

**DETERMINING THE MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
CHILDREN ATTENDING KINDERGARTENS**

**ANASINIFINA GİDEN ÇOCUKLARIN MATEMATİK GELİŞİM  
DÜZEYLERİNİN BELİRLENMESİ**

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**Abstract**

The current study was carried out to determine the mathematical development levels of children attending a preschool education institution in terms of mathematical content. The research was conducted on 334 children between 60-72 months attending an independent kindergarten. The mathematical development level of children was measured through Progress in Math 6 Test. As a result of the analyses conducted, it was found that the success of the children for “Shapes-Space-Measurements” and “Data Analysis” categories were high in terms of the mathematical development levels of the children, while their success rates were lower than expected in the sub-group of processes at the “Numbers” category.

*Keywords:* mathematical development, mathematics at preschool period, mathematics content

**Özet**

Bu çalışma, okul öncesi eğitim kurumunda anasınıfına devam eden çocukların matematik gelişim düzeylerinin, matematik içeriği açısından belirlenmesi amacıyla yapılmıştır. Araştırma Ankara’da Milli Eğitim Bakanlığına bağlı, bağımsız anaokullarına devam eden 60-72 aylar arasında olan 334 çocuk üzerinde yürütülmüştür. Çocukların matematik gelişim düzeyleri Matematik Gelişimi 6 Testi (Progress in Math 6) ile ölçülmüştür. Yapılan istatistikler sonucunda çocukların matematik gelişim düzeylerinde “Şekil-Alan-Ölçümler” ve “Veri Analizi” Kategorilerinde başarıları yüksek bulunurken “Sayı” kategorisinde işlemler alt grubunda başarı oranları beklenenden daha düşük düzeyde bulunmuştur.

*Anahtar Kavramlar:* matematik gelişimi, okul öncesi dönemde matematik, matematik içeriği

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## Introduction

Today, it is generally accepted throughout the world that the qualitative education given to the children at the preschool period provide children with a good adaptation to school and environment and increase their success in their later life. The mathematics education given in this term will help children be aware of their environment and physical world around them. Through mathematical experience, children will learn that a whole has parts, understand later that these parts will make up the whole, learn how to make a comparison, separate the similarities and differences, then will discover how to arrange the knowledge by analyzing the data, how to organize the knowledge using the graphics and tables, how to make a comment and understand the relations and learn how to solve problems.

Children in their early childhood years develop mostly the same mathematical thoughts, strategies and skills regardless of their culture and earlier lives (Ginsburg et al., 2003). However, even though children do not need any special effort in order to learn mathematics in their early childhood years, it is pointed out that there is a need for adult guidance for them to reach the potential desired level as well as their daily experience (Jackman, 2005; Ginsburg et al., 2003). The activities applied in the environment where children are present with the guidance of adults for their mathematical development must be enriched with a systematic mathematics program (Starkey, 2004). Children must be given applications aiming at their mathematical interests and skills. Children are interested in shapes, forms, comparing sizes, numbers, numerical processes, classifications and spatial relations at the same time. Children can understand the addition and subtraction process before they start school and can usually interest in complex mathematical ideas like symmetry and large numbers at the same time. They are ready to for interesting mathematical ideas in terms of intelligence. In this sense, the curriculum of children should be extensive in terms of content (Ginsburg et al., 2003).

Mathematical skills that must be included in the educational program for preschool period children could be classified in ten groups as numbers and processes, identical similarity, part and whole relation, comparing, grouping, classifying and ordering, modeling, spatial thinking and shape, measuring, data analysis and graphic. Mathematical skills can be explained shortly as follows;

*Numbers and operations:* Numbers and operations comprises counting, identical similarity, classifying, ranking, part and whole relation, comparing, reminding numbers, writing numbers and changing their value (Jackman, 2005). The fact that children can

perceive numbers in their early ages at a good level is a necessity for them to learn mathematics in their later life (Young and Loveridge, 2004).

*Matching:* Matching is based upon the fact that every object has a value. Matching occurs when an object is matched with another object or a group of objects is matched with another group of object in the same number. Matching is the basis of numerical order principle. Assigning the name of a number (one, two, three etc.) to an object will help children make an identical relation with the objects (Jackman, 2005; Sperry Smith, 1996).

*Part and Whole Relation:* Separating objects into the parts which make up them is the basis of arithmetical knowledge. The first form of part and whole idea is to be able to do simple processes. Children can do simple adding and subtracting processes in a natural way in their daily lives. Being able to understand part and whole relation requires doing these processes (Sophian, 1994; Hunting, 2003).

*Comparing:* While taking the same features of objects into consideration in classifying, the differences are taken into account in comparing (Sperry-Smith, 1996). Children making a comparison discover the relationship between two things or groups (Charlesworth and Radeloff, 1991).

*Grouping:* The term of grouping means that the objects with common features such as colour, shape and size are brought together (Charlesworth and Radeloff, 1991).

*Classification and Ordering:* The skills of classifying and ordering are of great roles in the development mathematical logic and learning. It was found in the studies that children who do not acquire the basic knowledge of classification and ordering at kindergartens cannot perform well in mathematics in their later school ages (Cianco et al., 2001; Lebron-Rodrigues and Pasnak, 1977; Pasnak et al., 1987; ext: Clements and Sarama, 2007).

*Pattern:* Copley (2000) pointed out that ‘Mathematics is the language and science of models. Thinking over models will help children understand mathematics’ (Jackman, 2005). A model is the succession of numbers, colours, objects, shapes and movements repeating continuously at the same line or order (Taylor-Cox, 2003, ext: Jackman, 2005).

