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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Analysis of Parents' Opinions and Expectations About Preschool Education

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Abstract

This study focuses on parents whose children are getting preschool education and aims to analyze these parents' opinions and expectations about preschool education. The study uses phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The study group consists of 20 parents whose children go to state kindergartens in the Bakırköy, Bahçelievler, Küçükçekmece, and Avcılar districts of Istanbul. The study group was chosen using the convenience sampling method. The data for the study were collected through semistructured interviews. The acquired data were analyzed through descriptive analysis. Parents are informed about preschool education by their surroundings, teachers, and various publications. The expectations of parents about preschool education are mostly socialization, adaptation to the environment, peer relationships, and emotional development. It is important for the parents that the teacher is knowledgeable, cheerful, fair, and someone who can contribute to their children by offering quality education. As for the improvement of preschool education, parents expect free education and qualified teachers. As a result, the themes of the study were determined to be: critical development period, social-emotional development, teacher competence in a safe environment, and experienced teacher.

Keywords: Expectation from preschool education, kindergarten, parent, preschool education

Introduction

Preschool education institutions are an important level of education which contribute to the acquisition of children's academic and life skills as well as offering support on children's socialization, character development, acquisition of social norms and values as a result of providing children with an environment different from family environment and with opportunities and settings necessary for learning (Oğuzkan & Oral, 2003). In order to raise modern generations that are socially healthy, preschool education institutions and parents must have strong communication and interaction, which will make them aware of each other's expectations and help them meet on a common ground (Metin & Arı, 1993). This interaction will facilitate the fact that parents express their expectations about their children's development and get feedback on this subject (Ulutaş Avcu, 2016).

The opinions of parents about preschool education institutions started to change as a result of the fact that scientific research revealed the importance of early childhood education, showing that the successful examples in developed countries affect all aspects of education life (Doğrul & Akay, 2019). For this reason, preschool education institutions began to be considered as planned and organized education institutions rather than places for child care (Aktaş Arnas, 2002).

Quality education calls for healthy cooperation between teachers and parents; and healthy cooperation calls for open communication of both parties and a much better understanding of the importance of children in our lives. Considering that the aim of both the school and the parents is to create a better educational setting, the cooperation between

these two will contribute a great deal to the formation of a better and richer educational setting, also by benefitting from the facilities of the school and the environment (MoNE, 2006). Parents can offer an outside-inside perspective (Katz, 1993, 1999) but in situations where there is a strong power differential between parents and settings (Einarsdóttir & Jónsdóttir, 2019), they need to be provided with ways of sharing their funds of knowledge to ensure they are informed, involved, and engaged (Lopez et al., 2004).

Teachers make it possible for parents get to know the school setting, program, and the teacher by helping the parents get actively involved in the education process (Carlson & Stenmalm, 1989). The involvement of the parents in education will help them increase their knowledge and skills about children's education, and it will also make them aware of how important their own roles are in education. School-parent cooperation and communication will help children get to know themselves better as well as positively affecting their self-perception, self-respect, and academic success (Kotaman, 2008; Yıldırım & Sönmez, 2008).

No matter what the quality of education programs is, unless they are supported by parents, it is difficult to reach the desired targets. It is known that education programs prepared in a way that considers children's characteristics of development, interests, and needs as well as parents' expectations, and that involves the parents actively in the education process will increase the quality of education (Ulutaş Avcu, 2016). The fact that teachers respect parents' expectations, values, and aims, and that parents feel this, plays an important role in parents' developing positive attitudes toward education. Therefore, learning what parents expect from the institution, making every effort to fulfill these

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expectations, and improving school–parent cooperation will ensure that children learn permanently (Şimşek & İvrendi, 2014).

There has been research where parents' expectations from preschool education institutions are analyzed. It was found in these studies that parents' expectations vary depending on social environment, educational level, requirements of the parents, cultural level, being a nuclear family or not, and income level (Aktaş-Armas, 2002; Başal & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2018; Güler, 2008; Kaya, 2002; Özen Altınkaynak & Yanıklar, 2014; Saçkes, 2013; Sevinç, 2006; Şimşek & İvrendi, 2014; Topaç et al., 2012; Ulutaş Avcu, 2016; Yaman & Saçkes, 2017).

