



EVALUATION OF THE EFFECT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION ON CHILDREN IN PRE-SCHOOL PERIOD: PARENTAL VIEWS

Kezban Ozgem¹, Sebnem G. Kan^{2,*}, Sermin Kuset³, Emine Şaşmacıoğlu⁴

¹PhD Student, Atatürk Faculty of Education, Near East University, North Cyprus, Mersin
10 Turkey. kezbanozgem@gmail.com

²Department of Preschool Teaching, Atatürk Faculty of Education, Near East University, North
Cyprus, Mersin

10 Turkey. sebnem.guldal@neu.edu.tr

³PhD Student, Atatürk Faculty of Education, Near East University, North Cyprus, Mersin
10 Turkey, serminkuset@gmail.com

⁴Master Student, Atatürk Faculty of Education, Near East University, North Cyprus, Mersin
10 Turkey emine.sasmaci@gmail.com

Correspondence: sebnem.guldal@neu.edu.tr

Abstract

This research is aimed to investigate the effects of distance education on preschool children. In this study, in order to investigate the effect of distance education on children by the parents of children going to the preschool institution, a case study based on qualitative data made with semi-structured interview technique was analyzed by content analysis method. The work carried out during the epidemic of COVID-19 experienced in 2019-2020 was discussed remotely with the parents of children in preschool education, which went to public and private schools. The participants are made up of 34 parents, but the majority are women. The majority of the children whose parents were evaluated in the study were found to be boys between the ages of 4-7, and went to private school. Other results obtained in the study were found that distance education is not sufficient in terms of supporting the development of children, it does not provide an advantage for children to learn, and the biggest disadvantage is that there is no interaction between the child and the teacher. It has been determined that the dimension of distance education that can be considered as an advantage in the pandemic process is that it provides access to the lessons taught and gives the opportunity again.

Keywords: Child, parent, preschool period, preschool education, distance education, Covid-19.

1. Introduction

Child is defined as a continuous development entity (Altınköprü, 2013). In the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the concept of children defines every person who has not completed the age of eighteen as a child (Şirin, 2011). Yörükoğlu defines the child as being able to show rapid changes in addition to his own characteristics (Yörükoğlu, 2011). Considering all definitions, it is reported that the child is quite different from adults, so the behavior towards the child should be different from adults (Connected, 2003).

Although parents have a very important place in children's lives, the family, which is the beginning of their first learning, is a prerequisite for social skills and behaviors to be acquired in school (Tavıl & Karasu, 2013). Parent-child relationship consists not only of biological

closeness, but also psychological and social relationships between each other, and it is a combination of parent-specific behaviors, emotions and expectations of the parent (Sharma, 2012). Establishing healthy communication between the parent and child provides the child's positive personality development, but it is the basis for the child to establish positive relationships with others (Kandır & Alpan, 2008; Sener & Karacan, 1999). In this context, the relationships between parents and children are very important (Ciftci & Bal, 2015; Dam, 2008; Engin, Özen Bayoglu; 2009; Keceli-Kaysılı, 2008; Kutluca & Aydın, 2010).

The preschool period, which is described as the beginning of the educational life of the child, develops rapidly in various developmental areas such as cognitive, mental and language in order to realize children's learning in the most permanent way (Oktay, 2002; Secure & Ak Akyol, 2014; Sever, 2013). It is the most important place that aims to systematically social, emotional and cognitive development of children after In this context, distance education is defined as "realized in environments where teachers and students are separated from each other in terms of time and space" (İsman, 2008). Distance education is stated as the support of traditional education by offering a wide variety of learning environments with technological developments and the opportunity to provide sufficient and high quality virtual classroom environments with higher efficiency than the traditional education system (Usun, 2006). Covid 19 defines it as "Serious Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2" by the World Health Organization (WHO). In this context, covid-19 epidemic also preserved the social distance, as well as all the regulation aimed at preventing infectiousness, as well as the transition to distance education in education (Yamamoto and Altun, 2020). When the literatures are examined, it is observed that there is no study related to distance education in preschool education and there are studies related to the use of technology in preschool education their families (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

In preschool period, children are interested in researching and exploring, and they mostly meet their curiosity through the game, and as their access to technology that offers visual richness and rapidly developing technology becomes easier, they have started to meet their game needs with technological tools (Kabakcı & Ozdengul, 2011). Technological tools, which are very interesting for children, have been moved to educational institutions and provided a rich stimulus in education and training environments (Arı & Bayhan, 1999). In many studies conducted in preschool education, the use of technology has positive effects on children's learning and increases motivation (Cakıroglu & Taskın, 2016; Huffstetter, King, Onwuegbuzie, Schneider & Powell-Smith, 2010; Kocaman-Karoglu, 2016; Şahin, 2006; Wolgemuth et al., 2011). With the development of technology, education and training also change in the concepts of time and space.

