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Investigation of the Role of Preschooler Parents as Teachers

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Abstract

The aim of this multivariate study is to examine the role as a teacher played by the parents of preschool children in their education. The descriptive survey model, a form of quantitative research, was used in this study. The study's population consisted of the parents of children aged 60-72 months attending official independent preschool education institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in the Kars and Niğde provinces. The sample group consisted of 114 parents from the same provinces. The "Parent as Teacher Inventory" was used as a data collection tool and proof of its validity and reliability has been provided. The variables used to examine the parents as teachers were gender, age, father's education level, and mother's education level. While no significant difference found between the education levels of the fathers, a significant difference was found between those of the mothers. Furthermore, parents in all age groups demonstrated similar levels of participation in activities for their children's education. The results of the study have been discussed in the light of the related literature and recommendations have been made accordingly, such as developing education programs that include teaching roles for parents. The limitations of the study, both practical and methodological, have been stated and information that could help future studies has also been shared.

Keywords: Parent as a Teacher Inventory, Teaching roles, Preschool period, Preschool education

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Introduction

Family is a small part of a society in which children are prepared for future life and where social rules and moral concepts are taught and is a very effective and important institution in terms of having the power to shape the lives of children and imparting knowledge, skills, and behaviors starting from the day they are born (Özbey, 2010). The attitudes and behaviors of parents, who are the most important members of the family, especially toward raising children, are an important factor affecting the developmental levels of children in all areas and in shaping and guiding their behaviors in the future. This means that parents matter a great deal for their children to grow up as individuals who are in harmony with their environment and who live up to the values and expectations of society (Demirkaynak, Aktaş, & Hasipek, 2006).

Parents' perspectives toward child education and their attitudes toward this issue significantly affect the future life of the child (Kaya, 2002). Parents' optimistic expectations about education can help children achieve greater academic success than otherwise predicted based on their family's socioeconomic background, while pessimistic expectations can result in children being less successful (Briley, Harden, & Tucker-Drob, 2014). In this regard, parent education has a supportive effect on the development of children, who are society's future (YılmazBolat & Gürsoy, 2011).

Tezel Şahin and Cevher (2007) state that the interaction within the mother-father-child triangle in the family plays a major role in shaping the child's behavior and developing and demonstrating positive behaviors. When mothers actively participate in their children's homework and take a close interest in their education, this increases children's academic success. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the emotional support that mothers provide for children's learning and children's success (Rogers, Theule, Ryan, Adams, & Keating, 2009). According to Bağatarhan and Nazlı (2013), powerful and healthy communication and interaction between parents and children within the family help the child develop as a whole.

As childcare and education are critically important in the child's life, parents need to improve their knowledge and skills in these areas. For this to happen, the education to be given to parents must be done so systematically (Tezel Şahin & Özbey, 2007). Today, the importance of parent education is considered indisputable. Education provided in schools alone cannot result in the desired success in the child’s education, so education needs to be provided within the family, as well. Raising the child in accordance with the value judgments of society starts with the education he receives in the family and continues at school and in the environment (YılmazBolat, 2011). However, some mothers and fathers cannot fulfill these duties because they do not have sufficient knowledge and skills regarding how to behave toward their children (Warner & Sower, 2005).

When parents know little about child education, they can experience problems when it comes to their children's development, education, and correct guidance. Indeed, many studies have confirmed that parents' educational skills and their attitudes and behaviors as parents are very important for the education and development of children (Babadoğan, 2003; Şahan, 2011). Therefore, mothers and fathers should be supported educationally to be effective parents and, as a result, develop positive attitudes and behaviors toward their children (Erkan & Durmuşoğlu 2006). Particular importance has been attached to parent education in Europe since 1964 with the "Parenting School" practices to improve parents' skills in child education (Özel & Zelyurt, 2016). This being the case, studies of parents and the theories of social interaction that explain the role of teacher played by parents in their children's education are described under the "literature review" heading.

Literature Review

Parents' Role as Teachers According to Social-Cultural Theory

Vygotsky emphasizes that the child's development is supported by the use of cultural tools as a result of the interaction with the people closest to him/her such as siblings and parents (Wood, 1999). According to Vygotsky, language is the most critical psychological tool in a child's development (Vygotsky, 1986). Parents interact with their children through language to support and develop their children's mental functions. According to Vygotsky, language is not only a means of communication but also an advanced mental tool (Vygotsky, 1986). Children can demonstrate upper-limit skills as a result of teacher or parental support when solving problems. The developmental level between children's lower limit and upper limit skills is defined as the *"convergent development"* area (Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner, & Souberman, 1978).

The *"convergent development"* area grows and the children's capacity for solving problems improves as a result of their development being supported. According to social-cultural theory, parents are expected to take on the role of teachers and build a *"scaffolding"* to support the "convergent development" area of children. Parental *"scaffolding"* may be defined as when parents ask questions, give hints, or guide their children when solving problems (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002; Hartman, 2002; Holton & Clarke, 2006; Mercer & Fisher, 1993). According to Vygotsky, parents who assume the role of teachers to support and guide the cognitive development of children can build scaffolding more easily by discovering the symbols and language used by children. In light of social-cultural theory, it is very important for a child's development that parents assume the role of teacher in support of their children's cognitive development. In his theory, Vygotsky emphasizes the importance of the language that parents use in imparting cultural values to the child (Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner, & Souberman, 1978).

