



Predicting play participation from parents' views on play and parenting attitudes*

Ebeveynlerin oyuna yönelik görüşlerinin ve ebeveyn tutumlarının oyuna katılımlarını yordaması*

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Abstract

Play begins at home. Parents are usually their children's first playmates from the first days of life. This study examined the predictive power of parents' views about play and parenting attitudes on their participation in children's play. The study sample consisted of 602 parents who had children attending public preschool-kindergarten programs in a city in southwest Türkiye. Data were analyzed by using multiple regression. The results showed that all types of play participation were statistically significantly related to parenting attitudes and their views about play. Democratic and authoritarian parenting attitudes were found to be determining factors, and democratic attitude was the strongest in predicting the level of parental participation in play. Regarding parents' views on play, only the positive play views subscale significantly contributed to predicting all types of play participation. Overall, the results demonstrate that the predictive power of parenting attitudes is higher on parents' play participation levels than their views on play. Implications for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Parents' participation in play, views on play, parenting attitudes

Öz

Oyun evde başlar. Yaşamın ilk günlerinden itibaren ebeveynler genellikle çocuklarının ilk oyun arkadaşlarıdır. Bu çalışmada, ebeveynlerin oyun hakkındaki görüşlerinin ve ebeveyn tutumlarının oyuna katılımları üzerindeki yordayıcı gücü incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın örneklemi, Türkiye'nin güneybatısındaki bir şehirdeki resmi okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarına devam eden çocukları olan 602 ebeveynnden oluşmuştur. Veriler çoklu regresyon kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar, ebeveynlerin oyun katılımının ebeveyn tutumları ve oyun hakkındaki görüşleriyle istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir şekilde ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Demokratik ve otoriter ebeveyn tutumlarının belirleyici faktör olduğu ve demokratik tutumun ebeveynlerin oyuna katılım düzeyini yordamada en güçlü faktör olduğu saptanmıştır. Ebeveynlerin oyun hakkındaki görüşleriyle ilgili olarak, yalnızca olumlu görüşler alt ölçeği, tüm oyun türlerine katılımı yordamada anlamlı katkıda bulunmuştur. Genel olarak sonuçlar, ebeveyn tutumlarının oyuna katılımlarına yönelik yordayıcı gücünün oyun hakkındaki görüşlerinden daha yüksek olduğunu göstermektedir. Gelecekteki araştırmalara yönelik öneriler tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ebeveynlerin oyuna katılımı, oyun hakkındaki görüşleri, ebeveyn tutumları

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Introduction

Regardless of how it is defined and classified, play begins at home. Starting from the first days of life, parents are usually their children's first playmates and environmental and material providers. Although parents have ample opportunities to take part in their children's play, not all parents value play or participate in it. The question is, therefore, which parental features lead to endorsement and engagement in play?

Play is highly valued in the literature (Bodrova & Leong, 2005; Roopnarine & Johnson, 2005; Tuğrul et al., 2014). Tuğrul et al., (2014) state that play is a child's exploration area and is a central part of the power of childhood and the language of learning. Adults should, therefore, be aware of the essential link between play and learning. Therefore, the value given to play by the adults around a child seems to be equal to the value given to learning, and this issue is supported by related research findings (Ihmeideh, 2019; LaForett & Mendez, 2017). Parents' positive views of play have been linked with their level of engagement (Ihmeideh, 2019) and positive play outcomes, such as interactive play skills (LaForett & Mendez, 2017). To better appreciate these findings, it is necessary to consider play's meaning, the nature of parents' play views and participation, and parenting attitudes' association with play.

The meaning of play

Play is "essential to lifelong learning, creativity and well-being" (Wood, 2007, p. 311). The literature states that there are generally two definitions of play: the criterion approach and the continuum approach. The criterion approach lists the features of the play. For instance, Smith and Pellegrini (2013) define play "as activity done for its own sake, characterized by means rather than ends (the process is more important than any end point or goal), flexibility (objects are used in novel combinations or roles are acted out in new ways), and positive effects (children often smile, laugh, and say they are enjoying themselves)" (p.1). More recently, it has been claimed that using a criterion approach to define play is insufficient (Oers, 2013; Zosh et al., 2018) since such a definition does not reflect the complexity of play. Similarly, Zosh et al., (2018) suggest defining play as a continuum that includes free-to-guided play and games. Such a continuum encompasses activities ranging from more to less child-directed forms of play. Considering play on a continuum may lead to better identification of the forms of play and the benefits of these different types. Examining these two approaches to defining play shows that the criterion approach illuminates the features of what play is, while the continuum approach considers the degree of child and adult authority in play.

