

The Examination of Perception of the Concept of “Family” In Preschool Children



Education

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ABSTRACT

The family is the building block of society. The family has different importance in all ages, and has a different perception starting from infancy. In this research, the concept of the family which is the core of the community in preschool period is examined. For this purpose, 120 girls and 131 men taking preschool education in Agri province. The research is prepared by a total of 251 students were asked 15 open-ended research questions and the data was collected. Results showed differences by gender in some questions.

INTRODUCTION

Family, in Turkish Language Association, defined as the smallest unit in the society which is based on marriage and consanguinity and created with the relationship between wife, husband, children and siblings; the whole people coming from the same ancestry or having line of descent; the whole relatives living together; partner, wife; all people sharing the same goal and working together; language, animal or plant group having one basic qualification, familia. However, family concept which has many definitions is taken into consideration in various ways. Family is the group living together and having strong bonds in between in the ways like birth, marriage or adoption (Bagayos & Martin, 2002). According to Pesechian (1999) although family structures have changed through the history, family continued its existence as it is the first environment in the growth of an individual. As it is seen, there are many definition of family. But, the common point of all is the situation that family is the basic unit of the society. Family, which is a social association, is an indispensable piece and basic building block of the society. A healthy and strong society is created by healthy and strong families and has important roles.

Some of the most important roles of family are care, love and education toward their children. As the child grows, parents' attitudes changes toward the child, who qualified enough physically, cognitively and socially and this situation changes relations in the family. Families should always love, be interested in and take under control their children. Parents play an important role in the growth of children (Aydın Yılmaz, 2006). Especially for preschool-age children relationship with parents is very important (Öngider, 2013). Because, child's place in the family determine the place in society in the future (Günindian & Giren, 2011; Günindi 2011). Family in this sense is seen as the association that support the child to be grown as a successful individual and to have healthy relations (Jones, Gutman & Platt, January 2013)

Family behavior toward the child, caring and the way they love their child affect child's later life. For many theorists the most important age period for the child, is 0-6. During this period, taking care of the child and reflecting the value toward the child are seen as an important element which is provided by verbal or non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication gives important and reliable tips in the interpretation and sense-making while supporting and reinforcing oral communication (Öksüzogulları, 2013).

Behaviors directed to the child by the family play a big role in

shaping the child's social life (Durmuşoğlu Saltalı and Arslan, 2012). Therefore, the duty of parents in the preschool period; the fulfillment of all necessary action is needed to ensure a healthy development of the child as an individual (Öngider, 2013). Parents can put down the rules to be complied with home life while they show your love to the children. According to Yaşar (1994), complying with the rules and participating in decisions are two of the democratic attitudes and behaviors which would be taught to top re-school children (Akt., Kızıltepe, Uyanık, Özşüer and Yaşar, 2013).

Although there are many studies on different issues in our country, there is not such a comprehensive research about the perception of family for children in ages 5-6. In the research named "The Changing Process of Family Concept and the Importance of Family in Pre-School Period" and done by Günindian & Giren (2011), they tried to find an answer by the question "Who creates the family?" which is asked to 80 children, 38 girls and 42 boys, in the age of 6.87% of the children meant nuclear family by giving the answer of "Mother, father and child/ren", 7.5% meant transition family by giving the answer of "Mother, father, children, and grandparents" and 5% meant extended family by giving the answer of "parents, children, grandparents and relatives". When looked as concept it is seen that analyze is in a narrow perspective.

This research is prepared as a comprehensive study that is based on more than one question which will lead wider results.

Considering the entire context, it will be tried to be put forward in the research whether the rules are perceived by the children, what kind of rules are put in home and the perception of family by children.

METHOD

The population of the questionnaire, which is developed to measure the perception of family in the preschool age children, is created by the children in kindergarten in the province of Ağrı and connected to Ministry of Education. The sample is total of 251 students, 131 boys and 120 girls, in the 5-6 age group selected by random sampling method.

Table 1. Table of Appliers

Feature	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Girls	120	47,8

Boys	131	52,2
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As it is seen in Table 1 there are a total of 251 students, 131 boys and 120 girls.

1. Limitations

There are some limitations in this research which takes the perception of the concept of family in pre-school children as its subject area. These limitations are caused by the decrease in the number of students since some do not continue the school in the kindergartens chosen as the sample. This situation is solved by increasing the number of samples.

