The Turkish Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views on Parenting

Okul Öncesi Öğretmen Adaylarının Ebeveynlik Hakkındaki Görüşleri

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Özet

Bu çalışmada, Malatya, Türkiye'de okul öncesi eğitim lisans programına devam eden son sınıf öğrencilerinin ebeveynlik hakkındaki görüşleri, Anne Baba Eğitimi dersi kapsamında çalışılmıştır. Katılımcılar derse kayıtlı 70 son sınıf öğrencisidir ve dersin bir bölümünde ebeveynlik ile ilgili soruları cevaplamışlardır. Toplanan veri niteliksel yöntemlerle çözümlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, katılımcılar tarafından betimlenen ebeveynlik tanımları, ideal ve beklenen ebeveyn portreleri, ebeveynlikte bir değişimi vurgulamıştır ve katılımcılar ebeveyn eğitiminin etkiliği ve okul öncesi eğitimde ebeveyn katılımı konularında güçlü bir inanç ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu çalışma katılımcıların okul öncesi eğitim alanında kuram ve uygulama arasında köprü kurmasını sağlayarak, katılımcıların iç görülerini geliştirmiş ve hem araştırmacılar hem de uygulamacılar için önemli sonuçlar ve çıkarımlar ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ebeveynlik, Ebeveyn eğitimi, Okul öncesi öğretmen adayları.

Abstract

In this study, the senior students' views on parenting were studied as a part of the required Parent Education course offered in the last year of a preschool education undergrad program in Malatya, Turkey. The participants were 70 senior students receiving the course and they completed the assignments by answering questions related with parenting. The data were analyzed with the qualitative techniques. As a result, the general description of parenting, the ideal and expected parent portraits described by the participants revolved around the change in parenting and the students showed a strong belief about the effectiveness of parent education and involvement in preschool education. This study helped the participants to improve their insights by making connections between theory and practice about parenting in preschool period and significant results and implications were revealed for the researchers and practitioners.

Keywords: Parenting, Parent education, Preservice preschool teachers.

1. Introduction

Teaching, supporting and engaging parents in preschool education is described as an important task of the early childhood education profession (Driscoll & Nagel, 2008). Bronfenbrenner (1986) explains the centrality of family in child's life and stresses the importance of family in child's education, especially for the early years in his ecological theory. Hence the efforts aiming more family involvement and education in preschool education is on the rise in Turkey and the revised preschool education program publis-hed by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) in 2013 includes a package of family training activities to be conducted by the preschool teachers in preschools. In the four year preschool undergrad education program in Turkey, "Parent Education" is a requi-red two credit course offered weekly in the last year as offered by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE, 2007). The course focuses on family related concepts such as social structure, culture, human social development, family structure and values, family-ori-ented educational programs, models and projects, adult learning, adult psychology and adulthood developmental stages, family theories, and family involvement in preschool education. During the course, the students acknowledges not only the importance of parent education but also the importance of larger social spheres surrounding the family thus they prepare themselves to work with the parents of children coming from a va-riety of socio-cultural environments. The family structure and parenting in the Turkish context has been studied from different perspectives in the parenting literature. There has been many cultural and cross cultural studies to understand the structure of Turkish family and especially to understand the effects social change which is characterized with a shift from autonomy to relatedness in Turkish family (Kagitcibasi, 2013). In some studies the practices and attitudes of parenting in Turkish family were studied from different perspectives and the findings were discussed in the realm of social chan-ge undergone in the Turkish society (e.g.; Balcı Çelik, 2007; Erkal, Copur, Dogan, & Safak, 2007; Gürsoy & Yıldız Bıçakçı, 2007). On the other hand, some studies focused on the cultural changes in parenting in Turkey and in cross cultural samples. For instan-ce; Nacak, Yağmurlu, Durgel, and van de Vijyer (2011) examined the parenting in the metropolis and Anatolia in Turkey. The value of children across cultures (Aycicegi-Dinn & Kagitcibasi, 2010), and cross cultural differences in parenting (Durgel, Leyendecker, Yagmurlu, & Harwood, 2009) were among the examined areas about Turkish family structure and parenting. Besides, it is important for preservice teachers to reflect on their teaching practices and how they think about themselves, teachers, children, and parents. The reflective practices could help professionals to think about how to improve their practice (Morrison, 2014). Although there have been some studies focusing on the preservice early childhood teachers' beliefs about family involvement in the United States (Baum & McMurray-Schwarz, 2004) and Turkish preservice preschool teachers' perceptions on teacher and teaching in Turkey (Aldemir & Kurt, 2014) and the United States (Aldemir & Sezer, 2009); beliefs about the developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education (Erdiller Akın, 2013), and attitudes on teaching specific subject courses such as early science education (Bulunuz, 2012) and early mathema-tics education (Kesicioğlu, 2015), the literature review revealed the need of examining the Turkish preservice preschool teachers' views on parenting and examination of the findings from a sociocultural and educational perspective. As indicated by Aldemir and Kurt (2014), although working with families was an important concern for preservi-