Different forms of play may offer children various opportunities, such as make-believe, physical play, and games with rules, all contributing to child learning in various ways. A study examining the context of pretend play has revealed that children's pretend play encompasses a variety of opportunities for mathematical development (Worthington & van Oers, 2016). Moreover, make-believe play and games with rules are found to be supportive of self-regulation (Bodrova & Leong, 2005). Goldstein and Lerner (2017) investigated the effect of three different types of guided play intervention,

namely dramatic pretend play, block play, and story time, on the emotional control abilities of 4-year-olds. Results show that engaging in guided dramatic pretend play supports children's emotional control, while guided block play or story time does not produce the same results. Further evidence shows the positive effect of less structured activities on children's executive functions (Barker et al., 2014). Therefore, instead of an either-or approach, it seems necessary to investigate what skills, attitudes, and knowledge children can gain by engaging in play forms at each end of the continuum.

Parents' views on and participation in play

Research has established the contributions of supportive parental play beliefs to parents' engagement in play (Ihmeideh, 2019; Lin & Li, 2018) and child play outcomes (LaForett & Mendez, 2017). Indeed a relation has been found between a child's reduced participation in interactive play and unsupportive views on play held by their parents (Fogle & Mendez, 2006). Parents may endorse different kinds of play and are more likely to participate in the types of play they value (Ihmeideh, 2019) and act differently according to their view about the purpose of play (Lin & Li, 2018). Sak et al. (2024) investigated the role of parents' (n=341) gender in parenting attitudes and parental permission to engage in risky play. They found that parents with democratic and permissive parenting attitudes were more likely to allow risky play than those with authoritarian and overprotective attitudes.

A qualitative study revealed that parents particularly agreed that games support different areas of children's development, such as communication skills, social behavior, and physical development (Gür Dörtok & Dursun, 2024). Another study conducted with 240 parents in Qatar indicated that parents had positive perceptions about play, acknowledged play's effect on development, and were involved in their children's physical and discovery play (Ihmeideh, 2019). Lin and Li (2018) investigated Chinese parents' beliefs and engagement in children's play at home. They found that some parents view play as just for fun, while others consider it important for academic learning. Parents who considered play important for academic learning engaged in their children's play, whereas parents who highlighted play for fun preferred not to involve their children's play directly. Instead, they acted as organizers of play-related issues, such as arranging play space and materials.

On the other hand, holding supportive views about play does not necessarily mean that parents participate, so they put their views into practice. Participant parents in Shiakou and Belsky's study (2013) considered play essential for children's development, but they devoted more time to academic study and organized lessons than play. Parents perceived play to be more important than academics. The authors related this inconsistency between play beliefs and practices to the effect of school (Shiakou & Belsky, 2013). Likewise, in Warash et al.'s study (2017), parents supported play for preschoolers, but the degree of their support lessened as the children got old. An investigation into the place of play in parent-child interactions determined that parents regularly play with their young children while they prefer to do educational activities

with their five-year-old instead of play (Özyürek & Gürleyik, 2016). Parents may have concerns about the degree of learning in play (Kit Ho Fung & Doris Pui Wah Cheng, 2012), and they may prioritize their children's academic achievement more than social and physical development in some cultures (Frewen, 2015). Parents also seem to approve of play as long as it does not hinder academic learning (Carolan et al., 2021).

Parenting attitudes and play

From a traditional perspective, parenting is depicted as the act of raising children. However, parents are not the only actors in this process, which includes both parents and children. Hence, children and parents reciprocally influence each other in parenting (Power et al., 2013). Darling and Steinberg (1993, p. 488) define parenting style as "a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent's behaviors are expressed." A parenting style can, therefore, be summarized as being attitudes toward the child.

Authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, disengaged, or rejecting-neglecting parenting attitudes are determined in literature as approaches to parenting (Baumrind, 1971; 1991, cited in Baumrind et al., 2010). Flexible control and high levels of support are two important features of parents with an authoritative attitude, as are being sympathetic and providing children with opportunities for decision-making (Baumrind, 1971). Authoritarian parents' distinctive features are delineated as "(1) unqualified power assertion, (2) arbitrary discipline, (3) psychological control, (4) severe physical punishment, and (5) hostile verbal criticism." The permissive parenting reflects the features of "low demandingness and high responsiveness," while disengaged parenting can be described as being "demanding, low-responsive, and low-autonomy supportive" (Baumrind et al., 2010, pp. 159, 161, 162). There is also the overprotective attitude, which is common in Turkish culture (Karabulut Demir & Şendil, 2018). This attitude is depicted as "the prolonging of infantile care through excessive control" (Holden & Buck, 2002, p. 540). It is the attitude of the parents who do what the child can do. Parents tend to think that their children cannot do things independently (Bozyiğit & Madran, 2018).

Even though there are different views about the relationship between parental attitudes and behaviors, the relationship can be seen as unidirectional. In other words, parental attitudes are seen to initiate parental behavior, which in turn influences child outcomes (Holden & Buck, 2002). Parents' attitudes to child rearing constitute important dimensions of caregiving as attitudes that affect parents' practices toward their children and the types of environments that they create for them. Research findings showed that the effects of behaviors corresponding to pressure, discipline, and overprotection in parental attitudes and behaviors on children and adolescents were consistently negative. In contrast, the effects of democratic and accepting attitudes and behaviors were consistently positive (Sümer et al., 2010). Bornstein et al., (2011) claim that parents with a progressive attitude value their children's independence more than those with an

authoritarian attitude. Hence, the method of child socialization used by each group varies. For instance, Cevher-Kalburan, and Ivrendi (2016) investigated the parenting attitudes of 890 Turkish parents of children who enrolled in early childhood institutions and looked at the practices and benefits of risky play. The findings indicated that overprotective parenting was the strongest predictor of practices and benefits of risky play. Another study examined the fathers' participation level and attitudes in raising children. Results reveal that fathers with a more democratic attitude were more likely to engage in free time activities, play, meet the daily needs of their children, provide physical care, be sensitive to what is experienced, and show affection (Karabulut & Şendil, 2018). As another example, research showed cultural variations in the levels of freedom provided to children, with Estonian mothers being more supportive of their children's independence than other cultures (Saar & Niglas, 2001).

In a qualitative study conducted with 142 parents, it was determined that the majority of the participants did not play with their children due to reasons such as work, lack of energy, and time (Gülen & Barış, 2021). Sunar (2009) examined mothers' and fathers' child-rearing practices in three generations of urban Turkish families and found that the features of being affectionate, less controlling, less discipline-oriented, and more encouraging of autonomy are valued by both parents. Another study showed that fathers did not adopt the traditional father role. Instead, they defined paternity as the father's participation in the development, care, and education of the child with the mother. Playing and spending time with children were reported by fathers as being among their roles in child education (Ünal & Kök, 2015). In fact, one study found that fathers were more involved in socio-dramatic and physical play than mothers (Işıkoğlu & Ivrendi, 2008).

To sum up, related research shows that parents generally have positive views about the influence of play on child development. However, these research findings lead us to conclude that parents may not reflect their supportive play views into practice, and others may be involved in their children's play to support academic learning. Regarding the influence of parenting attitudes on play, different parenting attitudes result in different parenting behaviors, and parents' participation in different types of play, such as academic play and socio-dramatic play, are therefore likely to differ. The influence of parenting attitudes and parental play views on their levels of participation in play has not been widely examined together to the best of our knowledge. The following question is therefore addressed in this study:

1. Can the levels of parents' participation in play be predicted by their views about play and parenting attitudes?

Methods

Research design

This study examined the predictive power of parents' views about play and their parenting attitudes on their participation in children's play using a relational survey method.