*Spatial Thinking and Shape:* Spatial thinking comprises two skills. These are spatial orientation and spatial visualization. Spatial orientation is being aware of where something is and where it is located in the world. Spatial visualization is the skill of being aware of the objects that look like each other in every aspect, forming an image and using it as a result of the experience gained (Clements and Sarama, 2007).

A shape is a basic structure which exists in the cognitive development of geometry and beyond geometry (Jönes and Smith, 2002 ext: Clemens and Sarama, 2007). Geometrical

shapes have different features as closed, having a certain number of straight sides with different side lengths and angle degrees that are changeable (Satlow and Newcombe, 1998).

*Measurement:* While cases and objects are given as numbers in measurement, they are compared with the cases and object with the same features. These numbers can be used in determining such physical features as volume, weight, length and height and non-physical features as time, heat and money (Sperry –Smith, 1996; Charlesworth and Radeloff, 1991).

*Data Analysis and Graphic:* Data analysis includes classification, counting and the data exhibition development (Clements and Sarama, 2007). Making graphics is a way to make analysis (Seefeldt, 2005). The questions that cannot be answered through direct observation is often evaluated by collecting data. Information can be organized, presented and summed through various methods (Jackman, 2005).

Starkey (2004) pointed out that the activities applied at home and at preschool education institutions for the mathematical development of children must be enriched with a systematic mathematics problem. For that purpose, even though a great many mathematical educational programs have been developed in terms of all mathematical improvements of preschool children focusing on national educational standards in mathematics in Europa and the USA, there is no study in this issue in Turkey. Determining the mathematical developmental levels of children is of great importance in order to find out what kind of mathematical skills should be supported. In that way, it is thought that the activities needed in the mathematical developments of children will be able to be enriched through a systematic mathematics program.

### **Method**

This study was carried out to determine the determining the mathematical development levels of children attending a kindergarten in terms of mathematical content.

Survey method was used as a descriptive method in this research. Also known as a scanning method, survey method is one of the methods widely used in educational sciences as well social sciences.

#### **Population and Sampling**

The population of the research was comprised of 60-72 months old children attending to a kindergarten in the central towns of the city of Ankara.

The population consisted of 334 children under 6 years of age with a normal development, attending to nine kindergartens in total determined out of the population randomly in the towns of Yenimahalle, Çankaya, Etimesgut, Sincan, Altındağ and Mamak in the city of Ankara.

In terms of the demographic features of the children included in the population, 52.7% of the children were boys. As for the status of attending to a kindergarten beforehand, it was found that 68.3% of the children did not attend to a kindergarten before.

#### Data Collection Instrument

In order to evaluate the developmental levels of mathematical skills of children, “Progress in Maths 6” test that was developed by Clausen et al. (2004) and of which Turkish validity and reliability test was made by Çelik and Kandır (2011) was used.

The items in the Progress in Maths 6 test were categorized as program content, numbers, shapes, space and measurements, using the data. The items also categorized as knowing about the realities and methods, using the concepts, solving daily problems, reasoning and process. This test is applied to children at the age of six or those who will be at this age in that educational year in groups. There are 24 questions in the test and it takes about 35 minutes to answer it. The content of the Test Booklet in the Progress in Maths 6 test was designed as the order of difficulty. The harder questions were scattered between the easier questions in order to keep the motivation of the children.

#### Data Collection

The Progress in Maths 6 test, the data collection instrument, was applied to children in 9 schools by the researchers.

During the application, what was taken into account was that the room where the test was applied was airy and it was an environment where children felt comfortable. Children were seated in a way that they wouldn't see each other's booklets, if another classroom was to be used, it wouldn't be used for any other activity, and the children wouldn't be disturbed and distracted during the test.

All of the questions were read by the teacher aloud. The Progress in Maths 6 test was applied to the children as groups, in a quiet surrounding at the desks and chairs suitable for the children located in a way that would not affect one another in line with the application instruction between the dates of 19<sup>th</sup> April and 14<sup>th</sup> May. The instruction was repeated during the application for those who could not understand it well.

#### The analysis of the data

The demographic data regarding the children and their parents included in the population were given as frequencies and percentages.

After the application process of the “Progress in Maths 6” test was completed, the scoring of the answers by the children was carried out. One point was assigned for each correct answer and zero point for each incorrect answer. The questions of “Progress in Maths

6” test were divided into three sub-categories in the mathematical content as Number, Shape-Space-Measurements and Using Data. The category of Number was grouped into four as Numerical Systems and Spatial Value, Numerical Relations, Counting and Solution of Numerical Problems. The category of Shape-Space-Measurements was grouped into five as Shape, Symmetry and Changing Shapes, Movement, Position and Coordinates and Sizes. As for Using Data category, it was divided into two groups as Determining Data and Application and Analyzing Data.

The data of the children obtained in the “Progress in Maths 6” test were given as frequencies and percentages depending on their mathematical content categories.

### Results

The results of the research carried out to determine the mathematical development levels of kindergarten children attending to preschool education institutions in terms of mathematical content were given below.

The data obtained through the analyses of all categories were given as frequencies and percentages in the Tables 1 to Table 11.

