Toys Library: A Phenomenological Study[1]

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ABSTRACT

In this survey, it is aimed to determine parents' thoughts of children using a toys library opened within a public library. The concept of a "Toys Library", which is growing in popularity, combines the perceptions of toys and library, based on the principle of lending toys out to disadvantaged children. This study is a qualitative phenomenological research in which parents' thoughts and knowledge gathered from the literature are examined. The study group is composed of 306 children, 134 from pre-schools and 172 from primary schools, and their parents. In this research, which is based on proper sampling method, statistical data were obtained from the software prepared for the toys library and qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews over a 12 month period. As a result of content analysis of 48 parents interviews recorded via video, it has been concluded that the project contributed to the functioning of the public libraries, has fully met the children's toys needs, and has positively affected the children's character and social development. As a result of this project, it is hoped that the survey will be seen as a reference point for toy libraries planned to be opened elsewhere.

Key Words: Toys library, Toys, Game, Library

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INTRODUCTION

Developments in the field of science and technology influence many areas such as the economy, ecology, social values, as well as educational and management concepts. One field in which changes have been observed is toys and the change in games culture, which plays an extremely important role in the mental, physical and psychosocial development of children in terms of their development of intelligence, imagination and emotions. On the one hand, toys create entertaining moments for children, but on the other they provide an efficient form of education; a process which has influenced both games and even playgrounds (MEGEP, 2008). With increasing urbanization, the fields and alley ways are no longer the chosen playgrounds, but artificial game halls in shopping malls; and the toys, which were once the tools of games, became the targets, and without them no games were played (Bumin, 1986). The availability of toys which children are dependent and the variety required has become a big problem for families of low socioeconomic level.

The toys sector in Turkey alone is worth 700 million US Dollars, with 80 billion US Dollars worldwide (Sormaz, 2010). While globally, people spend 175 US Dollars per child on toys, according to the International Council of Toys Industries (ICTI, 2012), this rate is 30 US Dollars in Turkey, and this amount is not shared equally by each child. This situation clearly highlights the scale of inequality throughout the world. In order to find a solution to this problem, to contribute to increased availability of toys without families incurring costs, as well as to inform children about different toys and to develop feelings of responsibility and socialization, many countries have started to open "Toy Libraries" (Mayfield, 1993), with conferences held to make the idea more widespread. Although the first toys conference was held in London, England in 1978, the contribution of toy libraries to the educational, physical, social and cultural development of children were eventually emphasized at the 5th International Toys Library, held in Torino, Italy, in 1990. In light of the conference's decisions, the International Toys Library Association (ITLA) was established in order to facilitate the production, development and availability of games and toys for children (ITLA, 2015). International conferences are held in different countries every three years in order to help the project spread worldwide.

The number of toy libraries are increasing in Turkey. One such toys library was opened as a sub-branch of the Public Library based on the *'toys library logic'* in Merzifon County, in the city of Amasya, to increase the availability of toys for children under the coordination of Amasya Family and Social Policies City Management, Merzifon Social Services. The toys library was set up by the "Let's Share and Play" project, which was started as an Institutional Social Responsibility Project between the Local Governor's Office of Merzifon, the County Public Library, Merzifon National Education Management and Merzifon Municipality. Justification for the opening of this library was to ensure that preschool and primary school children can meet up at the library, and that children obtain value by sharing the toys with each other, to help make children adopt habits of playing with toys of their choosing and returning them back to the library after some time, thus developing a sense of responsibility. The outcomes of this project, which has brought about a different viewpoint on the toys libraries and public libraries, have formed the subject of this current study.

Firstly, detailed information is provided on the project preparation, its target audience, and the application steps; and then the viewpoints of the parents are gathered, and the data then analyzed.

Opening and Operating of the Toys Library

This section details the project and its application steps.

Forming the project team

The public institutions which were expected to contribute to the project were researched, and a list of representatives from each institution determined. In order to reach agreement on the representatives, criteria were considered such as the ability to provide efficient coordination among the institutions (Local Governor's Office), working at the location where the toy library is planned to be opened and ensuring sustainability (County Public Library), being able to bring preschool teachers and class teachers to the toys library in order that their viewpoints may be sought (National Education Management), and those who could provide facilities and a budget to purchase toys for the library (the Municipality). Interviews took place based on these criteria, and the representative of the institutions were determined. In order to ensure fulfilment of responsibilities, a protocol which laid out the institutional responsibilities was signed by each of the representatives.