ce preschool teachers' future teaching, they lacked of recognition of families in explaining their perceptions of teacher and teaching in preschool education wherein the parental involvement takes place at the highest level.   Research highlights the importance of parents' own perceptions of parenting on the actual parent involvement with the preschool children (Dubeau, Coutu, & Lavigueur, 2013); hence, to learn about the pre-service preschool teachers' views on parenting would support the efforts to improve future preschool teachers' work with young children's parents and in turn those efforts could result in better parental and educational practices both for parents and preschool teachers. Family involvement in preschool education period has benefits for children, parents, and teachers (Eldridge, 2001). Considering the centrality of parents in young children's lives and education, the purpose of this study was to understand the preservice teachers' views on parenting and to provide significant implications for the parent education and parent involvement in preschool education.

2. Method

Research Model

In this study, I adapted a qualitative approach to uncover the meanings of participants' accounts. Since I was the instructor of students for four years, sharing the same educational environment for four years enabled me to understand the participants' language and the meanings they convey about young children and families. In this research, I attempted to convey the explanations of participants and tried to explain the findings by situating them in the literature in the discussion section of this study. Specifically, I sought a mix of the grounded theory and phenomenological perspectives in the analysis. The phenomenological perspective helped to explain the meaning of parenting as explained by the participants. The grounded theory perspective helped to generate a small scale theory depending on the findings retrieved from the participants' accounts who experienced the concepts under investigation as suggested by Creswell, 2013.

Participants and Measure

The participants in this study were senior undergraduate students in the preschool education undergrad program of a big scale university in Malatya, the Eastern Anatolian Region of Turkey. A total of 70 senior students enrolled in the course comprised the sample of this research, 61 students were females and 9 were males. All the students in the classroom participated in the research. The data were collected in the 2012-2013 fall semester as a part of the "Parent Education" course. Prior to the data collection, the participants were acknowledged about the scope and purposes of the study. The students had +10 points from the midterm and final exams upon answering eight questions. In this way, I tried to increase the students' participation levels during the course and their interest in replying the questions. The questions have not only been developed for the data collection purpose but also have guided the students to think over the parenting concepts throughout the course. However, giving extra points on exams might had caused the answering process to be regarded as a requirement for the students and added some restrictions for the students in composing their answers. The students were provided with one question and had one week period to answer the question and emailed