Participants

Participants were parents of children (aged 48-66 months) attending formal preschools in a province in south-western Turkey. Teachers delivered the questionnaires to parents who had volunteered to participate in this study. The questionnaires were sent to 1127 parents through teachers. A total of 672 parents responded to the survey. After removing questionnaires with missing data and the ones with outliers, 602 were used in the analysis.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Participating Parents

Variables	Group	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	478	79.4
	Male	120	19.9
	Total	598	99.3*
Age	25 and below	39	6.5
	25-32	249	41.4
	32-40	254	42.2
	40 +	58	9.6
	Total	600	99.7
Mothers' educational level	Elementary-Middle school	218	36.2
	High school	203	33.7
	College and above	178	29.6
	Total	599	99.5
Fathers' educational level	Elementary-Middle school	206	34.2
	High school	199	33.1
	College and above	195	32.4
	Total	600	99.7
Number of children	Single child	191	31.7
	2 children	307	51.0
	3 and above	103	17.1
	Total	601	99.8

*Totals do not add up to 100 due to missing data.

According to Table 1, there are more mothers participating than fathers. The majority of parents are between 25 to 40 years old, and a greater number of fathers were educated to a college and higher level than mothers. About half of the parents had two children.

Data collection

The Parents' Views about Play (İvrendi & Işıkoğlu, 2008). This scale is used to determine parents' views about play. It consists of 12 items with two factors: positive views (7 items, e.g., "Play helps develop my child's physical skills"; "Playing with my

child strengthens our relationship") and negative views on play (5 items, e.g., "My play choices are more useful than his/her choices"). It is a 4-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree). Cronbach's alpha (α) value for the positive views on play subscale was 0.86, and it was 0.63 for the negative views about play. In the present study, Cronbach's Alpha values were $\alpha= 0.77$ for the positive views on play subscale and $\alpha= 0.53$ for the negative views on play subscale.

The Parents' Participation in Play (Işıkoğlu & Ivrendi, 2008). This scale was used to measure parents' participation in play. It is a 4-point Likert scale (1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Frequently, 4=Always). It consists of 15 items with three factors: Academic play (5 items, e.g., "We learn numbers, colors, and letters together"), socio-dramatic - physical play (5 items, e.g., "We play with toys like cars, baby dolls"), and initiation-encouragement for play (5 items, e.g., I encourage my child to play with other children around him/her). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient values were as follows: Total scale ($\alpha=0.78$), academic play ($\alpha= 0.73$), socio-dramatic -active play ($\alpha= 0.69$), and initiation-encouragement for play ($\alpha= 0.41$) (Işıkoğlu & Ivrendi, 2008). For this study, Cronbach alpha coefficient values are as follows: Total scale ($\alpha=0.76$), academic play ($\alpha=0.67$), socio-dramatic-physical play ($\alpha=0.66$), and initiation-encouragement for play ($\alpha=0.38$).

The Parenting Attitude Scale (PAS). This scale has been developed by Karabulut Demir and Şendil (2008) to measure parents' attitudes towards children aged 2-6. It is a 5-point Likert scale (1= It is never like this, 2= Rarely like this, 3= Sometimes like this, 4= Mostly like this, 5= Always like this) and consists of four factors: democratic (17 items), authoritarian (11 items), overprotective (9 items) and permissive (9 items) (e.g., "I talk with my child about everything"; "I let my child intervene when I'm talking to someone else"). Cronbach's alpha (α) values of the factors were as follows: democratic ($\alpha=0.83$), authoritarian ($\alpha=0.76$), overprotective ($\alpha=0.75$), and permissive ($\alpha=0.74$) (Karabulut Demir & Şendil, 2008). For this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient values are as follows: democratic ($\alpha= 0.78$), authoritarian ($\alpha= 0.74$), overprotective ($\alpha= 0.74$), and permissive ($\alpha=0.64$).

Data analysis

The multiple regression analysis technique was used to investigate the predictive power of parents' views on play and their parenting attitudes on their participation in children's play. All variables' skewness and kurtosis values were examined to see whether the data was normally distributed. The skewness values were between -0.567 and -1.186 , and the kurtosis values ranged between $.031$ and 1.650 for the parents' views about play scales' total and its subscales. Parents' participation in play scale's total and its subscales' skewness ranged between -0.129 and $.268$, and the kurtosis values were between -0.139 and -0.386 . For parenting attitudes' total and subscales, skewness values were between -0.061 and $.547$, and kurtosis values ranged between -0.061 and $.708$. Since these values are between -2 and 2 , they attest to the data's normality (George & Mallery, 2010).