In this context, distance education is defined as "realized in environments where teachers and students are separated from each other in terms of time and space" (Isman, 2008). Distance education is stated as the support of traditional education by offering a wide variety of learning environments with technological developments and the opportunity to provide sufficient and high quality virtual classroom environments with higher efficiency than the traditional education system (Usun, 2006). Covid 19 defines it as "Serious Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2" by the World Health Organization (WHO). In this context, covid-19 epidemic also preserved the social distance, as well as all the regulation aimed at preventing infectiousness, as well as the transition to distance education in education (Yamamoto & Altun, 2020). When the literatures are examined, it is observed that there is no study related to distance education in preschool education and there are studies related to the use of technology in preschool education.

For this purpose, descriptive content analysis will be carried out in the qualitative research method to examine the Effects of Distance Education on Preschool Children with Parental Views. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What is the Social-Demographic distribution of the parents?
2. What are the parents' thoughts on distance education?
3. What are the advantages of distance education?
4. What are the disadvantages of distance education?

2. Method

This study was designed as a qualitative study to determine the effect of distance education on children with parents' opinions and to present them in detail, and case study method was used. In this research, a holistic single case pattern, one of the case study patterns, was used. The holistic single state pattern is used by Yıldırım & Şimşek (2015) in three ways when there is a single unit of analysis (an individual, an institution, a program, a method). Firstly, if there is a well-formulated theory or method in the environment, it can be used to confirm or refute it. Secondly, a holistic single state pattern can be used to study extreme, contradictory or unique situations that do not comply with general standards. Finally, a holistic single state pattern can be used where no one has ever worked or reached before. The study of such situations is defined in terms of the emergence of a certain subject previously unknown to future researchers and as a basis for or guiding future research ”(p. 326). The case study aims to take into account the in-depth, natural environment and complexity of the event (Puch, 2005) and provides the opportunity to examine, understand, and provide information about the relationship on the participant or society without interfering with an event (Akar, 2016).

2.1 Data Collection

This study has followed a path to bring the purposeful sampling situation to a faster and easier accessibility. 34 parents participated in the study, whose children went to the institutions of preschool education. Female parents constitute the overall study. Demographic information about parents is given in Table 1.

2.2 Data Collection

This study was carried out by obtaining the necessary permissions from the Ministry of National Education and Culture for the implementation of the semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers, and a semi-structured questionnaire developed by the researchers was created. Semi-structured interview questions do not allow the researcher to ask the other party to the questions he / she has previously determined and to shift to other branches with the answers received (Karasar, 2005; Yıldırım & Simsek, 2004). By examining the writings of the semi-structured interview form, care was taken not to be multi-dimensional so as not to create a clear and aimless question burden on individuals, which can be understood as easily as possible. The interview form prepared by the researchers was shown to 3 field experts and their opinions were subjected to the experts. The statements in the interview form consist of 8 questions prepared for distance education in pre-school education. Due to the situation on the curfew that we were in during the research pandemic, questions were prepared in Google

form, and Google drive prevented the loss of data by writing down the qualitative data obtained by the responses uploaded and analyzed by content analysis method. During the interviews, the data recorded in Google Drive was analyzed and numbered interviews were created by giving numbers, and the records and transcripts were given to an expert in the field and the control of the wrong or missing sections was provided. After the interview transcripts of this study were made, the data obtained from the participants were analyzed in detail and divided into sections, sections were named and coded by creating meaningful integrations. After all the data was coded, the researchers created a code list, which provided quite a lot of convenience in the study and editing of this data and served as a key list for the researchers. Later, the necessary adjustments were made by the researchers by reading the coding keys and interview transcripts separately, discussing the issues of consensus and disagreement. The security calculation for the themes created was calculated using the reliability formula of Miles and Huberman (1994). As a result of this calculation, the reliability of the study was calculated as 92% for the first question and 100% for the second question and 96% for the second. Over 70% of the reliability calculations are considered reliable for research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As a result of the data obtained here, it has been accepted as reliable for the study, and the codes coded by the researchers are based on the arrangement of the data according to the codes and themes in reaching themes.

