



THE INFLUENCE OF FATHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON THE LEVELS OF FATHER INVOLVEMENT WITH CHILDREN: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY*

BABALARA VERİLEN EĞİTİMİN BABALARIN ÇOCUKLARIYLA İLGİLENMELERİNE ETKİSİ: DENEYSEL BİR ÇALIŞMA

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to reveal the effects of father education programs on the levels of their involvement with their children aged 2 to 9. The study group comprised 14 fathers who participate in a father education program. The study employed the pre-test-posttest design. Data were collected by using Father Interview Forms. The independent variable of the study is the Father Education Program activity implemented on the study group between the pre- and posttest. Starting from one week after the fathers were given the Father Interview Form as a pretest, the fathers took participated a 10-week education. One week after the education program was complete, the same test was administered once again to the fathers as a posttest. Data obtained from the study were analyzed with the Non-Parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The findings have shown that the father education program increased “the frequency of fathers becoming involved with their children’s games, going out with their children, having verbal interactions with them, teaching them new things, becoming involved with their daily care, and looking after them at special times”.

Keywords: father involvement, father education programs, father-child interaction.

ÖZET: Bu çalışmada, babalara verilen eğitimin, babaların 2-9 yaş çocuklarıyla ilgilenme düzeylerine olan etkisini ortaya koymak amaçlanmıştır. Çalışma grubunu baba eğitim programına katılan 14 baba oluşturmuştur. Araştırmada, ön test-son test deseni kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın verileri, Baba Görüşme Formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın bağımsız değişkeni ön test-son test arasında çalışma grubuna verilen Baba Eğitim Programı etkinliğidir. Çalışma grubuna Baba Görüşme Formu ön test olarak verildikten bir hafta sonra babalar on hafta süren bir eğitim almıştır. Eğitimin tamamlanmasından bir hafta sonra aynı test babalara ikinci kez son test olarak tekrar verilmiştir. Araştırmadan elde edilen veriler Non-Parametrik Wilcoxon İşaretleli Sıralar Testi ile analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları, babalara verilen eğitimin; “babaların çocuklarının oyunlarına katılma, çocuklarıyla birlikte dışarı çıkma, sözel etkileşime girme, çocuklarına yeni birşeyler öğretme, günlük bakımlarıyla ilgilenme ve çocuklarına özel zamanlarda bakma sıklığını” artırdığını ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: baba katılımı, baba eğitim programları, baba-çocuk etkileşimi.

1. INTRODUCTION

The changing structure of the modern society and family has also led to changes in parental roles. The increasing social standards of our day, the boom in divorce rates, increased integration of women in the work force and scientific studies about the effects of fathers on children have changed and restructured the role given to fathers.

Today, good fathering is much more than being the distant breadwinner; fathers are now viewed as the only precondition to the intellectual and emotional well-being of their children. Fathers are more involved in child-rearing than they were a generation ago. In other words, many of them are being forced to develop family relationships that are quite different from those they had with their own fathers. Today’s fathers report feeling closer and more intimate with their children than their own fathers were with them (Marsiglio, 1993).

When fathers assume an active role, they have a positive influence on all aspects of their children’s development (McBride & Mills, 1993). Research studies indicate that even though fathers

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engage more with their children today, mothers are still involved at much higher rates than fathers are (Darling-Fisher & Tiedje, 1990; LaRossa, 1988).

Until very recently, parent education for fathers was a neglected area (Levant, 1988). Traditionally parent education programs were aimed at supporting women in their roles as mothers (Powell, 1986). But recently, the increasing recognition of the father's role has led to the development of education programs for fathers. The role of fathers has been changing rapidly, yet many fathers are still finding themselves unprepared to assume an active role. It is now expected that fathers will have to learn a new role that departs radically from the role of their own fathers, and one that involves skills such as sensitivity to children, nurturance, expressivity, and child management that cannot be assumed to be part of men's existing repertoire (Levant, 1988).

Therefore, the creation of father education and support programs may be a way to bridge this gap between the culture and conduct of fatherhood, as well as to increase the parenting options of fathers (McBride, 1991).

