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Benefits of Parental Involvement Activities in the Preschool Period: A Comparison of Teacher and Father View

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine and compare the views of teachers and fathers on father involvement and the benefits of parental involvement activities in the preschool period. The sample included 23 preschool teachers employed at public and private schools in Turkey's capital of Ankara, and fathers of 53 children in these teachers' classrooms. This study is based on qualitative research that used an interview form to obtain data which is analyzed through content analysis. The findings of this study yield the deduction that both educators and paternal figures harbor the perception that parental involvement endeavors predominantly draw the attendance of mothers, with fathers exhibiting infrequent participation in such activities. The main reasons for fathers' lower attendance rates for these activities are found to be working schedule and unsuitable working hours of the fathers. According to both the teachers and the fathers children are happy in terms of the benefits of parent involvement activities for the children, the family gains awareness about their child and improves itself in terms of the benefits for the family, and these activities provided easiness of communication and problem-solving with families in terms of the benefits for the school and the teacher.

Key Words

• Preschool education • Parent involvement • Father involvement • Teacher views • Father views

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Introduction

Parental involvement activities are significant factors in education programs for increasing success in preschool education, establishing positive relationships between the family and the child, and achieving continuation of education (Oke, et.al, 2020; Tezel Şahin & Özbey, 2009). Permanent behavioral changes in children attending preschool education facilities are only achievable with the assistance of learning experiences outlined in the curriculum in family life (Aral et.al, 2000). The imperative arises that the onus for the advancement and scholastic nurturing of children should be jointly borne by both the educational institution and the familial unit, as underscored in the works of Brooks (2009) and Kaya and Gültekin (2003). Schools need to focus on establishing a reliable and strong relationship between families and teachers, consider cultural differences of families, know their needs and respect them, as well as adopting a philosophy of ‘partnership’ where power and responsibility are shared (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

McBride et.al (2002) stated that the term of parental involvement refers to efforts of collaboration between the school and the family to improve children’s learning. According to Epstein (2010), parental involvement comprised the components of family, school and society, and children are in the center of this partnership. Parental participation is a very significant factor in terms of teachers sharing information with families about development of children, children’s success at school, and their discipline and social awareness, which gives families the opportunity to inform the teacher about their children’s situation at home. Conversely, the pedagogue possesses the capacity to provide individualized guidance to each pupil, thereby facilitating the optimization of their latent potential, as elucidated by Brooks (2009).

Studies have shown that education programs that focus on active parent involvement activities, collaboration between school and home have positive results for children, families and schools (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020; Henderson and Berla, 1994; NCES [National Center for Education Statistics], 2001). Parental involvement is directly related to support children’s academic, psychosocial, social, self-regulation skills, and decrease problem behaviors (Brody, et.al, 1999; Kohl, et.al., 2000; Marcon, 1999; McWayne, et.al, 2004; Powell, et.al, 2010; Schultz, 2000; Topor, et.al 2010). In addition to this, parent involvement support children’s early academic success (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Arnold, et.al, 2008; Fan & Chen, 2001; Kohl et al., 2000; Sénéchal, 2006). Besides, children attend school more regularly when their parents attended to parental involvement activities, adapt to the school environment more comfortably and show more positive behaviors (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). This improvement can continue not only in the school environment of children, but also in their future lives (Epstein, 2010; Henderson & Berla, 1994). Teachers acquire a better understanding of the child and the family when parents are involved, which allows them to create instructional programs that are tailored to the needs of the child (Eliason & Jenkins, 2003). Based on this information, it may be stated that parental involvement has several positive effects in terms of the child, family, the teacher and the institution. However, some studies have reported that there are obstacles in front of implementing parental involvement activities such as economic problems of the family, education levels, stress at home, attitudes of the family towards the school or parent involvement, and cultural differences (Castro, et.al, 2004; Coley & Morris, 2002; Fantuzzo, et.al, 2006; McBride et al., 2002; Raffaele & Knoff, 1999; Thompson, 2012). Furthermore, in

accordance with parental perspectives, it becomes evident that the educational institution and its educators constitute the most salient determinants of parental engagement.

