



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' VIEWS ON DOMESTIC DEMOCRACY¹

(AİLE İÇİ DEMOKRASİ İLE İLGİLİ İLKÖĞRETİM ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN
GÖRÜŞLERİ)

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate elementary school students' views on this democratic within-family process. This study is a case study which is one of the qualitative research methods. For this purpose, Van and Bingöl from Eastern Anatolia, Ankara and Kirsehir from Central Anatolia, Aydın and Istanbul from Western Anatolia were selected. As the data collection tool in the study, "views on domestic democracy form" was used. According to results of the research, it has been indicated that every students has different democracy process in their family.

Keywords: democracy, domestic democracy, family, elementary school student.

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada, aile içi bu demokratik süreç ile ilgili ilköğretim öğrencilerinin görüşlerini tespit etmek amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan durum çalışması modelindedir. Çalışmada örneklem olarak Doğu Anadolu'dan Van ve Bingöl; Orta Anadolu'dan Ankara ve Kırşehir; Batı Anadolu'dan ise Aydın ve İstanbul illerinde öğrenim gören 6. ve 7. Sınıf öğrencileri seçilmiştir. Veri toplama aracı olarak ise "Aile içi demokrasi görüş formu" kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonunda farklı illerdeki ailelerde farklı demokrasi süreçlerinin yaşandığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Demokrasi, Aile içi Demokrasi, Aile, ilköğretim Öğrencisi.

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INTRODUCTION

Human race and humanity's culture have been sustained within the institution of family that starts with a marriage contract and is considered an irreplaceable common value in every society throughout human history. Family is considered a unit that constitutes the foundation for the society. It has functions such as transferring the society's culture to younger generations, educating for socialization, and unconditionally providing its members with psychological and moral satisfaction at the highest level in a socially safe fashion. Even though family phenomenon has been defined differently in different historical and social periods, it means a social unit in which some developmental activities that may almost considered universal take place (Gür and Kurt, 2011). In the historical process, although the family has undergone a change of form (large family, nuclear family, etc.), it has never lost its importance so far.

Family is the smallest social and, at the same time, an educational organization. The family is the medium where the individual experiences first-ever feelings, ideas, behaviors, and education. Beside Freud and Adler, many psychologists have stated that child's initial years form the crucial period in a child's development and that further developments are shaped based on personality characteristics gained in the early years of a child's life. The child experiences an important period for body, intelligence, and character before the formal education. Even after the childhood period, "home" continues to be the primary society for a child (Büyükdüvenci, 1990: 591).

There are many factors effective in granting a child a democratic personality and family is the main factor. a child's social and intellectual development starts within the family circle and continues in the school environment (Aslan and Cansever, 2009). Therefore the family needs to be a better model for the child, starting from the childhood years. Families should promote democratic values, love for humanity, and loyalty towards human rights, before their children. Values gained in the family affect children's and youth's world view. It may also be said that democratic habits democratize the social life (Üstün and Yılmaz, 2008). The attitude and values a child attains in the family direct his or her future; in other words, they draw the framework of his or her level of democratic personality. Dispositions of child's family members constitute a model for him or her and in one sense they define his or her dispositions too (Kontaş, 2009). In homes where a democratic, tolerating and embracing attitude is adopted, children are raised as active and independent decision makers and creative social individuals. They gain recognition on higher levels. Children raised in such style become successful and positive individuals with particular curiosity. It is not easy to dominate over them (İkizoğlu, 1993). It is also known that domestic communication and interaction are greatly effective on the development of children's and youth's individuality and personality. Therefore, for the democratic values to survive,

it is required to establish them within the family. It only depends on a healthy communication environment for parents to raise their children as responsible, collaborative, self-disciplined, positive, and creative individuals (Nazlı, 2000). However, a democratic and healthy domestic environment is not available for all children. Different parent attitudes may be found in the literature.