Although studies focusing on father education programs are becoming more popular everyday, such studies are almost non-existent in Turkey. Many parenting programs are still implemented only with mothers because they are easier to reach and seen as the primary caregivers. One exception has been the "Mother-Father School Project" which was designed by Yavuzer. This program has been running since 1989 and targets fathers as well as mothers to give information about child development, communication skills and their influence on children's school success (Yavuzer, 2001).

Another father education program in Turkey was designed by Mother Child Education Foundation (MOCEF) in 1996. The Father Enrichment Program developed by the MOCEF aimed to support fathers in the development of their 3-9 year-old children. The need for such a program was observed when the mothers who attended the Mother Child Education Program expressed the need for their husband's behavior to change, especially in relation to disciplining their children. Moreover, in 2000 MOCEF organized a symposium called "The Role and Importance of Fathers in Children's Lives" with the participation of Lamb – a prominent researcher in this field. These attempts by MOCEF paved the way for other organizations to focus on the need for fathers to be involved in child-care and child development (Aydın, 2003; Kimmert, 2001;2003).

Another popular topic of discussion these days is effective parenting. Effective parenting considers fathers to be an indispensable part of family life and no longer lets them go unnoticed in child development. Even if fathers may not be aware or willing, they are expected to engage in child-rearing and go outside traditional patterns of behavior. Father education and support programs help fathers adapt to their new role, make a positive effect on their children's development, and become better involved in their lives.

There are not enough studies in Turkey focusing on the development of education and support programs for fathers, the effects of such programs, the nature of the interaction between father and child, ways of becoming more involved in children's lives, multiple roles played by fathers in children's lives, and the need for a raised awareness. In addition, considering that the sole responsibility for child-rearing in the traditional families of our society largely rests with mothers, it is particularly important to offer education and support to fathers to break the traditional behavior patterns and share the responsibility with their spouses. Starting from this point, the present study examined the extent to which father education influenced the levels of involvement with children and the intensity of their interaction.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

Our study group (sample) was drawn from a small province in Turkey called Aksaray. A total of fourteen volunteering fathers were included in the study. They all had children between 2 and 9 years old and had participated in the Father Education Program offered by Aksaray Public Education Directorate. Before drawing the study group, a meeting was held with volunteered fathers whose

children were attending kindergarden classes in public schools by using random sampling. Fathers at the meeting were informed about the father education program and volunteers were asked to attend the program. As a result, 14 volunteering fathers were included in the sample. The mean age of fathers was 32.35 (SD = 3.20); and that of mothers was 27 (SD = 4.20). Nine fathers were working as teachers, two fathers were small business owners, two were civil servants and one was a worker. Among mothers, ten were house-makers, two were teachers, and two were civil servants. Two of the fathers were primary school graduates, two were high school graduates and ten were university graduates. On the other hand, seven mothers were primary school graduates, three were vocational school and four were university graduates. Regarding the duration of their marriages, four of the parents had been married 0 to 5 years, eight had been married between 6 and 10 years, and two had been married for 11 to 15 years. Six families had single children, and eight had two children. As regards the age of these children, 10 families had children aged between 2 and 3, eight had children between 4 and 6 years and four had children between 7 and 9 years.

2. 2. Instruments

Data was collected by using “Father Interview Forms” developed by Öğüt in 1998. The form had two parts and fathers were asked to choose a convenient time and place for the interview. Most people chose their workplace or home.