Findings

The mean and standard deviation scores of parents' participation in children's play, their views about play, and their parenting attitudes were computed, and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for parents' participation in children's play, their views about play and their parenting attitudes

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD
Parents' participation in play			
Academic play	602	2.69	.51480
Socio-dramatic- physical play	602	2.50	.49055
Initiation-encouragement for play	602	2.96	.41368
Parents' views about play			
Positive views on play	602	3.61	.38362
Negative views on play	602	3.14	.46226
Parenting attitudes			
Democratic	602	4.36	.51245
Authoritarian	602	1.925	.64145
Overprotective	602	3.74	.47944
Permissive	602	2.17	.39480

According to Table 2, the initiation-encouragement for play subscale has the highest mean score compared to academic and socio-dramatic-active play. This implies that parents "frequently" encourage their children to play. Parents' positive views on play has a higher mean score than negative views on play. Among the parenting attitudes, the democratic parenting attitude has the highest mean score compared to the others, followed by overprotective. The predictive power of parents' views about play and parenting attitudes on academic play participation was examined using multiple regression analysis, and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of Multiple Regression for Predicting Parents' Participation in Academic Play

Predictors	B	Std. Error	β	t	p	Bivariate correlation	Partial correlation
Constant	.993	.292		3.399	.001		
Democratic	.387	.054	.297	7.229	.000	.364	.284
Authoritarian	-.121	.043	-.113	-2.803	.005	-.231	-.114
Permissive	-.093	.039	-.092	-2.399	.017	-.137	-.098
Positive views on play	.123	.053	.092	2.322	.021	.199	.095
R=.41				Adjusted R ² =.159		F= (4.597) =29.477,	
R ² =.17				p=.000			

** $p < .01$

Table 3 shows that democratic, authoritarian, permissive, and positive views on play were statistically significant predictors in the final regression model. In contrast, overprotective and negative views on play did not make a significant contribution to the model. The R² of 17% indicates a proportion of variance in participation in academic

play that parenting attitudes and views of play can explain. The stepwise method revealed the following significant final model $F = (4.597) = 29.477$, $p = .000$. Examining standardized regression coefficients (β) demonstrates that the democratic ($\beta = .29$, $t = 7.23$, $p < .05$) parenting attitude makes the strongest contribution to explaining academic play participation followed by authoritarian ($\beta = -.11$, $t = -2.80$, $p < .05$), permissive ($\beta = -.09$, $t = -2.39$, $p < .05$) and positive views on play ($\beta = .09$, $t = 2.32$, $p < .05$).

The bivariate and partial correlations reveal a positive and mid-level correlation between democratic parenting and participation in play, while a positive and low-level correlation existed between positive views on play and participation in academic play. A negative and low-level correlation existed among authoritarian, permissive, and participation in academic play. These results imply that parents with authoritarian and permissive attitudes participate less in children's academic play. The predictive effect of parents' views on play and parenting attitudes on socio-dramatic- physical play participation was investigated using multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Multiple Regression for Predicting Parents' Participation in Socio-Dramatic-Physical Play

Predictors	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Bi-variate correlation	Partial correlation
Constant	.655	.276		2.378	.018*		
Democratic	.303	.052	.244	5.884	.000**	.329	.234
Positive views on play	.206	.051	.161	4.043	.000**	.251	.163
Authoritarian	-.117	.040	-.115	-2.902	.004**	-.203	-.118
R=.38	Adjusted R ² =.140				F= (3.598) =33.562,		
R ² =.144	p=.000						

** $p < .01$; $p < .05$

Table 4 shows that socio-dramatic-physical play was statistically significantly predicted by democratic attitude, positive views on play and an authoritarian attitude. The independent variables of democratic, positive views about play, and authoritarian parenting included in the model explain 14% of the variance in participation in socio-dramatic-physical play. Using the stepwise method, the following significant final model emerges $F = (3.598) = 33.562$, $p = .000$. Standardized regression coefficients (β) demonstrate that democratic parenting ($\beta = .24$, $t = 5.88$, $p < .05$) makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining socio-dramatic-physical play, followed by positive play views ($\beta = .16$, $t = 4.04$, $p < .05$) and authoritarian parenting ($\beta = -.11$, $t = -2.90$, $p < .05$).