Findings could not be compared since there are not many researches, thesis or works.

2. Data Collection Tool

As the data collection tool questionnaire which is developed by researchers consisting of 15 open-ended questions is used. These questions are as follows:

1. Gender?
2. What is family for you?
3. Who should be in the family?
4. Is family necessary? Why?
5. How parents love their children? Else?
6. How do you show your love to your parents?
7. Do your parents get angry at you? What happens when they get angry?
8. Do you get angry at your parents? What do you do when you get angry?
9. Do you want children in the future?
10. How will you show your love to your children?
11. What rules are there in your home? What happens when one does not obey the rules?
12. Will you put orders on your children? Which rules will you put?
13. What makes you angry? What do you do when you are angry?
14. For what do you get angry at your children?
15. To whom do you want to look like? Your mother or father? Why?

3. Analyze of the data

After questionnaire prepared, a total of 392 students, 186 girls 186 boys, continuing education in state schools in Ağrı were interviewed individually in classroom and data was recorded on paper. The survey on paper is converted to tables using Microsoft Office.

In the questionnaire, there are questions related to each other. For example, "Do you want children in the future?, How will you show your love to your children?, Will you put orders on your children? Which rules will you put? For what do you get angry at your children?". Looking at this relation, questionnaires which are thought to be filled without consciousness and which do not have consistency, are not taken into consideration since they do

not serve for the aim and comply with validity criteria. After this questionnaires has been checked a total of 251 students', 120 girls, 131 boys, and questionnaires are taken into consideration.

After reading responses, questions are divided into several groups and their percentages are calculated.

FINDINGS

Comparing according to the variable

TABLE – 1

2ND QUESTION

(What is family for you?)	Female %	Male %
Family members	29	34
Togetherness	59	56
Relationship based on self-interest	2	3
Other	10	10

The distribution between girls and boys of the second question was virtually the same. Some children counted family members when asked what family is; generally, family is defined in words or sentences which expresses the idea of togetherness such as people living together, living in the same house, talking to each other. The group is drawing attention to the differences between the groups. Answers here; indicate a different angle in approach to the family such as they fight-divorce, a noisy environment, a living thing and keeping quiet.

TABLE – 2

3rd QUESTION

(Who should be in the family?)	Female %	Male %
Nuclear Family	99	97
Second degree relative	25	29
Objects or individuals in the environment	4	6
I do not know	-	1
Unanswered	-	1

In third question's answers distribution does not show differences between genders. Generally they count nuclear family members to the question of "who should be in the family?". Addition to nuclear family, there are children who count second degree relatives (grandfather, grandmother, aunt, uncle).

Even it is small in the sense of percentage, third group is drawing attention in terms of answers. 10 children gave friends, teacher, birds, dogs, cats and house.

TABLE – 3

4th QUESTION

(Is family necessary? Why?)	Female %	Male %
Necessary	8	11
Necessary for self-interest	77	72
Necessary for democratic environment	12	8
God wanted	-	1
Not necessary	1	3
Other	3	3

For the question "Is family necessary? Why?", there are some

children saying necessary but not explaining the reason. But generally, 77% of girls and 72% of boys see the family necessary for their self-interest. For them, family consist of the ones that protect children, feed and raise children, doing works to raise children (milking the cow, making cheese, cutting down grasses) and help for the works children cannot handle.

Answers in 4a2 group such as having meeting, rules of home are discussed, requests are specified, firstly elders and then young members talk show the children have the right of audience. But percentages of this answer are 12% and 8% which are not enough.

One of the boys' answer is "God wanted." This answer shows that there is religious sense of associations in the family. Children generally see the family as necessary except a few.

TABLE – 4
5th QUESTION

(How parents love their children? Else?)	Female %	Male %
Physical contact	57	42
Emotional tie	11	15
Fulfillment of needs	32	36
Other	2	4

To the question "How do parents love their children?" Girls mostly answer it like by hugging and kissing etc. On the other hand boys are mostly loved by verbal reactions. When they stay silent, do whatever they are told, don't want telephone, sleep, don't be naughty, be silent when somebody is present, they are being loved and the percentage is %4 for boys and %2 for girls.