Except for one of them (Topaç et al., 2012), these studies were carried out with quantitative research methods. Using a qualitative research method and having chosen parents whose children go to preschool education institutions, this current study aims to determine more deeply the opinions and expectations of these parents about preschool education.

Aim of the Study

This study focuses on parents whose children are getting preschool education and aims to analyze these parents' opinions and expectations about preschool education. Within this scope, the following questions were asked:

1. What do the parents know about preschool education?
2. What are the parents' reasons for sending their children to a preschool education institution?
3. What do the parents expect from preschool education?
4. What do the parents think about improving preschool education?

Methods

Model of the Study

This study uses phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Phenomenological design focuses on the phenomena we are aware of, but about which we do not have a deep and detailed understanding. In the world we live in, we can come across phenomena in different ways, such as incidents, experiences, perceptions, tendencies, concepts, and situations. However, this familiarity does not mean that we exactly understand phenomena. Phenomenological design forms a suitable basis for studies that aim to search for phenomena that are not completely alien to us, but that, at the same time, we cannot completely comprehend (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p. 69).

When writers compile a phenomenology, they report how individuals participating in the study view their experiences differently (Moustakas, 1994). The inquirer then collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. This description consists of “what” they experienced and “how” they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). The phenomenon of “parent expectation” is analyzed in this study.

Study Group

The study group consists of parents whose children are getting education in state kindergartens in the Bakırköy, Bahçelievler, Küçükçekmece, and Avcılar districts of İstanbul. The study group was chosen with criterion sampling method. Criterion sampling includes participants who meet predefined criteria. The most prominent criterion is the participant's experience with the phenomenon under study. The researchers look for participants who have shared an experience but vary in characteristics and in their individual experiences (Moser & Korstijens, 2018). The demographic data of the parents that form the study group are found in Tables 1 and 2.

The criteria used in this study are explained below:

1. Parents whose ages are a minimum 25 years old,
2. Parents' graduation at least from primary school
3. Parents whose children are attending public kindergarten

As it can be seen in Table 2, 14 mothers (70%) and 6 fathers (30%) participated in the study. 16 of the participants (80%) are between 31–40 years old; 13 of them (65%) are working; 16 (80%) have 1 or 2 children, and 18 (90%) have an education level of high school or higher.

Data Collection Tool

The data was collected with a semi-structured interview method. In the interviews, “Parent Interview Form” was used. This form was developed by the researchers in order to learn the expectations of parents, and the final version of the form was completed after getting the opinions of three experts. The form consists of two parts. In the first part, there is demographic information, such as being a mother or a father, age, education level, working or not, and the number of children. In the second part, the following interview questions are found:

1. What do you know about preschool education?
2. What are your reasons for sending your children to a preschool education institution?
3. What do you expect from preschool education?
4. What can be done to improve preschool education?

Data Collection Process

First of all, ethics committee approval was received for this study from the ethics committee of a university (date: March 30, 2023, no.: 23/05). The interviews with parents were carried out on a voluntary basis. In the application phase of the study, parents were briefly informed about the purpose of the interview. It was appropriately explained to them that no personal information such as name, surname would be asked, their personal information would not be included anywhere, the interviews would be kept confidential, and they did not need to hesitate to express their sincere ideas when answering the questions.

Before starting the interview, there was a brief conversation in which the researchers and the parents met each other. During the interview, the researchers made every effort to remain objective. The researchers

Table 1.
Demographic Data of the Study Group

	Age	Working or Not	Number of Children	Education Level
A1	32	Not working	2	Primary school
A2	36	Not working	2	Two-year degree
A3	32	Working	1	Undergraduate
A4	34	Not working	2	2-year degree
A5	35	Not working	1	2-year degree
A6	36	Not working	1	Undergraduate
A7	34	Not working	1	Primary school
A8	33	Not working	2	High school
A9	39	Not working	3	Undergraduate
A10	29	Not working	2	High school
A11	32	Not working	1	Undergraduate
A12	36	Not working	3	2-year degree
A13	38	Not working	3	Undergraduate
A14	38	Not working	3	Undergraduate
B1	42	Working	2	2-year degree
B2	43	Working	2	2-year degree
B3	47	Working	1	Undergraduate
B4	35	Working	2	High school
B5	37	Working	1	2-year degree
B6	39	Working	2	High school