Parents' Role as Teachers According to Social-Learning Theory

Vygotsky emphasizes the interaction of the individual with the social environment in the development of the individual's cognitive capacity. Bandura (1971), on the other hand, argues that learning takes place not only by direct interaction but also by observing and emulating the behavior of others. In this context, Bandura (1971) proposed a theory that is not critical of Vygotsky's (1986) theory, but which instead supports and improves it. According to Bandura (2006), the individual's psychosocial variables play an important role in the acquisition of different personal characteristics in the development of the individual. The immediate social environment has an important effect on the development of the child's behavior. However, mass communication, cultural elements, media, beliefs, and expectations affect the behavior of the child as much as the immediate social environment does. In this context, according to social learning theory, the child learns through observation and emulation.

The immediate social environment formed by their parents and siblings has an important effect on observational learning in the formation of children's behavior in early childhood. The behaviors the child learns by observing his parents are not a simple imitation of the behavior but include complex cognitive processes. Bandura (1986) states that learning by observation consists of four elements. First of all, attention is paid to the behavior to be observed. This behavior is kept in mind. It is then exhibited. Motivation to ensure repetition of this behavior needs to be acquired. When learning by observation, children can use their parents as role models. When this is going on, it is extremely important that the parent who is modeled behaves by assuming the role of teacher in supporting the child's learning. Children observe how their parents behave. Children exhibit behavior by imitating their parents. If the exhibited behavior is welcomed by the immediate environment, it is reinforced and the behavior is permanent. It is important not only for cognitive development but also for gender development that parents assume the role of teachers and exhibit behaviors that support children's development at this time. Children can learn gender roles by observing their parents or older adults. Generally, children observe the same-sex parent more and comprehend the relationship between that parent's behavior and gender (Maccoby, 1994).

Parents' Role as Teachers According to Bioecological Systems Theory

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), a child is born in a social and cultural environment. Ecological systems theory argues that as the child develops in the environment in which he is born, there are complex "layers" in the system of relationships that affect his/her development. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), each social and cultural environment is under the influence of other social and cultural environments. It consists of a social environment made up of complex layers that affect the individual from multiple distances.

According to the bioecological systems theory, five different systems affect the child either directly or indirectly. These are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. To explain the relationships between systems, Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that they are bidirectional and reciprocal (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; 2006). A schematic of Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory is shown in figure 1.

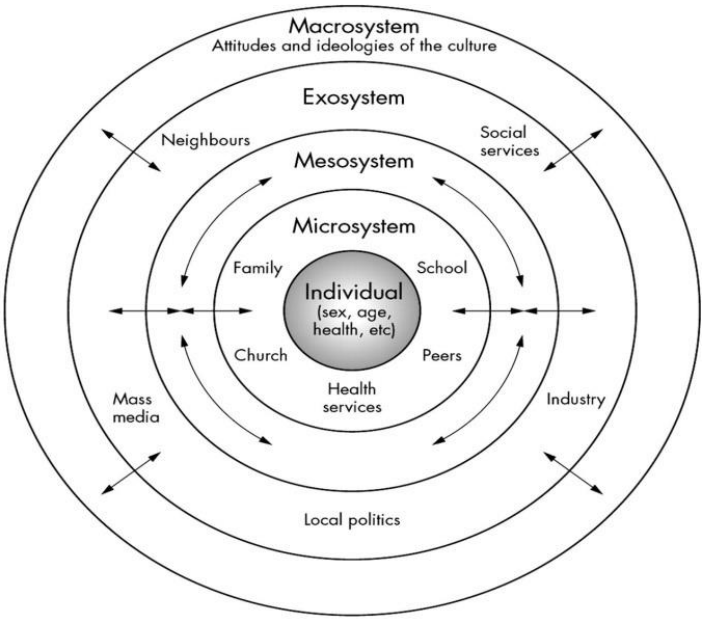

Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory

According to Figure 1, the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem affect each other reciprocally in addition to the systems interacting within themselves. Only the microsystem and mesosystem from the bioecological systems theory are explained below in the context of parents' role as teachers according to ecological system theory.

The microsystem shows the people with whom the child interacts in daily life and that these people interact with one another. The microsystem consists of the interaction of such individuals as children, parents, siblings, teachers, and friends. According to Bronfenbrenner, the family is the element of the microsystem that affects the child the most. Parents' behaviors, emotional, and psychological states, and beliefs in the family directly affect the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In this context, it is expected that the development of children is positively supported as a result of the interaction of parents with their children depending on the teacher roles they undertake (Bronfenbrenner, 1976).

The mesosystem is the interaction between two or more microsystems with which the child interacts (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). For example, interaction between child and family can be defined as a microsystem. Interaction between the child and the teacher can be another microsystem. Interaction between parent and teacher can be yet another microsystem. These three microsystems can affect one another reciprocally. The preschool teacher is part of an interaction that supports the child's development. The preschool teacher interacts with the parents by including them in the teaching process to support the child's development. Parents can engage in educational activities with their children to support their development by doing at home the same activities they do at school. In this context, the mesosystem explains that the parent should assume the role of teacher through interaction with the three different microsystems.

In this context, without leaving it to chance for parents to assume the role of teacher, various parental teaching programs have been developed and their effects on child development studied. Studies on parent education programs developed in this context are explained below.