The first part of the interview form collected information about the socio-demographic variables of the family, such as the age, occupation and education level of parents, family possessions, and the number of years the couple had been married. The second part of the interview was designed to measure intensity of engagement. This part has 14 main components which ask the participants about “playing games with their children”, “going out together”, “reading books for children”, “reading stories, working on puzzles or limericks, singing songs with children”, “conversing with children”, “going for a walk together, going sightseeing or just getting fresh air together”, “watching TV and listening to music together”, “eating meals with children”, “teaching children new things”, “undertaking daily care”, “looking after children when they are ill”, getting up at night when children cry”, “taking care of children when they fall down and cry, wet themselves, have a runny nose or when there is an emergency”, and “involving the children in certain daily chores or during private times”. This part also aimed to reveal the father participation rate in “child centered” or “non-child centered” activities. There were two options in answering the main items: ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Whenever the answer was ‘yes’, a second question related to that main item was directed to the father. In this second question, there were 5 options to be ranked between 5 and 1. Fathers chose 5 for ‘every day’, 4 for ‘a few times a week’, 3 for ‘once or a few times a month’, 2 for ‘less than once a month’, and 1 for ‘not at all’. Whenever fathers responded to the main item by saying ‘no’, they were then automatically ranked 0 and passed on to the next main item without being asked the secondary question. For some of the main items which had been replied to as ‘yes’, there was a further box that gave specific activities of the given type of engagement, and the fathers were asked to indicate how often they practiced each of these specific activities.

A reliability analysis was applied to measure internal consistency of the specific items that measure intensity of engagement based on a sample of 15 subjects by Öğüt (1998). The resulting reliability coefficient of alpha was found to be .7648 (Öğüt, 1998).

2. 3. Procedure

Before applying the father education program to the study sample, a pilot study was conducted on 11 fathers. As a result of feedback from the pilot study, we decided that the program would consist of 20 sessions, run for 10 weekends with 3,5 hour every Saturday and Sunday, and last for a total of 70 hours. The program content was chosen relying on fathers’ opinions, researchers’ observations and the existing literature. At the same time, care was taken for the program content to include the

subheadings of the Father Interview Form. Program content included: “Greetings, introduction to the program, expectation and needs analysis”, “Infant (0-2 years) development characteristics and education”, “Acquiring basic habits (eating, sleeping, toilet, cleaning)”, School age (7-12 years) development characteristics and education”, “Active listening”, “Communicating with children”, “Father-child relationship”, “The impact of the father on child development”, “Common parent attitudes”, “Social and behavioral disorders in children”, “The role of family in child development”, “Sex education”, “Games and toys”, “Children and books”, “Children and art”, “Children and TV”, “Discipline”, “Relations between siblings”, “Problem-solving for spouses”, “Problems between spouses”, and “General evaluation and closing”.

The program made use of techniques such as lecturing, question and answer, discussion, drama and case studies. We obtained consent from the Ministry of Education and offered the program at Aksaray Public Education Center. We chose pre-test/post-test design. The independent variable was the Father Education Program offered between the pre and post-tests. The 10-week father education program started a week after the implementation of the pre-test, which was an interview with the fathers. The same interview was once again given to the participating fathers as the post-test, one week after they completed the program.

2. 4. Data Analysis

Two different groups of data were analyzed separately: socio-demographical variables and intensity of engagement. Concerning the socio-demographical variables in the first part of the interview, we calculated frequency and percentages. In order to measure the intensity of engagement between fathers and children, we used Non-Parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for Paired Sample to compare pre- and post-test points.

3. RESULTS

3. 1. Frequency of fathers playing games with their children

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers playing games with their children

Item	Post-test – Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	p
Frequency of playing games with children	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,91*	,004
	Positive rank	10	5,50	55,00		
	Equal	4				
	Total	14				
Physical games	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-3,07*	,002
	Positive rank	11	6,00	66,00		
	Equal	3				
	Total	14				
Painting, model building together	Negative rank	1	3,00	3,00	-2,54*	,011
	Positive rank	9	5,78	52,00		
	Equal	4				
	Total	14				
Playing with toys	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-3,06*	,002
	Positive rank	11	6,00	66,00		
	Equal	3				
	Total	14				
Games with rules and turns	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-3,06*	,002
	Positive rank	11	6,00	66,00		
	Equal	3				

	Total	14				
Computer games, gamewatch	Negative rank	2	3,00	6,00	-2,61*	,009
	Positive rank	10	7,20	72,00		
	Equal	2				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

As you can see in Table 1, there is a meaningful difference between pre- and post-test results in all sub-categories of playing games (frequency of playing games with children $z=-2,91$; $p<.05$; physical games $z=-3,07$; $p<.05$; painting, model building together $z=-2,54$; $p<.05$; playing with toys $z=-3,06$; $p<.05$; games with rules and turns $z=-3,06$; $p<.05$; computer games, gamewatch vb. $z=-2,61$; $p<.05$). When rank averages and totals are considered, it can be seen that the difference was in favor of positive ranks, in other words, in favor of post-test points.