Table 2.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Study Group

		f	%
Gender	Mother	14	70
	Father	6	30
	Total	20	100
Age	25–30	1	5
	31–35	8	40
	36–40	8	40
	41–45	2	10
	46–50	1	5
	Total	20	100
Working or not	Working	13	65
	Not working	7	35
	Total	20	100
Number of children	One child	7	35
	Two children	9	45
	Three and more children	4	20
Education level	Primary school	2	10
	High school	4	20
	2-year degree	7	35
	Undergraduate	7	35
	Total	20	100

tried to create an atmosphere in which the interviewee could feel in a natural conversation. The interviews were carried out in the classroom or in an available room, before or after school time, and lasted an average of 20–30 minutes on average.

Analysis of the Data

The data collected in the study were analyzed through descriptive analysis method. Descriptive analysis is defined as “conveying the different ideas of different people about the same question in the way obtained from the interviewees” (Altunışık et al., 2010). The process of the analysis and interpretation of participants' answers were carried out in the following phases: (1) naming phase, (2) elimination phase, (3) phase of developing categories, (4) phase of ensuring validity and reliability, (5) phase of calculating-interpreting frequencies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

The study is based on four main themes: 1) knowledge about preschool education, 2) the reasons for sending children to preschool education, 3) the expectations from preschool education, 5) the opinions about the improvement of preschool education.

The Validity–Reliability of the Study

In qualitative research, “validity” is related to the correctness of scientific findings, whereas “reliability” is related to the repeatability of scientific findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The following actions were taken in order to increase the validity and reliability of the study;

- In order to increase the internal validity (credibility) of the study, the related literature was searched, and the interview form was prepared after determining the themes. The relational unity between the themes and the questions was ensured, and the questions were finalized after getting the opinions of three experts. Necessary permissions were taken from the school principals for the interviews, and a brief pre-interview was carried out with parents to tell them the content of the study, leading to mutual trust. Parents were told that their names and schools would not be mentioned in the study, thus making it possible for them to answer the questions sincerely and without any concern. In this way, researchers paid great attention to the fact that the data would reflect the truth as much as possible.
- In order to increase the external validity (transferability) of the study, what was done in the research process was explained in

detail. In this scope, the model of the study, the data collection tool, the data collection process, data analysis, and data interpretation were explained in detail in the method part.

- In order to increase the internal reliability (consistency) of the study, the data were analyzed separately by the two researchers, and similar results were obtained. It was found that the data were confirmed considering the information in the literature and the interviews. In order to assure validity and reliability of the study, inter-coder reliability and Miles and Huberman's (1994) inter coder reliability formula were used (reliability = agreements/agreements + disagreements). As a result of reliability calculation, the inter-rater reliability calculation was calculated as 0.87 and it was accepted as reliable.
- Also, the confirmability (external reliability) of the analysis was ensured as the acquired raw findings and the coding were analyzed by the field experts.

Results

This part consists of the findings obtained from the interviews with the parents.

Findings About the Question “What Do You Know About Preschool Education?”

As a result of the interviews, the knowledge of the parents about preschool education was found to be like this (Table 3).

Findings reveal that parents have an idea about preschool education mostly through their surroundings, teachers, and various publications. Parents usually decide the institution together; the most mentioned criteria in this decision are the budget, closeness to home, the physical condition of the school, the teacher's effective use of Turkish, the teacher's having an undergraduate degree, the child's socialization and getting prepared for primary school.