Teachers' attitudes and ideas about this subject, on the other hand, are one of the barriers to parent engagement (Thompson, 2012). It has been stated that instructors believe they do not have enough time for parent engagement activities, and that since they lack information about how such activities should be carried out, the activities cannot be carried out enough (McBride et al., 2002). Studies on parent involvement activities have shown that mothers are more involved in these activities in comparison to fathers (Coley & Morris, 2002; McBride & Rane, 1997; Toth & Xu, 1999). However, it is known that including not only mothers, but also fathers in these activities has a significant effect on children's development and education (Tezel Şahin & Özbey, 2009). According to a study, increasing the amount of time fathers spend with their children has a positive impact on their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Furthermore, father participation, which includes behaviors such as father presence, parental satisfaction, child-rearing, and financial assistance, has been linked to children's intellectual growth. In this sense, the father's distinct relationships with the child, as well as differences in the roles they play in society and the family, lead him to have a different effect on the child than the mother (Downer, et.al, 2008; Mwoma, 2009). According to the scholarly work of Allen and Daly (2007), discernible outcomes manifest wherein children cultivate more favorable dispositions toward the educational environment, experience heightened levels of contentment, and exhibit increased enthusiasm in the discharge of their scholastic obligations when paternal involvement in school-related activities is realized.

It is believed that a study on parental involvement activities in the preschool period will contribute to the literature as the study involves a detailed analysis of which parent attends parent involvement activities more, as well as the reasons of fathers for attending less. Besides, considering that beliefs and views of mothers and fathers on parental involvement affect their attendance (Hoover Dempsey & Sandler, 1997), it is believed that investigating the views of fathers on parental involvement, and the benefits of such activities is important. Nevertheless, when we look at studies on family involvement, it is seen that the number of studies on father involvement is limited. While there are studies that compare teacher and parent opinions on the dimensions of parent involvement (Eğmez Köksal, 2008; Ladner, 2003; Ünüvar, 2010), it is seen that these studies were conducted mostly with mothers (Çaltık & Kandır, 2006; Çamlıbel Çakmak, 2010; Erdoğan & Demirkasımoğlu, 2010; Erkan, Uludağ & Derele, 2016; Keçeli Kaysılı, 2008; Tezel Şahin & Turla, 2003; Tezel Şahin & Ünver, 2005). Based on all of the evidence, it is believed that a research comparing the views of teachers and fathers on parental involvement is necessary. As a result of this study, it will be possible to establish fathers' ideas and beliefs on the subject, as well as their challenges toward parental involvement activities. In terms of comparing the views of fathers and teachers, it is intended that this study will serve as a model for future research on the subject. Hence, the primary objective of this study is to ascertain and juxtapose the viewpoints held by both educators and fathers concerning the benefits engendered through parental involvement activities during the preschool phase, with a specific focus on paternal engagement.

Method

This study was designed based on qualitative research techniques (Glesne, 2012). The qualitative research process consists of managing the interconnections between the various dimensions of the study by the researcher (Miller & Dingwall, 1997).

Sample

The sample included 23 preschool teachers employed at public and private schools in Turkey's capital of Ankara and fathers of 53 children in these teachers' classrooms. Criterion sampling method was used in forming the study group of this research. In this sampling method, some predetermined It is aimed to study all situations that meet the criteria (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). The criteria was that the teachers in the sample had at least two years of experience, and they graduated from departments of early childhood education or child development. For the fathers, the criterion of inclusion was that their children, who had normal developed, were at the age of 36-72 months. Demographic information of teachers is in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic information of teachers

Teachers		f	%
Age	20-30 years	7	30.4
	31-40 years	6	26.1
	41 and above	10	43.5
Seniority	1-10 years	9	39.1
	11-20 years	6	26.1
	21 years and over	8	34.8
Number of children in the class	8-15 children	10	43.5
	16-22 children	13	56,5
Total		23	100

It was determined that 7 (30.4%) of the preschool teachers participating in the research are between the ages of 20-30; 6 (26.1%) were in the 31-40 age range and 10 (43.5) were 41 years old and over. 9 of the teachers (39.1%) are between 1-10 years; 6 (26.1%) have 11-20 years of seniority and 8 (34.8%) have 21 years or more of professional seniority. 10 (43.5%) of the teachers have 8-15 children in their class; In 13 (56.5%) classes, 16-22 children receive education.

Table 2 shows the distribution of fathers participating in the study and their children according to their characteristics.