3. 2. Frequency of fathers going out with their children

Table 2: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers going out with their children

Item	Post-test –Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	P
Playing ball or other physical games in the open air	Negative rank	1	3,50	3,50	-2,12*	,034
	Positive rank	7	4,64	32,50		
	Equal	6	-	-		
	Total	14				
Taking children to parks	Negative rank	4	3,88	15,50	-,26	,792
	Positive rank	3	4,17	12,50		
	Equal	7				
	Total	14				
Taking children to the cinema, theater, circus, exhibitions, museums, etc	Negative rank	1	4,50	4,50	-2,30*	,021
	Positive rank	8	5,06	40,50		
	Equal	5				
	Total	14				
Taking children to eat out at a place of their choice	Negative rank	2	3,00	6,00	-1,72*	,084
	Positive rank	6	5,00	30,00		
	Equal	6				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

Table 2 shows that there is a meaningful difference between fathers' pre and post-test points (Playing ball or other physical games in the open air $z=-2,12$; $p<.05$; Taking children to the cinema, theater, circus, exhibitions, museums, etc $z=-2,30$; $p<.05$; Taking children to eat out at a place of their choice $z=-1,72$; $p<.05$). When the rank averages and totals are considered, it may be seen that the difference was in favor of positive ranks, in other words in favor of post-test points. However, no meaningful difference was found for the "taking children to parks" item.

3. 3. Frequency of fathers establishing verbal communication with their children

Table 3: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers establishing verbal communication with their children

Item	Post-test –Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	p
Reading for children	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-3,22*	,001
	Positive rank	13	7,00	91,00		
	Equal	1				
	Total	14				
Storytelling, riddles, singing songs, etc.	Negative rank	1	4,50	4,50	-2,64*	,008
	Positive rank	10	6,15	61,50		
	Equal	3				
	Total	14				
Chatting with children	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,87*	,004
	Positive rank	10	5,50	55,00		
	Equal	4				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

The results shown in Table 3 suggest that a meaningful difference exists between fathers' pre and post-test points obtained on all sub-categories of "chatting with children" (Reading for children $z=-3,22$, $p<.05$; Storytelling, riddles, singing songs, etc. $z=-2,64$; $p<.05$; Chatting with children $z=-2,87$; $p<.05$). When rank averages and totals were considered, the difference was observed to be in favor of positive ranks or in favor of post-test points.

3. 4. Frequency of fathers spending their spare time with their children

Table 4: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers spending their spare time with their children

Item	Post-test –Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	p
Going on walks, sightseeing or strolling	Negative rank	5	6,50	32,50	-,54	,589
	Positive rank	5	4,50	22,50		
	Equal	4				
	Total	14				
Watching TV, listening to music	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-1,73	,083
	Positive rank	3	2,00	6,00		
	Equal	11				
	Total	14				
Having family meals together	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	,00	1,000
	Positive rank	0	,00	,00		
	Equal	14				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

Table 4 shows that there was no meaningful difference between the pre- and post-test results of fathers on the item "spending their spare time with children".

3. 5. Frequency of fathers teaching their children

Table 5: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers teaching their children

Item	Post-test –Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	p
Teaching a new game or song	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-3,36*	,001
	Positive rank	14	7,50	105,00		
	Equal	0	-	-		
	Total	14				
Teaching new knowledge and concepts like numbers, letters, colors and things	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-3,37*	,001
	Positive rank	14	7,50	105,00		
	Equal	0				
	Total	14				
Teaching getting dressed, eating, using the toilet and cleaning themselves	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,87*	,004
	Positive rank	10	5,50	55,00		
	Equal	4				
	Total	14				
Teaching how to behave appropriately	Negative rank	1	3,00	3,00	-1,34	,180
	Positive rank	4	3,00	12,00		
	Equal	9				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

Table 5 presents Wilcoxon Test results about the difference between fathers' pre- and post-education behaviors. According to this, there is a meaningful difference between these results (Teaching a new game or song $z=-3,36$; $p<.05$; Teaching new knowledge and concepts like numbers, letters, colors and things $z=-3,37$; $p<.05$; Teaching getting dressed, eating, using the toilet and cleaning themselves $z=-2,87$; $p<.05$). Rank averages and totals show that the difference was in favor of positive ranks, or post-test results. A meaningful difference was not found in the "Teaching how to behave appropriately" sub-category.