Oppressive and authoritarian attitude: Oppressive and authoritarian attitude is described as an attitude destroying child's self confidence and paying no attention to his or her personality. It usually prevails in traditional families where children are expected to follow each rule and parents apply a strict discipline (Yavuzer, 1999). This type of families applies punishment when children do not obey the rules. Parents in this type of families do not usually exchange ideas with children and they often expect children to accept all they preach, without questioning (Baumrind, 1968).

Democratic attitude: This is the attitude of parents who are both concerned and responsible. These parents have a supportive understanding of discipline rather than a punishing one (Seven, 2008:201). In families with democratic attitude, child has a right to speak; his or her feelings and opinion are respected; and he or she is loved and supported (Yavuzer, 1999).

Indecisive attitude: Indecisive attitude includes differences and changes in parents' child raising styles and behaviors (Yavuzer, 1999).

Protective parents practice excessive control, attention and interest over the child. Even under conditions the child does not need any help, such parents find it necessary to interfere. Such parents meet child's all needs and they do not give him or her any opportunity to be self-sufficient. They simply inhibit the child researching.

Indifference attitude: indifferent and distant parents leave the child alone and ignore him or her. The communication that needs to exist between parents and the child is lacking (Yavuzer, 1999:33). Discipline in such families is almost non-existent.

Differences in family structures and education methods cause different individual characteristics to prevail in different societies and families. It may be said that families applying democratic methods in raising children raise democratic individuals and families with anti-democratic methods raise anti-democratic individuals (Yeşil, 2001). Parents in our country may adopt democratic or anti-democratic attitudes. Many factors such as education level, socio-economic status and culture in a family are effective in this. To secure a democratic future, it is required to raise individuals in a healthy democratic environment. Exchange of ideas in decision-making and division of labor prevail the democratic family environment. Children are provided with opportunity to make decisions; their opinion is respected and tolerated. All children have equal opportunity and they are not discriminated or privileged due to their sex and other different characteristics in a democratic family environment. How is this in Turkish culture? How are family decisions made?

Is there labor division within the family? Are local, national and regional topics discussed in the family? Purpose of this study is to investigate elementary school students' views on this democratic within-family process.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study is a case study which is one of the qualitative research methods. Case study is a research strategy that targets to understand social phenomenon of a single or small group in its natural environment. The purpose, here, is to get the sample described in details (Bloor and Wood, 2006). In other words, case study is the research method that allows the researcher to study a phenomenon or happening, not controlled by the researcher, in depth, based on questions "how" and "why". Cases may be in different forms. An individual, an institution, a group or an environment may be examples of cases to be studied. Selecting the case to study is significant in terms of the purpose of the study (Bloor and Wood, 2006; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005). The most basic characteristic of a qualitative research is to study a single or a few cases in depth (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2005). In this sense, this study will put forward the elementary school students' perceptions of democracy within family.

Sampling

In this study, elementary 7th and 8th grade students from various cities around Turkey were selected through maximum variety sampling of purposeful sampling methods and maximum variety source is based on the cultural richness. According to Patton (1987), a small sampling with maximum variety has at least two advantages:

- 1) Describing each group's peculiar dimensions in details, including the sampling,
- 2) Putting forward the themes and their values that may exist among cases with greatly differing characteristics (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2006).

For this purpose, Van and Bingol from Eastern Anatolia, Ankara and Kirsehir from Central Anatolia, Aydin and Istanbul from Western Anatolia were selected. Families in Eastern Anatolia make a living on agriculture and husbandry; their number of children is usually large; and the families are large. Socio-economic status of these families is low in general. Ankara, selected from Central Anatolia, is the capital of Turkey. Kirsehir, at close distance to Ankara, is a city where mostly public servants live. Socio-economic status of families is moderate. Istanbul, selected from Western Anatolia, is the largest city in Turkey, in terms of population, industry, trade, and tourism. There are diverse families from around Turkey in Istanbul.