Table 2

Demographic informations of fathers and their children

			f	%
Father	Age	20-35 years	25	47.2
		36-40 years	22	41.5
		41 years and above	6	11.3
	Education status	High school and below	16	30.2
		University	22	41.5
		Master	15	28.3
	Number of children	1	18	33.9
		2	27	51
		3 and over	8	15.1
Child	Age	36-48 month	15	28.3
		49-60 month	21	39.6
		61-72 month	17	32.1
	Gender	Girl	27	51
		Boy	26	49
Total			53	100

Of the fathers participating in the study, 25 (47.2%) were aged 20-35, 22 (41.5%) were aged 36-40, and 6 (11.3%) were aged 41 and over. In terms of educational status of the fathers, 16 (30.2%) were high school or below, 22 (41.5%) were university graduates, 15 (28.3%) were master's degree, in addition, 18 (33.9%) had one child, 27 (51%) had two children, and 8 (15.1%) had 3 children and/or more.

It was determined that 15 (28.3%) of the preschool children were 36-48 months old, 21 (39.6%) were 49-60 months old and 17 (32.1%) were 61-72 months old, and 27 (51%) of the children were girls, 26 (49%) of them were male.

Data Collection Tools

The data were collected using the "Teacher Interview Form" and the "Father Interview Form" which were developed by the researcher.

Teacher Interview Form

The form consists of structured and semi-structured questions about parent involvement activities. The interview form, which was prepared on the basis of studies on the subject (e.g. Brooks, 2009; Epstein, 2010; McBride, et.al, 2002), in order to determine the opinions of preschool teachers about the family involvement studies

implemented in their schools, consists of two parts. The inaugural segment of the questionnaire encompasses inquiries pertaining to the age, professional tenure, educational attainment, and the compositional size of the pupil cohort under the purview of the instructors. The second part consists of structured and semi-structured questions about parent involvement activities. Some of the questions in the form are as follows: “Do you think family participation studies are beneficial for children? What do you think are the benefits of family participation studies for children?”

Father Interview Form

A father interview form was prepared by the researchers based on the studies on the subject (e.g. [Fagan & Palm, 2004](#); [Gonzalez et.al, 2023](#); [White et.al, 2023](#)) in order to determine the views of fathers whose children attend preschool education institutions on family participation studies. The first part consists of questions on the fathers' age, education status, number of children and the age, sex and order of birth of the child included in the activities. The second part consists of structured and semi-structured questions about parent involvement activities in parallel to those in the “Teacher Interview Form”. Some of the questions in the form are as follows: “Do you think family participation studies are beneficial for your child? In your opinion, what kind of benefits do family participation studies have for your child?”

Data Collection and Analysis

For data collection, firstly, meetings were held with the principals of the schools where the study would be conducted. Participants were informed about the aim of the study and data collection tools. After receiving permission from the principals of the schools, separate meetings were held with the teachers and the fathers. The participants were told that the study would be conducted voluntarily, their names would not be shared with third parties due to research ethics, and they were needed to reflect their actual experiences and observations while answering questions. The interviews were conducted in a silent, physically comfortable setting at the preschool education institutions, and they lasted for about 30 minutes. The interviews were written by hand for recording.

In the course of this investigation, content analysis emerged as the chosen methodological approach employed for the scrutiny and interpretation of qualitative data procured via semi-structured interviews, wherein the participants, encompassing both teachers and fathers, expounded upon their respective experiences and perspectives.

Content analysis is a scientific approach which inquires on a social reality by objective and systematic classification of the message of verbal, written and other materials in terms of meaning and grammar, transforming it into numbers and making inferences ([Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001](#)).

With this purpose, the collected data need firstly to be conceptualized, and then, to be divided into categories in a logical way based on the resulting concepts and the themes that explain the data ([Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001](#); [Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011](#)). For this purpose, the information collected in the interviews was organized in the computer environment and a data set was formed. Then, numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, ...) were assigned to the data set, and the teachers

were coded 'T', the fathers were coded 'F'. Coding was carried out not by using predetermined concepts, but by utilizing the concepts derived from the data of the study. The codes that were obtained at the first stage were then collected under certain categories. In this manner, the acquired data underwent a systematic categorization process via the application of discrete codes. The recurrence of these codes was subsequently quantified in terms of both percentages and frequency values. This methodological approach not only enhanced the overall reliability and credibility of the study but also facilitated meaningful comparisons within and across the delineated categories. The divided data were supported by direct quotes when needed. These quotes were written in italic, and the number for source data for the quote was given in parentheses. As Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011) also stated, it is believed here that, in qualitative studies, frequent inclusion of direct quotes is important for the purpose of reflecting the views of the participants in an explicit way.