Considering the findings obtained from the parents, it can be said that the theme about this question is “critical development period.” The direct references and related interpretations can be found below:

Preschool education is the institutions where children go as preparation for primary school, play games, and socialize. There must be preschool education but it must start after 3-4 years old because the first education must be given by parents at home, in a warm family environment. (A2)

This parent's idea is in accordance with preschool education's aim of preparing children for primary school. Also, with her sentence “[preschool] education must start after 3-4 years old,” the mother defends the idea that children must start a preschool education institution after

Table 3.
Frequency Table Related to the Knowledge about Preschool Education

	f	%
Preparation for primary school	3	15
The age to start school	4	20
Socialization	9	45
First contact with the world outside	7	35
A very important level	7	35
Personality development	4	20
Effective use of Turkish	9	45
Language use	10	50
Teacher qualities	11	55
Main aims of education	2	10
Social media	1	5
Playing games	14	70
First education starts at home	3	15

getting their first education in the family so that all their development areas can be healthy and at the desired level.

Yes, I had some information, little though. I was following on social media like Facebook, Instagram some activities that could contribute to the development of my daughter. Thanks to what I learned from them, I started to have some ideas about what qualities a kindergarten teacher must have, and what the main aims of preschool education can be. (A7)

Another mother stated that she had some knowledge about preschool education, although that knowledge was limited. However, the mother didn't find her knowledge sufficient and tried to improve herself through social media in order to contribute more to the development of her child. It can be said that she reached some basic information in this way.

I know that the age range 0-8 is universally the most important time period in personality development. The correct and effective use of Turkish was a very important area in preschool education. My wife speaks both Turkish and Kurdish. Because I wanted my child to speak Turkish more fluently, with consensus in the family, we decided to choose the school near our home, which was known for its quality education. (B3)

It can be concluded that the father knows preschool education is an important period for personality development, and regards the institution as a place where his child can meet the need for speaking his native language correctly and effectively.

Preschool education is the child's first contact with the world outside after his parent's interest. Therefore, I think what the children are exposed to there, either positively or negatively, will affect them directly in their adulthood. That's why preschool education is vital. (A10)

The parent states that the knowledge, skills, and behavior acquired through preschool education can affect the child's later life, and shows that he knows preschool education is important for this reason.

Findings About the Question "What Are Your Reasons for Sending Your Children to a Preschool Education Institution?"

As a result of the interviews, the parents' reasons for sending their children to preschool education were found to be like this (Table 4).

As for the parents' reasons for sending their children to preschool education institution, the most common answers are parents' working,

Table 4.
Frequency Table Related to the Parents' Reasons for Sending Their Children to a Preschool Educational Institution

	f	%
Socialization	14	70
Mother's working	1	5
Insufficient education at home	8	40
The satisfaction with the education of the previous child	6	30
Discipline	5	25
Being organized	7	35
Adaptation to the environment	11	55
Decrease in aggressiveness	9	45
Mother's getting overwhelmed at home	12	60
Spending time with their peers	10	50
Acquisition of skills	7	35
Feeling of responsibility	13	65
Acquisition of self-confidence	12	60
Acquisition of life principles	2	10

their desire for the child to socialize at an early age, and their idea that education at home is not sufficient. Unlike the parents with a single child, parents having more than one child stated their satisfaction with the preschool education institution where they had sent their first child.

Considering the findings obtained from the parents, it can be said that the theme about this question is "social-emotional development." The parent's views about the above-mentioned satisfaction can be found below:

When we sent our daughter to preschool education, all her behavior changed in 1-2 weeks, and she asked my permission... (A12)

Some of the parents sent their children to a preschool education institution and are planning to send their other younger children, as well, because of various reasons such as gaining discipline, organization, responsibility, adaptation to the environment, decreasing the level of aggressive and ill-tempered behavior, mothers' wanting to have their own free time.

Another noteworthy view of a parent in the interviews was as follows:

H. is a hyperactive kid. He makes life hard for me both at home and outside. He needed education not only for his own development, but also for me to save some time for myself. We decided to send our child to the institution so that he could get away from the aggressiveness and ill-temperedness, spend good time with peers, and gain alternative skills... (A9)

Mothers want to send their children to a preschool institution so that children can have less problematic behavior and to spare some time for themselves.

One of the fathers we interviewed had this interesting view:

Who am I? I am sending my child to the preschool education institution because I know that some things will leave a mark on the minds of little human beings, such as self-confidence, correct and incorrect behavior in the society, sense of responsibility for the society and the environment, the basics of life principles like discipline and organization, etc... (B4)

Compared to mothers', fathers' reasons are more about values, rules, acquiring the first pieces of knowledge, and behavior in society.