3. 6. Frequency of fathers taking care of daily activities

Table 6: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers taking care of daily activities

Item	Post-test –Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	p
Dressing children, combing their hair	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,56*	,010
	Positive rank	8	4,50	36,00		
	Equal	6				
	Total	14				
Offering food, helping them eat when necessary	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,58*	,010
	Positive rank	8	4,50	36,00		
	Equal	6				
	Total	14				
Putting them into bed	Negative rank	1	3,00	3,00	-2,15	,031
	Positive rank	7	4,71	33,00		
	Equal	6				
	Total	14				
Bathing them	Negative rank	2	3,50	7,00		

	Positive rank	5	4,20	21,00	-1,26	,206
	Equal	7				
	Total	14				
Taking them to the toilet	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,85*	,004
	Positive rank	10	5,50	55,00		
	Equal	4				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

An analysis of Table 6 points to a meaningful difference between fathers' pre- and post-test results on "taking care of daily activities" (Dressing children, combing their hair $z=-2,56$; $p<.05$; Offering food, helping them eat when necessary $z=-2,58$; $p<.05$; Taking them to the toilet $z=-2,85$; $p<.05$). Rank averages and totals show that the difference was in favor of positive ranks, or post-test results. However, a meaningful difference was not found in the "bathing" and "putting into bed" sub-categories.

3. 7. Frequency of fathers taking care of children in emergencies

Table 7: Pre- and Post-Test Wilcoxon Test Results regarding fathers taking care of children in emergencies

Item	Post-test –Pre-test	n	Rank Average	Rank Total	z	p
When children are sick	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-1,41	,157
	Positive rank	2	1,50	3,00		
	Equal	12				
	Total	14				
When children wake up at night and cry	Negative rank	4	7,00	28,00	-,92	,356
	Positive rank	8	6,25	50,00		
	Equal	2				
	Total	14				
When children fall down and cry, when they wet themselves, when they have a runny nose or when an urgent need comes up	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,58*	,010
	Positive rank	8	4,50	36,00		
	Equal	6				
	Total	14				
Taking children with themselves when fathers do daily business or have private time	Negative rank	0	,00	,00	-2,81*	,005
	Positive rank	9	5,00	45,00		
	Equal	5				
	Total	14				

*Based on negative ranks principle

As can be seen from Table 7, there is a meaningful difference between fathers' pre- and post-test results on this item (When children fall down and cry, when they wet themselves, when they have a runny nose, or when an urgent need comes up $z=-2,58$; $p<.05$; Taking children with themselves when fathers do daily business or have private time $z=-2,81$; $p<.05$). Rank averages and totals show that the difference was in favor of positive ranks, that is post-test results. However, a meaningful difference was not found in the "When children are sick" and "When children wake up at night and cry" sub-categories.

4. DISCUSSION

The researcher examined the impact of father education on fathers' frequency of taking care of their children and their intensity of engagement in Aksaray, a small town in Turkey. Overall, the findings of this study have shown that the father education program had a positive effect on increasing the involvement level of fathers with their children. The fact that the fathers volunteered and that they knew the aims of the study may have played a role in these findings.

To begin with, the frequency of fathers playing with their children increased. This is in line with findings from other studies cited in the literature (McBride, 1989; Hossain & Roopnarine, 1993; Kimmet, 2001, 2003). Starting from this finding, it can also be said that the fathers' participation in the 10-week program helped them to get rid of their prejudices about interacting with children and increased their participation in their children's games.

A similar kind of finding was reached for the item "going out with children". The father education program helped increase father engagement by encouraging them to go out more often with their children. Although a meaningful difference was not found on the "taking children to parks" sub-category, the post-test points were still higher than pre-test points on this item. These results indicate that fathers were aware of the importance of their role in children's development and they wanted to be involved in their children's life.