Bekman (1999) investigated the short and long-term effects of the Mother-Child Education Program on children's school achievement in a study conducted with children and their mothers in various geographical regions where the program was implemented. The study determined that the children of mothers who participated in the education program exhibited better behavior, were more interested, creative, and inquisitive, and were socially and cognitively more ready for school, while the mothers were more interested in what happened in school, made more effort toward their children's success, and attended the meetings more.

The Parent as Teacher Inventory (PAAT) was used in the study conducted by Snowden and Christian (1999) to determine the roles of parents with gifted children and to describe parental behaviors. The study reported that the parents of gifted children support their children's creativity, experience less frustration, apply discipline methods flexibly and internalize them, care about play, perceive themselves as teachers, and simplify the teaching-learning process.

Cheng (2004) conducted a study to evaluate the DTBY (Dare To Be You) program and to determine the adequacy of the program in terms of physical punishment for children, stress management, satisfaction with parental responsibilities, and the targeted children's development and social skills. The study reported a significant difference in favor of the experimental group in punishment, stress management, parenting satisfaction, and social skills at the end of the program, and that the program improved parenting skills.

Simpkins et al. (2006) determined the impact of the Comprehensive Child Development Program (CCDP), an early intervention program for children aged 0-6, on the development of mother-child relations, conflict prevention, and child education as well as mathematics and literacy success. The study found that that as a result of the applied program, mother-child relations improved and warmer relationships were established, but there was no significant difference in conflict, concluding that mothers' participation in education significantly increased the child's success.

A study was conducted by Zigler, Pfannenstie, and Seitz (2008) with 5,721 children aged 4-5 and their families to evaluate the effect of the "Parents as Teachers" training program on children's school readiness and academic success. As a result of the study, it was seen that the "Parents as Teachers" program supports parents directly and indirectly, that the applications given to parents when children are in the preschool period support the child's school preparation skills and subsequent academic success, and that children who are supported by their parents demonstrate higher academic achievement in the3rd-grade than children whose family is not given educational support.

In the study conducted by Taşkın and Erkan (2009), 14 fathers were included in the sample group to train these fathers and examine the effect of this training on their interest in their children aged 2-9. The fathers in the experimental group underwent 10 weeks of training. It was reported that the education given to fathers increases the frequency of fathers participating in play, taking the child out, interacting verbally, teaching their children something new, dealing with their daily care, and looking after their children at special times.

Beckert et al. (2004) conducted a study in Taiwan to reveal the strengths and weaknesses and level of knowledge of parents with children aged 3-6 and to organize an education program in this regard. The effects of various independent variables on the subsets (creativity, frustration, discipline, play, teaching/learning) of the Parent as a Teacher Inventory (PAAT) were examined. As a result of the study, it was determined that parents scored highest in the play subset and least in the frustration subset. A significant difference was found in favor of those who spend more time with the child, and in the creativity subset in favor of those with high income. In addition, while it was determined that educational status made a significant difference in the creativity, discipline, and teaching/learning subsets, no significant difference was found according to the variables of gender, age, and employment status. In this context, considering the suggestions made in the literature about revising the PAAT, the adaptation and validity-reliability study for which was conducted with parents of children aged 5-6 in Adana by using different heterogeneous groups (YılmazBolat, Gürsoy, & Strom, 2016), it is thought that this study, in which the teacher roles of parents are identified, will be beneficial to the field.

It is considered important from a literature standpoint to study the roles undertaken by parents in the teaching and learning of children in light of sociocultural theory, social learning theory, ecological systems theory, and research. Indeed, it is important to study the teaching roles of parents according to their gender, age, and education level in the light of theories and research.

This study aims to examine the role of teacher played by parents in the learning and teaching of preschool children according to certain variables. To that end, the study asks whether or not a significant difference is observed depending on the parents' role as teacher. Accordingly, answers are sought to the following research questions.

- Does gender make a significant difference in the teaching roles of parents?
- Does age make a significant difference in the teaching roles of mothers?
- Does age make a significant difference in the teaching roles of fathers?
- Does education level make a significant difference in the teaching roles of mothers?
- Does education level make a significant difference in the teaching roles of fathers?

Method

The study, which examines the teaching roles of parents in terms of certain variables, was conducted using the quantitative research method. The descriptive survey model was also used in this study. Descriptive survey is a research model that describes a past or present situation as it is and that covers all the processes applied for parents to actualize their roles as teachers and to instill desired behaviors in individuals. In the general survey model, a survey is made of the entire population or a sample group taken from that population to reach a general conclusion about the population (Karasar, 2011). Accordingly, the study's population and sample are described below.

Population and Sampling

The study's population consists of the parents of children aged 60-72 months attending official independent preschool education institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in the Kars and Niğde provinces. The sample of the study was created by using the random sampling technique known as the simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling means that all units from the universe have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Büyüköztürk et al., 2012). The study's sample group consisted of 114 parents from Kars and Niğde Provinces. When the personal information of the participants is examined, it is seen that 50.8% of the parents are mothers (n=58) and 49.2% fathers (n=56).

