

## Effectiveness of family involvement activities in pre-school education

**Pembe Aytac\***, Near East University, North Cyprus, Via Mersin 10, Turkey

**Nur Demirbas-Celik**, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Education of Science, Alanya, 07450 Antalya, Turkey

**Duygu Kiracioglu**, Near East University, North Cyprus, Via Mersin 10, Turkey

### Suggested Citation:

Aytac, P., Demirbas-Celik, N. & Kiracioglu, D. (2019). Effectiveness of family involvement activities in pre-school education. *Global Journal of Guidance and Counseling in Schools: Current Perspectives*, 9(3), 131–137.  
<https://doi.org/10.18844/gjgc.v9i3.4489>

Received from March 05, 2019; revised from June 05, 2019; accepted from December 02, 2019.

Selection and peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Kobus Maree, University of Pretoria South Africa.

©2019 United World Center of Research Innovation and Publication. All rights reserved.

### Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the effectiveness of family activities which are improved for the families. In this research, content improved family involvement activities were applied to the families whose children continue their pre-school mothers' and fathers' family involvement were compared. Research's experiment group includes the parents of 16 students who continue their pre-school education. Control group includes the parents of 10 students. Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) has been used to test the effectiveness of family involvement activities. This FIQ measures the family involvement as school-based involvement, home-school conferencing and home-based involvement. In data analyses, the Mann-Whitney U test has been used. FIQ has been answered by all the parents from experiment group and 10 mothers and 6 fathers from the control group. The result of analyses has shown that there is no difference between experiment and control groups' family involvements. In the experiment group, mothers' home-school conferencing permanent involvement scores are higher than the fathers' home-school conferencing involvement scores. The results of the research have been argued, and the suggestions were given to pre-school teachers and related research workers.

**Keywords:** Family involvement, home-school conferencing, pre-school education.

\* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: **Pembe Aytac**, Near East University, North Cyprus, Via Mersin 10, Turkey.  
E-mail address: [pembe03@gmail.com](mailto:pembe03@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Pre-school education is one of the important steps of education system and constitutes the grounding of the education in which the individual will obtain within whole education system (Altay, Ira, Unal-Bozcan & Yenil, 2011). This period which includes under zero age of the individual is an important period in which physical, mental, emotional and social developments are fast, personality structure starts to form and basic habits are gained (Razon, 1987). When families are considered to be children's first teachers in this period, one of the most important factors for the success of the educational activities given in the institutions is the awareness of the family. Parents with high awareness strive to provide rich opportunities to their children search in daily life events, interact active with environment and learn through imitate observations. The most competent authority in pre-school education is family (Oktay & Unutkan, 2007).

The role of family is the personality development of the child, positive behaviour adoption of the child and growing a child as an individual who is emotionally and physically healthy, who becomes self-sufficient, who is profitable for himself/herself and for the world he/she lives in (Tezel-Sahin & Cevher-Kalburan, 2009). The importance of the environment for the cognitive development of children was frequently emphasised in the literature. Children's readiness for school is determined with supporting children's curiosity, motivation, imagination and problem-solving skill through family and their reactions (Ozmert, 2006). Although the parents' responsibilities related to education are thought to be undertaken by teacher when children started to pre-school institutions, it is very important to families which support school activities in home. The most effective education required for the child will be realised by the cooperation of the family and the teacher (Yildiz, 2017).

Considering that there is a much closer relationship and more one-to-one relationships can be established with the child in home environment, the realisation of family-school consistency and mutual exchange of information indicate that it is important for children in terms of academic, social and personal development (Kocabas, 2016). One of the roles of educationalist is supporting children, creating a healthy contact with both his/her family and the society. Thus, permanence of the ability in which the child has obtained cannot be provided. In this context, the best approach in pre-school education is not only the one which deals with the child as single individual but also the one which deals with the child together with his/her family (Ministry of National Education Pre-school Education Program, 2006).

It is very important to plan how family education studies and their results will be transferred to the system and to form the structures related to this (Tavil & Karasu, 2013). Temel (2013) sequenced the family involvement works as family education activities, family communication activities, participation of parents in education activities, individual interviews, home visits, participation of parents in management, decision-taking processes and family support programmes. In Pre-school Education Programme, these works are gathered into the titles of family education activities, family communication activities, participation of parents in education activities, home visits, activities which shall be done at home, participation of parents in management and decision-taking processes (Ministry of National Education Pre-school Education Program, 2006).

Family education activities are systematic, scored and constant works intended to develop the information and skills of father and mothers in subjects such as child health, child development, behaviour management, communication, nutrition and mental health. When family education programmes are planned, Need Determination Form must absolutely be implemented, and education programmes must be prepared according to the needs (Temel, 2013). Family communication activities are coming-going times, telephone calls and short message services, brochures, audiovisual records, tape records, photos, notice boards, bulletins, informing letters, correspondences, meetings, school visits, portfolios, Internet-based applications and wish boxes (Ministry of National Education, 2013). Family involvement studies which provide multidimensional contribution are necessary for continuity of education in both school and home with rich activities (Cakmak, 2010).