Determining toy groups according to age group

Figure 1. *Determination of the toys*

In order to determine which toys would be used in the study, a council was formed consisting of preschool and primary school teachers, under leadership of the teachers from the project team who represented the National Education Management. The council was given the duty of determining which toys were suitable for preschool and primary school level children by considering children's developmental characteristics. Classifications of toys were made based on the viewpoints of the preschool and class teachers. Recommendations found in the literature on the properties of the toys were noted such as the toys being plain, endurable, handy, easy-to-repair, cleanable, proper for the developmental stages and different developmental areas of children, and having qualities that could stir interest in the children in terms of audio and cognitive properties. In addition, toys were discounted where they could be considered to drive children towards aggressive behaviors (e.g., guns, rifles, etc.) and where they were produced of natural materials (Pehlivan, 2005). In addition, in selecting the toys, gender appropriateness was noted, as was toys that could be played with among peers to increase socialization. On this issue, preferences of those teachers who had children took precedence.
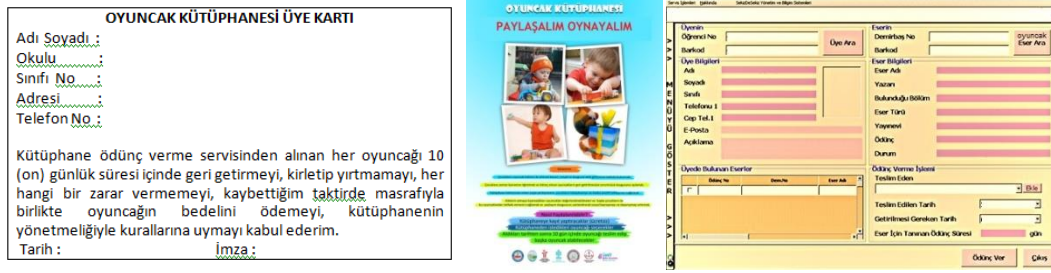
Figure 2. *Determining the processes to be planned*

Preparing a budget for the project

A list was formed of the toys selected, and prices were obtained from the toy shops in the area. A payment plan was formulated, and 340 preschool and 264 primary school toys were then purchased. In addition, 224 toys were either donated, either new or secondhand. The total number of toys the library acquired amounted to 828. As the toys were purchased, issues like them becoming worn out or otherwise no longer useful during the lifetime of the project, or the possibility of toys not being returning were addressed. In terms of the project's awareness, posters, brochures, toy boxes, membership cards, a loan toy follow-up program and a budget for refreshments was formed which the institutional stakeholders of the project took responsibility for.

Table 1. *Numbers of toys*

Classification of Toys		*f*	*%*
Number of Toys compared to Target	Preschool	340	41
	Primary School	264	32
Number of Toys Donated	Preschool	158	19
	Primary School	66	7
Total		828	100

Toy box

In order to increase awareness and to ensure interest and support for the project, toy boxes upon which the project explanation was written, were on display in front of each preschool educational institutions for a period of 15 days, and brochures were distributed in order to attract donations of toys.

Figure 3. *The toy box*

Preparing the application area

It was understood that toy libraries are usually opened by municipalities and NGOs (e.g., Eskişehir Odunpazarı Municipality, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, Sultangazi Municipality, Kalp AnkaraEducation and Youth Center Association, Şırnak Minik Eller

Association, etc.). The toy libraries require not only premises, but the employment of continuous staff, which may give rise to problems over time in terms of the sustainability of the project. Since the project is similar to a book library in terms of its purpose and function, and since libraries are no foreigners to the lending process, situating the toys library under responsibility of the Merzifon Public County Library ensured financial ease, sustainability and support for the project. Accordingly, a section of the library was re-organized as the toys library.

Figure 4. *Preparation of the application area*

Starting the project after the opening

The purpose of the project and its function was announced to the public with an official opening ceremony held on March 13, 2014 with the participation of management from the official institutions, representatives of the NGOs, and the press.

Figure 5. *The opening ceremony*

The Effect of the Toys Library on the public library

According to data obtained from the library, the number of users was 3,309 in 2014, with almost 18,500 books and 2,380 toys borrowed from the library over a period of one year.

Table 2. *The data on the users of the library*

	Number of Active Users	Increase Rate %
2011	1,656	-
2012	1,917	13.6
2013	2,023	5.2
2014	3,309	38.8

By considering that 104 children, who were members of the toys library, were also former members of the library, the number of the actual members were calculated, and it was determined that there was an increase at a rate of 38.8% with the opening of the toys library. It is possible to claim that members of the toys library, and their parents, may have been influential in this increase.

Data on the use and return of toys to the library according to school level are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Data on toys lending and return*

Use of Toys		F	%
Annual number of toys loaned	Preschool	556	23.4
	Primary School	1,824	76.6
Number of non-returned toys	Preschool	32	62.7
	Primary School	19	37.3
Number of toys returned as unusable	Preschool	98	56.3
	Primary School	76	43.7

It was observed that children made use of the project 2,380 times, and that it was mostly primary school students (76.6%); and that the rate of not returning the toys back to the toys library, as well as returned toys not being reusable was found to be higher in preschool children. This was interpreted as the feeling of responsibility having started in the preschool children, or due to children claiming ownership over the toys and not returning them. The rate of toys not returned to the rate of toys registered was 6.1%; and the rate of those that were not usable having been returned was 21.2%. This rate is consistent with the rate that was estimated before the study.

The study was conducted between March 2014 and February 2015, and the study group consisted of 134 preschool and 172 primary school students, in total 306 students. The characteristics of the children and their parents who constituted the study group are given in Table 4.

Table 4. *Data on library users between march2014 and February 2015*

Demographic Properties		*f*	*%*
Gender	Girls	122	39.8
	Boys	184	60.1
Age	Aged 3-6 (Preschool)	134	43.7
	Aged 7-10 (Primary school)	172	56.3
Father's Educational Status	Primary School	39	12.7
	Secondary School	123	40.2
	High School	96	31.4
	University	48	15.7
Mother's Educational Status	Primary School	56	18.3
	Secondary School	151	49.3
	High School	85	27.8
	University	14	4.6
Socioeconomic Status	Low	97	31.7
	Medium	168	55.0
	High	41	13.3

82 of the 306 children were siblings, and the number of families who made use of the project was determined as 224. It was observed that 306 children made use of the library on 2,380 occasions in nearly one year, and that the majority of the beneficiaries were boys (60.1%) at the primary school level (56.3%). It was also observed that the majority of users were from middle and low socioeconomic levels (86.7%). Based on this finding, it was interpreted that the project achieved its purpose. In addition, it was also observed that the fathers of the children who made use of the project were mostly (85%), and almost all of the mothers (95%), from education levels at or lower than high school.