TABLE – 5
6th QUESTION

(How do you show your love to your parents?)	Female %	Male %
Physical contact	45	38
Please the eye	27	17
Meet the family expectation	24	29
Emotional tie	5	14
Other	-	2

The answer to the question "How do you show your love to your parents?" was mostly physical contact and being seen pretty by girls. Boys answered the question firstly by physical contact and secondly by doing the things that the parents wanted like not being naughty and keeping their word. When boys and girls are compared, the group which says that showing love to the family members is mostly verbal is boys.

When answers to question 5 and 6 are considered, it is seen that the way parents show their love to their children is similar to the way children show their love to their parents.

TABLE – 6
7th QUESTION

(Do your parents get angry at you? What happens when they get angry?)	Female %	Male %
They do	3	1

a. Show emotional response	42	46
b. bully	14	17
c. restrict rights	4	8
They do not	34	25
Sometimes	2	2

When they are asked that "Do your parents get angry at you? What happens when they get angry?" most children (63% of the girls, 72% of the boys) answered that they get mad. The answer "They don't get mad at me." is mostly given by girls compared with the boys. It is seen that when family is angry with the children, physical violence like beating is mostly shown to the boys. But mostly their reaction is like being angry and yelling. The most interesting answer is that "I will tell my father and he will beat my mother."

TABLE – 7
8th QUESTION

(Do you get angry at your parents? What do you do when you get angry?)	Female %	Male %
Yes	2	1
I show emotional response	22	33
I show propensity for violence and damage environment	7	13
No	66	46
Unanswered	2	2
Sometimes	-	1
I cannot get angry	-	1

When children are asked that "Do you get angry at your parents? What do you do when you get angry?" children answered that they won't get angry different from their parents. The explanation of the answer was that their parents are bigger than them. Making face, not speaking, be crossed with their parents is intensive answer when they are angry. Kicking, punching and beating are also some of the answers.

One of the boys answer was "They would take me to the park when I'm angry". This shows that some parents act in the ways that children enjoy when they are angry. Two children said "I would make my sibling cry when I'm angry with my parents." Another boy said that "I would not be angry with them." This answer shows that the child is either afraid of his parents or he cannot dare to do that.

TABLE – 8
9th QUESTION

(Do you want children in the future?)	Female %	Male %
I do	94	94
I do not	6	4
I do not know	-	2

Generally children want children in the future. However, girls want daughter and boys want son.

TABLE – 9
10th QUESTION

(How will you show your love to your children?)	Female %	Male %
Physical contact	44	32
Awarding materially	16	27
Taking care	26	24
Emotional tie	9	11
Unanswered	2	3
There will be no child	2	1
I do not	1	2

In tenth question, women love their children respectively by physical contact, attention, tangible price, emotional bond. On the other hand men love their children respectively by physical contact, tangible price, attention, and emotional bond. 2% of the man answered this question like by writing a letter and when sheep are out at grass.

TABLE – 10
11th QUESTION

(What rules are there in your home? What happens when one does not obey the rules?)	Female %	Male %
1. Disciplinary rules for home order	19	23
a. Emotional reaction	22	29
b. Physical reaction	10	7
c. Getting away from the environment	6	5
Other	7	2
2. Rules for personal health	2	4
a. Emotional reaction	12	8
b. Other	3	6
3. No rules	15	14
I do not know	5	2

In 11th question most of the children (81% girls and 84% boys) said that there are rules in the house. 64% of these rules are related to the order of the house and 17% of these are the rules for protecting personal health. In these two rule groups there is not difference in distribution according to gender. 1% of the houses have no rules.

Disciplinary rules for home order: obeying what mother says, not pressing on the carpet with shoes, watching no more than four cartoons, not going outside without permission, not playing with lighter, not entering to the room without permission, praying before meal etc. Rules for protecting personal health: drinking milk, sleeping on time, not throwing rubbish on the ground, going to toilet at night, not watching TV so close, brushing teeth, eating meal etc.

Answers to other option are as follows: God does not love us, witch takes us away, my eyesight deteriorates, I cannot grow if I do not eat my meal, house becomes dirty, people do not come to our house, there would be disorder.

TABLE – 11
12th QUESTION

(Will you put orders on your children? Which rules will you put?)	Female %	Male %
Yes	3	8
1. Disciplinary rules for home order	32	39
Being considered	7	4
Warning	2	5
Giving responsibility	2	4
2. Rules for protecting personal health	18	12
No	28	22
Unanswered	4	4
I will not have children	2	1
I do not know	1	-

To the question “Will you put orders on your children? Which rules will you put?” 64% of girls and 72% of boys gave the answer yes while 28% of girls and 22% of boys gave the answer no.

