

ATTITUDES OF PARENTS TOWARD CHILD-REARING: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract. The aim of this study is the investigation of parents', living in rural areas or urban areas and with children 5-6 years of age, difference in their attitudes towards children according to demographic characteristics and living conditions, rural and urban areas. The study group of the research includes 200 parents who have 5-6 years old children taking pre-school education. 100 of them live in rural areas and 100 of them live in the city center. Instruments of study are Personal Information Form and PARI (Family Life and Child-Rearing Attitude Scale). Independent samples t-test, ANOVA and Regression Analysis were used for data analysis. According to findings, mothers are more over-protective, more democratic and less disciplined than fathers. Parents living urban areas are more over-protective, more democratic and less disciplined than parents living rural areas. Moreover, parents living in extended families are more disciplined, less over-protective and less democratic-egalitarian in terms of attitudes than parents live in nucleus families. As a result, educational status, gender, family type and location are predictors for

parents' child-rearing attitude. However, the variables of age and number of children do not contribute to the total variance significantly.

Keywords: parents' attitudes, child-rearing styles, family

Introduction

In Turkish society and many other societies, there are some opinions based on culture and tradition on child-rearing attitudes. Child care is seen as a duty of the mother, the father bears responsibility for the person that meets the economic requirements of the house (Evans, 1997). Changing living conditions, family structure, and the change in working conditions, brought the need for child care. The working condition of women brought the obligation to share the responsibility of child care (Myers, 1996).

From the moment of birth, child is affected by family environment in which he lives. Child's perception of mother and father creates the basic perception of other people; mothers and fathers can affect the child outside the child's inborn personality traits. Children are not passive, but constantly interacting with their environment, changing all the time. According to the attitude of the parents, children overcome the difficulties faced in the process of adaptation to the society, or they have permanent problems arise. Children, grow in harmonious relations, love and understanding in a good family environment, ripe, create their personality, consolidate their confidence and self-respect if supported (Çıkrıkçı, 1999; Yörükoğlu, 2000).

According to Yavuzer (2012) each parent exhibits different attitudes to their children consciously or unconsciously. Some children are loved more, some see more tolerance, some of them become unwanted children and some are exposed to pressure. All of these attitudes affect both moral and social development of the child positively or negatively (Yavuzer, 2012).

Maccoby & Martin (1984) considered child-rearing attitudes in terms of two dimensions: control and acceptance-relation. In the intersection point of these two dimensions, they identify four attitudes of parents. Permissive parent classified by Baumrind is divided into two as transmitter-tolerant and permissive-neglectful. Authoritarian parents demand a high level of control, while they show low level of interest in acceptance-relation. The difference in the development of children of authoritarian and democratic parents is a result due to the difference in the level of parental acceptance-relation, because in both attitudes level of the concept of controlling is high.

Yavuzer (2012) addresses the most common parental attitudes as over-protection, tolerant, over-indulgence and affection, rejection, acceptance, possession under pressure, the separation of unequal treatment to children. Arı et al. (1995), classify the attitudes of parents as authoritarian, free and democratic attitude. Yörükoğlu (2011) takes the attitudes towards the child attitudes and behaviors as repressive, over-tolerant and democratic.

Jensen classified attitudes of the parents as follows:

1 - Less love: a) that neglect, b) strict, c) anxious and nervous, d) extreme authoritarian parents.

2 - High-love: a) over-protective, b) tolerant, c) democratic, d) normative parents (Demiriz, 1997).

For some parents it is easy to be tolerant, but it is difficult to be decisive. This often leads to excessive tolerance. Some parents, however, find easy to be decisive, but forget tolerance. This usually leads to an extreme hardness. Both conditions are unhealthy for children. Neither hardness, nor tolerant help children to be participatory, talented, happy young people and develop the skills they need to be the life (Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn, 1993).

Accordingly, parental attitudes can be regarded as: (1) democratic attitude; (2) authoritarian attitudes; (3) free (indifferent) attitude; (4) overly tolerant attitude; (5) preventive attitudes and (6) inconsistent attitude.