Table 1

*The Results Concerning “Numerical Systems and Spatial Value” Sub-group*

	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item2	264	79.0	70	21.0	334	100.0
Item9a	162	48.5	172	51.5	334	100.0
Item9b	152	45.5	182	54.5	334	100.0
Item12	122	36.5	212	63.5	334	100.0
Item15	289	86.5	45	13.5	334	100.0
Item19	26	7.8	308	92.2	334	100.0

Upon the examination of the results of “Numerical Systems and Spatial Value” sub-group within the category of “Number” in Table 1; in the Item 15 which was related to counting, 86.5% of the children and in the Item 2 which was related to finding the largest number between 2 and 9, 79.0% of the children answered correctly. However, children had a success of 48.5% in the Item 9a and 45.5% in the item 9b dealing with writing the missing number between the numbers of 1-30 written in succession. In the Item 19 related to placing the number in its correct place on the numerical axis, 92.2% of the children were unsuccessful and they were also unsuccessful at the rate of 63.5% at the Item 12 related to knowing the

numerical values and making a process of subtraction. Children is given in Shape 1 is an example of the answer.

Shape 1

Example "Question 9: Calendar" answers



Table 2

The Results Concerning "Numerical Relations" Sub-group

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item6a	71	21.3	263	78.7	334	100.0
Item6b	57	17.1	277	82.9	334	100.0
Item14	35	10.5	299	89.5	334	100.0
Item15	289	86.5	45	13.5	334	100.0
Item16a	67	20.1	267	79.9	334	100.0
Item16b	33	9.9	301	90.1	334	100.0
Item18	18	5.4	316	94.6	334	100.0
Item22	25	7.5	309	92.5	334	100.0

Depending on the results concerning the results of "Numerical Relations" sub-group within the category of "Number" in Table 2, 86.5% of the children answered the Item 15 related to counting correctly. However, they were unsuccessful at a rate of 94.6% in the Item 18 containing the relation between the numerical and value compounds of coins. The children were also unsuccessful in the Item 22 and 16a dealing with skip counting by 2at a rate of

92.5% and 90.1%, respectively. They did not give a correct answer for the Item 6a and Item 6b related to finding the order of counting at a rate of 78.7% and 82.9%, respectively.

Table 3:

*The Results Concerning “Processes” Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item3	21	6.3	313	93.7	334	100.0
Item6a	71	21.3	263	78.7	334	100.0
Item6b	57	17.1	277	82.9	334	100.0
Item8	111	33.2	223	66.8	334	100.0
Item10	35	10.5	299	89.5	334	100.0
Item12	122	36.5	212	63.5	334	100.0
Item16a	67	20.1	267	79.9	334	100.0
Item16b	33	9.9	301	90.1	334	100.0
Item18	18	5.4	316	94.6	334	100.0

As is given Table 3, depending on the results of Counting Sub-group regarding “Number” category, 94.6% of the children were not successful in the Item 18 containing finding the numerical and value components of coins and counting them and also unsuccessful at the rate of 93.0% in the Item 3 dealing with the addition processing. Children were unsuccessful at the rate of 79.9% in the Item 16a and of 90.1% in the Item 16b which were related to simple addition. Children were not successful in the Item 10 which related to adding the values of coins at a rate of 89.5%. They were not able to succeed in the Item 6a and Item 6b which were related to simple subtraction at the rate of 78.7% and 82.9%, respectively. Children were unsuccessful in the Item 8 dealing with solving numerical problems at the rate of 66.8%. In addition, they were unsuccessful in the Item 12 which was about making simple subtraction at the rate of 63.5%.

Table 4

*The Results Concerning “Solution of Numerical Problems” Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item8	111	33.2	223	66.8	334	100.0
Item10	35	10.5	299	89.5	334	100.0
Item14	35	10.5	299	89.5	334	100.0
Item16a	67	20.1	267	79.9	334	100.0
Item16b	33	9.9	301	90.1	334	100.0



Depending on the results concerning “*Solution of Numerical Problems*” in the category of “Number” in Table 4, children were unsuccessful in the Items 16a and 16b asking them to do simple additions at the rate of 79.9% and 90.1%, respectively. Children were not successful in the Item 10 which related to adding the values of coins and in the Item 14 dealing with finding the uneven number at a rate of 89.5%. Children were unsuccessful in the Item 8 dealing with solving numerical problems at the rate of 66.8%.

Table 5

*The Results Concerning “Shapes” Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item5	236	70.7	98	29.3	334	100.0
Item7	219	65.6	115	34.4	334	100.0
Item21	170	50.9	164	49.1	334	100.0
Item23	247	74.0	87	26.0	334	100.0

When it comes to the results concerning “*Shapes*” in the category of “Shapes, Space and Measurements” in Table 5, children answered the Item 23 dealing with recognizing geometric shapes and finding their position correctly at the rate of 74.0%. Also, children were successful in the Item 5 measuring the skills of completing a pattern that was formed with geometric shapes by drawing it at the rate of 70.7%. As for the Item 7 measuring the skill of completing geometric shapes within the relation of part and whole, children were successful at the rate of 65.6%, while only the half of them answered the Item comprising finding the geometric shape correctly.

Table 6

*The Results Concerning “Symmetry and Changing the Shapes” Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item11	234	70.1	100	29.9	334	100.0

Depending on the results concerning “*Symmetry and Changing the Shapes*” in the category of “Shapes, Space and Measurements” in Table 6, children were successful in the Item 11 measuring symmetry and changing the shape at the rate of 70.1% .

Table 7

*The Results Concerning "Movement" Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item24	322	96.4	12	3.6	334	100.0

Dealing with the results regarding "Movement" in the category of "Shapes, Space and Measurements" in Table 7, children were successful in the Item 24 containing finding rolling three dimensional shapes at the rate of 96.4%.

Table 8

*The Results Concerning "Position and Coordinates" Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item23	247	74.0	87	26.0	334	100.0

Depending on the results regarding "Position and Coordinates" in the category of "Shapes, Space and Measurements" in Table 8, children answered the Item 23 related to recognizing geometrical shapes and finding their positions correctly at the rate of 74.0%.