their responses back to the instructor. There were eight questions needed to be replied by the students and it took eight weeks in total to compile the whole data. At the time of the data collection, the parent education course had been ongoing with my presentations about the subjects defined in the course content. It should be kept in mind that the course presentations and discussions should had affected the students' answers about parenting; however, the students composed their answers individually and their own academic and personal experiences and knowledge guided them throughout the answering process. At the time of the study, the preservice teachers had been following the practicum courses at the preschools and had already had other practicum courses in the past semesters so that the students' reflections were enriched with the first hand educational experiences. The participants' names were not used in the study, instead they were assigned numbers from 1 to 70. The questions in the survey were prepared by the instructor and focused on the parenting concepts to encourage students to think over the parenting concepts. Although the questions were pretested with the senior students in the past years, that should be kept in mind that each student group in the past years was composed of unique groups with different socio cultural aspects, which should add a question mark about the reliability of the questions. So the draft questions were also discussed and refined with two other colleagues at the same department to achieve comprehensiveness and meaningfulness of the questions. I did not use a specific theoretical background in the preparation of questions. The main aim in preparing the questions was to get a holistic picture of the students' views about parenting, the comprehensive structure of the questions allowed me to make within and between case analysis as suggested by Creswell, 2013. In replying the questions, the students were requested to think over their personal, academic experience and knowledge, which allowed students to compose their unique and individual answers for each question. However, they were not required to tabulate their answers under those categories which might had restricted their answers and thinking process. The students' personal, academic experience and knowledge were presented as thinking tools to guide their answers and they were not obliged to share their actual educational and academic experiences and knowledge. The questions raised for the students were as stated below;

As a senior student in a preschool education undergraduate program, (1) Could you describe the maternity within the context of your personal and academic experiences and knowledge?, (2) Could you describe the paternity within the context of your personal and academic experiences and knowledge?, (3) Could you describe the ideal mother portrait that a preschool child should have within the context of your personal and academic experiences and knowledge?, (4) Could you describe the ideal father portrait that a preschool child should have within the context of your personal and academic experiences and knowledge?, (5) Could you describe the mother portrait that you expect to meet when you begin working as a preschool teacher within the context of your personal and academic experiences and knowledge?, (6) Could you describe the father portrait that you expect to meet when you begin working within the context of your personal and academic experiences and knowledge?; (7) What is the foremost that a mother should teach to her child?, and; (8) What is the foremost that a father should teach to his child?

Data Analysis

At the end of the data collection, a total of 531 pages of data were collected from the 70 participants. First, I read the whole data to get a common sense of the responses for each question. Then, open codes were created grounded in the participant's responses. In creating the open codes, the text is screened to label the participants' accounts. Some of the open codes were shortly named according to the participants' descriptions which is also called as en vivo coding. The grand open codes were given in the tables of this research. Then, the axial codes were created depending on the contents of the open codes. The open codes were revolved around the axial codes. The axial codes were given in each table left to the grand open codes. The open and axial codes were reviewed back and forth for several times to achieve comparative constant analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In the formation of the axial codes, the links and connections created between the open codes helped in writing the discussion part of this research. In the discussion section, the links between the open codes created under each question were seen and analyzed as a whole. In doing so, I tried to provide a small scale theory explaining the participants' perspectives in parenting mostly depending on the sociocultural change. Finally the selective coding was used to complete the coding process, the selective codes which were important in understanding the relationships between open and axial codes also helped in making links between different types of questions replied by the participants in this research. Through the selective codes, and with the help of previous research, the findings were discussed in a more comprehensive fashion as suggested by Creswell, 2013. In the analysis, the NVIVO7 software was utilized to ease the data coding process. To achieve the credibility of data, the participants' responses were categorized in their own terms and were scrutinized in accordance with the parenting literature. The peer review, and taking back responses to the participants to assure the trustworthiness set the stage for triangulation of the data (Creswell, 2013). Another academic colleague with ten years of teaching experience at the same department independently reviewed the analysis steps of the whole data to assess the plausibility of analysis. Then, the reviewer and I together screened the analytical procedure and discussed the necessary points to reach a consensus. I also shared my analysis with seven of the participants and asked whether the categorization of the data or the verbatim examples reflected their sincere thoughts as suggested by Creswell, 2013. The participants agreed that the verbatim quotes and overall categorization were in line with their thoughts.

3. Findings

In this section, the axial codes presented in bold on the left columns and the grand open codes presented on the right columns were tabulated through the tables. The numbers in parenthesis next to the grand open codes stands for the number of students cited the open codes.