Democratic attitudes

In democratic attitude, the attitude of the family based on love and independence children have the right to share ideas; parents respect children's decisions, enter into co-operation, and support their children. These children are observed as more independent, outward-looking, creative. Friendly atmosphere at home is usually dominated (Arı & Bayhan, 1995).

Authoritarian attitudes

In authoritarian attitudes, children are always under continuous supervision and pressure. Parents want children to adhere to strict rules. In this attitude penalty is at the forefront, there is no flexibility in behavior and this draws attention because child's rights are minimized. Child has the fear to make things wrong. In authoritarian attitude; parents, show their love to their children long as children act as how their parents want, waiting absolute obedience the fulfillment of requests and orders from children; and give any decision about the children. This relationship is based on his/her parent's relationships (Arı & Bayhan, 1995; Savran & Kuşin, 1995). Arı & Bayhan (1995) found that as mothers increase the level of authority, there is an increase in problems with children as result of their research. They also found out that there is an inverse proportion between mothers' level of free, democratic attitudes and level of problems of children (Arı & Bayhan, 1995).

Free (indifferent) attitude

In free attitude, child is granted with myriad rights. Child's behaviors cannot be limited and children do not obey the rules and regulations. Parents avoid children where children would avoid parents. This attitude appears to be child-centered. Children growing up in this attitude are disobedient, irresponsible, selfish, and spoiled (Arı & Bayhan, 1995).

Over-tolerant attitude

Tolerance of parents to have their children means allowing children to have what they want except for some limitations. Normal level of tolerance of the parents helps the children increase their self-confident, creative, social skills. According to the researches analyzing the relation between parents' behaviors and children's behaviors, parents' non-coercive, flexible and tolerant attitudes have positive emotional, social and cognitive development on children. Over-indulgence and over-tolerance makes the children selfish. They always want to attract the attention of others and want others to serve for them. These children home show a very weak social cohesion both inside and outside (Özyürek, 2004; Yavuzer, 2010).

Protective attitude

Parents' over-protection means controlling and showing attention for children more than necessary. As a result of this, children can be dependent on others, show emotional jealousy and face with self-confidence problem. This dependency can last throughout the children's life, and wait the protective attitude from their partners (Yavuzer, 2010).

Inconsistent attitude

Inconsistent means keep track of the rules and their results. Parents should apply what they say if they want to see the effects of the rules they set. As a matter of failing to implement the decisions taken, children learn very easy to exceed the limits. To be inconsistent is one of the most seen situations that parents fall into. Whatever the reason is, not forming consistency and regularity can cause behavioral disorders (Stede, 1998).

In this study, parents', live in rural areas or urban areas and with children 5-6 years of age, difference in their attitudes towards children are inves-

tigated according to demographic characteristics and living conditions, rural and urban.

Method

Participants

The study group of the research includes 200 parents, with 5-6 years old children taking pre-school education, 100 living in rural areas and 100 in the city center. 84 percent of the participants are male and 116 are female parent with mean age was 29.7. In addition, 66 parents live in large families and 134 as core families.

Data collection tools

Personal Information Form: a data collection tool developed by the researchers and includes parents' and children's demographic information.

PARI (Family Life and Child-rearing Attitude Scale): PARI was used in the study to determine the attitudes of mothers towards their children. PARI was developed by Schaefer and Bell (1958). Test was adapted to Turkish Güney LeCompte, Ayhan LeCompte and Serap Özer in 1978. In the test which was re-organized in accordance to the conditions in Turkey there are 60 items and 5 subscales. These sub-scales are over-protective mother, democratic attitudes and recognition of equality, rejecting the role of housewife, marital conflict-incompatibility and strict discipline. In the scale items 2, 29 and 44 are reverse coded. Increase in scores indicates negative mother attitudes in the factors other than recognition of equality and democratic attitudes. But it cannot be considered to obtain a total score of the scale factor scores.

Process

When environmental and cultural features and number of the materials of the research carried are considered, sub-dimensions refusal of the role of

house-wife and conflict in the family are taken out in accordance to the goals of the research. Then, after obtaining the necessary permissions for research, invitations are sent for families with children to come to school. The day comes, families are invited to the meeting room; PARI and Personal Information Form replicated and distributed in the package to the families. It is reminded that volunteerism is an essential component and after non-volunteer parents left the room, volunteers are informed about the research and forms are collected after 20 minutes from the command start. The data obtained were transferred to a computer for data analysis to determine differences between variables with independent samples t-test, ANOVA and the Regression Analysis to identify predictors of child-rearing attitude made. Analysis evaluated through SPSS.17 software package.