As the developments in information technology caused many changes in the social life of the individual, children were affected by this situation. In their research, Nie and Erbring (2002) found that as individuals' use of the Internet increased, the time that they spend with others decreased. In the light of this finding, it seems that problems in social relations will be inevitable with the decrease of the time that individuals spend with others in the family. Children are mostly affected by this situation. It is very important for family members to spend time together to strengthen social bonds. Educational activities towards families shall make adult-child communication enjoyable and extend the learning opportunities of the child from school environment to home environment (Mendez, 2010). These educational activities may be prepared as written materials by benefitting from educational books. Activities must be explained step by step as can be understood by the families; there must be activities and games in which parents can do with their children, topics which they can discuss, discipline methods and messages by which they can support their attitudes toward bringing up a child. Hereby, father and mother are encouraged to the activities at school and they interact with their children as an educationalist. Experimental researches made on different student groups found out positive relationship between specific family involvement behaviours and specific student successes. Researchers found a meaningful relationship between teacher and parent evaluations of voluntary working hours of the families and continuity rate of the families to school workshops and children's academic motivation, social competence and state of readiness to school (Fantuzzo, Tighe & Childs, 2000).

The aim of this research is to investigate the family involvement activities developed for the families. In this context, family involvement activities have been prepared and applied to the families whose children continue to pre-school education. When family involvement activities are prepared, conveying the children's learning opportunities from school environment to home environment by making adult-child communication enjoyable in educational activities formed for families is aimed (Mendez, 2010). Family involvement activities developed within this study.

## **2. Method**

The study is an experimental study which was developed for testing the effectiveness of family involvement activities formed. Research was carried out in post-test experimental control group pattern.

### **2.1. Participants**

Experimental group includes fathers and mothers of 16 students who are going to pre-school education in Northern Cyprus. Control group includes fathers and mothers of 10 students.

### **2.2. Instruments**

#### **2.2.1. Family involvement scale**

Family involvement scale (FIS) measures family involvement as school-based, home-based and home-school conferencing-based involvement. The Family Involvement Questionnaire which was developed by Fantuzzo et al. (2000) comprises 25 items and 3 subscales (home-based involvement, school-based involvement and home-school conferencing-based involvement) in total. School-based involvement subscale includes seven items defining behaviours about family's involvement in educational activities at school together with their children; home-based involvement subscale includes nine items defining the behaviours and activities of families towards supporting the learning process of the child in environments except school and home-school conferencing-based involvement subscale includes nine items defining the interaction level of family with teacher and school personnel towards the development of child. FIS is graded as Likert type (5 always, 4 often, 3 sometimes, 2 rarely and 1 never). The reliability coefficient in original implementation of the scale is determined as 0.85. Turkish adaptation of FIS was made by Gursimsek (2003). Four items were removed during the

adaptation phase of the scale. Four items measure school-based involvement, seven items measure home-based involvement and nine items measure home-school conferencing involvement. Alpha coefficient of FIS is determined as 0.87 for the whole scale and as 0.79, 0.69 and 0.84, respectively, for subdimensions.

### 2.2.2. Family involvement activities

Family involvement activities developed by the researchers were applied to the experiment group of the research. First, families in the experiment group were informed in written about the programme which shall be applied; the activities which can be carried out by the families at home and which are the continuing activities of the school activities were sent to families. Some of these activities were chosen from Evirgen (2010), and some of them were written by the teacher. Families are required to apply the activities and to convey their thoughts about the activities to the teacher either in written or orally. At the end of 3 weeks, families were invited to school to make a contact meeting and to compare the notes. During the meeting, information on the developmental features of the children was given, evaluation on the activities carried out at home was made and proposals and opinions were put forward. Information and opinion exchange between teacher and family was continued during coming from and going to home and on the phone. Some activities carried out in the following weeks were planned according to the proposals and opinions of the families. In addition to this, a trip was organised within the frame of an activity with the participation of the families. After ten activities, in total, were carried out, FIS was implemented to the parents both in the experiment and control groups. Results of the FIS were analysed in the SPSS programme. FIS non-parametrical statistics were used. In comparisons between the experiment and control groups and mother and father groups, the Mann-Whitney U test was implemented.

## 3. Results

FIS was implemented to experiment and control groups at the end of first semester. The Mann-Whitney U test results obtained at the end of these applications are provided in Table 1. There is no significant difference between final test scores of the experiment and control groups.

