



THE METAPHORIC PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF PROBLEMS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

EBEVEYNLERİN İLKÖĞRETİM EĞİTİMİNDE YAŞANAN SORUNLAR KAVRAMINA
İLİŞKİN METAFORİK ALGILARI

Emine KIRAL¹ - Nurdan OZRECBEROGLU²

Öz

Bu araştırma, velilerin ilköğretim sorunlarına ilişkin algılarını metaforlar aracılığıyla belirlemek ve karşılaştırmak amacıyla tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan fenomenoloji yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma grubunu, amaçlı örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenen, KKTC'de İlköğretim Bölümü'ne bağlı ilköğretim okullarında çocuğu olan 100 veli oluşturmaktadır. Ebeveynlerin algıları doğrultusunda okullarda yaşanan sorunlara yönelik çözümlerin üretilmesi ve gerekli önlemlerin alınması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu hazırlanmış ve her velinin metaforik algılarını ortaya çıkarmak için "İlköğretimdeki sorunlarye benzer çünkü" cümlesini tamamlamaları istenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda veliler toplam 46 metafor üretmiştir. Üretilen metaforlar ise içerik analizi ile çözümlenerek sorunların kaynağını belirlemek amacıyla 5 kategori altında toplanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına bağlı olarak velilerin olumsuz metaforlar ürettikleri ve eğitimdeki sorunları karmaşık, belirsiz ve içinden çıkılmaz bir durum olarak gördükleri belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim sorunları, ebeveyn görüşleri, metafor.

Abstract

This study was designed to identify and compare parents' perceptions of primary education problems through metaphors. In the research, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research methods, was used. The research group consists of 100 parents who have children in primary schools affiliated with the Primary Education Department in TRNC, determined by purposive sampling method. In line with the perceptions of the parents, it is aimed to produce solutions for the problems experienced in schools and to take the necessary precautions. For this purpose, a semi-structured interview form was prepared to reveal and the metaphorical perceptions. To collect research data each parent was asked to complete the sentence "Problems in primary education are similar to because" As a result of the study, the parents produced a total of 46 metaphors. The metaphors were analyzed by content analysis and gathered under 5 categories in order to determine the source of the problems. Depending on the results of the research, it was determined that the parents produced negative metaphors and saw the problems in education as a complex, uncertain and inextricable situation.

Keywords: Metaphor; problems in education; parents' opinions

¹ Department of Education Administration & Supervision, Social Sciences Institute, Cyprus Health and Social Sciences University, Turkey, eminekiral4@gmail.com, Orcid: 0000-0002-4638-8771

² Assist. Prof. Dr., Department of Education Administration & Supervision, Social Sciences Institute, Cyprus Health and Social Sciences University, Turkey, nurdan.ozrecberoglu@kstu.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0002-3509-9317

1. Introduction

Education is the activity of building knowledge, skills, habits, and attitudes for the individual. In other words, education is the process of creating a planned and programmatic change in a person's behavior through their own life (Maxamatjonovich and Burxoniddin, (2022). According to Pestalozzi, education is the natural and moral development of the child's powers and abilities. Against Pestalozzi's goal of developing the child's abilities and skills, Herbart rejected the opinion that divided the mind into abilities. According to Herbart, who also disagrees with Rousseau's opinion of society, the purpose of education is the adaptation of the child to the current social order. It is important that the person acquires knowledge and develops in terms of character and social morality. Herbart explained education's purpose with the word virtue/merit (Varış et al., 1991).

Since education is the interaction of variables related to individual and socio-cultural phenomena, the person's goals, behaviors, wish level, moral measures, and knowledge develop through these interactions. It is thought that interactions between teacher-student, student-social environment, and student-physical environment should be emphasized in learning resulting from interactions. People interact with the environment throughout their lives, and they build knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a result of this interaction. These interactions constitute the basis of learning (Ozdamar and Aydın, 2020). Therefore, learning can be defined as life products with relatively permanent impressions that emerge as a result of the interaction between the individual and his environment (Şimşek, 2013).

Education aims to raise individuals with strong and good character, equipped with knowledge and skills, and to provide individuals with behaviors appropriate to the requirements of the age and society's expectations (Banabakova, 2022). School is where children learn about events and concepts and gain personality development and social interaction skills. The level at which child first meet with the school is known as the primary education level.

When the effect of primary education is considered, which is the first step of the education system, a quality basic education constitutes an important step for further education levels. Accordingly, it is an expected situation that the problems experienced in the education system manifest themselves in basic education as the first step. The increasing problems in primary school age, which is the most important age of personality development, is an indication that education cannot reach its purpose in every individual. Problems experienced in any step of education can prevent reaching the required objectives both in the previous and the next steps. Capacity limitations and insufficiencies in preschool education affect primary education as well as structural inequalities, and quality problems in secondary education negatively affect primary education (TED, 2007). On the other hand, it has been observed that effective parental participation, which is thought to have a positive effect, has a positive effect on the development of children by implementing it in education programs.