Tablo 1. The Tabulated View of the Meaning of Parenthood

Axial codes	Open codes
Social value	
Parent	holiness(70), time(47),universality(48)
Father	surname(59)
Positive emotions of parenthood	
Mother	happiness(58), hopefulness(55), pride(50)
Parent	love(60), mercy(55), patience(50), trust(53)
Negative emotions of parenthood	
Mother	anxiety of being mother(44)
Father	emotional distance(52), fear(45), indifference(43)
Personal development	
Mother	regeneration(51), researching(49)
Parent	making sacrifice(53). maturation(55)
Father	assertiveness(45), empowerment(43)
Modernism/Traditionalism	
Mother	cognitive(55), language(58), personality(59), social development(60)
Parent	involvement in child development(60)
Father	gender development(58), play(55)
Emotional roles of parents	
Mother	sharing(53), stabilizing the family relationships(51)
Parent	attachment(55), forgiveness(47), friend(58)
Father	supporting mother(48), second person(43), source of trust(53)
Institutional roles of parents	
Mother	contribution in family finance(45), endeavor in child care(58)
Parent	involving in child education(55), modeling(59), protection(57)
Father	authority(60), contribution in child care(51), democracy(33), discipline(33), responsibility of family finance(65), socialization (58)

The participants explained their views on parenting with the comprehensive concepts such as *holiness, time, and universality*. While the participants emphasized the *endeavor and dedication in child care* related to the institutional roles of mothers, the fathers' *contribution in child care* was stressed in the institutional roles of fathers;

> Motherhood is endeavor seen in everything; in sleepless nights with the fevered child, in a cup of milk, in front of the school door, in ironed shirts, in dyed shoes, in weaved hair, in clipped nails, in the kitchen, in the streets ... There is the mother's endeavor in everything. As our ancestors said, mother is not the one who gives birth to a child but the one who cares for her child (Participant 1).

In the child development aspect under the modernism/traditionalism, the participants mentioned about the involvement of mothers in overall child development and especially emphasized the fathers' roles in *gender development and play*. The positive emotions explained for the maternity dispersed on a wide range while the *anxiety* regarding the motherhood was mentioned as a negative emotion. Participant 19 stated;

> The thought of being a mother brings both extreme joy and anxiety. It brings happiness to bring a new one to the world. It brings anxiety to think whether I could be a good mother. Motherhood is a mix emotions of happiness, anxiety, and sacrifice.

The negative emotions related to the paternity included *emotional distance, fear, and indifference*. Participants also reflected their views on the change from traditional values to the modern ones in explaining the parents' roles;

> The societies are changing. The families are smaller consisted of children and parents. The husband and wife should share the responsibilities. The fatherhood is changed. There is no anymore an authoritarian and distant father who is not involved in family chats and activities (Participant 61).

In the personal development aspect, the participants explained the maternity through the concepts of *regeneration and research*, whereas the concepts related to the paternity revolved around the power such as *assertiveness and empowerment*. In the emotional roles aspect, the maternity attracted attention through the role of *stabilizing* family relationships. The *parental involvement* in child's education was regarded as an important feature in the description of institutional roles of parents. While fathers were seen as *financially responsible*, mothers' roles in family finance were seen as *contributing*. The roles of fathers in *child's socialization, practicing discipline, and the importance of democratic attitudes* in childrearing were also highlighted.