**Table 1. Final test results of experiment and control groups**

Group	<i>p</i>
School-based involvement	0.42
Home-based involvement	0.12
Home-school conferencing involvement	0.91
Family involvement (total score)	0.63

The Mann-Whitney U test was implemented to investigate the family involvements of mothers and fathers who are in the experiment group of the research. The result of this test is provided in Table 2. In this test result, family involvements of mothers and fathers show a difference in home-school conferencing-based involvement. When the average scores of mothers and fathers are investigated, home-school conferencing-based involvement scores of mothers are higher than the father's home-school conferencing-based involvement scores.

**Table 2. Mann-Whitney U test results of mother and father group**

Group	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>p</i>
School-based involvement			
Mother	15	24.3	0.67
Father	15	23.5	
Home-based involvement			
Mother	15	19.2	0.96
Father	15	18.0	
Home-school conferencing			

involvement	15	32.5	0.04*
Mother	15	25.3	
Father			
Family involvement (total score)			
Mother	15	76.1	0.61
Father	15	73.5	

$p < 0.05$

#### 4. Discussion and conclusion

In this study, the effectiveness of family involvement activities which are developed families whose children continue pre-school education, and it has been seen that there is no meaningful difference between the experiment and control groups in terms of family involvement activities applied. Abbak (2008) found out the same result in his research whose subject is investigating the family involvement activities in pre-school education programme in the sense of pre-school teachers and parents. According to this research, it became evident that teachers used family involvement forms, organised conferences for parents, made individual interviews, invited parents to classroom, made meetings within coming-and-going from schools and used correspondence and education boards. However, it was determined that family involvement did not fully realised due to the reasons emerging from teacher and parents (Abbak, 2008). There is no meaningful difference between the experiment and control groups; the reason for this may be that the mothers and fathers in the control group currently carry out family involvement activities such as parent–teacher meeting and telephone calls which are included in school programme. Measuring family-child interaction to determine the effectiveness of family involvement activities which were applied in this research may provide more meaningful results in evaluating the activities. On the other hand, it can be said that an important deficiency of this research is that pre-test did not applied at the beginning of the semester.

In spite of the family involvement activities planned for the experiment group, it is seen that school-family cooperation dimension of fathers is different from mothers. Fathers fulfilled home-based and school-based involvement; however, they did not create any effect in terms of cooperation with school. It is important that the mother and father who have an equal role in the child’s birth have the same sensitivity in child education. In Tamis-LeMonda, Shannon, Cabrera and Lamb (2004) research on the contribution of parents to the language and cognitive development of children, it was concluded that the father had an equal impact with mother. It was found that the group which does not have father had a lower success potential compared to the other groups. The results of the research show that the father’s contribution to the child’s development is undeniable. For this reason, fathers should be encouraged to be more effective in their family involvement activities, to come and go to school and to be in communication with the teacher.

Recent researches have shown that father is as important as mother. Thus, it can be beneficial to encourage fathers for being more active in family involvement works, for coming to school and for communicating with the teacher.

The age level of the students should be considered when organising home activities. In this period, the development of the child should be supported by various games. Game is an important process in child development (Ecirli, 2014). For this reason, it is important that the activities to be made in home involve game for both parent-child interaction and cognitive development. When the activities are organised, the natural and accessible materials to be needed can be easily processed. The applicability of the activities implemented at home may create a written feedback system between the school and family to be aware of the effects on the family members. Thus, according to this feedback, new activities can be prepared with school-family cooperation for children.

On the other hand, the lack of communication between the school and parent interrupts the family involvement process. For this reason, as prerequisite of healthy progress of child's process, it is important that family, children, educators and school attendants are in communication.