Trustworthiness

Essentially, qualitative research methods have the tendency to be related to words as units of analysis, and as they are not number-related like quantitative methods, it is highly important for qualitative methods to take precautions that will contribute to the credibility, reality and originality of the study, namely credibility (Daymon & Holloway, 2003; Glesne, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 2015). With this purpose, some methods were used to achieve credibility and trustworthiness in this study. While preparing the interview forms, firstly a literature review was carried out on family education, parent involvement and father involvement. After the literature review, the structured and semi-structured items were formed. In order to achieve content credibility, 3 experts of the field were consulted for the teacher interview form, while 3 experts in the field of preschool education and 4 teachers were consulted for the father involvement interview form. Criteria such as "Are the questions clear? Are they suitable? What else might one ask?" were determined for the experts and their opinions were collected. The interview forms were given shape as a result of consulting experts and teachers. Later on, in order to clarify the state of the study and the questions, and with the purpose of helping reveal and test the assumptions of the researchers on the subject and context of research (Glesne, 2012), a pilot study was carried out with three preschool teachers and three fathers. As a result of the pilot study, it was seen that there were no problems in terms of the content and language of the questions or the length of the interviews, and the forms were given their final shape. In the pursuit of bolstering the credibility of a research endeavor, the incorporation of data triangulation emerges as a pivotal criterion during the data collection phase. Additionally, it is incumbent upon the researcher to solicit perspectives from diverse individuals situated within disparate environmental contexts, a principle underscored by Glesne (2012). This is why 23 teachers and 53 fathers from 9 different public and private preschool education institutions were included in the study to utilize data triangulation (Glesne, 2012). In order to achieve dependability in the study, the consistency between teacher and father responses was analyzed. For triangulation, the data were coded by two researchers based on the criterion of avoiding personal views, emotions and prejudices in data analysis, and the agreement between these codes were tested.

Findings

In this section, the findings obtained from the analysis of the interviews are presented. Content analyzes revealed 5 main themes (fig.1). These themes were (1) Which parent participates more in family involvement activities, (2) Reasons why fathers participate less in family involvement activities, (3) Benefits of family involvement activities for children, (4) Benefits of family involvement activities for parents, and (5) The benefits of family involvement activities to the teacher and the school.

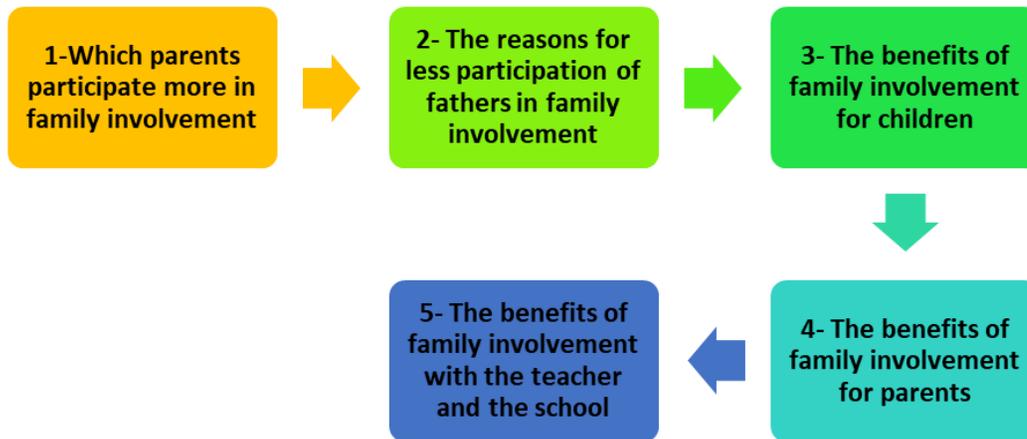


Figure 1. Themes obtained from the analysis of the interviews

Views on the Reasons Why Fathers Participate Less in Parent Involvement Activities

Both the teachers and the fathers expressed the major reason to be working conditions and working schedule for participating less in parental activities. Some statements regarding this were; “Father’s working hours are not suitable” (T-13). “I have problems with time. Because my work program is full. This is why my wife attends these” (F-40).

In addition to this, the teachers (f=6) stated that another reason for fathers attending parental involvement activities less frequently may be that the fathers considered it as a duty for the mothers and leave the responsibility to them. Similarly, five fathers stated this view. Some statements regarding were as the following: “In our culture children are generally brought up by mothers. It is widespread in our culture” (T-9). “Responsibility for the child should belong to the mother” (F-17).

It can be said that the reasons for fathers’ lower attendance in parent involvement activities were explained by the teachers (f=3) and the fathers (f=3) as these activities are usually believed to be designed for mothers. Some statements by the teachers and fathers regarding as the following: “Even the fathers who want to attend are

uncomfortable when they see all mothers at activities” (T-7). “Usually the mothers go there. The fathers do not attend. This is why I did not attend the meetings” (F-2).