Fathers' verbal communication with their children also benefited from the father education program. Levant and Doyle (1983) evaluated the communication of fathers with their 6-12 year-old children after an 8-week-long family education program and found that fathers had increased communication skills after the program. Studies from Turkey have also shown that such programs improve father-child communication. For instance, The Father Enrichment Program offered by MOCEF also increased father-child communication. The fathers in that particular program started to use "I-messages" and "active listening" with their children (Kimmet, 2001, 2003). Another similar study was that of Şahin (1998), which found that father-child communication benefited from father education programs.

Findings about fathers spending spare time with children showed that the education program did not affect this item as much as others. Fathers may have been misled by the questions and perceived the activities mentioned as routine activities already taking place in their families. The findings may have also been affected by previous participation of fathers into family activities prior to the education program. Other studies investigating how families with children spend their spare times have found that especially men spend more time dozing off in front of the TV or in the coffeehouse than they spend with their children (Lamb, 2001). These are similar to our findings.

Findings about fathers teaching their children showed that father education helps certain sub-categories but not others. For instance, the sub-category of "behaving appropriately" was not improved by the program. Other studies conducted in Turkey have shown that fathers teach children about life and value judgments, develop with their children, and feel more self-confident (Saygılı & Çankırılı, 2003; Bekman, 2001; Güleç, 1998).

When it comes to fathers taking care of daily activities, it was found that fathers improved themselves on many items. At the end of the education program, fathers expressed in informal interviews that they felt better capacitated and more knowledgeable thanks to the program. Although the sub-categories, "putting children to bed" and "bathing children" did not yield a meaningful difference between pre and post-test points, the post-test points were still observed to be higher. This may be due to the short duration of the study. If it had been longer, a meaningful difference might have been found. Russell and Russell (1987) found that even when both parents take care of daily activities, mothers are more frequently engaged with their children. Other studies have concluded that in educated and middle class families, fathers have increased engagement with child-care and housework (Barnett & Baruc, 1987; Deutsch et al, 1993; Volling & Belsky, 1991). Darling-Fisher and Tiedje (1990) observed that men with working wives engage more frequently with their children. Evans (1997) found in a study with a socio-economically disadvantaged group that mothers took more

interest in the physical care of children. Ögüt (1998) conducted a study on middle and upper-middle classes in Turkey that upper-middle class fathers are more involved in their children's daily care.

The fathers in our study were relatively well-educated, had a decent job, and volunteered to take part in the study. On the other hand, mothers were mostly poorly educated and stay-at-home mothers. It must be said here that parent roles in Turkey are still rather obviously distinct. Mothers take care of both their children and their husbands therefore their main roles are that of a home-maker and mother (Koçak, 2004). Even though both spouses may be working outside the home, women mostly work a "second shift" at home; they play the part of the main care-giver, and men that of the assistant (Fişek 2001). The role of the father is still very traditional in Turkey (Dinçer, 2003). When the findings of the study are evaluated in light of these, it can be argued that the education program was effective in increasing fathers' involvement in children's daily activities.

Findings about fathers taking care of children on special occasions largely show that the education program was effective. Even on sub-categories that did not have a meaningful difference between pre and post-test points, the post-test points were still higher than those of pre-test points. According to this finding, it may be said that the participating fathers got rid of their cultural prejudice that taking care of children is women's job and responsibility, and tended to have more interest in their children. This is in line with the findings of earlier studies as well (McBride & Mills, 1993; Tiedje & Darling-Fisher, 1993).

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have shown that a 10-week education offered to fathers generally increased the frequency of fathers' "game participation, going out with their children, conversing with children, teaching new things, taking daily care of them and taking care of them at special times". This finding is particularly important as women in the traditional families of patriarchal Turkey mostly assume entire responsibility in raising children, and this finding may have an effect on fathers going outside traditional behavior patterns and share the responsibility for child-rearing with mothers. It is promising that fathers tend to behave in line with their changing roles when they are supported. Education and support programs for fathers will help fathers adopt their new role of child-rearing, leave a positive impression on their children, participate more actively in their lives and take more interest in them. In developing countries like Turkey, the importance given to education needs to be emphasized. Cooperation between government offices, private institutions and non-governmental organizations will undoubtedly have a positive effect on this.