When the age distribution of the mothers is examined, it is seen that 18.96% (*n*=11) are in the age group (25-30), 37.93% (*n* =22) are in the age group (31-36), 25.86% (*n*=15) are in the age group (37-42), and 17.25% (n=10) are in the age group (43-48). When the age distribution of the fathers is examined, it is seen that 17.86% (*n*=10) are in the age group (25-30), 64.28% (*n*=36) are in the age group (31-36), and 17.86% (*n*=10) are in the age group (37-42). When the education levels of the mothers are examined, it is seen that 13.79% (*n*=8) have a primary school level education, 25.86% (n=15) have a secondary school level education, 30.21% (*n*=21) have a high-school level education, and 24.14% (*n*=14) have a university-level education. When the education levels of fathers are examined, it is seen that 16.07% (*n*=9) have a primary school level education, 17.86% (n=10) have a secondary school level education, and 26.79% (*n*=15) have a high-school level education, and 39.29% (*n*=22) have a university-level education.

Data Collection Tool

A personal information form and the "Parent as Teacher Inventory" (PATI), which is used to evaluate the attitudes of parents with children aged 3-9, were used as data collection tools. Developed by Strom in 1984 and adapted to Turkish by YılmazBolat, Gürsoy, and Strom (2016), the inventory consists of five dimensions, namely, creativity, discipline, play, frustration, and teaching/learning to evaluate parent-child interactions. The data collection tool consists of 32 items. The items take the form of a four-point Likert-type scale -- (always-4 points, frequently-3 points, rarely-2 points, never-1 point). The reliability analysis of the data collection tool showed the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient to be .83. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to determine the structural validity of the data collection tool. DFA result fit index values are RMSEA = .05, RMR = .03, SRMRI = .06, GFI =.86, AGFI = .84, X^2 / *df*: 2.01, (X^2: 909.05; p<.01). Test-retest correlation coefficient for reliability was found to be 0.88.

In this study, the Cronbach alpha (α) internal consistency coefficient for the *"Parent as Teacher Inventory"* was calculated. The internal consistency coefficients for the subsets of the *"Parent as Teacher Inventory"* are: creativity (α = .758), frustration (α = .725), discipline (α = .810), play (α = .742), teaching-learning (α = .810). The internal consistency coefficient of the Parent as Teacher Inventory is (α=.750). As such, it was determined that the data collection tool and its sets are reliable.

Data Collection

During the data collection process, the parents were told the purpose of the study and that the results obtained would be used in a scientific study according to ethical principles, and that their personal information would not be disclosed to third parties. To obtain the data for the study, one-on-one interviews were held with the parents of children aged 60-72

months receiving education at official preschools affiliated to the National Education Directorates in Kars and Niğde Provinces by applying the *"Parent as Teacher Inventory"*. Parents participating in the study filled in the consent form indicating that they participated voluntarily. During the data collection process, the researchers answered the parents' questions about the data collection tool.

Data Analysis

The statistical package for social science (SPSS) 21.0 package program was used to analyze the research data. First, the data set was checked in terms of missing data, outlying values, normality, multicollinearity, and singularity assumptions. Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk normality tests were conducted for the normality assumptions. Parametric and non-parametric analyses were conducted to find answers to the research questions according to the assumptions for normality and homogeneity. Independent t-Test and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used for unrelated samples in research questions belonging to data showing normal distribution. Kruskal-Wallis H Test was used for the analysis of data that did not show normal distribution. While parametric tests were applied because the parents' gender and age variables showed normal distribution, non-parametric tests were applied because the parents' education level variable did not show normal distribution. A significance value of .05 was selected to examine the significant difference between the variables in the study. Post Hoc tests (Tukey) were performed to determine which significant difference was between the groups in case of significant difference in the comparison of more than two groups in the study. In parametric analyses, Tukey analysis was performed between Post Hoc tests, while Mann Whitney U test was used for multiple comparisons in non-parametric analyses. Bonferroni Correction was applied when calculating the Mann-Whitney U test significance value.

Results

The study gives findings for the questions as to whether the teaching role of parents of preschool children changes significantly depending on which parent teaches, their ages, and their levels of education.

Does gender make a significant difference in the teaching roles of parents? The findings for this research question are seen in Table 1

Table 1
T-test results for parents' role as teachers by gender

Scale	Parent	*N*	$\overline{X}$	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p*
Creativity	Mother	58	12.80	2.41	112	0.270	.788
	Father	56	12.92	2.36			
Frustration	Mother	58	22.50	2.16	112	0.775	.440
	Father	56	22.83	2.26			
Discipline	Mother	58	13.84	2.28	112	0.190	.849
	Father	56	13.92	2.40			
Play	Mother	58	31.37	3.85	112	0.144	.886
	Father	56	31.47	3.62			
Learning/Teaching	Mother	58	20.37	2.18	112	0.756	.451
	Father	56	20.05	2.39			
Total	Mother	58	100.90	10.90	112	0.196	.845
	Father	56	101.20	11.20			
	Total	114					

*Statistical difference between groups p < .05

As can be seen in Table 1, when the teaching roles of the parents of children aged 60-72 months are examined for significant differences, it can be seen that there was no significant difference between mothers and fathers in the creativity subset of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory" [t_{112}=0.270; p=.788; p>.050]. It was determined that there was no significant difference between mothers and fathers in the frustration subset *[*t_{112}=0.775; p=.440; p>.050]. It was found that there was no significant difference between mothers and fathers in the discipline subset [t_{112}= 0.190; p=.849; p>.050]. There was no significant difference between mothers and fathers in the play subset [t_{112}=0.144; p=.886; p>.050]. It was determined that there was no significant difference between parents in the learning/teaching subset [t_{112}=0.756; p=.451; p>.050]. It was determined that there was no significant difference between parents in the total score of the Parent as Teacher Inventory [t_{112}=0.196; p=.845; p>.050].