Likewise, it was seen that both teachers (f=2) and only one father (f=1) stated as a reason for less frequent attendance by fathers that the teachers are women. Some statements regarding these as the following: *“As the teachers are female, fathers can not speak more comfortably with teacher, they cannot speak some problems with us” (T-9). “As the teacher is a woman, it is easier to communicate with my wife. This is why my wife attends these activities” (F-53).*

In difference to the fathers, the teachers stated some reasons for the lower rates of participation by the fathers as that the fathers are shy (f=3) and indifferent (f=2), they have lack of self-esteem (f=2) and they lacked responsibility (f=1). One of the interesting statement of the teachers regarding these as the following: *“I think the reason for this is related to having awareness. Responsible fathers think they have as much responsibility on the child as the mother. For example, they come to picnics with their child, arrange the school bus for their child, prepare the child’s lunch, help their wife in issues related to children” (T-10).*

In contrast to the responses provided by the teachers, several fathers articulated their rationales, positing that the greater availability of mothers, often due to their role as housewives (f=4), and the proximity of the mother's workplace to the child's school (f=4), factored prominently into their limited participation. Some statements regarding this were as the following: *“My wife does not have a problem with time as she is a housewife” (F-1). “My wife’s workplace is walking distance from here. She arranges the course schedule accordingly. My working hours are not fixed. As my wife’s schedule is fixed, she does the planning accordingly and she attends the activities” (F-51).*

Views on the Benefits of Parent Involvement Activities for Children

Both teachers (f=8) and fathers (f=8) included children becoming happy as a benefit of parental involvement activities. Some statements regarding as the following: *“The child whose family visits becomes happy. Activities of the family like reading stories or baking cookies make children happy” (T-21). “He/she becomes happy when we see what he/she does” (F-45).*

Regarding the benefits of parental involvement activities for children, it was found that teachers (f=8) and fathers (f=6) had an agreement on children’s increased self-confidence. Some statements as the following: *“Children feel better, their self-confidence is improved” (T-22). “It increases my child’s self-confidence, he thinks, my father is by my side” (F-18).*

Some teachers (f=3) and fathers (f=2) stated their views that children are more willing to go to school thanks to parent involvement activities. Some statements regarding as the following: *“Children’s opinion of the school changes. “They get more used to the school. They like to come to school” (T-22). “My child is more willing to go to school” (F-1).*

Both teachers (f=3) and fathers (f=6) emphasized that such activities contributed to socializing of the children. In addition to this, both teachers (f=3) and fathers (f=1) stated that children's communication with their family is improved thanks to these activities. Some statements regarding as the following: *"They experience social satisfaction, their social side is improved"* (T-10). *"It provides benefits in terms of socializing of the child"* (F-10).

Teachers stated that as a result of these activities, children gain positive behaviors (f=3), spend quality time with their families (f=2) and these activities contribute to children's learning (f=1). Fathers also thought parent involvement activities contribute to the development of children (f=10). Some statements of the teachers as the following: *"Mutual decisions and mutual solutions for children are beneficial for them. Acting in unison and with consistence provides the child with positive behaviors"* (T-12). *"I think they are useful for my child to be educated and developed suitably"* (F-4).

Furthermore, noteworthy within the study's findings was the observation that two participating fathers expressed the perspective that parental involvement activities yielded negligible advantages for their children, thereby emphasizing the absence of discernible benefits from their vantage point.

One of the statement of the fathers regarding these as the following: *"It has no benefit for the child. The organize meetings when they want to collect money or there is something to buy"* (F-35). 15 fathers also stated that they had no idea about the benefits of parent involvement activities.

Views on the Benefits of Parental Involvement Activities for Parents

Benefits of family involvement practices for families are stated. According to this, getting awareness was the dominant idea for benefits provided by parental involvement activities for families, stated teachers (f=7) and fathers (f=15). Additionally, it was found that the vast majority of the fathers (f=17) stated opinions about "being able to monitor development of the child", while the teachers did not provide any opinion in this. Some statements regarding these as the following: *"Families do not know how to behave with their children. These activities may provide benefits for what kinds of toys they would buy their children, place of family in playing games, child development, communication with the child, behavior interventions"* (T-3). *"I gain information about my child. I can observe behaviors that he/she does not show at home but shows at the school"* (F-24).