Table 9

*The Results Concerning "Measurements" Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item1	324	97.0	10	3.0	334	100.0
Item4	320	95.8	14	4.2	334	100.0
Item13	323	96.7	11	3.3	334	100.0
Item17	311	93.1	23	6.9	334	100.0

Depending on the results regarding "Measurements" in the category of "Shapes, Space and Measurements" in Table 9, children answered the Item 1 related to finding the longest one at the rate of 97.0% and the Item 13 related to liquid measurement at the rate of 96.7% correctly. While children answered the Item 4 dealing with determining the position correctly at the rate of 95.8%, 93.1 of them answered the Item 17 related to finding the shortest correctly.

Table 10

*The Results Concerning “Determining Data and Application” Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item5	236	70.7	98	29.3	334	100.0
Item20a	291	87.1	43	12.9	334	100.0
Item20b	228	68.3	106	31.7	334	100.0

Dealing with the results regarding “*Determining Data and Application*” in the category of “Data Analysis” in Table 10, children were successful in the Items 22a and 22b related to the skills of commenting on the data and application at the rate of 87.1% and 68.3%, respectively. In addition, children were successful in the Item 5 measuring the skills of completing a pattern that was formed with geometric shapes by drawing it at the rate of 70.7%.

Table 11

*The Results Concerning “Commenting on Data” Sub-group*

Items	1		0		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item20a	291	87.1	43	12.9	334	100.0
Item20b	228	68.3	106	31.7	334	100.0

Dealing with the results regarding “*Commenting on Data*” in the category of “Data Analysis” in Table 11, children were successful in the Items 22a and 22b related to the skills of commenting on the data and application at the rate of 87.1% and 68.3%, respectively

Table 12

*The Results Concerning Categories Sub-group*

Categories	1	0	Total
	%	%	
Movement	96.4	3.6	100
Measurements	75.4	24.6	100
Commenting on Data	77.7	22.3	100
Determining Data and Application	75.4	24.6	100
Position and Coordinates	74.0	26.0	100
Symmetry and Changing the Shapes	70.1	29.9	100
Shapes	65.3	34.7	100
Numerical Systems and Spatial Value	50.6	49.4	100
Numerical Relations	22.3	77.7	100
Processes	17.8	82.2	100
Solution of Numerical Problems	16.8	83.2	100

## Discussion

As a result of the statistics, children were more successful in the Items 15 and 2 measuring the counting of numbers smaller than 10 and recognizing the value of the number in terms of the findings obtained in the Table 1, Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4 belonging to “Number” category. The fact that the success was high in answering this item correctly was an expected result. There have been researchers pointing out that infants in their first six months are able to differentiate one object from two objects, two objects from three objects, in other words they are sensitive to numbers; however, children cannot differentiate four objects from five or six objects (Clements and Sarama, 2007a). In the related literature, Gelman and Gallistel (1978) suggested that there are five counting principle for preschool children in succeeding to count in correct way (Thomson, 1999). These principles are; one-to-one principle, fixed order principle, cardinal number principle, separating principle and the principle of insignificance of the order. Gelman and Gallistel thought that children will be able to learn counting in a comfortable, fast and easy way with the improvement of the mentioned counting principles in children. It is argued that most of the children are able to understand one-to-one principle, fixed order principle, cardinal number principle, separating principle and the principle of insignificance of the order clearly and totally up to the age of three and all of them can do it at the age of five (Clements and Sarama, 207a).

However, children were able to answer the Items 9a and 9b related to finding the missing number between 1 and 30 that was written in an order at the rate of 48.5% and 45.5%, respectively. In a study carried out by Fuson (1992); Saxe et al., (1987), they pointed out that many children smaller than three and a half years old are able learn to count the order of numbers up to 10 correctly (cit. Clemens and Sarama, 2007a). It was pointed out in some researches in the literature that children from three and a half years old to four and a half years old are able to improve the order of numbers from 10 to 20, they can make mistakes in the decimal number system from the age of four and a half to six, however, most children are able to count up to 70 and a considerable number of children can count up to 100 and over (Bell and Bell, 1988; Fuson et al., 1982, cit. Clemens and Sarama, 2007). In the findings, an expected low success was obtained as parallel with the related literature. However, it is likely to say that this case might be as a result of the fact that children are aimed to be attained the counting skills between 1 and 20 in the ME (Ministry of Education) Preschool Education Program applied in the kindergartens in Turkey.

It was found that the success of the children in the Items 3, 6a, 6b, 8, 10 and 12 related to carrying out processes with the numbers in the category of “Number” was lower than

anticipated. At the end of Wynn's (1992a) study, it was pointed out that babies are able to calculate simple arithmetical processes on small numbers and this indicates that babies have numerical concepts; therefore, human being is innately equipped with numerical concepts. Another study by Koechlin et al., (1997) supports the results of the findings by Wynn. In some researches, it was found that the ability to differentiate some adding and subtraction processes by the children at the age of 12-24 months old proceeded to the improvement of counting skills in a good way. However, their perception of adding larger numbers is realized almost at the age of four. Most of the children are able to do addition process with larger numbers with some concrete objects up to the age of five, as they have not learned to count principle and cardinal number principle up to this age yet. In addition, children have not improved the skill of changing the numbers to qualitative values yet. They are able to solve the variety of problems related to addition and subtraction (Clements and Sarama, 2007a). It was found in the related literature that while children's being successful is an expected situation, such a success was not found in the findings of these studies. It is likely to say that this case might be as a result of the fact that children are aimed to be attained the addition skills in 10 and the subtraction in 5 in the ME (Ministry of Education) Preschool Education Program applied in the kindergartens in Turkey. However, the success of the children was found low in the Items 6a, 6b, 8 and 12 which were related to being able to do addition in 10 and do subtraction in 5. The reason for this might be the fact that teachers cannot provide children with necessary experience in developing their addition and subtraction skills in their classes. In addition, children were to a great extent unsuccessful in Item 18 comprising the relation between numerical and value components of counts. It is indicated in the related literature that children can learn the names and values of coins (Heddens and Speer, 2001; Sperry-Smith, 1996) and also they need to learn some other combinations of coins at the equal value (Heddens and Speer, 2001). Low success was obtained at children in the findings obtained parallel with the related literature.