Does age make a significant difference in the teaching roles of mothers? The findings for this research question are seen in Table 2.

Table 2
ANOVA Test Result of Teaching Role Scores by Mother's Age

Scale	Age	*N*	$\overline{X}$	*SD*	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean of Squares	*F*	*p*
Creativity	25-30	11	13.89	1.53	Between Groups	29.174	3	9.725	1.816	.156
	31-36	22	12.11	2.63						
	37-42	15	13.46	2.12	Within Groups	278.389	52	5.354		
	43-48	10	12.78	2.53	Total	307.563	55			
	Total	58	12.92	2.36	Significant Difference	-				
Frustration	25-30	11	22.50	2.20	Between Groups	1.993	3	0.664	0.123	.946
	31-36	22	23.01	1.86						
	37-42	15	22.84	2.09	Within Groups	280.841	52	5.401		
	43-48	10	22.75	3.73	Total	282.834	55			
	Total	58	22.83	2.26	Significant Difference	-				
Discipline	25-30	11	14.18	2.13	Between Groups	7.484	3	2.495	0.418	.741
	31-36	22	13.50	2.59						
	37-42	15	14.06	2.15	Within Groups	310.516	52	5.971		
	43-48	10	14.48	2.88	Total	318.000	55			
	Total	58	13.92	2.40	Significant Difference	-				
Play	25-30	11	31.44	3.15	Between Groups	4.106	3	1.369	0.099	.960
	31-36	22	31.51	3.98						
	37-42	15	31.75	3.99	Within Groups	718.596	52	13.819		
	43-48	10	30.87	2.99	Total	722.703	55			
	Total	58	31.47	3.62	Significant Difference	-				
Learning/ Teaching	25-30	11	20.36	2.61	Between Groups	6.084	3	2.028	0.340	.797
	31-36	22	19.78	2.30						
	37-42	15	20.43	2.54	Within Groups	310.280	52	5.967		
	43-48	10	19.66	2.37	Total	316.364	55			
	Total	58	20.05	2.39	Significant Difference	-				
Total	25-30	11	102.38	6.93	Between Groups	82.180	3	27.393	0.390	.761
	31-36	22	99.92	8.43						
	37-42	15	102.56	9.38	Within Groups	3651.897	52	70.229		
	43-48	10	100.56	7.96	Total	3734.078	55			
	Total	58	101.20	8.23	Significant Difference	-				

*Statistical difference between groups p < .05Note: Levene's showed homogeneity of variances.

As can be seen in Table 2, when the ages of the mothers of children aged 60-72 months in the learning/teaching subset are examined for significant differences between them, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between the ages of the mothers in the creativity subset of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory" [$F_{3.55}$=1.816; p=0.156; p>.050]. No significant difference was found between the ages of the mothers in the frustration creativity subset [$F_{3.55}$= 0.123; p=0.946; p>.050]. No significant difference was found between the ages of the mothers in the discipline subset [$F_{3.55}$=0.418; p=0.741; p>.050]. No

significant difference was found between the ages of the mothers in the play subset [$F_{3.55}$= 0.099; p=0.960; p>.050]. No significant difference was found between the ages of the mothers in the learning/teaching subset [$F_{3.55}$=0.340; p=0.797; p>.050]. Based on the total score of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory," it was determined that there was no significant difference between the ages of the mothers [$F_{3.55}$=0.390; p=0.761; p>.050].

Does age make a significant difference in the teaching roles of fathers? The findings for this research question are seen in Table 3.

Table 3
ANOVA Test Result of Teaching Role Scores by Father's Age

Scale	Age	*N*	$\overline{X}$	*SD*	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean of Squares	*f*	*p*
Creativity	25-30	10	13.11	1.98	Between Groups	5.842	2	2.921	0.493	.613
	31-36	36	12.57	2.63						
	37-42	10	13.34	1.92	Within Groups	325.643	52	5.921		
	43-48	-	-	-	Total	331.485	54			
	Total	56	12.80	2.41	Significant Difference -					
Frustration	25-30	10	22.39	2.60	Between Groups	0.365	2	183	0.038	.963
	31-36	36	22.49	1.66						
	37-42	10	22.66	3.39	Within Groups	266.835	52	4.852		
	43-48	-	-	-	Total	267.200	54			
	Total	56	22.50	2.16	Significant Difference -					
Discipline	25-30	10	12.80	2.29	Between Groups	13.150	2	6.575	1.270	.289
	31-36	36	14.048	2.20						
	37-42	10	14.10	2.51	Within Groups	284.715	52	5.177		
	43-48	-	-	-	Total	297.865	54			
	Total	56	13.84	2.28	Significant Difference -					
Play	25-30	10	30.36	5.76	Between Groups	48.094	2	24.047	1.651	.201
	31-36	36	32.02	3.32						
	37-42	10	29.90	3.21	Within Groups	800.847	52	14.561		
	43-48	-	-	-	Total	848.941	54			
	Total	56	31.37	3.85	Significant Difference -					
Learning/ Teaching	25-30	10	19.85	2.65	Between Groups	32.861	2	16.431	3.765	.029 *
	31-36	36	20.89	2.00						
	37-42	10	18.96	1.76	Within Groups	240.037	52	4.364		
	43-48	-	-	-	Total	272.898	54			
	Total	56	20.37	2.18	Significant Difference (31-36/37-42)					
Total	25-30	10	98.52	12.09	Between Groups	143.336	2	71.668	1.071	.350
	31-36	36	102.04	6.93						
	37-42	10	100.56	8.04	Within Groups	3681.779	52	66.941		
	43-48	-	-	-	Total	3825.115	54			
	Total	56	101.20	8.19	Significant Difference -					

*Statistical difference between groups p < .05 Note: Levene's showed homogeneity of variances.