2.3 Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze the data. In the technique of descriptive analysis, the data are evaluated according to the previously determined themes and the results obtained are edited and interpreted. The data obtained in the descriptive analysis are summarized and summarized under the pre-determined titles (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

3. Result

The themes obtained from the opinions of the participants were tabulated together with their frequency distributions and interpreted.

In this study, it was aimed to evaluate the effect of distance education on preschool children. For this purpose, the findings obtained from the parents are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Parents

	N	%
Gender		
Women	31	91,2
Man	3	8,8
Parent's Age		
29 and under	1	2,9
30-34	19	55,8
35-39	11	32,3
40-44	3	8,8
Education Status		
High School	3	8,8
Undergraduate	24	76,6

Graduate	6	17,6
Doctorate	1	2,9
Occupation		
Military personal	1	2,9
Banker	2	5,8
House wife	1	2,9
Public relations and advertising	2	5,8
Graphic artist	1	2,9
Operator	2	5,8
Officer	3	8,8
Clinical psychologist	1	2,9
Architect	2	5,8
Accounting	1	2,9
Engineer	1	2,9
Musician	1	2,9
Teacher	11	32,4
Instructor	1	2,9
Sales manager	1	2,9
Assistant	1	2,9
Doctor	1	2,9
Lawyer	1	2,9
Occupation in Pandemic (Epidemic) Period		
Active	11	32,4
Passive	23	67,6
Number of Children		
1	22	64,7
2	11	32,4
3	1	2,9
Marital Status		
The married	33	97,1
Single	1	2,9
Child Age		
0-3 years	8	23,5
4-7 years	26	76,5
Gender of the Child		
G	16	47,1
B	18	52,9
Pre-School Institution		
Private	29	85,2
State	5	14,7

As seen in Table 1, the socio-demographic characteristics of the parents who participated in the study were examined, it was found that 91.1% of the parents were women, the majority of the participants were between 30-39 years old, and 66.6% of the parents were at the level of undergraduate education. When the professions of the parents are examined, it is determined that while there are many occupational groups, 32.4% of the teachers are teachers. It is remarkable that 64.7% of the professions in the profession during the pandemic

period participated in the study. According to the information received from the parents, 64.7% of them were found to have a single child, while 97% of the participants were among the findings of the study in which they were married. As a result of the research about the child, 55.8% of the children are between the ages of 4-7, and the gender of the child is among the findings that 52.9% are boys and 85.2% are going to private school.

Table 2. Thoughts on Distance Education

Themes	N	%
Useful, Efficient	4	11
Enough	10	29
Compelling	7	20
Not Enough	12	35
No	1	3

In the study, it was found that distance education is not sufficient for children in terms of what the thoughts about distance education are, and it is sufficient for directing children and families in the participants who are close to the majority. Findings obtained from parental opinions are given in Table 2.

P2: "I think it is not enough, all the responsibility is left to the family, and since it is not in the same environment with its teachers and friends, a full efficiency cannot be obtained both socially and academically."

P15: "I think that distance education is not sufficient due to the children not seeing the teacher while not contributing to the education, and not being in the school environment, there is a low motivation after a while."

P4: "Having difficulty adapting in a challenging home environment."

P6: "It is sufficient according to our current situation, but it cannot be compared with the classroom environment."

P 27: "I have no idea about distance education."

P 30: "I find it very useful."

Table 3. Advantages of Distance Education

Themes	N	%
Responsibility Awareness	3	9
Quality time with the parent	4	12
To give the opportunity again	8	24
Being active in education	6	18
Course related equipment	1	3
No advantage	12	35

In the study, the advantages of the distance education process were evaluated. While it is determined that 35% of parents have the idea that distance education is not an advantage, an important finding that comes to the fore is that it gives an opportunity to give the opportunity again in terms of being traceable at a rate of 24%. Findings obtained from parental opinions are given in Table 3.