As a result of the statistics, the success of the children were found high in the Items 5, 7, 21, 23, 11, 24 and 23 depending on the findings obtained in the Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8 in the category of "Shapes, Space and Measurements". It is pointed out in the literature that children are expected to define geometric shapes and draw them up to the age of six (Seefeldt, 2005). Clements (1998) thought that the period from 3 to six years of age is ideal for children to learn geometric shapes. In another study, Fushon and Murray (1978) found that children can tell the name of a circle, a square and a triangle and Klein et al., ((1999) pointed out in their research where they reported the success of the five-year old with a medium income in

naming the shapes that children was able to recognize a circle, a triangle, a square and a rectangular at the rate of 85%, 80%, 78% and 44%, respectively (cit. Clements and Sarama, 2007a). Also Clements et al., (1999) found in a study that children's recognition of a circle was 92%, 96% and 99% for the children at the age of four, five and six, respectively. Depending on the Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9, it is likely to say that the success children obtained to recognize the geometric shapes is parallel with the findings of the current research.

Children were successful in the Item 1, 4, 13 and 17 related to the ability to measure at a high level in the category of "Shape, Space and Measurements" in Table 9. The fact that the success was high in answering this item correctly was an expected result. In the related literature, it has been pointed out that children are aware of the presence of such constant qualities as mass, length and weight, but they cannot determine and measure the amount of them in a correct way. It is thought that these children learn perceptual hints at the age of four and five and they proceed in conceptualizing and measuring their quantity (Clements and Sarama, 2007a). It is also believed that there is no need for children to develop their permanence before learning some ideas regarding the measurement (Clements and Sarama, 2007a). According to Piaget, children make measurements with non-standard units between the ages of five and seven, while they can do it with standard ones after the age of six (Charlesworth and Radeloff, 1991). However, Boulton-Lewis (1987), Clements (1999), Hiebert (1990) and Petitto (1990) agreed that permanence is of great importance for the sense of measurement (cit. Clements and Sarama, 2007a). It is necessary that children should first attain the permanence of length and weight in using measurement with standard units (Seefeldt, 2005). It is likely to say that related literature supports the results obtained.

As a result of the statistics, depending on the findings obtained in the Table 10 and Table 11 in the category of "Data Analysis", most of the children were successful in the questions of Item 5, 20a and 20b measuring the skills of graphic commenting and forming patterns. Data analysis comprises the development of classification, counting and showing the data (Clemens and Sarama, 2007a). Making a graph and showing the information to children provides them with a perception and facilitates them to make a prediction about the related events (NCTM, 2000, cit. Jackman, 2005). Preschool children can organize simple information through simple graphics (Copley, 2000). It is likely to think that the success of children they obtained in Table 10 and Table 11 measuring the skills of graphic commenting and forming patterns is parallel with the related literature.

### Recommendation

1. As the application of preschool teachers regarding the mathematical development of children and their level of knowledge is of great importance for preschool students in terms of enriching the program contents to be applied, it is possible for preschool teachers to make some studies in order to determine the competency level and needs of children for the mathematical development.
2. It is likely to carry out some researches in order to determine the relation of the methods and techniques teachers use with the mathematical development of children with the materials regarding the mathematical development provided by preschool educational institution.
3. Some seminars, conferences etc. could be organized about the works teacher could do to support the mathematical development of the children in order to increase their knowledge about the method in terms of their mathematical developments.
4. Some “mathematical projects” could be prepared and carried out for the mathematical development of preschool children.

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## Geniş Özet

### Amaç

Bu çalışma, okul öncesi eğitim kurumuna devam eden anasınıfı çocuklarının matematik gelişim düzeylerinin, matematik içeriği açısından belirlenmesi amacıyla yapılmıştır.

### Sonuçlar

Araştırmada, çocuklarının matematik gelişim düzeylerinin, matematik içeriği açısından belirlenmesi için yapılan istatistikler sonucunda elde edilen veriler aşağıda sunulmuştur.

“Sayı” Kategorisine İlişkin, Sayı Sistemleri ve Yer Değeri Alt Grubu değerlendirme sonuçları incelendiğinde; sayı sayma ile ilgili olan Mad 15’de çocukların %86.5’i ve 2-9 arası



yazılan rakamlar içerisinde en büyük olanını bulmayı değerlendiren Mad 2’de çocukların %79.0’ı doğru yanıt vermiştir. Ancak çocukların 1-30 arasında sıra ile yazılmış rakamlardan eksik olanı yazmayı değerlendiren Mad 9a da %48.5 ve Mad 9b de %45.5 oranında başarı gösterebilmişlerdir. Çocukların sayı doğrusu üzerinde verilen sayının yerleştirilmesini ölçen Mad 19’da %92.2’si ve rakam değerlerini bilerek basit çıkarma işlemi yapabilme becerisini ölçen Mad 12 sorusunda da %63.5’i başarısız olmuşlardır.