Aydin, on the other hand, is a city of tourism. Families usually have higher socio-economic status. From these cities, 40 students from each city – twenty of 7th grade and twenty of 8th grade – make a total of 240 students selected.

Data Collection Tool

As the data collection tool in the study, “views on domestic democracy form” was used. To prepare the form, literature related to family and democracy was studied and the characteristics of a democratic family were defined. Those characteristics elementary students can understand were selected and a pool of ten open-ended questions was formed. These questions were reduced to eight upon consulting with two experts from Ahi Evran University and later a pilot study was conducted at Prof. Dr. Erol Gungor Elementary School in Kirsehir. Following the pilot study, required adjustments were made on questions and number of questions was reduced to seven. One language expert and a faculty member from psychological counseling and guidance were consulted with on these seven open-ended questions. Then the form was given the final shape. Following questions were included in the “views on domestic democracy form”:

1. How does your family make decision about anything?
2. How does your family react when you have a different view than your family on anything?
3. Does your family practice division of labor and duties?
4. Do you discuss topics related to our city, country or other countries in the family?
5. Do you think you have the same rights as your sisters or brothers do? Is your family’s view on daughters and sons the same?
6. When you make decisions related to yourself, does your family respect your decision?
7. What type of family is your family? Why?

Data Analysis

Descriptive and content analyses of the qualitative research data were made. Content analysis was conducted on four levels such as coding the data, finding the categories (themes), organization of codes and themes, and defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2005). Therefore, during the analysis of research data, responses from students were coded in relation to the study purpose. Paying attention to similarities, differences and relations in codes, categories were created, regarding the data. Each student’s view, with original construction and meaning, was included in these categories. The same procedure was followed for each city and finally a table was built. Then, a city-wise comparison was made. Analysis unit was the sentence. Analysis of qualitative data was conducted in accordance with descriptive analysis (direct quotations).

Data were organized in general and sub-categories, and in order to process them, a conceptual framework was established. Later, frequency of each category was found. Thus, qualitative data were quantified. The main reasons for quantifying the data were: increasing the reliability, reducing bias, and making comparisons among categories (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2005). Total frequencies were given in the data analysis in order to find how many views were expressed in total. For some questions, students expressed more than one view whereas for some other no view was expressed. When interpreting the data, students' views were directly conveyed. No student names but codes were used for these. For example; V/8/M from city of Van symbolizes an 8th grade male student, and I/7/F from city of Istanbul symbolizes a 7th grade female student.

Role of the Researcher

One of the most significant variables of validity and reliability in qualitative studies is the researcher. Researcher's success depends on mastery, knowing the terminology, and adopting an unbiased attitude towards people and events. Therefore, in this study, data obtained with "views on domestic democracy form" were coded by two different researchers at two different times. Inter-reliability rate between the two raters for qualitative data analysis is calculated as 0.76. this rate shows that there is higher level inter-reliability between raters (Şencan, 2005).

FINDINGS

Table 1. Frequency distribution of responses to question "How does your family make decision about anything? Who tells the final decision?"

	Istanbul	Aydın	Ankara	Kırşehir	Van	Bingöl	Total	
Democratic	<i>Everyone expresses opinion/shared decision is made</i>	21	25	23	20	12	7	108
	<i>I express my opinion</i>	14	19	14	16	4	7	74
	<i>Voting is run.</i>	1	-	2	3	1	-	7
	<i>We make decisions but the one about whom the decision is made tells the final say.</i>	1	2	1	3	-	1	8
	<i>Everyone has a right to speak.</i>	2	1	3	-	-	1	7
	<i>Children make decisions.</i>	-	2	2	2	-	-	6
Σ	39	49	45	44	17	16	210	

