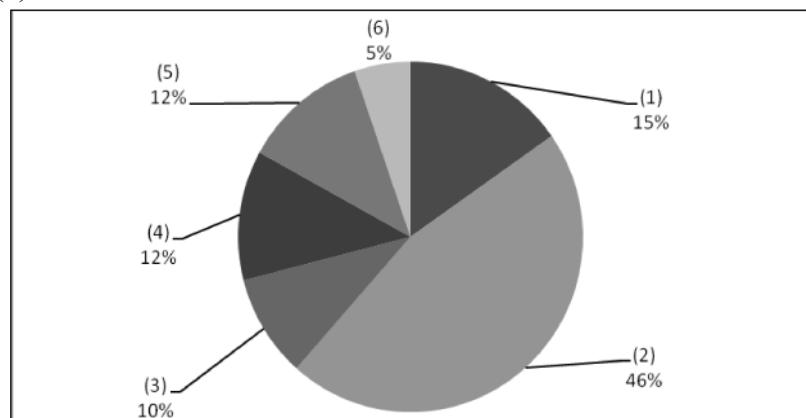
(1) He was overwhelmed and tired	175
(1) Often it was boring	188
(2) Did not affect	37



Most of the parents signify that they are aware of the psychological pressure of getting ready for the university exam on their children.

10) What was/is the meaning of being unsuccessful in the university entrance exam for your child?

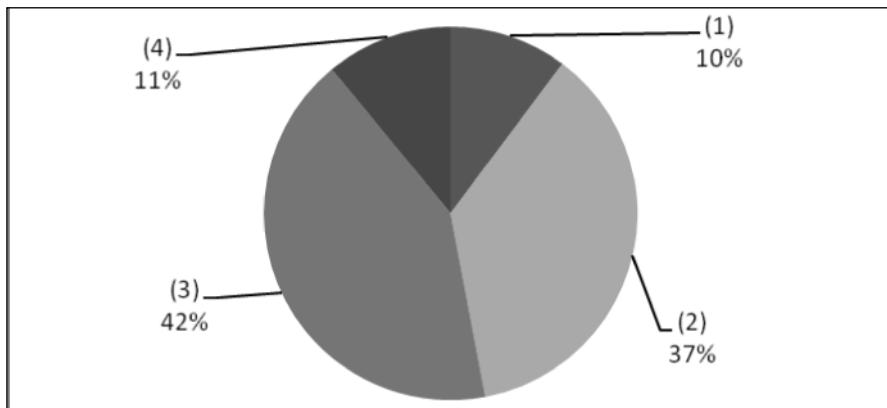
(1) Their life got /will get worse	61
(2) To study again till the next year üniversity entrance exam	185
(3) finding a job immediately	38
(4) Making alternative plans for the future	48
(5) being ashamed against us and social environment	47
(6) don't know	21



An important part of the parents can not think any alternative to the university entrance exam for their children. The troubrous position when the children will be in if they can not be successful in the exam is known by their parents,too. Therefore,parents heed the exam.

11) Which was/is more useful? Vocational guidance given at school or at the private courses to advertise the university-faculty-department to your child .

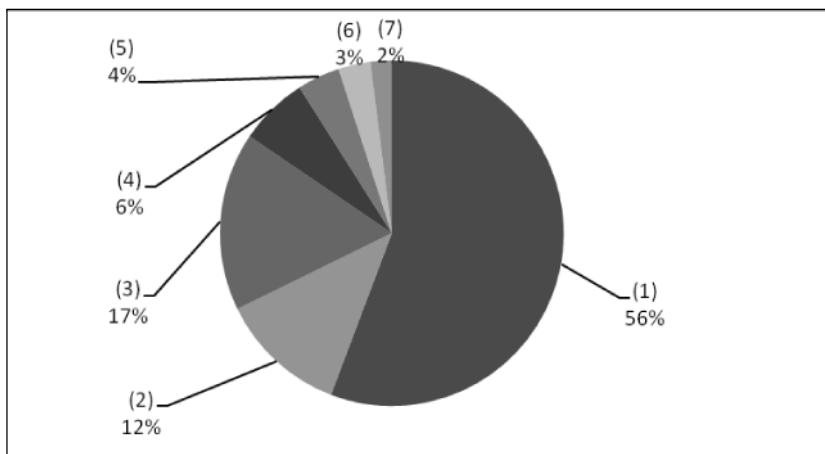
(1) At school	41
(2) At the private course	147
(3) Both of them	168
(4) None of them	44



Few of the parents in this search think that the vocational guidance given at school for the introduction of the departments is sufficient. According to the parents private courses are more persuasive . It is confirmed by the parents that schools are inadequate with both their educational functions and guidance services.

12) How did your child decide the area that they studied/will study for higher education ?