Some numerical data obtained from the project provide insight as to the efficiency of the project. However, it is considered that determining the viewpoints of the parents, whose children made use of the library, will contribute to the evaluation of the functioning of the project and therefore as an evaluation of toys libraries. Based on this, it was aimed that the viewpoints of parents whose children made use of the toys library would be determined.

METHOD

The Study Model

This study is a qualitative study in which the phenomenology design is used. Phenomenology studies are those in which the personal experiences, perceptions and meanings of an event are examined instead of generalizations (Akturan & Esen, 2008). In this approach, the focus is on how people perceive and discover experiences and convert them into conscious thoughts, both as an individual and as a shared meaning (Patton, 2014). In this study, based on parents whose children made use of the toys library, the purpose was to reveal the parents' opinions, perceptions and experiences.

The Study Group

The sampling of the study was determined using the convenience method. In this context, four parents, who voluntarily agreed to participate in an interview and whose children made use of the toys library, were asked questions in a semi-structured questionnaire at the end of each month. During the study period, 48 parents were interviewed over a period

of 12 months. Demographic data regarding the study group from these interviews is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. *The study group*

Demographic Properties		f	%
Interviewee	Mother	42	87.50
	Father	6	12.50
Gender of Children	Female	19	39.58
	Male	29	60.42
School type of Children	Age 3-6 (Preschool)	30	62.50
	Age 7-10 (Primary School)	46	95.83
Siblings*	Single child	22	45.83
	Two siblings	28	58.33
	Three siblings	26	54.17
Father's Educational Status	Primary School	1	2.08
	Secondary School	13	27.08
	High School	19	39.58
	University	15	31.25
Mother's Educational Status	Primary School	2	4.17
	Secondary School	23	47.92
	High School	15	31.25
	University	8	16.67
Socioeconomic Status	Low	13	27.08
	Medium	28	58.33
	High	7	14.58

*Some of the 48 parents who participated in the project have two or more children.

The majority of the parents who constituted the study group are women (87.50%), with the educational status mostly below high school level, and mostly at the middle or low level (85.41%) socioeconomic status.

Data Collection

As a means to increase the validity of the proposed data collection tool, the literature was investigated, and questions proposed. These draft questions were then reviewed by a Turkish Language teacher, a Measurement and Evaluation Specialist, and Educational Curricula and Teaching Specialists. The interview form, which consisted of open-ended questions, was applied to 20 individuals not included in the study in order to test the comprehensibility of the questionnaire.

The data collection for the study lasted a period of 12 months. 48 parents were interviewed during this process. The Parent Interview Form was created for the interviews, and was designed to expose whether or not the project addressed the children's needs for toys, and whether or not it contributed to their development. In this context, questions such as "Do you think the toys library covered the needs of your child?" and "Did the project have positive or negative effects on the development of your child?" were included in the form. Interviews were carried out by appointment in a quiet setting. Each participant was given information regarding the purpose of the study and permission to video-record the interview sessions were obtained. The interviews lasted for nearly half an hour and each participant was assigned a code (e.g., K1, K2…).

Data Analysis

Content analysis was the method of analysis applied to the data. First, each interview video recording was viewed. Each participant was given a code (e.g., K1, K2,…K48), and the answers that participants gave to the questions were transcribed as given. Then, each answer was examined and codes were formed about the viewpoints, and based on the codes, emerging themes were determined. The data and the codes were organized according to the themes. In addition, direct quotations are provided in order to reflect the viewpoints of the beneficiaries.

Data obtained from the interviews were analyzed by two specialists independently. According to the specialists' analysis, the Percentage of Confirmation of the codes was determined as .87. It is expected that the Percentage of Confirmation, which is used to detect the inter rater or intra-rater reliability, is higher than 70% (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001, 81). Codes that did not fit were revised and a mutual consensus was obtained and encoded. In conclusion, it is possible to claim that the coding reliability to be at an acceptable level.

FINDINGS

Overall findings obtained from the interviews conducted with the parents of children who made use of the toys library are given in Table 6.

Table 6. *Viewpoints of parents on the toys library*

	Parents' Viewpoints	*f*
Covering the Need for Toys	Opportunity being given to examining a desired toy.	14
	Covering the need for a toy.	15
Socialization	Ensuring that children integrate with other children.	32
	Toys that ensure that time is spent within a group, providing time together.	21
	Ensuring that new information on the children's development is obtained from parents who met at the library.	12
Personality Development	Developing the child's understanding of 'loan' concept.	11
	Ensuring that aggressive attitudes of the children decreases.	8
	Children perceiving 'going to the library' as a reward when they fulfil their assignments (homework, etc.).	9
	Ensuring that my child learns how to share things.	16
Other	Ensuring that my child starts to read books.	41
	Ensuring that the parents start to read books.	6
Recommendations for the Library	Toys preferred more must be determined and more must be provided.	16
	Toys that develop intelligence must be provided more.	21
	Toys must be replaced due to wear and tear over time.	22
	Toys that require group-play must be provided more.	19
	Toys must be classified according to age and then given to the children.	6
	The area for toys must be larger and more suitable for playing.	32
	Toys ofknown cartoon characters must be provided more.	7

When the data obtained from the parents was analyzed, themes like the toys library having covered the needs of the children for toys, contributed to socializing and personality developments of the children, changed the habits of book reading for both children and parents, and the recommendations for the library are given in Table 6.