It is also noted that parents also have significant acquisitions because they are active participants in the educational process (Epstein, 2018). Through school-family cooperation, it is possible for parents to function in the education process, to carry out educational program objectives, and to develop a more positive attitude towards school. Ensuring that parents receive education in the process through their involvement in the educational process will eliminate elements that negatively affect children's academic success and ensure that children's development is in a positive direction (Gürşimşek, 2003). This information reveals the importance of parents being active participants in the education process at every education system stage, especially starting from preschool education. According to Arı (2005), parents stated that since the child is their primary educator, attention should be paid to ensuring their

active involvement in the educational process. The reason is that parents are valuable collaborators in their preschool experience and research (Senin and Halim, 2021).

First of all, parents expect their children to be in a safe environment, away from all kinds of risks and threats and receive a quality education. School staff should also work, taking into account that families love their children and expect them to be successful while performing their duties. For this, schools and teachers must first establish good relations with parents and even maintain good relationships with parents who have never visited the school.

At the same time, according to Wibowo, Mahmudi and Retnawati (2021) school staff should develop effective ways and methods to ensure that parents come to school and cooperate with the school, and a positive atmosphere should be created between parents and school to continue school-parent cooperation. Thus, school and family should know and determine each other's expectations and needs.

Researchers recommend establishing effective cooperation between family and school and organizing activities, taking into account the different characteristics seen as this changing obstacle in every society. Ogan (2000) suggested the reasons for not communicating with the school administration, teachers, and the school-family association in his research on the school, school-family association, and parent-father communication and parents' expectations of education. In this study, 90.80% of parents believe that they contribute to their children's success in the questionnaire applied to the parents of a high school and a primary school. Parents stated that they contributed to their children's success by providing general interest (shelter, nutrition...), teaching, and financial support. In addition, 93.17% of parents need an education that can contribute to their children's educational success. Hill and Taylor (2004) state that parents and school are the main success mechanisms in their research, which examines the relationship between families' school attitudes and children's academic achievement. Parents' characteristics such as socio-economic structure, ethnic origin, demographic characteristics, educational status, the immediate environment, insufficient resources, transportation problems, and stress affect families' involvement and attitudes to school. Also, teachers from the same culture as their students are more likely to communicate with parents of students compared to teachers who are not from the same culture, and this affects their academic status, demographic factors, families' psychological conditions, negative feelings about themselves, not trusting their mental abilities, experiences of poverty, and their school experiences.

Balkar (2009) aimed to determine parents' and teachers' opinions on school-family cooperation in their research. A standardized interview form was used to collect research data. A total of 50 participants, 25 of whom are parents of primary education and 25 of whom are primary school teachers, participated in the study. In the study, teachers stated that school-family cooperation was not carried out adequately, parents' meetings and parents' interests were insufficient, and parents came to school only to learn about their children's success. Parents, on the other hand, emphasized that teachers use meetings for complaints, teachers, and school principals should call parents and inform them when necessary, and teachers should make home visits and pay attention to meetings to have effective school-family cooperation. Garbacz, Kwon, Tab, Sheridan, and Woods (2010) aimed to investigate the motivation (structural roles and effects against family involvement) of families in the face of their children's positive behaviors and the stress of family involvement that may occur in the face of their children's negative behaviors. In order to reveal the relationship between family stress and parent involvement, the dimensions of family-centered involvement, school-centered involvement, and the relationship between family-school were questioned. According to the findings of the research, the families of children with negative behaviors

state that they are responsible for parent involvement and that they are inadequate in their children's education (Patnaik, Sharma, and Subban, 2022). The study suggested developing and supporting involvement activities for the families of children with negative behaviors to serve the motivation of parent involvement. This study, which is carried out to reveal the personal perceptions of parents about the education system, is considered important because it will add important information to the field.

In recent years, the lack of educational outcomes at the requested level reveals the importance of identifying problems in education. For this reason, the determination of the general opinions and metaphorical perceptions of the problems experienced by parents in primary education was considered worth investigating. Metaphors are used in analyzing concepts, making them understandable by providing closeness to life, conveying experiences, sharing feelings and opinions, determining perceptions about an object, concept, or phenomenon. In the changing and developing world, the symbolic representation power of language is important in understanding daily life implications (Bourdieu, 1991; Foucault, 1980). The first study that can be considered as a pioneer on metaphors was carried out by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and the "cognitive metaphor theory" was put forward. According to this theory, metaphors are expressed as mental structures that shape people's thoughts on the world and reality. According to the cognitive theory, individuals try to make sense of the world by establishing a connection between the complex facts they encounter and the concrete concepts they experience. To this end, the research's problem statement is, "What are the metaphorical perceptions of the parents about the concept of problems in primary education?"

The questions below were answered by these objectives:

- i. What are the metaphors parents have regarding the problems experienced in education at primary level?
- ii. Do the metaphorical perceptions of the parents about the problems in primary education change according to their demographic characteristics?

2. Methodology

The study's methodology section, which examines metaphors related to the concept of problems experienced by parents in primary education, consists of the research model, study group, data collection, and analysis sub-sections. In the study, the Phenomenology Research Pattern, which is one of the Qualitative Research Patterns, was used.