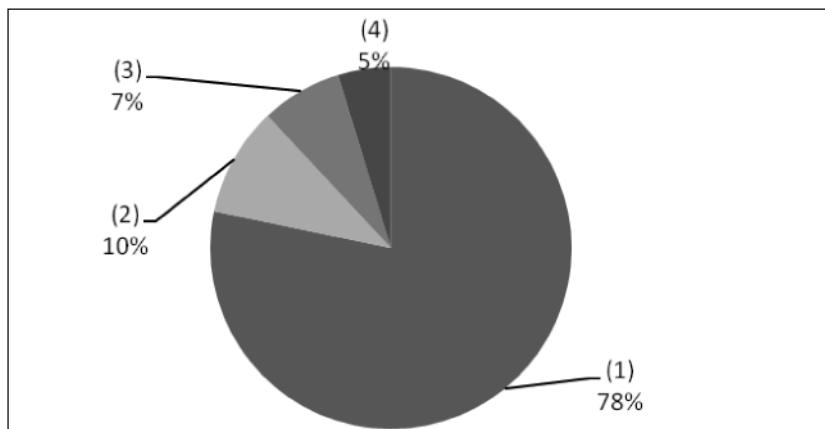
(1) It was his/her ideal occupation.	223
(2) It was prestigious	48
(3) He/she can earn a lot of Money	67
(4) He/She can work for the government	26
(5) To have an academic career	16
(6) Occupation of father-mother.	12
(7) Other reasons	8



56 % of the parents participated in this study state that their children choose their area because it was their ideal . On the other hand 17 % of the parents signify that their children choose the area because they can earn a lot of money, 12 % of them imply that the area is prestigious.

13) Under whose influence did your child choose the area she/he aimed for higher education?

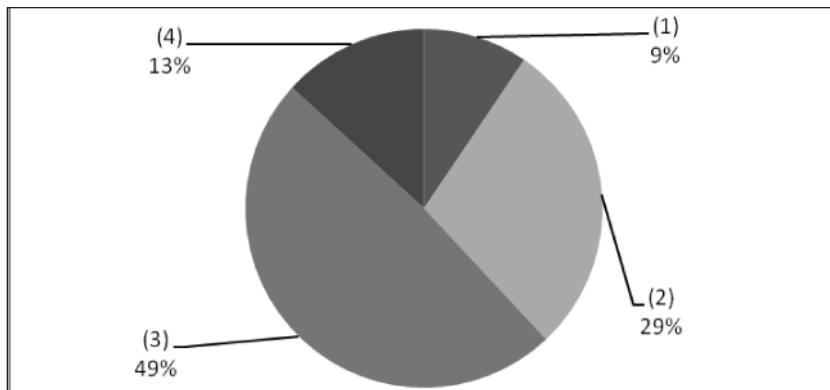
(1) Completely his/her own decision	313
(2) I and my wife/husband's decision	39
(3) Guidance of their teacher	29
(4) Have no idea	19



While more than two-thirds of the parents stated that their children had chosen the area they had aimed to study for higher education by themselves, others stated that they themselves and the teachers guided the children. Parents who were effective to choose the high school became less effective for university choice.

14) Which education is more beneficial? The education that your child had studied at school or at the private courses?

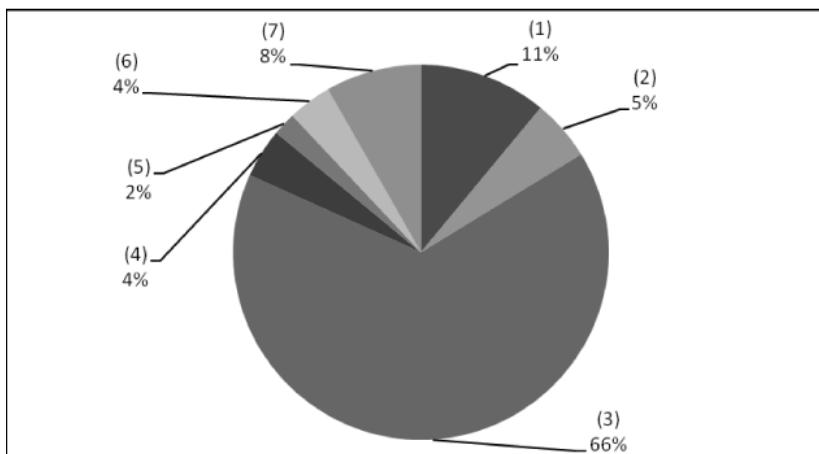
(1) Education at school	38
(2) Education at the private courses	114
(3) Both of them	195
(4) None of them	53



Only %9 of the parents think that the education at school is sufficient for getting ready to the university entrance exam. The percentage of the parents who think the education at both school and private courses are sufficient is % 49. %29 of the parents think the education at the private courses is sufficient .

15) What do you think to do if your child can not pass the exam to study at a state university or to have a scholarship for a private university?

(1) I let my child study at the private university	44
(2) I send my child study abroad	21
(3) I let my child to study for the next exam in the following year	262
(4) I want my child to start in business	17
(5) I want my child to study at a vocational course	8
(6) I send my child to the army	15
(7) Other	13



It is seen that most of the parents don't have any alternative plans to the university education. The percentage of the parents who have alternatives like private university or study abroad, is %16. The percentage of the parents who prefer the alternatives like business life and vocational courses, is %6. %66 of the parents are planning that their children should study for the next year's exam once again if they are not successful.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that all the parents want to help their children during this critical period. But, the most important factor is when and how they are supported to increase their success. The parents should tell their children that the exams are the tools to reach a goal in their lives.

One of the mistakes made by parents during the exam period is that children have to be successful under all circumstances and should have the best personality in public. This results from the prejudice that is one of the reasons affecting parents' attitudes toward their children. This expectation may also result in depression.

When children are forced to do something unwillingly, the following problems may come out; they study more than they have to do, because they think that if they fail, then they will not be praised and loved by their families. This causes them to be in depression which can affect their academic performance in a negative way.

However wrong it is to expect from children to be perfect, it is also wrong not to care about their successes and failures, not to guide them, not to motivate them. The parents who have no expectations from their children and do not care about them are more harmful than those parents who have some certain authority on their children.

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