“Sayı” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Sayı İlişkileri* Alt Grubu değerlendirme sonuçlarına göre; çocukların sayma ile ilgili olan Mad 15’de çocukların %86.5’si doğru yanıt vermiştir. Ancak çocuklar madeni paraların sayı ve değer bileşimleri arasındaki ilişkiyi içeren Mad 18’de %94.6 oranında başarısız olmuşlardır. Çocukların ikişerli saymayı ölçen Mad 22’de %92.5’i ve tek sayıyı bulmayı içeren Mad 14’de %89.5’si başarısız olmuştur. Çocuklar basit toplama yapmalarını isteyen Mad 16a’da %79.9 ve Mad 16b’de %90.1 oranlarında başarısız olmuşlardır. Çocukların sayı sırasını bulmayı içeren Mad 6a’da %78.7’ü ve Mad 6b’de 82.9’si doğru yanıt verememişlerdir.

“Sayı” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Hesaplamalar* Alt Grubu değerlendirme sonuçları incelendiğinde; çocukların madeni paraların sayı ve değer bileşimlerini bulmayı ve hesaplamayı içeren Mad 18’de %94.6’si ve toplama işlemi yapmalarını değerlendiren Mad 3’te %93.0’ı başarılı olamamışlardır. Çocuklar basit toplama yapmalarını isteyen Mad 16a’da %79.9 ve Mad 16b’de %90.1 oranlarında başarısız olmuşlardır. Çocuklar madeni paraların değerlerini toplamayı içeren Mad 10’da %89.5 oranında başarısız olmuşlardır. Çocukların basit toplama çıkarma yapmalarını içeren Mad 6a’da %78.7’si ve Mad 6b’de %82.9’u doğru yanıt verememişlerdir. Sayısal problem çözme becerilerini ölçen Mad8’de çocukların %66.8’i başarısız olmuşlardır. Ayrıca basit çıkarma işlemi yapabilme becerisini ölçen Mad 12 sorusunda da %63.5’i başarısız olmuştur.

“Sayı” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Sayısal Problemlerin Çözümü* Alt Grubu değerlendirme sonuçlarına göre; Çocuklar basit toplama yapmalarını isteyen Mad 16a’da %79.9 ve Mad 16b’de %90.1 oranlarında başarısız olmuşlardır. Çocuklar madeni paraların değerlerini toplamayı içeren Mad 10’da ve tek sayıyı bulmayı içeren Mad 14’de %89.5 oranında başarısız olmuşlardır. Sayısal problem çözme becerilerini ölçen Mad8’de çocukların %66.8’i başarısız olmuşlardır.

“Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Şekil* Alt Grubu Değerlendirme Sonuçları incelendiğinde; çocuklar, geometrik şekilleri tanımayı ve pozisyon bulmayı ölçen Mad23’de %74.0 oranında doğru yanıt vermişlerdir. Yine çocukların geometrik şekillerle oluşturulmuş örüntüyü şekli çizerek tamamlama becerilerini ölçen Mad5’de %70.7’si başarılı

olmuşlardır. Parça bütün ilişki içinde geometrik şekilleri tamamlamayı ölçen Mad7’de çocukların %65.6’sı başarılı olurken istenilen geometrik şekli bulmayı içeren Mad21’de çocukların ancak yarısı doğru yanıtlamışlardır.

“Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Simetri ve Şekil Değiştirme* Alt Grubu değerlendirme sonuçlarına göre; simetri ve şekil değiştirmeyi ölçen Mad11’de çocukların %70.1’i başarılı olmuşlardır.

“Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Hareket* Alt Grubu Değerlendirme Sonuçları incelendiğinde; yuvarlanabilen üç boyutlu şekilleri bulmayı içeren Mad24’de çocukların %96.4’ü başarılı olmuşlardır.

“Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Konum ve Koordinatlar* Alt Grubu değerlendirme sonuçlarına göre; çocuklar, geometrik şekilleri tanımayı ve pozisyon bulmayı ölçen Mad23’de %74.0 oranında doğru yanıt vermişlerdir.

“Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Ölçümler* Alt Grubu Değerlendirme Sonuçları incelendiğinde; çocuklar en uzununu belirlemeyi değerlendiren Mad1’de %97.0 ve sıvı ölçümü bilgilerini değerlendiren Mad13’de %96.7 oranlarında doğru yanıt vermişlerdir. Çocuklar, pozisyonu belirleme ile ilgili olan Mad4’de %95.8 oranında başarılı olurken en kısayı belirleme ile ilgili olan Mad17’de %93.1 oranlarında doğru yanıt vermişlerdir.

“Veri Kullanma” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Veri Belirleme ve Uygulama* Alt Grubu Değerlendirme Sonuçlarına göre; çocuklar grafik yorumlama ve uygulama becerilerini değerlendiren Mad22a’da %87.1 ve Mad22b’de %68.3 oranlarında başarılı olmuşlardır. Ayrıca çocukların geometrik şekillerle oluşturulmuş örüntüyü şekli çizerek tamamlama becerilerini ölçen Mad5’de %70.7’si başarılı olmuşlardır.

“Veri Kullanma” Kategorisine İlişkin, *Veri Yorumlama* Alt Grubu Değerlendirme Sonuçlarına göre; çocuklar grafik yorumlama ve uygulama becerilerini değerlendiren Mad22a’da %87.1 ve Mad22b’de %68.3 oranlarında başarılı olmuşlardır.