Findings About the Question "What Do You Expect from Preschool Education?"

As a result of the interviews, parents' expectations from preschool education were found to be like this (Table 5).

Considering the findings obtained from the parents, it can be said that the theme about this question is "teacher competence in a safe setting." The most important expectation of parents from the school setting is hygiene in the school. As for the biggest expectations from the teacher, findings reveal that parents expect the teacher to love the children, to be cheerful and sincere, and to treat all the children fairly. Only one of the parents wanted emphasis on foreign language and stated his view as follows:

The teacher must be someone who has improved himself and who can connect with the children. I also expect the school to provide children with a nice educational setting and put emphasis on foreign language. Good education means providing an appropriate and safe setting both physically and content-wise. (A6)

That only one parent has foreign language expectations makes one think that parents do not have a basic expectation from preschool education about foreign language.

Findings show that parents mostly expect their children to prepare for primary school. Learning how to hold a pencil, getting used to school, and gaining basic values like sharing are examples of this expectation.

As for parents' expectations from the teacher, it is noteworthy that they want to be informed about their children's levels of development. What A10 said about this topic can be found below:

When parents are called to school, they think about two things. Either they will ask me for money again, or they will complain about my child. Such topics cause parents to keep away from the school. I am expecting an attitude that will help this thought disappear. (A10)

Parents state that no additional contact is made by the institutions other than to ask for money or to inform a negative situation about their children. This idea makes one think that schools lack school-parent cooperation and interaction. To sum up, findings reveal that the expectations from preschool are a hygienic setting, a knowledgeable, cheerful, and sincere teacher, preparation for primary school, effective communication, and cooperation.

Findings About the Question “What Can Be Done to Improve Preschool Education?”

As a result of the interviews, parents' suggestions about the improvement of preschool education were found to be like this (Table 6).

Parents have dreams and wishes related to preschool education. According to the findings, there is consensus on ideas such as making preschool education common on a full-day basis, making the grounds for meals, activities, and games big enough and having each of them designed separately. The teacher is expected to take on the role of an educator who will prevent a competitive atmosphere. In addition, the teacher is asked to prepare an atmosphere which will contribute to children's development, as well as helping their social relations get stronger and helping them express themselves freely. Considering the findings obtained from the parents, it can be said that the theme about this question is “free education and competent teacher.” The direct references and related interpretations can be found below;

Preschool education must be free in accordance with the principle of social state in our constitution. As a requirement of

Table 5.
Frequency Table Related to the Expectations from Preschool Educational Institutions

	f	%
Hygiene	5	25
Knowledgeable teacher	9	45
Cheerful teacher	13	65
Fair treatment by the teacher	10	50
Foreign language education	2	10
Safe environment	11	55
Appropriateness of the physical setting	9	45
Preparation for primary school	3	15
Skill of holding a pencil	3	15
Getting used to school	4	20
Value of sharing	4	20
Not being called only for money issues	7	35
Not being informed about complaints only	8	40
Effective communication	10	50

full-day education, breakfast, lunch, and mid-afternoon meal must be served free. The transportation of the students from home to school must be ensured by the state on service buses without any charge and with utmost safety. (B1)

Considering these views, we can say that the parents want the financial burdens in preschool education to be decreased.

An atmosphere that will make children feel more at home. Teachers who are experienced and especially who are mothers... (A3)

The parent expects motherhood from the teacher, and states the belief that teachers who are mothers can be more competent in the classroom.

I wish all preschool teachers became teachers having received better education than other teachers. (A4)

The parent shows awareness of the role of preschool teachers in child education, emphasizing the importance of education in the age period of 0–6. The parent also states the wish for teachers to receive better education so that quality studies can be done for this field.

I would like my child to learn in kindergarten many subjects they are supposed to learn in primary school, and to feel more comfortable in this way. Especially, I would like reading and writing to be taught. (A5)

The parent has a contradictory attitude with the educational aims of MoNE (Ministry of National Education). Teaching how to read and write in kindergarten is not considered correct in our country at the present.