Some teachers (f=7) and fathers (f=2) stated that parent involvement activities "increase family's confidence in the school and the teacher." Some statements regarding this as the following: *"When they see the child in the classroom, the questions in their heads disappear. They see what is going on in the classroom. They see what a kindergarten is. Perceptions articulated by participants included statements such as, "They see that this is not only a place for playing games, but it also provides children with some things" (T-3), indicative of an evolving recognition that schools serve a purpose beyond mere recreation. Another participant noted, "Our confidence in the school and the teacher as parents increases" (F-6), implying an augmentation of trust and reliance in the educational institution and its instructors with respect to their parental role.*

Both teachers (f=4) and fathers (f=4) stated that it is possible to “spend quality time with children” thanks to these activities. In addition to this, both teachers (f=3) and fathers (f=3) emphasized the “strengthening of child-family communication” benefit of parent involvement activities. Some statements of teachers regarding as the following: *“As they return home in the evening tired, they get to spend quality time with their children this way. (T-18); Fathers learn how to communicate with their child. Their communication with their spouse and child is improved” (T-5).*

Some teachers (f=2) and fathers (f=2) stated that family involvement activities “made parents happier.” In difference to the fathers, teachers were observed to state their views that parent involvement activities are beneficial because “they increase the self-confidence of the family” (f=2). Some statements regarding this as the following: *“The family feels better, this increases their confidence in themselves” (T-1); “Parents are experiencing the pleasure of doing something for their child” (T-19).*

Furthermore, fathers elucidated perceived advantages, notably including the ability to engage in an exchange of ideas with the teacher (f=3). Additionally, one father underscored the value of the opportunity to interact with other parents (f=1) as a consequential benefit derived from their involvement in school-related activities. One statements’ of fathers regarding this as the following: *“We get to meet other parents. We sit somewhere with fathers and have a chat. A sensitive family should think they need to be interested” (F-45).*

It was seen that some fathers (f=11) responded as “I have no opinion” and one father stated that such activities have no benefit for the family. This statement was as the following: *“I do not think there is a benefit for us as a family. Maybe if it was the first child” (F-5).*

In the “benefits of family involvement practices for the teacher and the school,” both teachers (f=8) and fathers (f=8) considered parent involvement activities to have the benefit of “easiness of communication with the family.” Some statements regarding as the following: *“I get the chance to have much better communication with the parents” (T-11); “Our collaboration gets better. You get closer. They share more with us, thus, we are more useful for the children” (T-21); “There is better communication” (F-24); “It is useful for communication” (F-24).*

Some teachers (f=6) and fathers (f=2) thought parent involvement activities provided “professional motivation” for teachers. Another result showed that both teachers (f=4) and fathers (f=12) emphasized these activities lead teachers to know the child and the family better. Some statements regarding this as the following: *“I become productive and get motivated” (T-22); “As the teacher forms a more reliable relationship, they must be doing their job in a more motivated way” (F-6). “We get to know the parents. This helps us understand the reasons for the children’s behaviors more easily. When I get to know both parents at the same time, I can understand the state of the child at home better” (T-10).*

Similarly, it was found that both teachers (f=3) and fathers (f=7) emphasized the “provision of experience” for teachers by parent involvement activities. Some statements regarding this as the following: *“I think it is useful for*

them to improve themselves professionally” (F-4); “When they gain information on the behaviors of the child, they become more experienced. I think this contributes to the teacher’s self-improvement” (F-51).

Views on the Benefits of Parent Involvement Activities for the Teacher and the School

Benefits of family involvement practices for the teacher and the school, as differently from the fathers, teachers mentioned benefits as “acknowledging the value of the teacher” (f=3), providing the teacher with “opportunities for different activities” (f=2), and “spending quality time” (f=2). Some statements regarding as the following: “*Most people have the impression that a kindergarten teacher is not doing much. At least, when activities are held for parents, they see what the teachers are doing for the children. Families get to see the school, too*” (T-3); “*Parents see the situation at the school more clearly. There are 16 different requests coming from the parents of each child. While someone is saying, please ... for my child, another jump in for another request. However, families understand this when they see the classroom. This is useful for us*” (T-17); “*I get to involve another color in daily routine activities*” (T-19).

On the other hand, unlike the teachers, the fathers expressed their views that benefits for the school and the teacher included “easing the workload of the teacher” (f=1). A statement regarding the following: “*These ease the teacher’s workload*” (F-14). It was observed that a large proportion of the fathers (f=24) responded as “I have no opinion”. Some of these statements were as the following: “*I do not know. We need to ask the teacher*” (F-22); “*I would not know it.*” (F-37).