According to the parents who made use of the library, the library was found to be beneficial in covering the children's needs for toys. One parent stated that "*Our family budget*

does not allow for buying toys. For this reason, we borrowed some toys from the library. Sometimes we went to the library to examine the toy we wanted to buy, and then made up our mind" (K12).

According to the viewpoints of the parents, the toys library contributed to the socialization of both the children and the parents. Two parents stated their viewpoints on this subject as *"I met the mothers of the other children. We talked about our children"* (K25), and *"My child made a lot of new friends at the library, and he played with them"* (K9).

When Table 6 is examined, it is observed that the parents stated that the toys library contributed to the development of the personality of their children. According to the viewpoints of the parents, the toys library contributed to the development of values such as the feeling of responsibility and sharing; *"The library ensured that my child learned the 'borrowing' concept. He knew that he had to take the toy back by the due date, and this developed his understanding of responsibility"* (K38).

According to the findings obtained from the interviews, the parents thought that the toys library contributed to the habit of book reading both for themselves and for their children. On this topic, two parents stated that *"We borrowed a book each time we went to the toys library. He started to read regularly"* (K18), and *"Each time we borrowed a toy, we borrowed a book from the library. It ensured that we read books"* (K20).

The parents who participated in the interviews also made some recommendations for the toys library. Their viewpoints on this topic focused on the following fields; renewal of toys that have become worn, providing toys that develop intelligence and that are suitable for group-play, increasing the number of toys demanded the most, and increasing the size of the area in the library for playing. On this topic, two parents stated that *"The game area in the library is inadequate. Many children arrive at the library at some certain times. I think the games area must be expanded"*(K32), and that *"The games that are played in a group, and the ones that develop their intelligence must be provided more"* (K17).

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

With the "Let Us Share and Play" institutional responsibility project, a toys library was opened in order to facilitate the access of children coming from families with a low socioeconomic level residing in and around Merzifon County, Amasya, Turkey. In order to provide advantages in terms of sustainability, the toys library was opened within the Merzifon Public library instead of in a separate building. According to the library registers, 306 children made use of the project on 2,380 occasions within the time period of nearly 12 months.

According to the results obtained in the study, which was conducted to determine the viewpoints of the parents whose children made use of the facility, the toys library covered the children's need for toys. According to Kamaraj (2006), the general purpose of a toys library is to provide the opportunity for each child to grow up playing with toys that ensure their growth in a healthy manner, and to ensure that children who come from parents of limited income are given the opportunity to play with toys in a sufficient number and of sufficient variety. In addition, through the sharing of toys, the notion of using belongings in a mutual fashion is served, and the consumption of toys decreases (Ozanne & Ballantine, 2010). In this context, it is possible to claim that the toys library in the current study served its purpose well, and the results of the interviews with the parents support these results.

Based on the findings obtained from the study, according to the viewpoints of the parents, the toys library contributed to the development of the children's thought son responsibility and sharing. According to Brodin and Bjorck-Akesson (1992), toys and games develop communication and cooperation between children and parents. Kamaraj (2000) conducted a study on the benefits of toys libraries for parents and reported that the toys library contributed to the development of children, their learning of how to use toys, their ability of selecting toys, their developing of socializing skills, the socializing of preschool children, the development of children to know how to behave in a group, finding opportunities for playing games with various toys, helping children to have experiences that prepare them for school, and to the adaptation of children that have special education needs.

Kapellaka (1992) conducted a study and reported that with the help of the toys library, children and parents had access to various toys, professional advice could be given to mothers about the games and toys, the psychological, physical and social developments of children were supported, children learned the feeling of responsibility in these areas through social isolation, parents and children found were given the opportunity of playing games outside of their homes, and that the toys meant the same thing for all children and was therefore an international language. It is possible therefore that the results of similar studies support the results of this current study.

In the scope of this study, the toys library serving in the Public Library of the Merzifon County made it possible that parents and teachers who made use of the toys library could also make use of the book library as well. According to the viewpoints of the parents, going to the toys library contributed to the regular reading habits of the children. Although the primary purpose of the study was contributing to the development of disadvantaged children through the borrowing of toys, another reason for the toys library being formed in the same building as the public library was the intention to help change the perceptions of reading as a habit and going to the library in a positive way. It was observed that there were statements on this topic by the parents, and they supported the targets on reading books, and therefore, up-to-date books which attracted the attention of children and parents were added to book stands in the games area.

The parents who participated in the interviews made recommendations on the functioning of the toys library, the renewal of worn toys, increasing the number of the most popular toys, and expanding the games area in the toys library. Kapellaka (1992) conducted a study and reported that the most significant problems encountered at the toys library were staffing issues and funding, followed by the replacement of worn and/or broken toys, and the hiring and training employed staff appropriate for the toys library. Although running the project within the public library solved issues of accommodation and staffing, children were in need of a larger games area.