	İstanbul	Aydın	Ankara	Kırşehir	Van	Bingöl	Total	
Anti Democratic	<i>My father makes the final decision.</i>	12	8	7	8	21	14	70
	<i>My parents make the final decision.</i>	8	6	14	9	9	16	62
	<i>Sometimes made. Sometimes not.</i>	1	4	4	-	2	4	15
	<i>Our opinion is asked but they do not consider it.</i>	-	-	7	4	2	1	14
	<i>My mother makes the final decision.</i>	1	2	5	4	-	-	12
	<i>My opinion is never asked.</i>	-	-	4	3	2	2	11
	<i>My grandparents make decisions.</i>	-	-	-	-	3	2	5
	<i>They don't like my decision because I am little.</i>	-	1	-	-	3	-	4
	Σ	22	21	41	28	42	39	193

As can be seen in Table 1, “everyone expresses opinion/shared decision is made” comes as the first among democratic behaviors related to making decisions within family. For example, student I/7/F responded to that question with “we all talk and make decision. For example, when we want to go somewhere, everyone’s opinion is asked and shared decision is made”. “My opinion is asked” was the democratic response. These responses were scarce among the responses by students going to school in Van and Bingöl. “My father makes the last decision” is at the head of anti-democratic expressions. This expression was repeated most in Van, later in Bingöl and Istanbul. For example, student V/8/F responded as “My father makes all decisions about anything. My father tells us to set what channel on TV, where to go, and whether to go or not to go to school”. Another anti-democratic expression is “my parents make the final decision”. This was used particularly in cities of Bingöl, Ankara, and Van. For example, student B/7/M uttered these expressions: “Since we are little, they do not take our opinions into account. Usually adults, my mom and dad make decisions”.

Table 2. Frequency distribution of responses to question “How does your family react when you have a different view than your family on anything?”

		Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total
Democratic	I can express my opinion comfortably.	29	30	23	21	8	16	127
	They respect my opinion.	9	17	11	13	4	3	57
	They listen to my opinion and we make shared decision.	9	5	8	5	3	7	37
	They listen to me.	5	2	9	8	1	-	25
	They tolerate me.	7	2	5	3	2	3	22
	They convince me if it is something that can be harmful to me.	5	4	4	1	2	2	18
	They accept if it is logical for them.	-	5	-	-	5	2	12
	They respond normally.	-	-	2	4	-	-	6
	Σ	64	65	62	55	25	33	304
		Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total
Anti Democratic	They react harshly and get mad.	2	-	1	2	1	6	12
	They tell me “you do not interfere, you are little”.	-	4	3	2	3	1	13
	I cannot express a different opinion.	-	1	1	1	1	5	9
	My father never accepts/gets mad.	1	1	1	2	2	-	7
	They do not accept my opinion.	3	1	1	-	2	-	7
	My mom never accepts and tells me “No”.	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
	They ignore/ do not listen.	-	-	1	1	2	-	4
	They question me.	-	-	1	2	-	1	4
I want to read and they do not let me.	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	
	Σ	8	7	9	10	12	14	60

As can be seen on Table 2, “I can comfortably express my opinion” leads the democratic behaviors related to different opinions. For example, one of the students said “when I have a different opinion than my family does, I can express this comfortably and they respond understandingly” (A/7/M). Van and later Bingol are the cities where democratic views are expressed less. Again Van and Bingol are the cities where anti-democratic views are mostly

expressed. For example, a student (B/8/F) used the expression “*they react harshly and get mad*”. We see that “*you do not interfere, you are little*” is generally used in the cities. For example, a student (K/7/M) said he was told “*you do not interfere with everything; you are little; you go and study*”. Frequency of democratic views is 304 whereas that of antidemocratic is 60

Table 3. Frequency distribution of responses to question “Does your family practice division of labor and duties?”