The bivariate and partial correlations indicate a positive and mid-level correlation between a democratic parenting and participation in socio-dramatic-physical play, while a positive and low-level correlation existed between positive views on play and participation in socio-dramatic-physical play. A negative and low-level correlation emerged between authoritarian and participation in socio-dramatic-physical play. These

results imply that parents with an authoritarian attitude participate less in children's socio-dramatic-physical play. The multiple regression results for predicting parents' participation in initiation-encouragement for play, in terms of views on play and parenting attitudes, are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of Multiple Regression for Predicting Parents' Participation in Initiation-Encouragement for Play

Predictors	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Bi-variate correlation	Partial correlation
Constant	1.677	.243		6.900	.000		
Democratic	.182	.045	.174	4.085	.000	.254	.165
Positive views on play	.153	.044	.142	3.467	.001	.210	.140
Authoritarian	-.120	.036	-.139	-3.342	.001	-.181	-.136
Permissive	.077	.032	.095	2.390	.017	.050	.097
R=.32 R ² =.104	Adjusted R ² =.098 p=.000		F=(4.597)=17.317,				

** $p < .01$

Table 5 demonstrates that democratic, positive views about play and authoritarian and permissive parenting attitudes are statistically significant predictors of initiation-encouragement for play. The R² value indicates that these variables included in the model explained 10% of the variance in the encouragement of play. Using the stepwise method, the following significant final model emerged: F= (4.597) =17.317 p=.000. Based on the standardized regression coefficients (β), it is determined that the most influential predictor of initiation-encouragement for play subscale is democratic parenting ($\beta = 0.17$, $t = -4.08$, $p < 0.05$), followed by positive views on play ($\beta = 0.14$, $t = 3.46$, $p < 0.05$), authoritarian parenting ($\beta = -0.13$, $t = -3.34$, $p < 0.05$) and permissive parenting ($\beta = 0.09$, $t = 2.39$, $p < 0.05$).

Discussion and implications

Parents' views of play as possible play providers at home are essential given the evidence that play has various benefits for development and learning, such as self-regulation skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2005; Metaferia et al., 2020) and mathematical skills (Worthington & van Oers, 2016). This study investigated the influence of parental play views and parenting attitudes on their play participation. The findings of this study demonstrate that parents' participation in play was statistically and significantly predicted by democratic, authoritarian, and permissive parenting attitudes, as well as positive views on play. It was only overprotective attitude and negative play views on play that did not make a significant contribution to explaining the level of parents' engagement in play. The positive views on play as a significant predictor of parents' participation in play are consistent with other research showing an association between parents' supportive view of play and their engagement in play (Ihmeideh, 2019; Lin & Li, 2018). This implies that overprotective parenting attitude and parents' negative view of play had no relationship with their participation in children's play.

In terms of parental attitudes, the democratic attitude is the strongest predictor of parents' participation in academic play. This finding coincides with other research that indicates that as parents' democratic attitudes increase, their participation in free time activities, meeting the daily needs of their children, providing physical care, being sensitive, showing affection, and play also increase (Karabulut & Şendil, 2018). A plausible explanation is that parents with such attitudes value their children's independence (Bornstein et al., 2011), have a loving relationship with them, and involve them in decision-making (Baumrind, 1971). This may lead parents to engage in reading books, playing with Lego, and drawing as part of academic play. In essence, democratic parents are more likely to create opportunities for play in line with considering their children's preferences regarding play-related issues, such as what to play, where to play, and with whom to play.