These issues have been considered in the construction of a new library which is now in progress, and the formation of a different area for children to play was supported by the Library Management. The project, being run in the present public library until the new library building is completed, has made it possible to expand this area. In addition, it was determined that the toys would be counted as fixtures at the end of each year, and that toys worn out would be determined and removed from the list of fixtures, and new toys purchased as replacements for the library. Before the protocol was signed for the project the following areas were mentioned: the project being run under the coordination of the Library Management, the

updating of toys following a review of usage data (library records) and viewpoints sought of the project council and the teachers, and the issue of funding by the Local Government and Municipality. For this reason, problems of the toys library such as adequate accommodation, staffing and funding are being addressed through efficient communication of the responsible institutions.

According to the results obtained from the viewpoints of the parents, it was recommended that there should be more toys in the library that aid the development of the children's intelligence and toys that are played in groups. According to the study conducted by Özyeşer-Cinel (2006), the children of parents with lower educational levels prefer manipulative and less educational toys such as 'place & remove', 'place them in each other', and transfer toys like Lego and wooden blocks. When the socioeconomic levels of the participants are considered, it is possible to claim that the perceptions of the parents on games and toys also changed in a positive manner. Adak Özdemir and Ramazan (2012) conducted a study and defined that toys are entertaining game tools for children, and that the teachers and mothers who participated in their study defined toys as learning through entertainment. Erbay and Durmuşoğlu-Saltalı (2012) conducted a study and reported that the majority of mothers considered toys and games as activities that entertained, supported development as leisure activities; while fewer mothers considered the games as a way of relaxing, self-expression, reflecting the child's imagination, as an educational tool, and as something that the child just does (like their 'job').

In conclusion, with the number of toys libraries steadily increasing, this study investigated their benefits, having been organized within a public library, based on the viewpoints of the parents of those who used the toys library. The following highlights the results of the study:

1. Problems related to the toys libraries such as accommodation, staffing, and sustainability were resolved through the cooperation of the public library, and funding problems were resolved with the support of other stakeholder institutions;

2. The needs of toys for children was covered;

3. The toys library contributed to socializing and personality developments of the children;

4. The project developed the book reading habits of both the children and the parents.

In this context, it is recommended that toys libraries should be opened using opportunities within the official institutions (especially as seen, within public libraries) to ensure the sustainability of the projects. Games areas designed for the children must be in large open areas where the toys can be played with, rather than just being a place from where toys are borrowed. It is also expected that the study will be a reference for other toys libraries that are planned to be opened elsewhere.

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Oyuncak Kütüphanesi: Bir Fenemonoloji Araştırması[4]

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Giriş

Dünyada yaşanan bilim ve teknoloji alanındaki gelişmeler, ekonomi, ekoloji, sosyal değerler, eğitim ve yönetim anlayışları gibi bir çok değeri etkilemektedir. Bu değişim sürecinin görüldüğü alanlardan biri de, çocukların zihinsel, bedensel ve psiko-sosyal gelişiminde büyük bir rol oynayan, çocukların zekâsını, hayal gücünü, duyularını geliştiren oyuncaklar ve oyun kültürlerindeki değişimdir. Çocuklar için bir yandan eğlenceli anlar yaratırken diğer yandan da etkili bir eğitimsel görev üstlenen oyuncaklar, oyunlar hatta oyun alanları da etkilenmiştir (MEGEP, 2008).Günümüzde geniş araziler, sokak araları yerini sayıları sınırlı olan oyun bahçelerine veya alışveriş merkezlerindeki suni oyun salonlarına bırakmış, eskiden oyunun aracı olan oyuncaklar amaç haline gelmiş, onlarsız oyun kurulamaz olmuştur (Bumin, 1986). Bağımlılığın ve çeşitliliğin her geçen gün arttığı oyuncağa ulaşmak ise sosyo-ekonomik düzeyleri düşük aileler için büyük bir sorun olmuştur. Dünya genelinde 80 milyar dolara ulaşmış olan oyuncak sektöründe Türkiye'deki pazar 700 milyon dolardır (Sormaz, 2010). Yine dünya genelinde oyuncak harcaması International Council of Toys Industries (ICTI, 2012) verilerine göre çocuk başına ortalama 175 dolar iken, bu oranın Türkiye'de 30 dolar olması ve bu miktarın her çocuk için eşit paylaşılmadığı gerçeği, eşitsizliğin boyutlarını daha net ifade etmektedir. Bu duruma çözüm üretmek, çocukların oyuncağa kolayca ve ücretsiz olarak ulaşmalarına, farklı oyuncakların kullanımları hakkında bilgi edinmelerine, sorumluluk duygularını ve sosyalleşme becerilerini artırmalarına katkı sağlamak amacıyla birçok ülkede "Oyuncak Kütüphaneleri" açılmış (Mayfield, 1993), kütüphanelerin yaygınlaşması için konferanslar düzenlenmiştir.

İtalya/Torino'da (1990) yapılan 5. Uluslararası Oyuncak Kütüphanesi konferansında ise kütüphanelerin, çocukların eğitsel, fiziksel, psikolojik, sosyal ve kültürel gelişimine katkılarına değinilmiş, oyun ve oyuncak üretiminin, gelişiminin ve çocukların bu oyuncaklara ulaşımlarının sağlanması için kütüphanelerin daha da yaygın hale getirilmesi amacıyla, Uluslararası Oyuncak Kütüphaneler Birliği (ITLA) kurulmuştur (ITLA, 2015).