P2: "I think it has no advantage, I am of the opinion that it can only facilitate the exchange of information when the school is open."

P12: "I don't think it has an advantage in younger age groups."

P21: "Even though he couldn't go to school, he learned that he had responsibilities to do."

P9: "Spending quality time with the child can be said as an advantage."

P25: "It exists, the child does not stay away from the lessons and repeats."

P11: "We have seen the training materials used by teachers."

Table 4. Disadvantages of Distance Education

Themes	N	%
Focus problem	8	24
The problem of socializing	3	9
Effects of the home environment	8	24
Interaction trouble	13	38
Technological troubles	1	3
Yok	1	3

In this study, the disadvantages of the distance education process were evaluated. According to 38% of the participants, the finding of low interaction between teacher and student was found. With the rate of 24%, the problem of focusing children during the lesson, loss of motivation and the effects of the home environment according to 24% of the parents are the important results of the research. Findings obtained from parental opinions are given in Table 4.

P30: *"It is learned more focused in the school environment."* E 22: *"We cannot convince himself that he should be educated."*

P8: *"The fact that it does not have real contact and social communication, of course, affects education and the ability of the child to be willing and active in every activity."*

P 10: *"It is a disadvantage that it is difficult to achieve the discipline of the school environment under the influence of many stimuli in the home."*

P17: *"Classroom environment is a big factor in learning. Sharing, it is very important for the teacher to recognize, motivate and learn with the missing members, and the absence of them is a major disadvantage."*

P 12: *"Parents are given excessive responsibility. (Families complete the continuation of the subject which is entered every day.)"*

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

An important education model in the constantly evolving and changing world has been "Distance Education". Today, during the epidemic of the world, distance education has become very widespread both in the world and in our country. Although the prevalence and usage of distance education varies depending on the development, hardware status and usage skills of the countries, this process continues in different ways depending on the infrastructure of developing countries. At this point, by conducting various researches and examinations, each country will prepare its own infrastructure according to its own needs and will guide the education policies for a more efficient education process. In this context, all kinds of data will contribute to the literature by conducting various researches to ensure that education and training, which is an important subject in the world, is sustainable. Increasing and expanding the effectiveness of distance education will be provided by each country having its own theories (Moore & Kearsley, 1996; Garrison & Anderson, 2003).

In this study, it is aimed to get the opinions regarding the assessment of the parental views of the effect of distance education on preschool children. For this purpose, answers were sought for the socio-demographic characteristics of parents, their thoughts on distance education, their advantages and disadvantages to children's education. Accordingly, the majority of the participants who participated in the study with their socio-demographic characteristics are female. Women constitute the majority of the group concerned with distance education. The limited time, place, resource and socio-economic disabilities of women increase the tendencies towards distance education (Kwapong, 2007). This point also shows that women are in the majority both in their education and in contributing to the education of children. The age range of the participants was 30-34, they completed their language education level, the majority of them were teachers, they were passive in the profession during the pandemic period, they had only one child, the majority of the children of the majority participants were between 4-7 years old, the majority were boys and they were educated in private school results have been reached.

The participants expressed their thoughts on distance education. They also expressed their thoughts on the advantages and disadvantages of distance education for the child. According to these three sub-problem results; It was determined that the contribution of distance education to the education of children is not sufficient. Participants stated that the effect of distance education is lower than face-to-face education. As can be seen in the study conducted by Ulug and Kaya (1997), it was concluded that face-to-face teaching relationships are not easy, they do not allow one-on-one interaction in the classroom environment, and that they cannot provide sufficient help to students who do not have the ability to learn alone.

While most of the participants stated that distance education does not provide any advantage in the education of the child, the majority of the participants expressed the opinion that distance education provides advantages in repeating the lessons of the children. In his study, Dincer (2006) touched on the point that distance education is a patient educator. He emphasized that it allows students to repeat the topics they do not understand as much as they want. Most of the participants who participated in the study stated that disadvantages of distance education for children are the low interaction between teacher and student. According to researchers, Dincer (2006), the biggest limitation of distance education is the result of the lack of student-educator relationship. It has been accepted by all researchers that the greatest limitation of the students' contribution, love and interest in the lesson is that the teacher-student eye contact cannot be established as the educator. Another important disadvantage obtained from the research is the effects of the home environment on the child and the problem of focusing children during the lesson is the loss of motivation. According to Odabas (2004); distance education emphasized passivity and lack of communication, this situation would have negative consequences such as cooling down from the lesson, not being able to gather attention and experiencing a focus problem.