## References

- Abbak, B. S. (2008). *Okul oncesi egitim programindaki aile katilimi etkinliklerinin anasinifi ogretmenleri ve veli gorusleri acisindan incelenmesi* (Master's thesis). Cukurova University, Adana, Turkey). Retrieved from <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi>
- Altay, S., Ira, N., Unal-Bozcan, E. & Yenal, H. (2011). Cumhuriyetin kurulusundan gunumuze milli egitim sularinda okul oncesi egitimi ve bugunku durumu. *E-Journal of New World Sciences Academy*, 6(1), 660-672.
- Ay, F. (2015). *Aile Egitimi Kurslarinin Yetiskin Egitimi Baglaminda Etkililiginin Degerlendirilmesi*. Bartin, Turkey: Bartin Universitesi Egitim Bilimleri Enstitusu.
- Cagdas, A. & Secer, Z. (2004). *Mutlu ve Saglikli Yarinlar Icin Anne-Baba Egitimi*. Konya, Turkey: Egitim Kitabevi.
- Cakmak, C. O. (2010). Okul Oncesi Egitim Kurumlarinda Aile Katilimi. *Abant Izzettin Baysal Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu Dergisi*, 2010-1(20).
- Durualp, E, Kaytez, N. & Kadan, G. (2016). Okul oncesi donemdeki cocuklarin annelerine verilen aile egitiminin annelerin bilgi duzeyleri ile cocuklarin gelismelerine olan etkisinin incelenmesi. *Abant Izzet Baysal Universitesi Egitim Fakultesi Dergisi*, 16(4), 1706-1722.
- Ecirli, H. (2014). Anne-Baba-Cocuk ve Oyun. Yasamin ilk yillarinda Oyun: Oyuna Cok Yonlu Bakis (Edt. Hulay Gulay Ogelman) (Vol. 14, pp. 295-316). Ankara, Turkey.
- Ekinci Vural, D. (2006). *Okul Oncesi Egitim Programindaki Duyussal Ve Sosyal Becerilere Yonelik Hedeflere Uygun Olarak Hazirlanan Aile Katilimli Sosyal Beceri Egitimi Programinin Cocuklarda Sosyal Becerilerin Gelismine Etkisi* (Doktora Tezi). Amsterdam, The Netherlands: DEU Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitusu
- Evirgen, S. (2010). *Bugun ne yapiyoruz?* Istanbul, Turkey: Morpha.
- Fantuzzo, J., Tighe, E. & Childs, S. (2000). Family involvement questionnaire: a multivariate assessment of family participation in early childhood education. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92(2), 367-376. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.92.2.367
- Gursimsek, I. (2003). Okul Oncesi Egitime Aile Katilimi ve Psikososyal Gelism. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Egitim Bilimleri*, 3(1), 125-144.
- Kartal, H. (2007). Erken Cocukluk Egitimi Programlarindan Anne-Cocuk Egitim Programi'nin Alti Yas Grubundaki Cocuklarin Bilissel Gelismelerine Etkisi. *Ilkogretim Online*, 6(2).
- Kocabas, O. E. (2016). Egitim Surecinde Aile Katilimi: Dunyada ve Turkiye'deki Calismalar. *Turk Psikoljik Danisma ve Rehberlik Dergisi*, 3(26).
- MEB. (2006). *(36-72 Months) Ministry of National Education Pre-school Education Program*. Istanbul, Turkey: YA-PA Yayınevi.
- Mendez, J. L. (2010). How can parents get involved in preschool? Barriers and engagement in education by ethnic minority parents of children attending Head Start. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16(1), 26-36. doi:10.1037/a0016258
- Ministry of National Education. (2013). *Ministry of national education books*. Retrieved from <http://tegm.meb.gov.tr/dosya/okuloncesi/ooproram.pdf>
- Nie, N. H. & Erbring, L. (2002). Internet and society: a preliminary report 1. *Stanford University. It & Society*, 1(1), 275-283.
- Oktay, A. & Unutkan, O. (2007). *okul oncesi egitimde guncel konular*. Istanbul, Turkey: Morpa.
- Ozmert, E. N. (2006). Erken cocukluk gelisminin desteklenmesi-III: Aile. *Cocuk Sagligi ve Hastaliklari Dergisi*, 49(3), 256-273.
- Razon, N. (1987). Okul Oncesi Cocukta Sik Rastlanan Uyum ve Davranis Sorunlarindan Bazilari ve Anaokulunda Cozum. 5. YA-PA Okuloncesi Yayginlastirilmesi Semineri. Antalya, Turkey: Ya-pa yayinlari, 73-85.
- Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Shannon, J. D., Cabrera, N. J. & Lamb, M. E. (2004). Fathers and mothers at play with their 2- and 3-year-olds: contributions to language and cognitive development. *Society for Research in Child*

Aytac, P., Demirbas-Celik, N. & Kiracioglu, D. (2019). Effectiveness of family involvement activities in pre-school education. *Global Journal of Guidance and Counseling in Schools: Current Perspectives*, 9(3), 131-137. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjgc.v9i3.4489>

*Development*, 75(6), 1806–1820. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezproxy.neu.edu.tr/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00818>

Tavil, Y. Z. & Karasu, N. (2013). Aile egitim calismalari: Bir gozden gecirme ve meta-analiz ornegi. *Egitim ve Bilim*, 38(168).

Temel, F. (2013). *Aile Egitimi ve Erken Cocukluk Egitiminde Aile Katilim Calismalari*. Ankara, Turkey: Ani Yayincilik.

Tezel-Sahin, F. & Cevher-Kalburan, F. N. (2009). Aile egitim programlari ve etkililigi : Dunyada neler uygulaniyor? *Pamukkale Universitesi Egitim Fakultesi Dergisi*, 25(1), 1–13.

Zembat, R. & Unutkan, O. (1999). Okul Oncesinde Cocugun Sosyal Gelisiminde Aile Katiliminin Onemi. *Marmara Universitesi Anaokulu Ogretmeni El Kitabı*, 151–174.