	Ankara	Kirsehir	Istanbul	Aydin	Van	Bingöl	Total	
Democratic	Yes, there is labor division.	32	35	31	27	22	17	164
	My mom does the house work.	22	27	24	16	25	13	127
	I tidy up my room.	23	23	21	12	5	1	85
	My dad goes shopping.	21	27	17	14	-	2	81
	I study.	9	29	12	18	5	4	77
	We share cooking.	15	29	6	5	8	9	72
	My dad takes animals out for grazing.			-	-	9	2	11
	My older brother takes sheep out for grazing.	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
	My sister in law does the housework.			-	-	6	2	8
	I go herding the sheep in summers.	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
	Σ	122	170	111	92	87	50	632
	Ankara	Kirsehir	Istanbul	Aydin	Van	Bingöl	Total	
Anti Democratic	We do not have labor division in the family.	3	2	5	3	8	8	29
	My older brother does not do whatever he is required to.	-	-	3	3	6	-	12
	My dad does not do whatever he is required to.	1	2	1	2	4	1	11
	My mom does all the work.	-	2	2	-	5	-	9
	They never help me with homework.	4	-	1	-	-	-	5
Σ	8	6	12	8	23	9	66	

As can be seen on Table 3, in relation to division of labor, a significant majority of children express that there is division of labor within family. Labor division is often related to sharing work at home. For example, a student (I/7/F) talks about the labor division at home by saying that “*there is labor division at home; I tidy up my own room, mom does house work, and dad goes shopping*”. Very few students expressed the lack of labor division within family. Frequency of democratic views on labor division is 632 whereas that of antidemocratic views is 66.

Table 4. Frequency distribution related to the question “Do you think you have the same rights as your sisters or brothers do? Is your family’s view on daughters and sons the same?”

	Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total	
Democratic	My family treat us equally.	20	25	17	18	19	20	119
	I think I have the same rights with my brothers and sisters.	19	28	22	22	15	22	128
	They treat daughters and sons the same way.	1	9	7	8	8	-	33
	I do not have any siblings.	9	-	6	4	-	1	20
	My older sibling has more rights.	4	5	-	-	-	4	13
	They treat daughters a bit more sensitively.	2	-	-	-	2	2	6
	Σ	55	67	52	52	44	49	319
	Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total	
Anti democratic	Men are always privileged.	3	-	3	3	4	3	16
	We do not have the same rights.	4	-	3	2	3	4	16
	My sister and I do not have the same rights.	-	-	1	-	2	-	3
	Σ	7	-	7	5	9	7	35

As can be seen on Table 4, in general students express that families treat them equally; they have the same rights as their siblings; they share the view on daughters and sons, in relation to democratic approach. As anti-democratic, they expressed that men are more

privileged. More frequent anti-democratic views inhabit Van and Istanbul. For example, a student (V/7/F) said, “Males are treated better; we get a “no” when they get a “yes”.

Table 5. Frequency distribution related to the question “When you make decisions related to yourself, does your family respect your decision?”

		Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total
Democratic	My family respects my decision.	24	27	22	18	17	21	129
	They warn me in case of a bad decision	8	11	7	5	2	9	42
	I make decisions in collaboration with my family.	4	9	3	2	1	3	22
	Σ	36	47	32	25	20	33	193
		Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total
Anti Democratic	They do not respect my decision if it is a bad decision for them.	7		5	4	14	16	46
	Sometimes respected sometimes not.	7	9	5	8	9	7	45
	They do not respect my opinion.			2	3	5	4	14
	They do not accept my opinion.		2	3	3	4		12
	My dad makes the decisions.					4	3	7
	For them, my decisions are nonsense.			2	1			3
	I have not decided for myself yet.					3		3
	They do not respect my choice of clothes.						2	2
Σ	14	11	17	19	39	32	132	

As can be seen on Table 5, students express the family approval when they decide for themselves. They also say that if it is a bad decision they get warned and they make decisions in collaboration with their families. Students expressing democratic views uttered the following:

“My family respects my decision since when something I want does not happen, I do not want it, and again what I want takes place.” (V/8/F)

“Yes, they respect. For example, when we bought a phone for me, dad thought another phone was better but we bought the one I liked.” (A/7/F)

“Yes, they do. First, we see if my decision is good. If it is, my mom and dad do not tell anything. However, if they think my decision is not so good, we discuss why so.” (A/7/M)

Students expressing anti-democratic views said that family does not respect their decision usually when it is bad decision in their opinion; they sometimes respect sometimes do not; and they do not respect students' opinion. They uttered the following:

“If they think it is a bad decision they do not respect. For example, they do not respect my demand of a computer” (K/8/M).