2.1. Research Model

The phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in this study, in which the phenomena of parents related to the concept of problems experienced in primary education were investigated. This type of design is known as an interview technique consisting of the phenomenon that is focused on generally applied research or individuals or groups to which this phenomenon can be reflected. With this design, it is aimed to reveal the experiences and perceptions of the individual regarding the phenomenon under consideration, as it focuses on the facts that the individual is aware of but have not mastered a deep and detailed understanding (Denscombe, 2014; Hammersley, 2013). In this context, this study attempts to explain the facts related to the concept of problems experienced in parents' primary education by basing them on the parents' experiences and past life.

2.2. Study Group

The study group consists of a total of 100 parents whose children are attending in primary education institutions within the borders of the TRNC. 100 parents were determined

by purposive sampling method. With the purposive sampling method, people with important characteristics that will serve the purpose of the research are selected (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). The following table contains detailed information about the parents who participated in the study.

Table 1. Demographic information about participants

Demographics		f	%
Gender	Female	63	63
	Male	37	37
	N	100	100
Educational Status	Primary School	0	0
	Secondary School	0	0
	High School	41	41
	Undergraduate	53	53
	Master	3	3
	Doctorate	3	3
	N	100	100
Employment Status	Employed	72	72
	Unemployed	28	28
	N	100	100

In the table showing the demographics of the participants' "Gender," "Educational Status," and "Employment Status" variables, 63% of the participants are female, and 37% are male according to the variable of "Gender." While it can be seen that 42% of the participants are graduates of High School, 53% Undergraduate, 3% Master, and 3% Doctorate, there are no participants from primary and secondary school levels. According to the "Employment Status" variable, it can be seen that 72% of the participants are employed, and 28% are unemployed.

2.3. Data Collection

In this study, in which the qualitative research method was used, the data were collected with the forms in which they completed the sentence "Problems in primary education are similar to because" which is accepted as a data collection tool. The relevant form consists of two sections that include demographics of the participants and the facts about the concept of "Problems experienced in the primary education of parents" and their reasons. The data of the study were collected in the technological environment in the spring period of 2019-2020 due to the pandemic process, and at this stage, the parents were asked to express the concept of the problem in the first gap in the form that is, to write a metaphor, while in the second gap, they were asked to express their reasons for writing this metaphor in detail. In the study, where participation was voluntary, 10 minutes was given to fill out the forms.

2.4. Data Analysis

It is known that metaphors can be used as a means of qualitative data collection, and rich findings can be obtained through concepts (Patton, 2002). Metaphors can also be used as both descriptive and comparison tools in understanding social phenomena (Silman and

Şimşek, 2006). Data obtained at the study were analyzed with the content analysis method. The purpose of this method is to reach the concepts and interconceptional relations by means of metaphors. Data are summarized through the Descriptive Analysis Method and analyzed deeply through Content Analysis. Concepts and interconceptional relations overlooked in the Descriptive Analysis Method can be detected by means of the Content Analysis Method. This analysis, by classifying the emerging information after the application of the basic analysis transmitted to the reader. This process is resolved in four stages;

1. Coding of data,
2. Finding the main topics,
3. Classification of codes and main topics
4. analysis of the data (Şimşek and Yıldırım, 2016).

Each metaphor created by the students was analyzed in terms of the relationship between the subject of the metaphor and its source. Contents the metaphors analyzed using the analysis method, the cases obtained and the frequency was determined and percentage values were calculated. From the source of the metaphor on the subject of metaphor those that create a common meaning in the evaluations are organized into categories. Thus, five categories were created. These categories were named according to the common meaning they indicate. In the section of categories, two different expert opinions were consulted, coded according to metaphorical perceptions, and the list containing metaphorical perceptions was finalized. At this stage, the researcher first studied the cause of each metaphor individually, and certain categories were formed by grouping the obtained metaphors with similar characteristics. After the forms filled out by the parents were read in detail, 8 forms that did not report in any metaphor or were not thought to be related to the concept of problems in education were considered invalid and excluded from the study. Some metaphors which created by parents are show with P1, P2, P3, etc.

2.5. Validity and Reliability

For validity and reliability, a domain expert assigned the metaphors to one of the predetermined conceptual categories, independently of the researcher. The assignments of the expert and the researcher were compared, and the points of consensus and disagreement were determined. Using Miles and Huberman's (1994) reliability formula ($\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{consensus}}{\text{consensus} + \text{disagreement}} \times 100$), the percentage of agreement was calculated as 82.8%. The research analysis is considered reliable when the consistency of reliability calculations is above 0.70 (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

3. Findings

In this chapter, the metaphors that emerged as a result of the research, the distribution of metaphors according to categories, the distribution of metaphors according to demographics, and the responses of the parents are included. The metaphors developed by the parents participating in the study are given in Table 2.