Another finding is that socio-dramatic-physical play was statistically significantly predicted by democratic parenting, having supportive play views, and by authoritarian parenting. While democratic parenting and positive play views positively correlated with participation in socio-dramatic-physical play, authoritarian parenting negatively correlated. Parents with an authoritarian attitude were less likely to participate in such play opportunities. Like the finding about participation in academic play, levels of participation in socio-dramatic-physical play were also best predicted by democratic attitude. The difference is that democratic parenting is followed by parents' positive views about play, which positively correlated with participation in this type of play. This implies that as parents' engagement in socio-dramatic-physical play increases, their score for positive play views also increases. Parents with a democratic attitude may see the context of this play as providing ample opportunities for their children's development and learning. Authoritarian parenting as a third predictor of, and negatively correlated with socio-dramatic-physical play participation, confirms the findings of Gaertner et al., (2007), who demonstrated that authoritarian fathers are less involved in their children's play and learning-related activities. One way to explain this is to consider that authoritarian parents tend to exert behavioral and psychological control over their children (Baumrind et al., 2010) and expect obedience (Cole & Cole, 2001). Hence, it may be difficult for authoritarian parents to participate in such play where children freely use their imaginations and even take control of the play. In such a context, they may tend to think that participation in their children's play will undermine their authority. Research findings show that such a parenting style is linked to negative child outcomes, such as conduct problems (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019). On the other hand, considering the place of socio-dramatic play in children's lives (Barker et al., 2014; Worthington & van Oers, 2016), efforts to increase parents' awareness about the importance of such play on child development can be beneficial in encouraging parents to engage in such play.

The final finding of this study is that the initiation-encouragement for play was statistically and significantly predicted by democratic attitude, positive play views, authoritarian attitude, and permissive attitude. As seen in the results, constructive play

views follow a democratic attitude, implying that having an egalitarian approach to parenting and supportive views on play are effective variables to explain encouragement to play. As discussed previously, parents' constructive views about and their level of engagement in play can be considered a way of valuing their children's learning (Tuğrul et al., 2014). The initiation-encouragement for play subscale contains items like, "I encourage my child to play with other children around him/her" and "We play when my child wants to." These items appear to reflect features of democratic and permissive parenting attitudes. Because parents with permissive attitudes exhibit low demand and high responsiveness (Baumrind et al., 2010), they may be more open to their children's play invitations or preferences. Moreover, it is likely that the children of parents with democratic attitude have the right to make decisions regarding playing with others or with their parents. Similarly, as these parents engage in their children's play experiences, they may see the benefits of play firsthand and thus develop constructive views about play, which is also effective in explaining the level of participation in play.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study has some limitations. Firstly, all the measures used in this study rely on the self-reporting of parents. Parents may have idealized their reporting. A way to overcome this problem is to conduct small-scale studies that consider observing the play participation of parents with different parenting attitudes, either in the home environment or outside. Parents with different parenting could also be interviewed to investigate their thoughts about play and their ways and levels of engagement in their children's play. There is research evidence about parents who reported supportive views on play but do not reflect their views in practice. Instead, such parents prefer to engage in academic and organized lessons (Shiakou & Belsky, 2013). Secondly, the participants of this study were parents who had 48-66-month-old children who attended early childhood education institutions. Since play is essential for all children of different ages, conducting a similar study with younger children, such as 36 months, may provide insights into the relationship among parenting attitudes, views about play, and levels of engagement in play.

Conclusion

This study contributes to play literature by presenting insights about the predictive power of parenting attitudes and parental play views on their play participation. The findings reflect the features of the sample taken from Turkish culture. Caution is required when generalizing these results since culture influences parenting attitudes and play. Literature suggests thinking of both universal and cultural features of play when studying or interpreting research findings about child play (Roopnarine & Johnson, 1994). Considering the present research findings, it is safe to conclude that democratic parenting attitude effectively predicts parents' participation in all three types of play. Moreover, authoritarian attitude is negatively correlated with all types of play participation, suggesting that parents with this attitude engage less in their children's

play. Among the parents' views on play, only positive play views subscale significantly contributed to predicting participation in all forms of play. It appears that parenting attitudes are stronger predictors than their views on play for their level of participation in play. The implication for play policymakers is to support parents in being cognizant of the importance of play for the healthy development and learning of young children, their parenting attitudes, and the association of such attitudes on their children's play opportunities. Seminars and workshops offered to parents in this direction can be helpful. Preschool teachers can inform parents about how and why they should be involved in their children's play and how they can provide a high level of support for play through parent-teacher meetings and informative notes.

Declarations

Ethics: Along with obtaining permission from the Provincial Directorate of National Education, the research was conducted in accordance with scientific and ethical rules.

Conflicting Interests: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author contribution: First author: Literature review, research design, data collection, processing, analysis, and writing.

Second author: Research design, critical review.

Participation Approval: Parents participated in this study voluntarily.

Publication Approval: We confirm that we have transferred all rights to the Primary Education Journal. The statements and explanations in the article belong to the authors.

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