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is observed that mothers are the ones who attend parental involvement events the most, according to both preschool teachers and fathers. Mothers have also shown to be more involved in the home environment and school-related activities in previous studies on the subject (Coley & Morris, 2002; McBride & Rane, 1997). Hence, a reasonable inference that can be drawn from the study's findings is that maternal participation in parental involvement activities tends to surpass that of fathers. The research reveals that the major cause for fathers' less frequent engagement in parental involvement activities was their work schedule and inadequate working circumstances, as indicated by both teachers and fathers. A study by Yaşar Ekici (2014) also found that the most important reason why parents do not attend parent involvement activities, according to preschool education institution administrators, teachers and parent, was that parents were working. A study by McBride et al. (2002) with preschool teachers also stated the reasons that prevent families from attending these activities as lack of time, problems in transportation, that families are not aware of the importance of family involvement and that families have a negative attitude towards the school environment. In a parallel vein, Hoover Dempsey and Walker (2002) have noted in their research that a notable impediment encountered by both educators and parents with regards to parental involvement pertains to the constraint of available time, thus underscoring its significance as a formidable barrier.

Another finding of the study was that, according to the teachers, one of the reasons why fathers participated in the activities less frequently was because they regarded them as the responsibility of the mothers. These findings suggest that fathers did not want to take on much responsibility for activities involving their children and instead delegated this to their mothers. According to the study by [Lawson \(2003\)](#), teachers thought parents should help the school for their children's academic achievement, but families usually ignore such responsibilities. In regards to fathers' lack of participation in parental involvement activities, it was discovered that teachers believe such programs are often organized for women, while fathers believe that participants are primarily mothers. [Fagan and Palm \(2004\)](#) found that fathers were unwilling to participate when they heard that other fathers at the school would not participate either. Similarly, [Gürşimşek et al. \(2007\)](#) found that fathers did not believe necessity of participation and fathers had some difficulties about communication with teachers. The findings of this study bring to the forefront the imperative need for a more judicious and concerted organization of father involvement initiatives within the ambit of parental engagement activities. These results underscore the necessity for enhanced support mechanisms to be instituted to bolster and facilitate paternal participation in such endeavors.

Both the teachers and the fathers in the study stated that children become happier, their self-confidence increases, they are more willing to go to school, these activities contribute to their socialization, and children's communication with their families improves as a result of parent involvement activities. Not unlike the fathers, the teachers also said that parent involvement activities help children develop positive habits, spend more quality time with their parents, increase their learning, and develop responsibility skills. The majority of research in the literature on parental engagement activities found that these activities had a positive impact on children school achievement ([Brooks, 2009](#); [Galindo and Sheldon, 2012](#); [Rimm Kaufman et al., 2003](#)), self-esteem and self-confidence ([McBride et al., 2002](#)), language abilities ([Fantuzzo et al., 2004](#)) and social skills ([Powell et al., 2010](#)). Therefore, it can be said that prioritizing parent involvement activities, especially from a young age, will benefit children's development.

Another result of this study was that mothers participated more in parental involvement activities in comparison to fathers. Fathers may believed, these activities are not necessary for children. [Hoover Dempsey and Sandler \(1997\)](#) stated that, the beliefs of fathers regarding the benefits of parental involvement activities for their children are influential on their participation. It is assumed that if fathers believe that these activities would help their children, they will participate more. In this context, [McBride et al. \(2002\)](#) found that parent involvement activities contributed to parents understanding of their child, increased the commitment to participate in future activities and awareness, and strengthened their communication with other parents and school personnel. Similarly, [Henderson and Berla \(1994\)](#) reported in their study that families trusted the school and the teachers more thanks to parental activities.

Regarding the benefits provided by parent involvement activities in preschools for the family, it was emphasized by the teachers and parents that these are beneficial in terms of "the family's raised awareness about the child". It was also stated by some teachers and fathers that, thanks to parent involvement activities, "increase family's confidence in the school and the teacher," these activities "get the parents to spend quality time with their child" and they "strengthen child-family communication." Like the fathers, the preschool teachers in the study mentioned benefits as "an increase in self-confidence of the family". On the other hand, the fathers also stated benefits as "being

able to exchange ideas with the teacher,” “becoming happy,” and “opportunity to meet other parents.” Similarly, [Kaya and Gültekin \(2003\)](#) found that parent involvement activities would firstly make the parents happy, contribute the interrelationships of the mother, the father, the child and the environment, and provide opportunities for the parents to observe and assess their child better.