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions can be made:

In line with the changing role of the fathers, the state policy should also be revised to encourage fathers to participate actively in their children's lives. Parent education seminars should be organized by official institutions such as schools and also by NGOs so that the society becomes better informed. The issue should be emphasized to parents through parent-teacher meetings at schools. The school curriculum should be revised to motivate especially boys at an early age to become involved in child-rearing. Future studies may investigate the effects of father education and support programs on all family members. Longitudinal studies may be conducted about of father education and support programs. New studies should also involve mothers in the education programs and investigate its effects.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, babalara verilen eğitimin, babaların çocuklarıyla ilgilenme sıklığını ve çocukları ile etkileşim yoğunluğunu ne ölçüde etkilediği incelenmiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, babalara verilen on haftalık bir eğitimin genel olarak; “babaların çocuklarının oyunlarına katılma, çocuklarıyla birlikte dışarı çıkma, sözel etkileşime girme, çocuklarına yeni bir şeyler öğretme, günlük bakımlarıyla ilgilenme ve çocuklarına özel zamanlarda bakma” davranışlarının sıklığını artırdığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu bulgu, özellikle ataerkil toplumun geleneksel ailelerdeki annelerin çocuk yetiştirmede çoğu zaman tek başına sorumluluğu üstlendikleri göz önüne alındığında, babaların geleneksel davranış kalıplarının dışına çıkarak anneyle sorumluluğu paylaşmaları ve çocuklarıyla ilgilenmelerindeki etkisi nedeniyle önemlidir. Babaların desteklenmeleri durumunda babanın değişen rolüne uygun davranışları gösterme eğiliminde olması sevindiricidir. Babalara yönelik verilen eğitim ve destek programları, babanın yeni yetiştirici rolünü benimsemesine, çocuklarının gelişimi üzerinde olumlu etki bırakmasına ve çocuklarının hayatlarında daha çok yer almasına; çocuklarıyla daha fazla ilgilenmesine katkı sağlayacaktır.

Araştırmanın örneklemini Aksaray’da yaşayan, 2–9 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan ve araştırmacılar tarafından verilen Baba Eğitim Programı’na katılan 14 gönüllü baba oluşturmuştur. Örneklem oluşturulmadan önce, bünyesinde anasınıflı bulunan ilköğretim okullarının velilerinden babalar ile toplantı yapılmıştır. Toplantıda babalara yönelik bir eğitim verilmek istendiği açıklanarak gönüllü babaların programa kayıt yaptırmaları istenmiştir. Kayıt yaptıran 14 gönüllü baba örneklem grubu olarak belirlenmiştir. Dokuz baba öğretmen, iki baba küçük işyeri işletmecisi, iki baba memur ve bir baba da işçi olarak çalışmaktadır. Annelerin 10’u ev hanımı, 2’si öğretmen, 2’si de memur olarak çalışmaktadır. Babaların 2’si ilköğretim, 2’si lise mezunu ve 10’u üniversite mezunudur. Annelerin 7’si ilköğretim, 3’ü meslek lisesi, 4’ü de üniversite mezunudur. Ailelerin 4’ü (0–5) yıllık, 8’i (6–10) yıllık ve 2’si de (11–15) yıldır evlidirler. Ailelerin 6’sı bir çocuğa, 8’i de iki çocuğa sahiptir. Ailelerin 10’unun çocukları (2-3) yaş grubunda, 8’inin çocukları (4-6) yaş grubunda ve 4’ünün çocukları (7-9) yaş grubundadırlar.