Based on the results obtained from this study, the following suggestions can be made;

1. The study is a qualitative study and the data of the study is limited to 34 parents. The study group can be expanded by developing a semi-structured questionnaire based on the data obtained in this study.
2. Opinions of students studying at all educational levels (Primary Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education) can be obtained from their parents about distance education.
3. Considering the study settlements (Village, City, etc.), parents' opinions about distance education can be taken.
4. A quantitative study can also be conducted on this study.
5. In-service training may be recommended to parents regarding distance education.

References

- Akar, H. (2016). Durum çalışması. Saban, A., & Ersoy, A. (Editors), In *Eğitimde nitel araştırma desenleri* (ss.113-149). Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Altinköprü, T. (2003). *Çocuğun başarısı nasıl sağlanır*. İstanbul: Hayat Yayıncılık.
- Arı, M. & Bayhan, P. (1999). *Okul öncesi dönemde bilgisayar destekli eğitim*. İstanbul: Epsilon.
- Bağlı, M. (2003). *Türk Modernleşmesi Bağlamında Hukuk ve Yargılama: Çocuk Yargılaması*, II. Ulusal Çocuk ve Suç Sempozyumu Bildiriler, Ankara: Türkiye'de Çocuklara yeniden Özgürlük Vakfı.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The ecology of developmental processes. In W. Damon, & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 1: Theoretical models of human development*, (pp. 993–1028). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Çakiroğlu, Ü. & Taşkin, N. (2016). Teaching numbers to preschool students with interactive multimedia: An experimental study. *Çukurova University Faculty of Education Journal*, 45(1), 01-22.
- Çiftçi, M., & Bal, N. (2015). Ortaokul öğrencilerinin anne-baba katılım düzeyi ile akademik başarıları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 12(1), 363-384.

- Creswell, J. W. (2013). Nitel, nicel ve karma yöntem yaklaşımları araştırma deseni. (Çev.Ed. Demir, S. B.). Ankara: Eğiten Kitap. Eğitim Vakfı.
- İşman, A. (2008). *Uzaktan Eğitim*. Ankara: Pegem A. Yayıncılık.
- Kabakçı, M. & Özdengül, F. (2011). *Cennet Kuşu Televizyon ve İnternet*. Konya.
- Kandır A., & Alpan, Y. (2008). Okul öncesi dönemde sosyal-duygusal gelişime anne-baba davranışlarının etkisi. *Aile ve Toplum*, 10(4), 33-38.
- Karasar, N. (2005). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemi*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Moore, M. G. & Kearsley, I. G. (1996). *Distance education: A systems view*. Wadsworth.
- Oktay, Ayla (2002). Yaşamın sihirli yılları: Okul öncesi dönem, İstanbul: Epsilon Yayınları.Publishing Company.
- Punch, K. F. (2005). *Sosyal araştırmalara giriş: Nicel ve nitel yaklaşımlar*. Ankara: Siyasal Kitapevi. Sempozyumu, Ankara.
- Sharma, M. (2012). Effect of gender and academic achievement on mother child relationship. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, 1(10), 39-51.
- Şirin, M.R. (2011). *BM Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesi Kitabı*. İstanbul: Çocuk Vakfı Yayınları.
- Tavil, Y. Z., & Karasu, N. (2013). Aile eğitim çalışmaları: Bir gözden geçirme ve metaanaliz örneği. *Eğitim ve Bilim dergisi*, 38(168), 85-95.
- Uluğ, F., & Kaya, Z. (1997). *Uzaktan eğitim yaklaşımıyla ilköğretim*. Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Uşun, S. (2006). *Uzaktan eğitim*. Ankara: Nobel Yayınevi.
- Yamamoto, G. T., & Altun, D. (2020). Coronavirüs ve çevrimiçi (online) eğitimin önlenemeyen yükselişi. *Üniversite Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1, 25-34.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2015). *Döküman incelenmesi sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2018). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. İstanbul: Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Yörükoğlu, A. (2011). *Çocuk ruh sağlığı*. İstanbul: Özgür Yayınları.