Table 2. *The metaphors formed by the participant parents regarding the concept of educational problems*

Metaphors	f	%	Metaphors	f	%
1- Octopus	1	%1	24- Guinea pig	1	%1
2- Aquarium	1	%2	25- Baked potato	1	%1
3- Labyrinthiform	5	%5	26- Labyrinth	1	%1
4- Ashura	2	%2	27- Tire	1	%1
5- Horse race	6	%6	28- Ocean	1	%1
6- Balloon	2	%2	29- Army	1	%1
7- Bomb	4	%4	30- Spider web	1	%1
8- Chameleon	3	%3	31- Money	5	%5
9- China	7	%7	32- Boss	1	%1
10- Sock rip	2	%2	33- Salad	1	%1
11- Soup	2	%2	34- Ivy	1	%3
12- Experiment board	3	%3	35- Politics	3	%1
13- Bottomless pit	2	%2	36- Field	1	%1
14- Doctor	2	%2	37- Coach	1	%1
15- Knot	3	%3	38- Trade	4	%4
16- Mill	1	%1	39- Space	1	%1
17- Factory	1	%1	40- Jigsaw	3	%3
18- Weather	1	%1	41- Eating food	1	%1
19- Needle	3	%3	42- Crab	1	%1
20- Unstable person	1	%1	43- Snake	1	%1
21- Complex hair	1	%1	44- Road	1	%1
22- Cyprus problem	12	%12	45- Walking	1	%1
23- Sword	1	%1	46- Chain	1	%1
			N	100	100

In Table 2, the metaphors suggested by the parents participating in the study regarding the concept of educational problems are shown with their frequency and percentages. As can be seen, a total of 46 metaphors for the concept of educational problems were developed by the parents participating in the study. The most frequently used one has been the "Cyprus Problem" metaphor. The frequency of the other metaphors are as follows: Octopus (f = 1, 1%), Aquarium (f = 1, 2%), Labyrinthiform, (f = 5, 5%), Ashura (f = 2, 2%), Horse race (f = 6, % 6), Balloon (f = 2, 2%), Bomb (f = 4, 4%), Chameleon (f = 3, 3%), China (f = 7, 7%), Sock rip (f = 2, 2%), Soup (f = 2, 2%), Experiment Board (f = 3, 3%), Bottomless pit (f = 2, 2%), Doctor (f = 2, 2%), Knot (f = 3, 3%), Mill (f = 1, 1%), Factory (f = 1, 1%), Weather (f = 1, 1%), Needle (f = 3, 3%), Unstable person (f = 1, 1%), Complex hair (f = 1, 1%), Cyprus Problem (f = 12, 12%), Sword (f = 1, 1%), Guinea pig (f = 1, 1%), Baked potato (f = 1, 1%),

Labyrinth (f = 1, 1%), Tire (f = 1, 1%), Ocean (f = 1, 1%), Army (f = 1, 1%), Spider web (f = 1, 1%), Money (f = 5, 5%), Boss (f = 1, 1%), Salad (f = 1, 1%), Ivy (f = 1, 3%), Politics (f = 3, 1%), Field (f = 1, 1%), Coach (f = 1, 1%), Trade (f = 4, 4%), Space (f = 1, 1%), Jigsaw (f = 3, 3%), Eating food (f = 1, 1%), Crab (f = 1, 1%), Snake (f = 1, 1%), Road (f = 1, 1%), Walking (f = 1, 1%), and Chain (f = 1, 1%).

Based on this generalization, the reasons for the metaphors produced by the parents were analyzed by content analysis and the metaphors were grouped under 5 categories to determine the source of the problems.

Table 3. Metaphor Categories Formed by Parents Regarding the Concept of Educational Problems

Category	Metaphors	f	%
Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure	Octopus (1), aquarium (1), labyrinthiform (5), Ashura (2), Chinese (7), soup (2), knot (3), mill (1), unstable person (1), complex hair (1), Cyprus problem (12), baked potato (1), labyrinth (1), salad (1), ivy (1)	40	%40
Education problems as a variational-political structure	Chameleon (3), experiment board (3), weather (1), guinea pig (1), tire (1), ocean (1), politics (3), jigsaw (3), walking (1)	17	%17
Education problems as a fear figure	Balloon (2), bomb (4), doctor (2), needle (3), sword (1), army (1), boss (1), coach (1), crab (1), snake (1)	17	%17
Education problems as a expenses structure	Horse race (6), money (5), trade (4)	15	%15
Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure	Sock rib (2), bottomless pit (2), factory (1), spider web (1), field (1), space (1), eating food (1), road (1), chain (1)	11	%11
	N	100	100

When Table 3 was examined, it was seen that the most metaphor suggested in the category of “a complex structure” (40%), followed by “variational structure” (17%) and “fear figure” (17%) with the same frequency. These categories were also followed by “a structure based on expenses” (15%) and a “continuous-infinite” structure (11%).

Metaphor Categories;

1- Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure (f=40, %40):

In this category, education problems are defined as complex, uncertain, and complicated situations. Regarding this category, the metaphors of octopus (1), aquarium (1), labyrinthiform (5), Ashura (2), Chinese (7), soup (2), knot (3), mill (1), the unstable person (1), complex hair (1), Cyprus problem (12), baked potato (1), labyrinth (1), salad (1), and ivy (1) were suggested, and it was seen as the category that developed the most metaphors. Some examples of metaphors created by parents are given below.

“Problems in primary education are similar to the Cyprus problem because the problems in education, just like the Cyprus problem, have existed for a long time and cannot be solved (P42).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to a labyrinthiform because it has become a messy and unsolvable knot (P13).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to China because the problems in education are crowded like China and cannot be solved because the whereabouts of the chaos is not found.”