As can be seen in Table 3, when the ages of the fathers of children aged 60-72 months in the learning/teaching subset were examined for significant differences, it was seen that there was no significant difference between the ages of fathers in the creativity subset of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory" [$F_{2.54}$=0.493, p=0.613; p>.050]. It was determined that there was no significant difference between the ages of fathers in the frustration creativity subset [$F_{2.54}$= 0.038, p=0.963; p>.050]. It was found that there was no significant difference between the ages of fathers in the discipline subset [$F_{2.54}$=1.270; p=0.289; p>.050]. There is no significant difference between the ages of fathers in the play subset [$F_{2.54}$= 1.651; p=0.201; p>.050]. A significant difference was found between the ages of fathers in the learning/teaching subset [$F_{2.54}$=3.765; p=0.029; p<.050]. The significant difference occurs between the age groups (31-36) and (37-42), in favor of the (31-36) age group. Based on the total score of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory," it was determined that there was no significant difference between the ages of the fathers [$F_{2.54}$=0.390; p=0.761; p>.050].

Does education level make a significant difference in the teaching roles of mothers? The findings for this research question are seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Results of the Kruskal-Wallis H Test for measuring teaching roles according to the mothers' education levels

Scale	Education Level	*N*	Mean Rank	*df*	x^2	*p*	Significant Difference
Creativity	1-Primary School	8	13.43	3	6.866	0.143	-
	2-Secondary School	15	28.30				
	3-High School	21	30.82				
	4-University	14	29.67				
	Total	58					
Frustration	1-Primary School	8	26.79	3	1.332	0.856	-
	2-Secondary School	15	24.23				
	3-High School	21	30.37				
	4-University	14	27.33				
	Total	58					
Discipline	1-Primary School	8	15.57	3	7.833	0.098	-
	2-Secondary School	15	23.80				
	3-High School	21	30.97				
	4-University	14	33.71				
	Total	58					
Play	1-Primary School	8	14.64	3	9.265	0.055	-
	2-Secondary School	15	25.20				
	3-High School	21	31.26				
	4-University	14	33.46				
	Total	58					
Learning/ Teaching	1-Primary School	8	23.86	3	0.990	0.911	-
	2-Secondary School	15	28.80				
	3-High School	21	28.58				
	4-University	14	27.13				
	Total	58					

Total	1-Primary School	8	10.86	3	11.212	0.024*	(1-3)
	2-Secondary School	15	26.13				(1-4)
	3-High School	21	32.66				
	4-University	14	33.58				
	Total	58					

*Statistical difference between groups p < .05

As can be seen in Table 4, When the education levels of the mothers of children aged 60-72 months in the learning/teaching subset were examined for significant differences, it was determined that there was no significant difference between the education levels of mothers in the creativity subset of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory". [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=58)}$=6.866; p=0.143; p>.05]. No significant difference was found between the mothers' education level in the frustration creativity subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=58)}$= 1.332; p=0.856; p>.05]. No significant difference was found between the education level of the mothers in the discipline subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=58)}$= 7.833; p=0.098; p>.05]. No significant difference was found between the education levels of the mothers in the play subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=58)}$= 9.265; p=0.055; p>.05]. No significant difference was found between the education levels of the mothers in the learning/teaching subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=58)}$=0.990; p=0.911; p>.05]. A significant difference was found between the education levels of the mothers based on the total score of the Parent as Teacher Inventory [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=58)}$=11.212; p=0.024; p<.05]. To determine between which groups there were significant differences, the Mann-Whitney U test was performed (Table 5). The level of significance (p) was determined by applying Bonferroni correction (.05/6=.0083). According to the Bonferroni correction Mann-Whitney U test results, the significant difference occurs between mothers who are primary school graduates and high-school graduates, and the difference is in favor of high-school graduates. In addition, there is a significant difference between mothers who are primary school graduates and those who are university graduates, and the difference is in favor of university graduates (see Table 5).

Table 5

Results of the Mann-Whitney U test

Education Level	*N*	MeanRank	RankSum	*U*	*Z*	*p*
1-Primary School	8	7.88	63.00			
2-Secondary School	15	14.20	213.00	27.000	2.162	.031
1-Primary School	8	7.88	63.00			
3-High School	21	17.71	372.00	26.000	2.785	.005*
1-Primary School	8	6.00	48.00			
4-University	14	14.64	205.00	12.000	3.012	.003*
2-Secondary School	15	17.20	258.00			
3-High School	21	19.43	408.00	138.000	.626	.531
2-Secondary School	15	13.30	199.50			
4-University	14	16.82	235.50	79.500	1.115	.265

**Statistical difference between groups p < .008*

Does education level make a significant difference in the teaching roles of fathers? The findings for this research question are seen in Table 6.