“It depends on their spirits; they sometimes respect, sometimes react. It also depends on what my decision is. If they think it makes sense, then they accept it” (K/8/M).

Table 6. Frequency distribution of responses to question “Do you discuss topics related to our city, country or other countries in the family?”

	Istanbul	Aydin	Ankara	Kirsehir	Van	Bingol	Total
We do not discuss these topics.	13	13	6	11	19	24	86
We discuss topics related to our city, region, country or other countries.	8	21	11	9	12	11	72
We usually discuss topics announced on news spots.	7	6	14	8	7	4	46
We discuss about our own city.	4	10	3	4	5	5	31
We discuss about our country.	8	7	5	2	5	5	32
We rarely discuss these topics.	4	3	8	6			21
We talked about the earthquake in Van.		4	5	3	6	2	20
We discuss about other countries.	5	5	1		3	3	17
My mom and dad discuss these topics.	4	4	2	3	-	-	13
We usually discuss about our home.	-	-	1	-	4	3	8
I do not like these topics.	3	3	3	-	-	-	9
We discuss about fights in Syria.	-	-	4	2	-	-	6
We do not discuss/practice politics at home.	-	1	2	2	-	-	5
I and my dad talk.	-	-	3	2	-	-	5
We discuss when it is election time.	-	1	1	1	-	1	4
We talk about environmental pollution.	-	-	2	-	-	1	3
We usually discuss these topics when there is a guest.	-	-	1	2	-	-	3
We watch serials after dinner.	2	-	1	1	2	1	7
We talk about it when there is a natural disaster around the world.	1	-	2	1	-	-	4

As can be seen on Table 6, students say that they usually do not discuss topics related to city, country, and other countries, within family. For example, students uttered expressions such as “we do not discuss this type of topics within family (A/8/M); we do not discuss these topics because adults do (B/7/F); we have not experienced such so far (I/7/F)”.

Students discussing these topics within family, on the other hand, state that they are limited to news-spot topics. For example, a student (A/8/M) said that “we watch news during dinner and we discuss related topics”. As such, students state that they more often discuss topics related to their own city. For example, a student said “we discuss topics related to our city, for example, they do not have seats at the bus stops and this gives trouble to particularly older adults. We discuss this at home”. Some other students uttered expressions such as “we talk about our country; we rarely talk about these topics; we talked about earthquake in Van”.

Table 7. Frequency distribution related to the question “What type of family is your family? Why?”

		Istanbul (20)	Aydın (23)	Ankara (23)	Kirsehir (18)	Van (8)	Bingöl (7)	Total
Democratic Family	Get opinion from every member of family.	8	8	13	11	3	-	43
	Decisions are made in collaboration.	4	10	5	6	4	2	31
	Everyone has equal rights.	7	4	10	7	2	6	36
	My decisions are respected.	1	-	9	7	1	-	18
	We deal with problems democratically.	2	3	6	4	-	-	15
	They listen to my opinions.	1	6	3	2	-	-	12
	We practice respect in the family.	1	1	4	2	1	-	9
	Σ	24	32	50	39	11	8	164
		Istanbul (19)	Aydın (14)	Ankara (8)	Kirsehir (10)	Van (23)	Bingöl (21)	Total
Over-protective family	They do not want to harm me.	9	3	4	5	8	8	37
	They protect me.	-	4	-	-	8	6	18
	They do not let me do anything alone.	3	5	5	2	2	2	19
	They do not trust strangers.	7	1	-	-	2	-	10
	They really pamper.	3	1	-	6	1	-	11
	They are fond of family members.	-	-	-	-	5	-	5