“Problems in primary education are similar to soup because there are many issues to be solved. So, nobody finds a solution. Every politician who comes with ambiguity gets confused more and more (P28).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to knots because more problems are created instead of solving existing ones(P55).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to a salad because every newcomer throws either tomato, cucumber or lettuce or something else to the salad. They all come together, and something complex emerges (P17).”

2- Education problems as a variational-political structure (f=17, %17):

In this category, educational problems are defined as a variational and political structure. Related to this category, chameleon (3), experiment board (3), weather (1), guinea pig (1), tire (1), ocean (1), politics (3), jigsaw (3), and walking (1) metaphors have been developed. Some examples of metaphors created by parents are given below.

“Problems in primary education are similar to chameleons because the frequent changes in politics and color in the education system change education according to political views, and the problems do not come to an end (P13).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to experiment board because new ideas and decisions are constantly being made, and the system is changed. Whether a thought is correct or not is tested on the system (P69).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to politics because nobody tries to improve the system by making joint decisions. There are always situations of opposition, and the really good things are not allowed to happen (P11).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to jigsaw because new systems are constantly coming. The elected politicians are introducing new systems and removing the old ones. Then comes another political color, and it sets up its own system. Nobody thinks about our children. They play like a puzzle (P42).”

3- Education problems as a fear figure (f=17, %17):

In this category, education problems have been described as fear figures. Related to this category, balloon (2), bomb (4), doctor (2), needle (3), sword (1), army (1), boss (1), coach (1), crab (1), and snake (1) metaphors have been developed. Some examples of metaphors created by parents are given below.

“Problems in primary education are similar to a bomb because it can explode in someone’s hands at any moment. Every newly elected government does not produce solutions to prevent the bomb, which we call problems, from exploding in its hands. Every one of them lives by discrediting the old (P66).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to a doctor because individuals are desperate about their educational deficiencies. We fell into their hands, we can’t get rid of them, and we just crave for a remedy (P85).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to the needle because no matter how sick you are, you will not get it done so as not to suffer. The person who touches the education problems knows that they will be harmed, so they prefer not to touch them at all, and the problems cannot be fixed (P70).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to crabs because nobody touches them because they don’t want to be harmed (P8).”

4- Education problems as a expenses structure (f=15, %15):

In this category, education problems are defined as a expences situation. Related to this category, metaphors of a horse race (6), money (5), and trade (4) have been developed. Some examples of metaphors created by parents are given below.

“Problems in primary education are similar to horse racing because our children are constantly racing in the education system, but in the end, they cannot make much progress. Our efforts are wasted (P32).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to money because we send them to private lessons to provide a good education for our children. Schools are not interested in our kids.”

“Problems in primary education are similar to trade because teachers give information in grams as if they were selling tomatoes in the market. This time, we have to send our children to private lessons or private teaching institutions (P1).”

5- Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure (f=11, %11):

Education problems in this category are defined as a continuous, unending structure. Related to this category, sock rib (2), bottomless pit (2), factory (1), spider web (1), field (1), space (1), eating food (1), road (1), and chain (1) metaphors have been developed. Some examples of metaphors created by parents are given below.

“Problems in primary education are similar to sock rib because when one side is ripped, it is removed without stopping until it is finished (P16).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to bottomless pit because it is unknown where the end is. If a person falls into the pit, he can stay there forever (P59).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to eating food because you eat, you get hungry again, and it always goes like this. Education problems arise before one can be solved (P23).”

“Problems in primary education are similar to road because it is not clear where you will go and how long you will run (P2).”

In this context, the basic category focuses on the fact that the system is complex and full of uncertainties; in essence, creating this situation can be linked to categories consisting of other metaphors facing the system. In particular, constant changes and inefficiency in the education system both lead to confusion and result in more uncertain processes. Consequently, parents’ metaphorical perceptions of educational problems are strongly associated with complexity and uncertainty.

The categories consisting of metaphors produced by the parents regarding the concept of “educational problems” were categorized according to the gender, educational status, and employment status of the parents, and their frequency and percentage distribution were examined. These distributions are shown in Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6. When Table 4 is examined, the category in which women produce the most metaphor among themselves is

THE METAPHORIC PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF PROBLEMS IN
PRIMARY EDUCATION

44.4% (N=28) of 'Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure,' while 19% (N=12) of education problems as a expenses structure,% 15.9 (N=10) education problems as a variational-political structure, 11.1% (N = 7) education problems as a continuous-infinite structure and 9.5% (N=6) 'education as a fear figure with the least metaphor.

Table 4. Distribution of categorized metaphors by 'gender' variable

Categories	Female		Male	
	f	%	f	%
Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure	28	44.4	12	32.4
Education problems as a variational-political structure	10	15.9	7	18.9
Education problems as a fear figure	6	9.5	11	29.7
Education problems as a expenses structure	12	19	3	8.1
Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure	7	11.1	4	10.8
N	63	100	37	100

When Table 4 is examined, the category in which female participants produce the most metaphors among themselves is 'Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure' with a frequency of 44.4% (N=28), while 19% (N=12) think of education problems as a expenses structure, 15.9% (N=10) as a variational-political structure, 11.1% (N=7) as a continuous-infinite structure and 9.5% (N=6) as a fear figure, which is the least repeated metaphor.