#### Tartışma

Yapılan istatistikler sonucunda “Sayı” kategorisine ait Tablo 1, Tablo 2, Tablo 3 ve Tablo 4’den elde edilen bulgulara bakıldığında 10 sayısından küçük olan sayıları sayma ve sayının değerini bilmeyi ölçen Mad 15 ve Mad2 sorularında çocukların çoğu başarılı olmuşlardır. Bu maddelere doğru yanıt vermedeki başarının yüksek olması beklenen bir durumdur. Yaşamın ilk altı ayın içinde olan bebeklerin bile bir nesneyi iki nesneden, iki nesneyi de üç nesneden ayırt edebildikleri yani sayılara duyarlı oldukları ancak çocukların üç-dört yaşlarına kadar dört nesneyi beşinden ya da altısından ayırt edemediklerini ortaya koyan araştırmalar bulunmaktadır. İlgili alan yazında okul öncesi çocuklarının doğru bir şekilde

saymayı başarmalarına yönelik beş tane sayma ilkesi olduğunu ileri sürülmüştür. Bu ilkeler; bire bir ilkesi, sabit sıra ilkesi, kardinal sıra ilkesi, ayırma ilkesi, sıranın önemsizliği ilkesidir. Sayma ilkelerinin çocuklarda gelişmesi ile saymayı daha rahat, hızlı ve kolay bir şekilde öğrenecekleri düşünülmektedir. Çocukların çoğunun üç yaşına kadar ve tamamının da beş yaşına kadar bire bir ilkesini, sabit sıra ilkesini, kardinal sıra ilkesini, ayırma ilkesini, sıranın önemsizliği ilkesini açık bir şekilde ve tamamıyla anladıkları savunulmaktadır.

Ancak çocukların 1-30 arasında sıra ile yazılmış rakamlardan eksik olanı bulmayı değerlendiren Mad 9a da %48.5 ve Mad 9b de %45.5 oranında başarı gösterebilmişlerdir. Yapılan bir araştırmada üç buçuk yaşından küçük pek çok çocuğun 10'a kadar olan rakam sırasını öğrenebildiği gözlenmiştir. Çocukların üç buçuk yaşından dört buçuk yaşına kadar 10'dan 20'ye kadar olan sayı sırasını geliştirebildikleri, dört buçuk yaşından altı yaşına kadar onlu sayılarda hatalar yapabilecekleri ama çoğu çocuğun 70'e kadar sayabildiği hatta önemli sayıda çocuğun 100'e kadar ya da 100'den sonrasını sayabildiği çalışmalara ilgili alan yazında rastlanmaktadır. Edilen bulgularda ilgili alan yazın doğrultusunda çocuklarda beklenenden düşük başarı elde edilmiştir. Ancak bu durumun Türkiye'de anasınıflarında uygulanan MEB Okul Öncesi Eğitim Programı'nda 1-20 arasında olan sayma becerilerinin kazandırılmasının amaçlanmasından kaynaklanabileceği düşünülebilir.

Çocukların "Sayı" kategorisine sayılarla işlemler yapmayı içeren Mad3, Mad6a, Mad6b, Mad8, Mad10, Mad12, Mad16a ve Mad16b,'de başarılarının beklenenden çok daha düşük düzeyde gerçekleştiği bulunmuştur. Bebeklerin küçük sayılar üzerindeki basit aritmetik işlemlerin sonuçlarını hesaplayabildikleri bunun ise bebeklerin sayısal kavramlara sahip olduğunu gösterdiğini böylelikle de insanların doğuştan aritmetik becerilerle donatıldığı öne sürülmektedir. Yapılan araştırmalarda 14-24 aylık olan çocukların bazı toplama ve çıkarmaları ayırt edebilmelerinin sayma becerilerinin iyi bir şekilde gelişmesinden daha önce olduğu bulunmuştur. Çocuklar üç yaşına kadar küçük sayılarla olan toplamayı ve çıkarmayı kavramaktadırlar ve ana temellerini edinmektedirler. Ancak daha büyük sayılarla olan toplamaları kavramaları dört yaşına doğru gerçekleşmektedir. Çocukların çoğu büyük sayılarla olan toplama işlemini beş buçuk yaşına kadar somut nesnelere yapabilirler. Çünkü bu yaşa kadar sayma sırası ilkesi ve kardinal sayı ilkesini öğrenememişlerdir. Ayrıca bu yaşa kadar çocuklarda rakamları niceliksel değere dönüştürebilme becerisi gelişmemiştir. Anasınıfı çocukları durumlardaki nesnelere, eylemleri ve ilişkileri betimledikçe geniş ölçüde toplama ve çıkarmaya ilişkin problem çeşitlerini çözebilmektedirler. İlgili alan yazını doğrultusunda çocuklardan toplama ve çıkarma işlemlerinde başarılı olması beklenen bir durumken araştırmadan edinilen bulgularda bu başarı saptanamamıştır. Bu durumun Türkiye'de

anasınıflarında uygulanan MEB Okul Öncesi Eğitim Programı'nda basit toplama ve çıkarma ile ilgili kazanımlarında 10 içinde toplama ve 5 içinde çıkarma işlemlerini yapabilme becerileri kazandırılmasının amaçlanmasından kaynaklandığı düşünülebilir. Ancak, 10 içinde toplama ve 5 içinde çıkarma işlemlerini yapabilme becerilerini kapsayan Mad6a, Mad6b, Mad8 ve Mad12 maddelerinde de çocukların başarıları çok düşük düzeyde bulunmuştur. Bu durumun kaynağının öğretmenlerin sınıflarındaki uygulamalarda çocuklara toplama ve çıkarma işlem becerilerini geliştirmede gerekli olan yaşantıları sağlayamadıkları olabilir. Ayrıca çocuklar madeni paraların sayı ve değer bileşimleri arasındaki ilişkiyi içeren Mad 18'de büyük oranda başarısız olmuşlardır. İlgili alan yazına bakıldığında çocukların madeni paraların isimlerini ve değerlerini öğrenebileceği hatta madeni paraların eşit değerde olan çeşitli birleşimlerini de öğrenmeye gereksinim duyabileceği yer almaktadır. Edilen bulgularda ilgili alan yazın doğrultusunda çocuklarda beklenenden düşük başarı elde edilmiştir.