Table 6

Results of the Kruskal-Wallis H Test for measuring teaching roles according to the fathers' education levels

Scale	Education Level	*N*	Mean Rank	*df*	x^2	*p*
Creativity	1-Primary School	9	22.67	3	2.405	0.493
	2-Secondary School	10	33.89			
	3-High School	15	29.03			
	4-University	22	27.07			
	Total	56				
Frustration	1-Primary School	9	27.11	3	0.110	0.991
	2-Secondary School	10	29.44			
	3-High School	15	28.07			
	4-University	22	27.73			
	Total	56				
Discipline	1-Primary School	9	18.17	3	6.268	0.099
	2-Secondary School	10	25.00			
	3-High School	15	27.93			
	4-University	22	33.30			
	Total	56				
Play	1-Primary School	9	25.33	3	1.417	0.702
	2-Secondary School	10	27.06			
	3-High School	15	25.67			
	4-University	22	31.07			
	Total	56				
Learning/ Teaching	1-Primary School	9	27.67	3	9.479	0.074
	2-Secondary School	10	14.11			
	3-High School	15	34.43			
	4-University	22	29.43			
	Total	56				
Total	1-Primary School	9	20.72	3	4.238	0.237
	2-Secondary School	10	22.78			
	3-High School	15	30.10			
	4-University	22	31.68			
	Total	56				

As seen in Table 6, when the education levels of fathers of children aged 60-72 months in the learning/teaching subset were examined for significant differences, it was determined that there was no significant difference between the education levels of fathers in the creativity subset of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory" [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n\ 56)}$= 2.405; p=0.493;

p>0.05]. No significant difference was found between the fathers' education levels in the frustration creativity subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=56)}$= 1.332; p=0.856; p>0.05]. No significant difference was found between the fathers' education levels in the discipline subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=56)}$= 6.268; p=0.099; p>0.05]. No significant difference was found between the fathers' education levels in the play subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=56)}$= 1.417; p=0.702; p>0.05]. No significant difference was found between the fathers' education levels in the learning/teaching subset [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=56)}$= 9.479; p=0.074; p>0.05]. No significant difference was found between the fathers' education levels based on the total score of the "Parent as Teacher Inventory" [$X^2_{(df=3,\ n=56)}$= 4.238; p=0.237; p>0.05].

Discussion

In this study, which aims to determine the role of parents in the learning and teaching process of preschool children, the five aspects of parent-child interaction, namely, creativity, frustration, discipline, play, and learning/teaching were examined to determine if they showed any significant difference depending on parents' gender, age, and education level. The findings of the study are discussed in light of related research.

It was determined that parent gender made no significant difference to the teaching role of the parents of children aged 60-72 months in the creativity, frustration, discipline, play, or learning/teaching subsets or the total score. These findings show that the interactions of parents with their children, their hopes and expectations for their children, their actions with respect to their children's behaviors, or the support they provided for their development did not change regardless of parent gender. Studies show that the gender of the parents does not make a difference in the roles, attitudes, and behaviors of parents. In the study in which Özel and Zelyurt (2016) examined the effect on parent-child relations of training given to parents of children aged 5-7 years, it was reported that the warmth, compassion, aggression, hostility, neglect, indifference, or undifferentiated rejection demonstrated by parents toward their children did not differ by parent gender. The study by UyanıkBalat (2007) examining the effects of parents' attitudes toward child-rearing on preschool education utilization levels found no significant difference between parents' attitudes by gender. AtalayYalçın and Türnüklü (2011) investigated the relationship between young adults' attitudes toward child-rearing and their perceived parental behaviors and concluded that parent gender made no significant difference to the perceived parental behaviors of young adults in the subsets of childcare, helping achieve goals, consistent discipline, the setting of standards, and deprivation of privileges. Furthermore, no significant difference by gender was found in the scores of young adult parents in the overly controlling motherhood, democratic attitude, and consistent discipline subsets of the child-rearing attitudes scale. In the study, although being a mother or father did not make a difference in the teaching roles of parents, the mean scores of fathers were noticeably

higher. The studies carried out in Turkey emphasize that mothers are responsible for children's physical care that fathers deem providing an income to be their important role, and that fathers share some of the responsibility for the child's education with mothers (cited in Kuzucu, 2011). In this context, it is thought that the fathers participating in the study have undertaken teaching roles to a great extent and share some of their responsibilities with the mothers.

When the teaching roles of parents are examined according to the age of the parents, it can be seen that parent age makes no significant difference to the creativity, frustration, discipline, play, or teaching/learning subsets or total score. In this context, it can be said that the age variable does not affect the parents' roles as teachers, that parents of all ages acknowledge their children's creativity, encourage their children to develop their creativity, experience frustration and concern in rearing children, and that they have similar levels of competency with respect to disciplinary practices, play perception, the effect of play on child development, and creating a supportive home environment. These findings are in parallel with those of other studies. In the study in which Özel and Zelyurt (2016) examined the effect of parent education on the family-child relations, it was concluded that the age of the parents did not create a significant difference between the education provided and family-child relations. Ömeroğlu (1996) and Tortumluoğlu (1999) concluded in their study that the age of the mother does not affect her attitudes toward children. In the study conducted by Beckert et al. (2004) to determine the strengths and weaknesses and level of knowledge of 223 mothers and 200 fathers with children aged 3-6 years in Taiwan and to prepare an appropriate education curriculum for parents, they reported that the age variable did not make a significant difference in the parenting roles of the parents.