While the category with the highest metaphor among male participants was 32.4% (N=12) 'Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure,' this was followed by 29.7% (N=11) education problems as a fear figure, 18.9% (N=7) education problems as a variational-political structure, 10.8% (N=4) education problems as a continuous-infinite structure, and 8.1% (N=3) 'education problems as a expenses structure' with the least metaphors.

Table 5. Distribution of categorized metaphors by 'educational status' variable

Categories	Primary		Secondary		High School		Undergraduate		Master		Doctorate	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure	0	0	0	0	18	43.9	19	35.8	1	33.3	2	66.7
Education problems as a variational-political structure	0	0	0	0	7	17.1	9	17	1	33.3	0	0
Education problems as a fear figure	0	0	0	0	5	12.2	12	22.6	0	0	0	0
Education problems as a expenses structure	0	0	0	0	8	19.5	7	13.2	0	0	0	0
Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure	0	0	0	0	3	7.3	6	11.3	1	33.3	1	33.3
N	0	0	0	0	41	100	53	100	3	100	3	100

When Table 5 is examined, it is observed that there are no participants from the primary and secondary school levels. In contrast, the category in which high school graduate parents produce the most metaphor is the category ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure’ with a frequency of 43.9% (N=18). In comparison, this was followed by 19.5% (N=8) education problems as a expenses structure, 17.1% (N=7) education problems as a variational-political structure, 12.2% (N=5) education problems as a fear figure, and 7.3% (N=3) ‘education problems as a continuous-infinite structure’ with the least metaphor.

While the category in which parents with an undergraduate degree produced the most metaphor was ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure’ category with 35.8% (N=19), it was followed by education problems as a fear figure with a frequency pf 22.6% (N=12), 17% (N=9) education problems as a variational-political structure, 13.2% (N=7) educational problems as a expenses structure, and 11.3% (N=6) ‘education problems as a continuous-infinite structure’ with the least metaphors.

The categories in which parents with a master’s degree produce the most and equal metaphors with 33.3% (N=1) are ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure,’ ‘Education problems as a variational-political structure’ and education as a continuous-infinite structure. However, they did not produce any metaphors in the categories of ‘Education problems as a expenses structure’ and ‘Education problems as a fear figure.’

While the category in which parents with a doctorate degree produced the most metaphor was ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure’ category with 66.7% (N=2), this was followed by the category of ‘Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure’ at 33.3% (N=1). However, they did not produce any metaphors in the categories of ‘Education problems as a expenses structure,’ ‘Education problems as a variational-political structure,’ and ‘Education problems as a fear figure.’

Table 6. Distribution of Categorized Metaphors by ‘Employment Status’ Variable

Categories	Employed		Unemployed	
	f	%	f	%
Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure	28	38.8	12	42.9
Education problems as a variational-political structure	12	16.7	5	17.9
Education problems as a fear figure	16	22.2	1	3.6
Education problems as a expenses structure	9	12.5	6	21.4
Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure	7	9.7	4	14.3
N	72	100	28	100

When Table 6 is examined, the category in which employed parents produce the most metaphor among themselves is ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure’ category with a frequency of 38.8% (N=12), while it is followed by 22.2% (N=16) of ‘Education problems as a fear figure,’ 16.7% (N=12) of ‘education problems as a variational-political structure,’ 12.5% (N=9) of ‘education problems as a expenses structure,’ and 9.7% (N=7) of ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure.’

The category in which metaphors are produced the most among unemployed parents was ‘Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure’ at a rate of 42.9% (N=12), while

it was followed by 'education problems as a expenses structure' with a frequency of 21.4% (N=6), 'education problems as a variational-political structure' with 17.9% (N= 5), 'education problems as a continuous-infinite structure' with 14.3% (N=4), and education problems as a fear figure' with a frequency of 3.6% (N=1) as the least repeated category.

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

4.1. Conclusion and Discussions

In this study, which aims to determine parents' perspectives on the concept of problems experienced in primary education through metaphors, a total of 46 metaphors were developed, and these metaphors were collected in 5 categories. The most metaphor-produced of these categories is the "Education problems as a complex-ambiguous structure" category, and it represents the reflection of the image of education problems in the minds of 40% of parents. Following these, "Education problems as a variational-political structure" (17%), which reminds educational problems as a changing expression, and "Education problems as a fear figure" (17%), which reminds them as an expression of fear, "Education as a expenses structure" (15%), which reminds them as an expression of money, and "Education problems as a continuous-infinite structure" (11%) categories, which reminds them as an expression of endless continuous.