Araştırmanın verileri Öğüt (1998) tarafından geliştirilen ve iki bölümden oluşan “Baba Görüşme Formu” kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Baba Görüşme Formunun güvenilirlik çalışması yine Öğüt (1998) tarafından yapılmış ve sonuç alfa: .7648 olarak bulunmuştur. Çalışmanın örneklem grubuna eğitim programını uygulamadan önce 11 baba ile bir ön çalışma yapılmıştır. Ön çalışmadan elde edilen geri bildirimler sonunda eğitimin Cumartesi ve Pazar günleri her biri 3,5 saatlik 20 oturumdan oluşmasına ve toplam 10 haftalık ve 70 saatlik bir süreyi kapsamasına karar verilmiştir. Program konuları babaların kendi ifadeleri, araştırmacıların gözlemleri ve ilgili literatür taranarak oluşturulmuştur. Bunlarla birlikte programın içeriğinin Baba Görüşme Formunun alt başlıklarını kapsamına da özen gösterilmiştir. Program konuları şunlardır: “Tanışma, programın tanıtımı, beklentilerin alınması ve gereksinimlerin saptanması”, “Bebeklik dönemi (0-2 yaş) gelişim özellikleri ve eğitimi”, “Temel alışkanlıkların (yemek, uyku, tuvalet, temizlik) kazandırılması”, Okul dönemi (7-12 yaş) gelişim özellikleri ve eğitimi”, “Aktif dinleme”, “Çocukla iletişim”, “Baba-çocuk ilişkisi”, “Babanın çocuğun gelişimine etkisi”, “Yaygın anne-baba tutumları”, “Çocuklarda uyum ve davranış bozuklukları”, “Çocuğun çok yönlü gelişiminde ailenin rolü”, “Çocuğun cinsel eğitimi”, “Oyun ve oyuncak, çocuk oyunları”, Çocuk ve kitap”, “Çocuk resimleri”, “Çocuk ve TV”, “Disiplin”, “Kardeşler arası ilişkiler”, “Eşler arasında problem çözme”, “Karı-koca ilişkilerinden doğan sorunlar”, “Genel değerlendirme ve kapanış”.

Baba eğitim programının uygulanmasında anlatım, soru-cevap, tartışma, dramatizasyon, örnek olay, beyin fırtınası gibi teknikler kullanılmıştır. Eğitim programı için gerekli izinler alınmış ve eğitim Halk Eğitim Merkezi’nde verilmiştir. Araştırmanın bağımsız değişkeni ön test-son test arasında babalara verilen Baba Eğitim Programı etkinliğidir. Örneklem Baba Görüşme Formu ön test olarak verildikten bir hafta sonra babalar on hafta süren bir eğitim almıştır. Eğitimin tamamlanmasından bir hafta sonra aynı test babalara ikinci kez son test olarak tekrar verilmiştir.

Babaların çocuklarıyla ilgilenme yoğunluğunu ölçmek için, ön test-son test puanlarının karşılaştırılmasında Non Parametrik Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for Paired Sample kullanılmıştır. Analiz sonuçları, çocukla oyun oynama ana maddesinin bütün alt boyutlarında ön test ile son test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu ortaya koymuştur (çocukla oyun oynama sıklığı, hareketli oyun oynama; birlikte resim, maket yapma; çocuğun oyuncaklarıyla oynama; sıralı, kurallı, dönüşümlü oyunlar; bilgisayar oyunu, gamewatch vb.). Babaların çocuklarıyla birlikte dışarı çıkma ön test ve son test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmuştur (açık havada birlikte top, yakalamaca vb. hareketli oyun oynama; sinema, tiyatro, sirk, müze gibi bir yere götürme; sevdiği bir yerde, sevdiği bir şey yemeğe götürme). Yapılan analiz sonuçları babaların çocukları ile sözel iletişime girme ana maddesinin bütün alt boyutlarından aldıkları ön test ve son test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu göstermektedir (çocuğa kitap okuma; çocukla birlikte masal, bilmece, şarkı vb. söyleme; çocukla birlikte oturup konuşma). Elde edilen bulgular, babalarının çocuklarına özel zamanda bakma (çocuk düşüp ağlayınca, altına kaçırınca, burnu akınca ya da herhangi bir acil ihtiyacı olunca bakma; babanın bazı günlük işlerini yaparken ya da kendisine özel vakit ayırırken çocuğunu da yanına alma) ana maddesinden aldıkları ön test ve son test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu göstermektedir.