In preschool education, my biggest dream for my child is that they form a basis for the perception of a happy childhood full of joy... (A9)

The parent dreams about the efforts in education that will offer his/her child a happy and healthy life period, which will bring positive effects in the future phases of life.

Results and Discussion

The themes found as a result of the study are as follows (Table 7):

Argon and Akkaya (2008), found that 56% of the parents in state schools and 58% of the parents in private schools had some knowledge about preschool education before sending their children to preschool

Table 6.
Frequency Table Related to the Improvement of Preschool Education

	f	%
Free education	9	45
Free meal	13	65
Emphasis on social state	7	35
Sufficient playgrounds	6	30
No competition	4	20
Competent teacher	12	60
Teacher's contribution to development	13	65
Free transportation	9	45
Children's feeling at home	6	30
Mother teachers	11	55
Teaching how to read and write	3	15
Perception of a happy childhood	7	35
Teachers' getting quality education	9	45
Teacher who strengthen social relations	10	50

Table 7.

Themes

Questions	Themes
1. What do the parents know about preschool education?	Critical development period
2. What are the parents' reasons for sending their children to a preschool education institution?	Social-emotional development
3. What do the parents expect from preschool education?	Teacher competence in a safe setting
4. What do the parents think about improving preschool education?	Free education and experienced teacher

education institutions. In another study by Köksal and others (2000), it was found that most of the parents (76.19%) considered preschool education institutions as places where children were provided with care and education.

The priority rankings of state and private school parents as to the duties of preschool education institutions were similar. The item of "caring for children when parents are working" was chosen last by both parents in state schools (69.1%) and parents in private schools (52.8%). This shows that preschool education institutions are not regarded by parents as places where children are just given care and made to spend time, but as places that influence their future life, help their healthy development and socialization, encourage sharing and cooperation (Argon & Akkaya, 2008). In Erşan's (2019) study, parents' views about why preschool education is necessary were listed as follows; preparing children for primary school (44.5%), children's socialization (19.5%), supporting their development (16.4%), being a critical period in gaining various skills (11.7%), having children gain self-confidence (7.8%).

In Argon and Akkaya's (2008) study, the views of the parents whose children went to state and private schools were found to be similar. According to these parents, the most important duties of preschool education institutions were preparing children for primary school, having them gain self-care skills, and teaching them social behavior like sharing and cooperation. In Erşan's (2019) study, the parents' reasons for sending their children to preschool education institutions were listed respectively as follows: preparation for primary school (31%), socialization (25%), supporting children's development (16%), good education (14%), gaining self-confidence (6%), being obliged due to working (5%), and gaining responsibility (3%).

Preschool education supports children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development; children become aware of themselves in this period, socialize by coming across other people and rules, and prepare for primary school (Başal, 2013). From this perspective, parents who have realized the importance of preschool education have differing expectations from it (Başal & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2018). Kıldan (2012) found that parents, in the phase of preparing their children for life, had higher expectations from preschool education compared to teachers.

In Başal and Bağçeli Kahraman's (2018) study, it was found that the mother's education level increased the expectations from preschool education institutions. Especially mothers who are high school or university graduates can be said to have higher expectations. As a result of their study that they conducted in the city of Elazığ et al. (2017) found that mothers who had a Master's degree had higher expectations from preschool education. However, in her study, Ulutaş Avcu (2016) showed that mothers' expectations from preschool education did not vary depending on their education level. Tokuç (2007) states that parents' education level is an important factor in children's starting preschool education at an appropriate age, and that parents with high education levels prefer to send their children to schools at an early age. This shows that the higher the education level is, the more importance parents attach to preschool education.

As a result of their study, Şahin et al. (2013) found that parents firstly expected the preschool education institution to support their children's

social skills. Gülander (1993) concluded that parents expected preschool education institutions to give sufficient love and interest to their children, and to make parents a part of the institution. In Erşan's (2019) study, the expectations of parents from preschool education institutions were listed as follows, respectively; improvement of the physical stings of the classrooms (28%), increase in social activities (24%), cooperation with parents (8%), improvement of the meals (10%), inclusion of foreign language education (9%), free education (8%), and education on a full-day basis at schools (6%).