Table 2. The Tabulated View of the Ideal Parent Portrait

Axial codes	Open codes
Emotions	
Parent	love(70), trust(65)
Father	tolerance(55)
Personal Development	
Parent	coordination of life(49),
Father	maturation(57), making sacrifice(57), researching(55),
Modernism/Traditionalism	
Mother	cognitive(52) and personality development(59), problem solving skills(64), self care skills(52),
Parent	involvement in child development(64)
Father	gender(62), moral(58), and social development(63), play(59)
Emotional roles	
Mother	being patient(65),empathetic thinking(58), mediation(54)
Parent	healthy communication(63), friendship(62),
Father	supporting mother (57)
Institutional roles	
Mother	contribution in family finance(52), endeavor in child care (59),
Parent	being democratic(63), involving in child education(67), modeling (65), practicing discipline(60), protection(61)
Father	authority(57), contribution in child care(59), responsibility of family finance (64)

The intense description of *endeavor and dedication* was also prevailed in explaining the ideal mother's institutional roles. The participants explained the importance of *research* about child education and development and being prepared to become ideal parents. In the child development aspect under the modernism/traditionalism, the participants explained the importance of mothers in all developmental areas whereas *gender* and *moral* development and play were especially highlighted for the fathers. In the emotional roles aspect of ideal maternity, the importance of *empathetic thinking* was stressed for the mothers. Similarly, *tolerance* was seen important for the fathers in the emotions aspect. In the personal development aspect, the participants mentioned the maturing effect of becoming parents. They described this process with *maturation, making sacrifice, and researching*. The participants also pointed out the change in paternal roles;

> *Until quite recently, the father-baby relationship was not regarded as crucial. The mother-baby attachment was regarded as more important because of mothers' primary roles in childcare. But today this perspective is changing. Mothers' involvement in workforce has changed the fathers' roles and responsibilities in the family. Together with the financial responsibilities, the fathers have more effective roles in child rearing and education today (Participant 61).*

The participants mentioned the importance of *democratic attitudes* in child raising for the parents, and also ascribed *protection and practicing discipline* in explaining the ideal parenting; and particularly emphasized being the *authority* for the ideal paternity. Besides, the parents' shared responsibilities in child care and education and family finance were highlighted in explaining the ideal mother's and father's institutional roles.

Table 3. The Tabulated View of the Expected Parent Portrait

Axial codes	Open codes
Parent-child interaction	
Parent	perception of parenthood(49)
Parent involvement in preschool	
Mother	expectations from preschool(52), intervention to teacher (46)
Parent	blaming attitudes toward teacher(33), working to involve parents(39)
Father	non involvement in child education(60)
Modernism/Traditionalism	
Parent	awareness about child care and education(64), education level(59), sociocultural differences (64), socioeconomic level (60), rural ur ban differences(62)
Positive qualities	
Parent	democratic(51), involved parents(47), friendship (46)
Negative qualities	
Mother	ambitious(34),emphasizing child care(30), non involvement in child education(56), obsession with nutrition(30), perfectionism(34)
Parent	autocratic(61), over attached(32), over protective(31)
Father	irresponsibility(57), uncaring about preschool period(48)

The participants highlighted the importance of parents' *own perception of parenthood* as a cause of shaping the actual parental behaviors. Particularly, the participants ascribed some hesitations regarding the fathers' reluctance in participating child education and the mothers' excessive expectations from preschools;

> *Creating parent awareness about young children's education is another responsibility for us besides educating children. On the other hand, I can meet with such mothers who have excessive expectations from preschool teachers and always criticize us. Some mothers could see the teachers as caregivers due to their intense working status (Participant 44).*

Although the participants ascribed some drawbacks about the parents they would encounter when they begin working, they also pointed out the importance of working harmoniously with the parents;

> *... Here we have important tasks as teachers. We need to have a positive attitude toward problems as we begin working. Actually when we encounter with the difficult situations, we need to perceive the situation not as a source of distress but a chance to improve ourselves. Actually problems are the chances. When you improve the ability to manage difficult situations, your communication talents get better. This is all about being a good teacher (Participant 68).*

In the positive qualities of the expected parent, the participants told that they would encounter with the *democratic and involved* parents who developed good communication habits with their children. In the negative roles aspect, the participants pointed out the adverse effects of the *autocratic, over attached, and over protecting* parenting attitudes. In the modernism/traditionalism aspect, the participants pointed out the emerging awareness about child care and education in relation with the social, cultural, economical, and educational change both for mothers and fathers.