The benefits of parental involvement activities in preschools for teachers, according to both teachers and fathers, include “the provision of ease in communicating with parents.” Some teachers and fathers believed that such activities gave teachers with “professional motivation.” Furthermore, both the instructors and the fathers noted that these activities allowed the teacher to have a better understanding of the child and the family, as well as offer experience to the teachers. According to the preschool teachers, “the importance of the teachers is acknowledged,” “opportunities of varied activities are offered to teachers,” and “quality time is spent”. However, the fathers also highlighted the category of “reducing the teacher's workload.” Educators constitute a pivotal cornerstone within the realm of parental involvement activities, signifying one of the foremost determinants of family engagement in school-related endeavors. The quality and depth of teacher-family connections have the potential to exert a profound influence on the level of familial participation in school activities, as well as the broader sphere of support extended to the educational institution. Family participation levels may influence teachers’ views toward families, and therefore the quality of the teacher-family connection may be influenced ([Kohl et al., 2000](#)).

There are studies in the literature which reached similar results. [Henderson and Berla \(1994\)](#) determined that, in terms of the benefits they provide for the teacher and the school, parent involvement activities provided teachers with motivation, teachers received more support from families, the success levels of children in their classroom increased, and families assessed teachers more positively. [McBride et al. \(2002\)](#) reached the conclusion that, with parent involvement activities, teachers will understand children and parents better, and form better relationships with families. [Thompson \(2012\)](#) revealed that beliefs of teachers in parent involvement activities constitute a significant and determining factor in their experiences of planning and implementing parent involvement activities. Additionally, in a study by [Xu and Gulosino \(2006\)](#) on this issue, it was shown that the interaction between the teacher and the family was a positive indicator in children’s success. In the light of all this information, it may be stated that achieving parent involvement is highly important for children, parents, schools and teachers. Another important point here is continuity of parent involvement activities. As stated by [Linden \(2010\)](#), continuous parent involvement is a key factor in achieving positive behavioral change in children and sustaining such change.

As a result of the study, it was seen that both the teachers and the fathers agreed that parent involvement activities are useful for children, parents, school and teachers. However, it was found that the fathers failed to demonstrate this in terms of participation. A family should be curious about why their child is doing at the school, receive information from the school and constantly monitor the development of the child. Therefore, positive or negative developments in the child will be noticed in a shorter time and early intervention will be possible. These may be achieved both by direction of the family by the school, and the family not neglecting these issues. Therefore, in order to increase parent involvement and especially father involvement, it is recommended to plan activities at times and in ways that will allow both parents to attend. Schools and educators should guide the family regarding activities that will

diversify and enrich fathers' relationships with their children. Planning should be made for activities that will create experiences that improve and enrich the relationships of fathers with teachers. For example, it may be stated that the effect of the "Program for Distinctive Fathers Education" (Tutkun, 2017), "Daddy & Me" (McBride & McBride, 1993), "Dads Tuning in to Kids" (Wilson, Havighurst, and Harley, 2014; Wilson et al., 2016), and "Father Friendly Initiative" (Pearson et al., 2003) will be highly beneficial in achieving father involvement in preschool education. In addition to this, implementations and environments that will encourage father involvement should be organized in preschool education institutions. Settings where fathers will be able to share the outcomes they reached as a result of their involvement in the education process should be prepared. Additionally, teachers should be informed about parent involvement, and their awareness should be raised in terms of the diversity of the activities to be carried out.

On the other hand, practices that will promote fathers' active participation in their children's education not only on the level of teachers but also on the level of schools and policy-makers may be supported. Policy-makers may take initiatives to include the father involvement and education programs exemplified above or similar programs in the national curriculum. Educational institutions may consider the facilitation of informational sessions and seminars conducted by subject matter experts with the explicit aim of garnering a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted dimensions surrounding father involvement. Such initiatives can serve as a conduit for the augmentation of perspectives, knowledge, and competencies pertaining to paternal engagement. Furthermore, they can contribute to the cultivation of a conducive milieu conducive to fostering collaborative engagement between parents and educators.

It is recommended for future studies to conduct in-depth analysis of practices related to parent involvement and identify the difficulties that arise during implementation. In-depth interviews might be conducted to determine why parents and teachers have opposing viewpoints on parental participation.

Ethic

In this study, scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed; It has been committed that no falsification has been made on the collected data, and that all responsibility belongs to the authors for all ethical violations to be encountered.

Author Contributions

All authors contributed equally to the study.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest

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