The findings found in this study also point to findings parallel to some previous studies. Education problems emerging from the parents' metaphors concluded that in the category of "complex structure," problems in education are complex and difficult to solve. In this context, parents use metaphors "octopus, aquarium, labyrinthiform, Ashura, China, soup, knot, needle, unstable person, complex hair, Cyprus problem, baked potato, labyrinth, salad, and ivy" and in the category of "a variable structure," it was concluded that the problems experienced in education differ and it is again difficult to solve. In this context, it was observed that the parents used the metaphors "chameleon, experiment board, weather, guinea pig, tire, ocean, politics, jigsaw, and walking." Similarly, it was observed that negative metaphors related to the education program are used in Özdemir's study as "fashion, experiment board, and chaos" (2012), in Taşdemir and Taşdemir's (2011b) study as "scratch pad, turtle, a blank sheet of paper, puppet, chameleon, refrigerator, war, ivy branch, etc.", in Aykaç and Çetin's (2014) study as "slave, oligarchic structure, empty box, celery meal, dirty dress, misguided child, planet without an orbit, etc.", and in Semerci's (2007) study as "mossy lake, a dream, child without a personality, failed surgery, diesel, and snowballs in the sea." The "turtle" metaphor produced in the study conducted by Taşdemir and Taşdemir (2011b) related to primary education programs was also produced in this research as a negative metaphor. Aykaç and Çetin's (2014) finding that teachers and prospective teachers generally have negative perceptions about new primary education programs implemented in primary schools and Taşdemir and Taşdemir's (2011b) finding that 75% of teachers produced negative metaphors about primary education curriculum both coincide with the findings of this study.

Örücü (2014) divided the metaphors produced by prospective teachers regarding the education system into conceptual themes such as chaos/uncertainty, mechanical/bureaucratic function, political, competition/exam centeredness, inability to achieve the goal, puzzle board, inefficiency, and obstacle to freedoms. It is possible to suggest that some of these themes (chaos/uncertainty, political, competition/test-centeredness, puzzle-board, and inefficiency) overlap with the themes of a complex-ambiguous, variational-political structure, and fear figure in this study. In this study's evaluations, the category in which the most prominent metaphors are gathered in the category of "educational problems as a complex-ambiguous structure" with 40 participants' opinions. Parents' perception of the education system as a

frequently changing and disordered complex structure is quite interesting. This finding also supports the findings obtained within the scope of the research titled “National Education System in Turkey: Structural Problems and Suggestions” conducted by Gür and Çelik (2009) for the Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETAV). As a result of this research, it is suggested that in the education policies followed in Turkey, national education is not considered as a whole system, and therefore changes made to the elements of the system are put into effect without adequate analysis of the effect of the other elements of the system. In addition, in the study conducted by Örucü (2014) using metaphors about the education system, it is stated that the continuous changes made in the system in parallel with the findings of this research cause confusion and uncertainty.

In Gültekin’s (2013) study, the metaphors of “labyrinth, rugged road, knot, equation with many unknowns, hot peppers, mussels, concrete, and turtle” constituted the category of “a complex structure that causes problems” as one of the themes created in the research. “The metaphors produced by teacher candidates about educational programs.” Resembling the curriculum to a “labyrinth,” a prospective teacher in that study underlined the complexity of the system and explained these opinions as follows: “Today’s education program is like a difficult labyrinth to come out of. Much effort must be made to understand and adapt it.” Resembling the curriculum to “hot pepper,” a prospective teacher said, “It overwhelms the students, it creates pressure on the students” and added that the program is an element of pressure. It is seen that some categories in this study are similar to those in Gültekin’s (2013) study. To this end, the categories of “labyrinth, knot, equation with multiple unknowns, and turtle” all overlap.

The results of the other findings of the study are as follows: By examining the gender distribution of metaphors in which parents express their perception of educational problems, it was found that both female participants and male participants generally see problems in education as complex, uncertain, and complicated situation.

Examining the distribution of metaphors that parents express their perceptions about educational problems in terms of educational status, it was observed that there were no participants from primary and secondary school levels, while it was found that participants with the high school, undergraduate, master, and doctorate education level generally saw the problems in education as complex, uncertain, and complicated.

When the distribution of metaphors by which parents express their perceptions about educational problems in terms of employment status was examined, it was found that both employed and unemployed participants generally saw the problems in education as complex, uncertain, and complicated. It was similarly observed that negative metaphors related to the education program are used in Özdemir’s study as “fashion, experiment board, and chaos” (2012), Aykaç and Çetin (2014), and Semerci’s (2007) studies are similar to the results of this study.

4.2. Suggestions

In conclusion, this study’s findings provide important information that metaphors can be used as a powerful tool to reveal parents’ personal perceptions of the education system. In this context, based on the relevant study, it can be suggested to conduct more qualitative and quantitative studies analyzing the opinions of parents about the education system and existing problems as well as their ideas about the “education system” in their ideal and to investigate the reasons for using negative metaphors about the programs. Identifying and reviewing the problems and failures that arise in the education program is very important for the program’s efficiency and effectiveness. To this end, research should be carried out on the efficient implementation of the existing educational program, taking into account the opinions of

teachers, students, parents, and other educational components, along with the results of the research. Besides, research to compare parents' perceptions of the concept of "educational problems" through metaphors can offer important clues to people interested in education and system designers. Consequently, it is believed that the research results can give an idea of the functioning and non-functioning aspects of the system to those who produce policies related to the TRNC education system.