The expectation levels of the mothers with a single child were found to be significantly higher than the others. This can be explained by the fact that mothers have closer relationships with their children and that they have higher expectations from their children in terms of success and mastery (Berk, 2013). It can be said that mothers with a single child might increase their expectations from education institutions especially about the area of social development because in the situation of single children, they lack playmates; parents function as playmates, and all the interest is on the child (Ulutaş Avcu, 2016).

Koç (1996) found that parents cared about areas of health and nutrition. According to studies by Akkök (1998) and Arabacı and Aksoy (2005), parents expect preschool education institutions to support them in getting informed and skilled about child development and education, thus getting actively involved in the learning process. The fact that parents care about children's development and education, their awareness on this subject, and the spread of preschool education in today's world have enabled mothers to gain more information about children's development. This, in turn, has caused mothers to increase their expectations from preschool education institutions (Tulan, 2005). In a study by Özen (2008), the expectations of mothers from preschool education were as follows: contributing to children's socialization, developing in children habits such as cooperation, sharing, mutual help, taking on responsibility and fulfilling it, and increasing children's commitment to national values.

In their study, Foot et al. (2000) showed the knowledge, expectations, and preferences of 911 parents in Scotland. They claimed that a relationship had to be set up between parents and educationalists. They revealed that for parents, their children's safety and care were the most important things, and that the preference in the program depended on education, environment, and needs. The parents' reasons for sending their children to school were preparation for primary school, socialization, and the opportunity to get to know other children, education, participation in various activities, and freedom. In Erşan's (2019) study, the expectations of parents from the teacher in a preschool institution were stated as; effective communication, being a good role model, cooperation with the family, a positive attitude toward children (interest, love, affection), freedom from violence and pressure, and quality education. This shows that parents generally expect the teacher to have a positive attitude toward children and provide them with quality education through effective communication.

Erşan's (2019) study revealed that the activities parents wanted in the preschool institutions were respectively as follows: activities that support development (30%), activities as preparation for primary school (29.23%), social activity (17.69%), foreign language (10.77%),

and values education (6.92%). Çelebi (2018) listed the features that parents expected from teachers as being fair, understanding, respectful, and valuing children. In a study conducted by Seyfullahoğulları (2012) in İstanbul, it was found that parents, about their expectations from the kindergartens, cared most about being informed.

When invited to rate attributes within curricular areas, characteristics of practitioners, and pedagogical approaches, 500 Jordanian parents of kindergarten children attributed importance to the social domain, empathic practitioners, and hands-on practices respectively (Abu Taleb, 2013). Three hundred Greek parents gave more importance to children's well-being and the overall caring dimension, where love and safety were paramount (Rentzou, 2013). Similar conclusions were drawn in another Greek study (Rentzou & Sakellariou, 2013) and in research with Chinese parents (Ying Hu et al., 2017) where parental background and expectations about their children's academic achievements influenced perceptions of quality.

Parents showed an appreciation for the services provided. Most importance was attributed to what is tangible and observable—predominantly physical and structural factors—implying that first impressions count. Children's comfort, happiness, and well-being are of paramount importance to their parents. Positive emotions and well-being can be fostered by the attitudes and personal characteristics of the practitioners and staff but strengthened through the relationships established with the children and extended to their families (Sollars, 2020). Family-school partnerships are crucial in early childhood education, positing that high-quality interactions among children and caretakers within home and school systems, and between caregivers that represent these primary socializing systems, stand to create continuities and consistencies that are not possible when focusing on any system in isolation (Barbarin et al., 2010; Crosnoe et al., 2010).

Recommendations

As a result of the information obtained, the following suggestions can be made:

1. Preschool education coincides with a critical development period. Therefore, parents must be informed in detail about subjects such as preschool education programs, the aim of the programs, expectations of the school, and expectations from the families.
2. In parallel with parents' expectations, more activities about social-emotional development can be included in preschool education content.
3. Parents' expectations of cooperation must be met by organizing systematic and regular activities of parent education and participation.
4. State support can be increased in preschool education, which will prevent parents from struggling financially.
5. There can be qualitative studies that aim to increase the effectiveness of school-parent cooperation, and that focus in detail on the expectations and views of both teachers and parents.

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