Table 4. The Tabulated View of the Foremost for the Parents

Axial codes	Open codes
Child development	
Mother	unconditional love(70)
Parent	problem solving skills(57), self confidence(54), socialization(56)
Father	gender roles(62)
Values	
Mother	conscience(67), happiness(63), helpfulness(62), mercy(62), patience(64), sharing(61)
Parent	autonomy(61), being a good citizen(37), diligence(41), honesty(65), love(70), making sacrifice for others(58), respect(56), responsibility(62), trust(65)
Father	courage(56), democracy(41), endurance(45), justice(33)

In the aspect of child development; *problem solving skills, self confidence and, so-*

cialization were explained as the foremost tasks both for the mothers and fathers. Participant 57 explained the mothers' roles in developing self reliance and the importance of autonomy in social life;

> *An individual needs to know how to stand alone in his life. To constitute a healthy sense of self, the individuals need to know their traits and competences. Besides, self reliance is important in building purposes, motives, and success. The sense of trust helps the individuals in surviving as active socio cultural beings.*

The *unconditional love* was seen as specific to the mothers, whereas the contribution of fathers in the development of *gender roles* was especially highlighted. In the values aspect; the *autonomy, being a good citizen, diligence, honesty, love, making sacrifice for others, respect, responsibility, and trust* were emerged as the foremost values to be taught to the children by their parents. A general view of the foremost to be taught by the fathers revolved around *courage, democracy, endurance, and justice*; whereas *conscience, happiness, helpfulness, mercy, patience, and sharing* were cited as the foremost for mothers;

> *I think the foremost to be taught by a mother is to love living beings. If a person learns how to love beginning from the early years of life, he can enjoy a happy life. A child should learn to love himself before loving others. A person who is at peace with himself knows his own ups and downs and does not feel guilty for those. Such a person could love others easily. A lovely person could accept others as they are and be more forgiving toward others. A mother should show her child all the living beings in this world including animals need love and mercy (Participant 70).*

4. Discussion

The Meaning Of Parenthood

As seen in the participants' accounts, the participants generally highlighted a change in parenting roles as a result of the social change. In their explanation of this transformation, especially the change in women's and children's status in the society, the increasing number of women in education and workforce, the emerging awareness about the preschool education, and belief in the effectiveness of parent education and involvement received attention. Overall, there was a belief that the parental involvement and education could create a positive change in the parenting practices during the preschool period. The participants mentioned that the *holiness, time, and universality* were common concepts related with the parenting and *the continuation of surname* was especially important for fatherhood. Similarly, Aycicegi-Dinn and Kagitcibasi (2010) explained that the male children were generally seen as the source of continuation of the family name in traditional societies. Mothers' *endeavor and dedication* in childcare and father's *supportive roles* in childcare were emphasized by the participants. Although the parental roles

changed as a result of the modernization, the mother was still seen as the main caregiver for the child and men still had more traditional roles in the family than those of women in the Turkish society (Erkal et al., 2007). The social change has also been documented as influential on the redefinition of parental roles, especially for fathers. The increasing number of women in workforce and increase in divorce rates as well as fathers' own will of to be closer to their children were cited as the sources of this transformation in the paternal roles (Dubeau et al., 2013). While the personal development area highlighted the regeneration and researching for mothers, power related concepts were emerged especially for the fathers. However; *attachment, forgiveness, and friendship* were highlighted in the emotional roles of both mothers and fathers. The fathers' roles in attachment were also highlighted in the literature in the last decade complementary to the classical theories of attachment primarily set between mother and baby (Paquette, 2012). Paquette's theory of activation relationship could also explain the view of fathers as the *source of trust* and fathers' roles in *practicing discipline* as described by the participants in this research. However, the fathers were depicted as the *'second person'* for the child in the emotional aspect by the participants. Being the 'second person' in the family could be resulted from the traditional view of childcare as the mothers' main role. Besides, the perception of fathers as *emotionally distant* by the participants could be resulted from the traditional view of father as the authority and power figure in the family. The mothers' emotional roles including prosocial skills and *stabilizing* the family relationships were especially emphasized by the participants. It is explained that the Turkish mothers set the balance of family relationships by mediating hence the mother had a traditional role of keeping the family unity together (Şahin, 2012). *Involving in child education, modeling, and protection* were seen as important in participants' explanations of the parenting roles. While the roles of mothers were seen as *contributive to the family finance*, financing was regarded as the main role of the father. Aycicegi-Dinn and Kagitcibasi (2010) also discussed that since the manpower was valued in agrarian societies, the view of the male as the breadwinner was prevail in traditional societies. They concluded that the patriarchal culture seems to be stronger in Turkey especially in the rural settings as compared to the U.S. as a result of their comparative study between the Turkish and American emerging adult samples. Although the father was situated as an authority figure in the family, it is indicated that today more fathers took roles in child care and education in Turkey (Balcı Çelik, 2007).