References

- Arı, M. (2005). Early Childhood Education and the Importance of Quality in Turkey, M.Sevinç (Editor). *New Approaches in Early Childhood Development and Education I. c. I*, 31-40
- Aykaç, N., & Çelik, Ö. (2014). Comparison of metaphorical perceptions of teachers and prospective teachers about the education program. *Education and science*, 39(173), 328-340.
- Banabakova, V. (2022). Digitalization In Higher Education-The Need For Quality Training And Professional Realization Of Students. *Education, Science And Digital Innovations-Sinergy For Professional Way 2021, Round table proceedings*, (1), 9-18.
- Balkar, B. (2009). A qualitative study on parent and teacher views on the school-family cooperation process. *Çukurova University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 3(36), 105-123.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Harvard University Press.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Kılıç-Çakmak, E., Akgün, Ö., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2008). Scientific research methods.
- Cerit, Y. (2010). Training of students, teachers and administrators on basic metaphors. *Education and Science*, 33(147), 3-13.
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide (fourth edition)*. Open University Press
- Erturk, S. (1972). Program development in education. *Ankara: Sailing Publications*, 4.
- Epstein, J. L. (2018). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*. Vintage.
- Gür, B. S., & Çelik, Z. (2009). *National Education System in Turkey: Structural Problems and Suggestions*.
- Gürsimsek, I. (2003). Family Participation in Preschool Education and Psycho-Social Development. *Journal of Educational Sciences in Theory and Practice*, 3(1), 125-144.
- Hammersley, M. (2013). *What is qualitative research?* Bloomsbury Academic
- Hill, N. E., & Taylor, L. C. (2004). Parental school involvement and children's academic achievement: Pragmatics and issues. *Current directions in psychological science*, 13(4), 161-164.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphor we live by*. Chicago/London.

- Maxamatjonovich, N. O., & Burxoniddin o'g'li, K. F. (2022). Legal Education Is the Basis for the Development of Society. *Journal of Ethics and Diversity in International Communication*, 2(2), 5-8.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Oğan, M. (2000). School, parent-teacher association and parent communication and parents' educational expectations. *Unpublished Master Thesis. Ankara University Institute of Social Sciences*.
- Örücü, D. (2014). Metaphorical perceptions of teacher candidates towards school, school management and Turkish education system. *Journal of Educational Administration in Theory and Practice*, 20(3), 327-358.
- Özdamar, N., & Aydın, O. (2020). Investigation of mobile learning and mobile learning applications of universities that carry out Open Education activities in Turkey. *Journal of Open Education Applications and Research*, 6(4), 113-154.
- Özdemir, S., Bacanlı, H., & Sözer, M. (2007). Pre-school and primary education system in Turkey: Basic problems and solutions. *Turkish Education Association*, 1.
- Özdemir, S. M. (2012). Eğitim programı kavramına ilişkin öğretmen adaylarının metaforik algıları. *Journal of Theoretical Educational Science*, 372.
- Patnaik, S., Sharma, U., & Subban, P. (2022). Who Is Responsible for Students' Challenging Behaviour? A Study of the Causal Attributions of Teachers to Challenging Behaviour in Primary Schools in West Bengal, India. *Disabilities*, 2(1), 56-72.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks. Cal.: Sage Publications.
- Senin, M. A., & Halim, H. (2021). The Administrator, Teachers and Parents Involvement in Preschool during Movement Control Order. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood*, 10, 10-24.
- Semerci, Ç. (2007). A New First with Metaphors on the Concept of "Curriculum Development"; A Different View on Retim Programs. *Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi/Journal of Social Sciences*, 31(2), 125-140.
- Semke, C. A., Garbacz, S. A., Kwon, K., Sheridan, S. M., & Woods, K. E. (2010). Family involvement for children with disruptive behaviors: The role of parenting stress and motivational beliefs. *Journal of School Psychology*, 48(4), 293-312.
- Silman, F., & Şimşek, H. (2006). A Metaphorical Overview of Schools and Central Education Institutions in Turkey and the United States. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research (EJER)*, (23).
- Şimşek, A., & Eroğlu, Ö. (2013). *Behavioral sciences*. Education Publisher.
- Şişman, M. (2002). *The understanding of excellence in education: Effective schools*. Pegem A Publications.
- Taşdemir, A., & Taşdemir, M. (2011, April). Metaphors on teaching process and teachers; produced by the teachers "Öğretmenlik ve Öğretim Süreci Üzerine Öğretmen Metaforları". In *2nd International Conference On New Trends In Education And Their Implications* (pp. 27-29).

THE METAPHORIC PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF PROBLEMS IN
PRIMARY EDUCATION

- Association, T.E. (2007). Pre-school and primary education system in Turkey: Basic problems and solutions (Edt. Özdemir, Hasan Bacanlı and Murat Sözer). *Ankara: Adim Agency*.
- Varış, F. Diğerleri (1998) *Introduction to Educational Science. Alkim Publications. Ankara*.
- Wibowo, D. E., Mahmudi, A., & Retnawati, H. (2021). Cooperative Relationship between Teachers and Parents: Develop Learning Ability for Primary School Students during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Education Research and Evaluation*, 5(2), 294-301.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2016). Qualitative research in social sciences. *Ankara: Seçkin Publications*.