	They over-protect me because I am a girl.	-	2	-	-	3	4	9
	They question a lot.	-	-	1	-	-	4	5
	They are influenced by the news programs.	2	-	1	1	-	-	4
	They themselves take me to school every day.	2	1	1	-	-	-	4
	They decide on what I do or don't do.	-	1	1	-	-	2	4
	Σ	26	18	13	14	29	26	126
		Istanbul (4)	Aydin (3)	Ankara (6)	Kirsehir (7)	Van (4)	Bingol (2)	Total
Oppressive Authoritarian Family	They pressurize me about classes.	2	3	4	5	1	1	16
	They threaten to beat me.	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
	I want to continue my education but they do not want me to.	-	-	-	-	2	1	3
	My family is very jealous.	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
	They use imperatives.	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	Σ	2	3	7	5	4	2	23

As can be seen on Table 7, those students who think their families are democratic ones, in general, express that everyone's opinion is asked about anything; decisions are made collaboratively; all family members are equal; and their decisions are respected. They uttered the following:

"Everyone's opinion is respected; everyone's opinion is asked; and decisions are made collaboratively" (A/7/F).

"Everyone puts forward their own decision, and everyone has equal rights" (V/8/F).

"We are four in the family. Everyone gets equal rights and all four get what they want done" (A/7/F).

"We all decide together and discuss ideas" (K/8/M).

Those students who think their families are over-protective express that their families do not want them to get harmed; they do not trust strangers; and they do not let students do anything on their own. Students from the over-protective families uttered the following:

"Since I am the youngest at home, my parents protect me and I get pampered" (B/7/F).

"They do not let me go out alone or do anything; and I am mad with this. Most friends can go out alone" (A/7/M).

“They love me much; they do not want me get hurt, and they do not trust outsiders” (I/8/F).

Those students who say their families are oppressive usually state that they are pressurized about school. Students uttered the following:

“They constantly tell me to study” (K/8/M).

“They very much want me to be successful; I am sometimes fed up with that but I will never tell them this” (A/7/F).

Considering the family types, democratic family has the most frequency (164); secondly the over-protective family (126); and the oppressive-authoritarian family has the least frequency (23).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study which researched the views of elementary students regarding intrafamilial democracy, the following results were obtained: Elementary school students in general state that within family, everyone’s opinion is asked and decisions are made collaboratively; and that their opinion is also asked. This is a democratic approach within family. As an anti-democratic approach, students state that fathers or parents have the final say over decisions. Democratic view frequency is low but anti-democratic view is high in Van and Bingöl. These cities in the Eastern Anatolia are the ones where fathers are viewed as the sole leader of family.

In a patriarchal family, the father makes the child dependent on him either by excessive protection or by force. This condition destroys the courages of children and causes them to grow introvertedly (Başaran, 1974). Yet children who are raised in a democratic family environment can express their ideas freely and present more effective, sociable and creative ideas in their relations with friends (Jersild, 1979). Considering the results of Family Structure Research that was conducted by the Turkish Statistics Institute throughout Turkey in 2006, two out of three participants indicated that the decisions about children are made with the participation of all family members (TUİK, 2006). This result corresponds to the result regarding western provinces in this study. Another study, on the other hand, shows that children and teenagers have a lower participation in Turkey. United Nations Development Programme, Progress Report of the Turkish People (2008) shows that regarding the children in the age group of 15-24, only 55 percent are able to participate in decisions regarding the TV channel to be watched at home and only 43 percent are able to express their ideas about financial decisions. As the age of the child and financial condition of the family decrease, these rates considerably decrease as well. On the other hand, U.N. Children’s Rights Committee that is also accepted by Turkey has always encouraged children to participate in the decision-making process in the

family and accepted it as an obligation to consider the views of children and take them seriously in determining the liabilities of parents and other caregivers, within the scope of the 12. Article (Akyüz, 2001). Even though the Convention on the Rights of the Child is accepted approximately by 142 countries, the importance of children's participation has not fully been comprehended in many countries of the world and children could not be enabled to participate in a number of areas. The studies show that children's participation is not allowed even in school textbooks of social studies sufficiently. In his study, Merey (2012) determined that children do not have the right to participate in the family environment, general politics, health and jurisdiction environment in social studies textbooks that are taught in Turkey and the United States sufficiently.