Türkiye'de de sayıları artan oyuncak kütüphanelere her geçen gün bir yenisi eklenmektedir. Amasya ili Merzifon ilçesinde de oyuncak kütüphanesi mantığından hareketle, çocukların oyuncağa ulaşımını kolaylaştırmak amacıyla Amasya Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar İl Müdürlüğü Merzifon Sosyal Hizmet Merkezi Müdürlüğü koordinatörlüğünde Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk Projesi olarak başlatılan "Paylaşalım Oynayalım" isimli proje kapsamında, Merzifon Kaymakamlığı, İlçe Halk Kütüphanesi, Merzifon Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü ve Merzifon Belediyesi ile birlikte halk kütüphanesi bünyesinde oyuncak kütüphanesi açılmıştır. Oyuncakla kitabı buluşturan, oyuncak kütüphanelerine ve halk kütüphanelerine farklı bir bakış açısı getiren bu projenin çıktıları araştırmanın konusunu oluşturmuştur. Bu doğrultuda araştırmada, oyuncak kütüphanesinden yararlanan çocukların ebeveynlerinin, oyuncak kütüphanesi hakkındaki görüşleri incelenmiştir.

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[4] Bu çalışma, 13 Mart 2014 Tarihinde Merzifon Sosyal Hizmet Merkezi Müdürlüğü koordinatörlüğünde "Paylaşalım-Oynayalım" adıyla kurumsal sorumluluk projesi olarak uygulanmıştır.
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I. Oyuncak Kütüphanesinin Açılış ve İşleyişi Süreci

Proje uygulama basamakları ve uygulamaya ilişkin açıklamalar aşağıda yer almaktadır:

1. Projeye ekibi Kurulması: Projeye katkı sağlayacağı umulan kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarıyla görüşme yapılarak proje ekibi kurulması amacıyla Kaymakamlık, Belediye, İlçe kütüphanesi, Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü okul öncesi eğitim kurumları ve ilkokulu temsil eden katılımcılar belirlenmiştir.

2. Yaşa Göre Oyuncak Gruplarının Belirlenmesi: Projede kullanılacak oyuncakların belirlenmesi amacıyla, okul öncesi ve ilkokul öğretmenlerinden bir kurul oluşturulmuştur. Kurul tarafından oyuncaklar, okul öncesi ve ilkokul düzeyi olmak üzere çocukların gelişim özellikleri dikkate alınarak sınıflanmıştır.

3. Proje İçin Bütçe Hazırlanması: Proje komisyonunca sınıflaması ve seçimi yapılmış olan oyuncaklar, oluşturulmak istenen farkındalık için afiş, broşür, oyuncak kumbaraları, projenin uygulamasında kullanılacak üye kartları, ödünç oyuncak takip programı ve açılış için planlanan kokteyl bütçesi çıkarılarak giderlerin, projeye destek veren kurumlarca karşılanması sağlanmıştır

4. Oyuncak Kumbarası: Farkındalığı artırmak projeye ilgi ve desteği sağlamak için hazırlanan proje açıklamasının üzerinde yazılı bulunduğu oyuncak kumbaraları özellikle okul öncesi eğitim kurumları önlerinde 15'er gün süreyle bekletilmiş hazırlanan broşürlerle oyuncak bağışı da sağlanmıştır.

5. Uygulama Alanının Hazırlanması: Sivil bir toplum kuruluşu ile yürütülen oyuncak kütüphaneleri bu projede, mekân ve sürekli personel istihdamı gibi sorunlar göz önünde bulundurularak proje mantığına ve anlayışına yabancı olmayan halk kütüphanesi bünyesinde yapılması açılması planlanmıştır. Bu doğrultuda kütüphane içerisinde belli bir bölümün oyuncak reyonu olarak yeniden düzenlenmesi sağlanmıştır.

6. Açılış Yapılarak Projeye Başlanması: 13 Mart 2014 Tarihinde resmi kamu kurum ve kuruluş müdürleri, sivil toplum örgütleri temsilcileri ve basının katılımının sağlandığı açılış programı ile projenin amacı, işleyiş şekli açıklanarak uygulamadan yararlanmak ya da projeye katkı sağlamak isteyen kişilere projenin tanıtımı yapılmıştır.

II. Oyuncak Kütüphanesinin, Halk Kütüphanesinin İşleyişine Etkisi

Halk kütüphanesinin 2011'de 1656, 2012'de 1917, 2013'te 2023 olan aktif üye sayısı, 2014 Şubat ayında 3309'a ulaşmıştır. Kütüphane verilerine göre bir yıl içerisinde yaklaşık 18500 ödünç kitap, 2380 ödünç oyuncak verilmiştir. Oyuncak kütüphanesine üye olan çocuklardan 104 çocuğun önceden de kütüphaneye üye olduğu göz önünde bulundurularak hesaplanan üye sayısında, 2013'te % 5.2 olan artış oranının, oyuncak kütüphanesinin açılması ile % 38.8'e yükseldiği tespit edilmiştir.