Rules that are stated by girls are respectively; rules that are disciplinary for home's order, rules for protecting health, being considered (listening to her, doing whatever she wants), warning (be reasonable, don't go out at night, don't fight, don't spend a lot of money), giving responsibility (giving things for her to do, helping her, drawing a picture at the drawing time). For boys the order is like; rules that are disciplinary for home's order, rules for protecting health, warning, being considered and giving responsibility.

TABLE – 12
13th QUESTION

(What makes you angry? What do you do when you are angry?)	Female %	Male %
1. Ruining the order that belongs to him/her	3	1
a. Emotional reaction	8	14
b. Reactions against actions	2	4
2. Being naughty	2	1
a. Emotional reaction	2	3
b. Reactions against the actions	1	1
3. Swear, insult, beating, punching	1	-
a. Emotional reaction	7	3
b. Reactions against the answer	-	2
4. Other	5	2
Unanswered	66	66
I won't be angry	2	1

When children are asked that “What makes you angry? What do you do when you are angry?”, 13% of the girls and 19% of the boys said they will get angry when their order is ruined. 5% of both girls and boys answered that they will be angry with naughtiness. 8% of the girls and 5% of the boys answered that they will be angry with swear, insult, beating and punching. 21% of the girls and 22% of the boys answered that question like getting angry, getting crossed, responding, yelling, being quiet, and crying. 3% of girls and 7% of the boys said that they will fight, push, respond accordingly, punish, not letting them play outside, bite the battery, look for them and find.

TABLE – 13
14th QUESTION

(For what do you get angry at your children?)	Female %	Male %
1. Destroying home order	17	22
2. Misbehavior	20	17
3. Taking care of health	7	4
4. Immoral behavior, violent behavior	24	28
Unanswered	26	24
I do not	4	4
There will be no child	2	-
I do not know	1	-

To the question “For what do you get angry at your children?” girls said misbehavior, destroying home order, immoral behavior (swear, snub, rudeness, taking others tools without permission etc.), not considering (not showing obedience, ridicule, interrupting, interlope, not help etc.), taking care of health (not eating meal, run and fall, not sleeping, not wash hands etc.) and violent behaviors (beating, spitting, dropping down etc.) respectively. Boys said destroying home order, misbehavior, consideration, immoral behavior, violent behavior and taking care of health. 4% of boys and girls said that they do not get angry.

TABLE – 14
15th QUESTION

(To whom do you want to look like? Your mother or father? Why?)	Female %	Male %
Father	23	1
a. I could create emotional tie	8	9
b. Because I like	14	55
Mother	5	1
a. Emotional tie	22	10
b. Like	34	7
Mother and father	11	11
Other	5	5

To the question “To whom do you want to look like? Your mother or father? Why?” 23% of the girls and 65% of the boys answered as father; 61% of the girls and 18% of the boys answered as mother while 11% of the children answered as none of them. When looked to the answers, differences are seen according to gender. So, boys generally take father as the role model while girls take mother as a role model.

Three boys take grandfather and uncles as role models and as reason they show that they love grandfather and uncle's power and car. One boy gave the answer of his brother because he thinks that his parents would love him more.

4 girls gave different answers. One said aunt since she love her; one said sister; the other two said their teacher since they see the teacher nice, knowledgeable and very intelligent.

CONCLUSION

In this research analyzing family concept in preschool children, questionnaires are applied to 251 students in 5-6 age groups. As the result of this questionnaire, for the question “who should be in the family?” 99% of girls and 97% of boys counted nuclear family members. From these percentages, 25% of girls and 29% of boys counted second degree relatives. Similarly, in the research Günindi and Giren (2011) have done, 87.5% of the children counted nuclear family members, while 12.5% counted extended family members such as mother, father, grandparents, and parents' siblings.

Answers given to the questions by children, show that the concept of family is understood right, individuals said to be in the family are generally form nuclear family and family affect children's life in many aspects for their future lives. In this sense, in researches made for preschool children should be done with families so the concept of family would be understood more effective.

SUGGESTIONS

- Family members and close people to the family should be more careful since children shape their lives by taking their environment as role model.
- Parents should show model behaviors since children take parents as a role model.
- There should be necessary rules in the family since children apply those rules in the future.
- Educational works should be done for the children who do not know about the family concept.

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