Mutual love and respect, caring about one another's right and being indulgent are among features that are encountered in democratic family members (Bilge, 2007). In this study, elementary school students stated that when they had a different opinion, they could easily express this and their opinion was respected. Yeşil (2001) researched the conformity of class and family environments to the democracy education. In the study, he concluded that the family environment is more convenient for the democracy education in terms of all features in physical, information and rule dimensions, compared to class environment. Family, where democratic behaviors are learned and practiced, is a very important environment for children since democratic values such as participation, discussion, openness, justice, objectivity, self-discipline are initially learned in the family (Doğan, 2007).

In Van where traditional family structure prevails, children, particularly girls, stated that they could not express their different opinions easily. As a matter of fact, Başaran (1992) stated that socio-cultural norms and values could vary in relation to sexual roles in the society and concluded that boys have better relations with their parents compared to girls. Still in general, frequency of democratic views is 304 whereas anti-democratic one is 60. It can be noticed that environment is getting more democratic.

It is not possible for families, which do not involve their children in labor sharing and assign them some certain responsibilities, to establish a democratic environment (Doğan, 2007). Another result that was obtained in the study is that all families have labor and duty division. Particularly within homes, mother, father and child share chores. A noteworthy point is about the works in Eastern Anatolia where students talk about doing husbandry works and works in other cities where students mention within family chores or going shopping. Frequency of democratic views is 632 whereas frequency for anti-democratic ones is 66. This result shows that labor division is practiced within family. Rasuly-Paleczek (1996), who conducted studies about Turkish families, stated that the most important element of determining the functions

of Turkish families includes intrafamilial relations, cooperation, mutualization, rather than physical elements such as the number of individuals.

Elementary school students stated that they have equal rights with their siblings within family and there is no discrimination between daughters and sons. However, some students stated that they do not have the same rights as their siblings do and sons are more privileged.

As another result, students stated that they can make decisions for themselves and families respect that. Other students state that they are sometimes respected but at other times not. If the decision they make is not good for the family, they are not respected.

Another striking result of the study is that elementary students do not discuss local, national and international issues within family. Families discussing these issues, on the other hand, particularly talk about the news in the media or they talk about only their own city. Some students stated that they talk about Turkey and other countries.

In his study that was conducted throughout Turkey, Kuş (2012) determined that students do not have much opportunity to discuss about national and international issues with their family, school environment and peers. Children, who are unable to talk or discuss about social issues in the family from young ages, fail to participate in these intrafamilial discussions when they are grown as well. For instance, the conclusion that Karatekin, Kuş and Merey (2012) reached in their studies that preservice social studies teachers rarely talk with family members regarding environmental problems and their solutions supports this finding.

The most common attitude of raising children in the Turkish society is the obstruction of the child's autonomy and enterprise tendencies (Tezcan, 1999). In this study, elementary students think their families are democratic or over-protective. Those students who think families are democratic showed shared decisions and equality in the family as the basis to their arguments. Students who believed that families are over-protective based their argument on the fact that families over-protect them and they do not trust other people from outside the family. Some students on the other hand said their families are oppressive since families pressurize them about school.

Suggestions

Family and school are where future generations are prepared for life. School alone cannot raise students as democratic individuals. In this sense, democratic environments within family should be created and sustained. Therefore, families should be regularly educated about democracy, children rights, and human rights within a program. This should be a life-long learning, not for just one occasion.

Local, national and international updated topics should be discussed within family in order to raise awareness of participation and democracy. If

the family is not knowledgeable about these, at least, local issues should be discussed within family.

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