The Ideal Parent Portraits

Besides the constructs explained for the description of motherhood and fatherhood, the participants ascribed the features that they would like to see in the parents of preschool children when they begin working in the field. Primarily, the parents' own *perceptions of parenting* was regarded as crucial in determining the actual parental behaviors. While *love and trust* were seen as the common emotional features of the ideal parenthood, participants especially indicated that the fathers should demonstrate more *tolerance* toward their children. This could be resulted from the participants' view of

fathers as emotionally distant and their need of to be more appreciated by their fathers. Participants depicted the ideal parent as a friend who developed *healthy communication* habits with his children. Also, the *protection* of children was seen as a required aspect of ideal parenting; and fathers' *authoritative* roles were also valued by the participants. While the participants' ideal parent portraits revolved around the *democratic* parental attitudes, they also highlighted the importance of *practicing discipline* in child raising. Similarly, Amato and Fowler (2002) stated that although there were slight differences in explaining the ideal parenting among diverse families, the general structure of ideal parenting was defined with the high level of support, monitoring child behavior, and avoiding harsh punishment. The participants ascribed mothers' role in *mediating* the child-father relationship and promoting fathers' involvement. Research also highlighted the importance of maternal effects on father involvement. Mothers' roles were found to be effective on father involvement with the infants (Gaertner, Spinrad, Eisenberg, & Greving, 2007) and older children (Fagan & Barnett, 2003). In explaining the institutional roles of parents, the participants valued the mothers' *contribution in family finance* and fathers' *contribution in child care*. Also, reviewing the father involvement research, Lamb (2010) discussed that the high degree of paternal involvement was fulfilling for parents' desires of being close to their children and permitting mothers to pursue their career goals.

The Expected Parent Portraits

When the participants were asked about the parent portrait they expect to meet when they begin working, they explained some drawbacks about the mothers' *excessive expectations* from preschools. The "caregiver" role of preschool teachers or expecting high academic achievement from the preschool children should be resulted from the incomprehension of preschool education by the public. The caregiver notion of preschool teachers was also prevail in the global history of early childhood education resulting from the need of facilitating mothers' participation in labor force (Kamerman, 2006). Participants also explained perplexed differences about parent involvement for working and non working mothers. They described that the non working mothers could not involve in child education and see preschool teachers as caregivers as a result of their unawareness about the scope of preschool education and their low levels of educational attainment. Conversely, similar statements were made for the working mothers related with their intense working schedules. Hence, the effects of working status of mothers on child development show perplexing results (e.g.; Gürsoy & Yıldız Bıçakçı, 2007; Schoppe-Sullivan, Kotila, Jia, Lang, & Bower., 2013). As emerged in the modernism/traditionalism aspect, socioeconomic status (SES) of the family is a well studied variable in child development and education (Bornstein & Bradley, 2012). Nacak et al. (2011) reported that the mothers in rural residences were more obedience-demanding and preferred more punitive strategies compared to the mothers living in urban areas in Turkey. Balcı Çelik (2007) described the increase in the affective involvement and behavior control of fathers with their children in line with their education level. Although the