Yöntem

Bu çalışma "Olgubilim" olarak tanımlanabilecek nitel bir çalışma olup, oyuncak kütüphanesinin açılış ve işleyişine ilişkin geliştirilen projeden yararlanan katılımcıların kişisel tecrübeleri, görüşleri betimlenmiştir. Mart 2014 – Şubat 2015 tarihleri arasında gerçekleştirilen araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 134 okul öncesi, 172 ilkokul düzeyinde toplam 306 çocuğun ebeveynleri oluşturmuştur. Uygun örnekleme yönteminin temel alındığı araştırmada veriler,

12 ayda 48 ebeveynle gerçekleştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme ile elde edilmiştir. İstatiksel verilerin elde edilmesinde, oyuncak kütüphanesi için hazırlanmış olan yazılım programı kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca araştırmacılar tarafından yarı yapılandırılmış veli görüşme formu hazırlanmıştır. Açık uçlu sorudan oluşan görüşme formu çalışma grubu dışında 10 kişiye uygulanarak anlaşılırlığı test edilmiştir. Görüşmeden elde edilen verileri iki uzman birbirinden bağımsız olarak analiz etmiştir. İki uzmanın analiz sonuçlarına göre kodlamalara ilişkin uyum yüzdesinin .87 olması kodlama güvenirliğinin kabul edilebilir düzeyde olduğu şeklinde yorumlanmıştır.

Görüşme yapılan her katılımcıya araştırmanın amacı açıklanmış ve video kaydı için izin alınmıştır. Katılımcılarla yapılan görüşmeler yaklaşık yarım saat sürmüş ve her katılımcıya K1, K2 gibi kodlar verilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde içerik analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Öncelikle görüşme kayıtları bütün olarak izlenmiştir. Katılımcılara K1, K2, …, K48, gibi kodlar verilerek katılımcıların sorulara verdikleri cevaplar olduğu gibi yazılmıştır. Daha sonra yazılan cevaplar tek tek incelenerek görüşlere ilişkin kodlar oluşturulmuştur. Kodlardan yola çıkarak temalar belirlenmiş ve veriler, kodlar, temalara göre organize edilmiştir. Ayrıca yorumlarda, yararlanıcıların görüşlerini yansıtması bakımından doğrudan alıntılara yer verilmiştir.

Bulgular

Bu kısımda, oyuncak kütüphanesinden yararlanan çocukların ebeveynlerinin oyuncak kütüphanesi hakkındaki görüşlerine ilişkin bulgulara yer verilmiştir.

Oyuncak kütüphanesinden faydalanan çocukların ebeveynleri ile yapılan görüşmeler analiz edildiğinde, görüşlerin: oyuncak ihtiyacını karşılama, çocukların sosyalleşmesini ve kişilik gelişimini destekleme, kütüphane açılış ve işleyişine ilişkin öneriler sunma ve kitap okuma alışkanlığı kazandırma şeklinde temalar oluştuğu görülmüştür. Kodlanan görüşler arasında çocukların sosyalleşmelerine ilişkin oranlarla (% 66.6), kitap okuma alışkanlığı kazandırma oranları (% 85.4) yüksek çıkmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra katılımcıların yaklaşık üçte biri (% 31.25) oyuncak ihtiyacını proje sayesinde kütüphaneden giderdiğini, yine yaklaşık aynı oranda (% 29.17) katılımcı kütüphane sayesinde almayı düşündükleri oyuncağı inceleme ve değerlendirme fırsatı bulduklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

Görüşmeye katılan ebeveynler kütüphanenin işleyişi hakkında öneriler de getirmişlerdir. Bu konudaki görüşlerin; yıpranan oyuncaların yenilenmesi, zekâ geliştirici ve grupla oynanan oyuncaklara yer verilmesi, çok talep gören oyuncakların sayısının arttırılması, kütüphanedeki oyun alanının geliştirilmesi yönünde yoğunlaştığı söylenebilir. Buna ilişkin K32 ve K17 görüşünü şu ifadelerle dile getirmiştir: *"Kütüphanedeki oyun alanı bazen yetmiyor. Bazı saatlerde birçok çocuk kütüphaneye geliyor. Bence, oyun alanı genişletilmeli."*(K32), " *Grupla oynanan oyuncaklara ve zekâ geliştirici oyuncaklara daha çok yer verilmeli."* (K17).

Sonuç, Tartışma ve Öneriler

"Paylaşalım Oynayalım" Kurumsal sorumluluk projesi ile Merzifon İlçesi ve çevresinde sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi düşük ailelerin çocuklarının oyuncağa erişimini kolaylaştırmak amacı ile oyuncak kütüphanesi açılmıştır. Projenin sürdürülebilirlik açısından avantaj sağlaması için ayrı bir bina yerine oyuncak kütüphanesi Merzifon Halk Kütüphanesi bünyesinde hizmete başlamıştır. Kütüphane kayıtlarına göre de projenin başladığı günden bu yana geçen yaklaşık 1 yıl içerisinde 306 çocuk 2380 defa uygulamadan yararlanmıştır. Kütüphaneden yararlanan çocuklarının velilerinin kütüphaneye ilişkin görüşlerinin

belirlenmesinin amaçlandığı bu araştırmadan elde edilen sonuçlara göre kütüphane oyuncak ihtiyacının karşılanmasını sağlamıştır. Kamaraj'a (2006) göre bir oyuncak kütüphanesinin genel amacı, her çocuğa sağlıklı bir şekilde büyümesini ve gelişmesini sağlayacak oyuncaklar ile oyun oynama imkânı vermek ve sınırlı gelir düzeyinde olan ebeveyne (yeterli sayıda ve çeşitlilikte oyuncak alabilme konusunda) imkân sağlamaktır. Ayrıca oyuncakların paylaşımı sayesinde mülkiyetin ortak kullanımına da hizmet edilmekte, oyuncak tüketimi de azaltılmaktadır (Ozanne & Ballantine, 2010). Bu açıdan oyuncak kütüphanesinin amacına hizmet ettiği, veli görüşlerinin de bu sonuçları desteklediği söylenebilir.

Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulardan ebeveynlerin görüşlerine göre oyuncak kütüphanesi çocukların sorumluluk, paylaşım gibi kişilik özelliklerinin gelişimine, sosyalleşmelerine katkı sağlamıştır. Brodin & Bjorck-Akesson'a (1992) göre de oyuncaklar ve oyunlar çocuklar ile ebeveynler hem de aileler arasındaki iletişimi ve işbirliğini geliştirir. Kamaraj (2000), oyuncak kütüphanesinin faydalarını ebeveynler açısından ele aldığı çalışmada kütüphanenin; çocuğun gelişiminde, oyuncakların kullanımına ilişkin bilgilerin öğrenilmesinde, oyuncak seçiminde, sosyalleşme becerilerini geliştirmede okul öncesi çocukların sosyalleşme ve grupla davranış becerisi geliştirmelerine katkı sağlamada, çeşitli oyuncak ve oyun oynama imkânı bulabilmede, çocuğun okula hazırlıkla ilgili deneyimler yaşamasında ve özel eğitime ihtiyacı olan çocukların adaptasyon süreçlerine katkı sağladığını ifade etmiştir. Kapellaka'da (1992) oyuncak kütüphanesi sayesinde; çocukların ve ebeveynlerin çok çeşitli oyuncaklarla erişebildiğini, oyun ve oyuncak hakkında annelere profesyonel öneriler verilebildiğini, çocukların psikolojik, fiziksel ve sosyal gelişiminin desteklendiğini, sosyal izolasyonun sağlandığı bu ortamda çocukların sorumluluğu öğrendiğini, ebeveynler ve çocukların evleri dışında rahatça oyun oynama imkânı bulabildiklerini ve oyunun bütün çocuklar için aynı dili ifade ettiği bu sebeple uluslararası bir dili olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Yapılan benzer araştırmaların bu araştırma sonuçlarını destekler nitelikte olduğu söylenebilir.

Bu proje kapsamında oyuncak kütüphanesinin İlçe Halk Kütüphanesi binasında hizmet vermesi oyuncaklardan yararlanan veli öğretmenlerin aynı zamanda kütüphaneden de yararlanmalarına katkı sağlamıştır. Ebeveynlerin görüşlerine göre oyuncak kütüphanesine gitmek aynı zamanda düzenli kitap okumaya başlamalarına da katkı sağlamıştır.

Görüşmeye katılan ebeveynler kütüphanenin işleyişi hakkında; yıpranan oyuncakların yenilenmesi, çok talep gören oyuncakların sayısının arttırılması, kütüphanedeki oyun alınının geliştirilmesi gelmektedir. Kapellaka (1992) tarafından yapılan araştırma da oyuncak kütüphanelerinin en önemli sorunlarının başında, personel ve fon sıkıntısının geldiği, yıpranan kırılan oyuncakların yenisini almanın, konunun önemine uygun personel yetiştirmenin ve istihdam etmenin ciddi bir sorun oluşturduğu ifade edilmiştir.

Ebeveyn görüşlerinden elde edilen sonuçlara göre zekâ geliştirici ve grupla oynanan oyuncaklara daha çok yer verilmesi önerileri de getirilmiştir. Özyeşer-Cinel'in (2006) araştırmasına göre düşük eğitim düzeyindeki anne babaların çocukları daha az eğitici oyuncaklara ve manipülatif oyuncaklara sahiptirler. Kütüphaneden yararlanan kitlenin sosyo-ekonomik düzeyinin düşük olduğu düşünülürse aynı zamanda oyun ve oyuncağa ilişkin algılarının olumlu yönde geliştiği de söylenebilir. Adak Özdemir ve Ramazan (2012) tarafından yapılan araştırmada da oyuncak, çocuklar için eğlenceli oyun aracı olarak tanımlanırken anne ve öğretmenler eğlenerek öğrenme olarak tanımlamışlardır. Erbay ve Durmuşoğlu-Saltalı da (2012) annelerin çoğunluğunun oyun ve oyuncağı eğlendiren, gelişimi

destekleyen ve boş zamanları değerlendirici bir etkinlik olarak görürken daha az sayıda annenin ise oyunu rahatlama, kendini ifade etme ve hayal dünyasını yansıtma yolu, eğitim aracı ve çocuğun işi şeklinde değerlendirmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, sayıları her geçen gün artan oyuncak kütüphanesinden hareketle halk kütüphanesi bünyesinde oluşturulmuş olan oyuncak kütüphanesinin açılış ve işleyiş aşamalarının, ebeveyn görüşlerinden hareketle kütüphanenin faydalarının betimlendiği bu araştırmanın, farklı il ve ilçelerde de açılması planlanan oyuncak kütüphanelerine referans olması umulmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Oyuncak kütüphanesi, Oyuncak, Oyun, Kütüphane