When the teaching roles of mothers and fathers were examined in terms of the education level of the parents, it was determined that the mother's education level made a significant difference. It is observed that the parenting roles of university graduate mothers differ positively compared with high-school graduate mothers and that the parenting roles of high-school graduate mothers differ positively compared with primary school graduate mothers. In his study examining the child-rearing attitudes of the parents of primary school students, Kaya (2010) found that the overprotective behaviors of mothers and fathers who graduated from primary and secondary school were significantly higher than those of high school, university, and post-graduate parents. Overprotective behaviors decreased significantly as the level of education increased. Similarly, Durmuş (2006) examined the personality traits and parenting attitudes of parents of children aged 3-6 years viewing such independent variables as age, gender, marital status, number of children, and educational status. The study reported that primary school graduate parents exhibited more overprotective attitudes and that the scores for democratic attitudes increased as the level of education increased.

The study by Uzun and Baran (2019) to determine the level of relationship between preschool children and their fathers according to some variables reported no significant difference between the groups in terms of the gender of the child and the working status of the parents. However, a significant difference was observed between the groups in the scores relating to the child's order of birth, the child's age, and the father's level of education. Looking at the father's education status variable, a statistically significant difference was reported between fathers with a postgraduate education and those with only a secondary or high-school education under the *Positive Relations* subset, and between high-school graduate fathers and secondary-school graduate fathers under the *Conflict* subset.

This situation was interpreted as the increase in the father's education positively affecting his relationship with his child and reducing conflict. In the study conducted by Gözübüyük and Özbey (2020) to examine the relationship between the motivation levels of children aged 48-72 months attending preschool education and the father-child relationship, a significant difference was found between scores under the *Conflict* subset, while no significant difference was found between the scores for the education status of the father in the other sub-setsor the total of the scale. Father-child relationship levels were found to be significantly higher for fathers with associate degrees or higher compared with fathers who were high-school graduates. This situation has been interpreted as follows: when a child establishes a healthy relationship with his father, this makes the child an individual who is at peace with himself, successful in social relationships, has high self-esteem, is skilled in communicating, and expresses himself better.

The study conducted by Tümkayaand Türkmenoğlu (2021) to determine fathers' opinions on family participation reported that fathers had different perceptions of family participation, they took part in home- or school-based family participation activities, but their participation effort was considered lacking. It also stated that family participation activities positively affected children's academic achievement and their social-emotional development. Ayyıldız, Ocakçı, and Ayoğlu (2006), Eskicumalı and Eroğlu (2014), Özyürek (2004), Şanlı and Öztürk (2012), Özyürek and Tezel Şahin (2005) found that as the education level of parents increased, their democratic attitudes toward their children also increased and that there was an accompanying decrease in overprotective, oppressive, and harsh/strict disciplinary attitudes. In this context, when the findings of this study are evaluated together with the relevant literature, it can be said that as the mother's level of education increases, their knowledge, and experience of child development and education increases, they spend more quality time with their children, they use affirmative disciplinary methods in their communication, their learning/teaching interaction increases, and that they use the power of play to strengthen their children's imagination and creativity.

Studies on the relationship between parents and children agree that parents play an important role in the development of the child's personality and skills. When considered in terms of parents taking on the role of teachers, the child's role as both son/daughter and student and the parents' role as both mother/father and teacher affect the parent-child dynamic in many ways (Salim & Safitri, 2020). This being so, the factors that determine this dynamic should be evaluated as a whole.

Conclusion

No significant difference by gender was found for the teaching roles assumed by parents in the children's teaching and learning process. One important conclusion of this study is parents assuming teacher-like roles in their children's education. Indeed, the fact that there is no significant difference between the teaching roles played by mothers and fathers shows that parents can share the different roles in which they take responsibility for their children.

It was concluded that there was no significant difference between the teaching roles of parents according to their ages and that older parents displayed behaviors similar to those of younger parents. In this context, the parents in the different age categories in this study could all display similar levels of participation in educational activities aimed at their children's learning and teaching.

When the teacher roles according to parents' education level were examined for significant differences, no significant difference was found between the teacher roles assumed by fathers but a significant difference was found between the teacher roles assumed by mothers. When the difference detected in mothers is examined, it favors high-school and university graduate mothers over primary school graduate mothers. This result of the study helps identify two important situations. The first is that the decrease in the mothers' education levels negatively affects their ability to influence their children's teaching and learning process. The second is that the target audience in the training to be given to parents is parents with a low level of education.

Recommendations

The following suggestions may be followed up in line with the findings of this study: Education programs that include teaching roles for parents could be developed. In this regard, training programs can be organized to ensure that parents acknowledge their children's creativity and support it, to eliminate the worries and frustration associated with rearing a child, to develop the notion of affirmative discipline, to realize the importance of play, to create a supportive home environment, and to increase parental competency. This study was conducted using the quantitative research method. Qualitative studies may also be conducted for an in-depth examination of parental roles with participants having different characteristics.

Limitations

The study carries the limitations of the quantitative method used. The biggest problem encountered in quantitative research is the sample's ability to represent the population. This study is limited to parents in the cities where it was conducted. In this context, the study can be generalized for the parents in the cities where data were collected, considering time, economy, and implementation difficulties. This being the case, the fact that this study's results resemble related studies' results shows that the consistency of the study is high.

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