participants in this study ascribed some drawbacks about parent involvement depending on the SES of families, they also stated that stereotyping the parent behaviors depending on the SES was not beneficial, and the most important point was the teachers' true belief in the positive change while working with the parents. The participants especially highlighted the effects of the modernism on mothers' and fathers' heightened awareness about child development and education. The fathers' involvement in their children's care and education was seen as a shift from the traditional roles to the modern ones by the participants together with taking more domestic roles in the house.

The Foremost For Children and Parents

The participants explained the *autonomy, being a good citizen, diligence, honesty, love, making sacrifice for others, respect, responsibility, and trust* were the common foremost values for parents as depicted by the students. Hence the participants valued both autonomy and making sacrifices for others as equally important and needed, it is seen that the students valued the sense of identity and belonging in their family and community.

The findings of this study were specific to the Turkish preservice teachers at a preschool education undergraduate program of a big scale university in Malatya, the East Anatolian Region in Turkey. There were some limitations in conducting this research such as answering the questions were a requirement of the course content, and the course had been ongoing when the students answer the questions in eight weeks. These points were also discussed in the method section. The other limitation should have been aroused from the qualitative nature of the study, that is the findings of this research was specific to the participants of this study which could hamper to make through generalizations to the other samples. Future research should be carried out with other samples in the preschool education field such as teachers, administers, and other professionals working with the families of young children. Since the parental attitudes and beliefs set the stage for the actual parental behaviors, similar studies could also be carried out with the parents before planning seminars and educational programs for the parents. It is observed that writing reflective accounts could help the preservice teachers to clarify their thoughts about educational issues and refine their thinking by making connections between theory and practice. Through those reflections, the instructors could also have the chance of recognizing their students better and improving their instructional strategies. The similar studies could be conducted on other topics in education to enrich the course content on the undergraduate and graduate levels. This study could help in understanding the parenting issues and developing more effective parent education and parent involvement strategies in preschools. One of the most important findings of this study was the effects of modernism and social change on parental roles, especially for the fathers as depicted by the participants. Dubeau et al. (2013) explained that considerable progress was sought in the integration of women in professional life, but the change in fathers' roles was more resistant in the family. Especially considering the change in paternal roles, the fathers should be supported on how to be more involved in child education and care and create joint responsibilities at home. Together with the inclusion of more women in work force, the students also underlined the importance of women's financial independency in family. Thus, it seems important to support the

working mothers by providing more quality early care and education. Although the students explained some drawbacks about the mothers' involvement for working mothers or incomprehension of the preschool education by the public, they also explained a through belief in working with the parents of young children. It is believed that when the students begin working in the field, they will meet with the parents more frequently and the mutual understanding between parents and teachers could grow. Indeed, such implications for parent involvement in preschool education could not be achieved solely through parent education offered by the preschool teachers considering the fact that the parenting is a sociocultural phenomena surrounded by larger social spheres. As indicated by this research, preservice preschool teachers had some hesitations in working with the parents resulting from the incomprehension of the scope of preschool education by the public. Similarly as indicated by Aldemir and Kurt (2014) and Baum (2000), the preservice preschool teachers had not enough experience in working with the parents of families which could decrease their effectiveness in cooperating with the parents. Tekin (2012) also mentions that the lack of school counselors in Turkish preschools set some problems for preschool teachers especially in working with the parents of children with special needs and with families experiencing inter parental conflicts. Hence, in the training of preschool teachers, it should be beneficial to add more courses about family psychology and adult psychology courses to the preschool undergrad programs; in service preschool teachers could also benefit more from such courses as they are aged and experienced in the field. Besides, in the practicum courses enabling the pre service preschool to meet with the parents, students should be provided with more opportunities to meet with the parents at the parents conferences and meetings both in schools and other institutions providing social services for parents.

5. References

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