Yapılan istatistikler sonucunda “Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” kategorisine ait Tablo 5, Tablo 6, Tablo 7 ve Tablo 8'den elde edilen bulgulara bakıldığında Mad5, Mad7, Mad21, Mad23, Mad11, Mad24 ve Mad23'de çocukların başarılarının yüksek olduğu bulunmuştur. Çocukların altı yaşına kadar geometrik şekilleri tanımalarının ve çizebilmelerinin beklendiği ilgili alan yazında yer almaktadır. Çocuklarda üç-altı yaş arasının geometrik şekilleri öğrenme için ideal dönem olduğunu düşünülmektedir. Çocukların üç yaşına kadar %60'dan fazlasının daireyi, kareyi ve üçgeni isimlendirebilmektedirler. Beş yaşındaki çocuklar daireyi %85, üçgeni %80, kareyi %78 ve dikdörtgeni %44 oranında tanımaktadırlar. Dört, beş ve altı yaşındakiler ise sırasıyla %92, %96 ve %99 oranında tanımaktadırlar. Tablo 7, Tablo 8 ve Tablo 9'da çocukların geometrik şekilleri tanımada elde edilen başarıları araştırma bulguları ile paralellik gösterdiği düşünülebilir.

Çocuklar, Tablo 9'da “Şekil, Alan ve Ölçümler” kategorisinde ölçme yapabilme becerilerini değerlendiren Mad1, Mad4, Mad13 ve Mad17'de yüksek oranda başarılı olmuşlardır. Bu maddelere doğru yanıt vermedeki başarının yüksek olması beklenen bir durumdur. İlgili alan yazından elde edilen bilgilerde okul öncesi dönemde çocukların kütle, uzunluk ve ağırlık gibi sürekli özneliklerin var olduğunu bildiği fakat onların miktarını doğru bir şekilde belirleyemedikleri ve ölçemedikleri bilgisi yer almaktadır. Bu çocukların dört-beş yaşlarında algısal ipuçlarını kullanmayı öğrendikleri ve nicelikleri anlamlandırmada ve ölçmede ilerledikleri düşünülmektedir. Çocukların ölçmeye ilişkin bazı fikirleri öğrenmeden önce korunumu geliştirmelerinin gerekli olmadığı düşünülmektedir. Piaget'in görüşüne göre ise çocuklar beş-yedi yaş arasında standart olmayan birimlerle ve altı yaşından sonrada standart olan birimlerle ölçmeler yapabilirler. Ancak, korunumun tam bir ölçme

anlayışı için çok önemli olduğu konusunda fikir birliği bulunmaktadır. Çocukların standart birimlerle ölçümü kullanmadan önce uzunluk ve ağırlık korunumunu kazanmış olmaları gerekmektedir. İlgili alan yazının Tablo 9'dan elde edilen sonuçları desteklediği söylenebilir.

Yapılan istatistikler sonucunda “Veri Kullanma” kategorisine ait Tablo 10 ve, Tablo 11'den elde edilen bulgulara bakıldığında grafik yorumlama ve örüntü oluşturma becerilerini ölçen Mad 5, Mad20a ve Mad20b sorularında çocukların çoğu başarılı olmuşlardır. Veri analizi sınıflamanın, saymanın ve veri gösteriminin gelişimini içerir. Grafik yapma, çocuklara bilgileri gösterme, anlama yolu sunar ve ilgili olaylar hakkında tahminler yapmayı kolaylaştırır. Okul öncesi çocukları basit grafikler yaparak bilgiyi organize edebilirler. Çocukların Tablo 10 ve Tablo 11'de grafik yorumlama ve örüntü oluşturma becerilerini ölçen sorulardan elde edilen başarılarının ilgili alan yazını ile paralellik gösterdiği düşünülebilir.

#### Öneriler

1. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların matematik gelişimine ilişkin uygulamaları ve bilgi düzeyleri, okul öncesi çocuklar için uygulanacak programların içerikleri zenginleştirilmesi açısından önem taşıdığından okul öncesi öğretmenlerin çocukların matematik gelişimine yönelik yeterlik düzeylerini ve gereksinimlerini belirleme çalışmaları yapılabilir.
2. Okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında sağlanan matematik gelişimi ile ilgili materyaller ile öğretmenlerin kullandıkları yöntem ve tekniklerin çocukların matematik gelişimiyle olan ilişkisini belirlemeye yönelik araştırmalar yapılabilir.
3. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların matematik gelişimlerine ilişkin yöntem bilgilerini artırmak amacıyla çocukların matematik gelişimlerini desteklemede yapabilecekleri çalışmalar hakkında seminerler, konferanslar vb. düzenlenerek bilgi verilebilir.
4. Okul öncesi çocuklarda matematik becerileri gelişimine yönelik “matematik projeleri” hazırlanabilir ve yürütülebilir.