Results

(1) t test is applied to independent samples to understand whether child-rearing attitude show difference with gender and the results are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Results related to whether parents' scores on child rearing attitude varies with gender

Sub-dimension	Gender	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Over-protective	Male	84	50.12	8.35	4.49	.000
	Female	116	54.90	6.67		
Democratic-equality	Male	84	26.38	3.69	2.99	.003
	Female	116	28.12	4.31		
Discipline	Male	84	48.12	8.51	3.02	.003
	Female	116	44.55	7.87		

*p< .05

As a result of the t test applied in order to understand whether Parents' child-rearing attitudes show differences with gender according to the scores: t-value for the sub-dimension over-protective is 4:49 p <.05 significant, the

Democratic-equity sub-dimension is 2.99 for the t-value, $p < .05$ significant, disciplinary 3:02 for the size of the t-value $p < .05$ significant. This finding shows that gender has statistically significant role in child-rearing attitudes of parents.

(2) t test is applied to independent samples to understand whether child-rearing attitude show difference with location and the results are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Results related to whether parents' scores on child rearing attitude varies with location

Sub-dimension	Location	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Over-protective	Rural	100	49.90	8.03	5.88	.00
	Urban	100	55.88	6.24		
Democratic-equality	Rural	100	25.46	3.95	7.43	.00
	Urban	100	29.32	3.37		
Discipline	Rural	100	50.14	8.12	6.50	.00
	Urban	100	43.10	7.18		

* $p < .05$

As a result of the t test applied in order to understand whether Parents' child-rearing attitudes show differences with location according to the scores: t-value for the sub-dimension over-protective is 5.88 $p < .05$ significant, the Democratic-equity sub-dimension is 7.43 for the t-value, $p < .05$ significant, discipline 6.50 for the size of the t-value $p < .05$ significant. This finding shows that location has statistically significant role in child-rearing attitudes of parents.

(3) t test is applied to independent samples to understand whether child-rearing attitude show difference with family type and the results are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Results related to whether parents' scores on child rearing attitude varies with family type

Sub-dimension	Family type	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Over-protective	Extended family	66	51.24	4.11	4.48	.00
	Nucleus family	134	56.24	8.59		
Democratic-equality	Extended family	66	26.54	4.12	4.34	.00
	Nucleus family	134	29.12	3.63		
Discipline	Extended family	66	51.94	5.40	6.98	.00
	Nucleus family	134	44.00	8.41		

*p< .05

As a result of the t test applied in order to understand whether Parents' child-rearing attitudes show differences with family type according to the scores: t-value for the sub-dimension over-protective is 4.48 p <.05 significant, the Democratic-equity sub-dimension is 4.34 for the t-value, p <.05 significant, discipline 6.98 for the size of the t-value p <.05 significant. T value is found 6.26 p<.05significant for general score of child-rearing attitudes. This finding shows that family type has statistically significant role in child-rearing attitudes of parents.

(4) Multiple Regression Analysis is used to understand whether the variables educational status, gender, family type, residential location, age and number of children affect democratic-equality, sub-dimension of child-rearing attitudes of and findings are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of multiple regression analysis for democratic-equality, sub-dimension of child-rearing attitudes

Variables	β	t	p	R	R ²
Educational status	-.292	-4.29	.00	.292	.085
Gender	.198	2.77	.00	.345	.119
Family type	-.380	-6.18	.00	.513	.263
Location	.357	6.08	.00	.617	.380

As can be seen in Table 4, regression analysis used for parents' child-rearing attitudes for sub-dimension of democratic equality which is predicted by some variables is completed in four stages. 29% of the variance in the regression analysis, the equation describing the 'educational status' has been variable. In the second stage variable predicted variance of 5.3% which contribute to 'gender' has been variable. The third variable is the regression equation 'Family type' and 16.8% of the variance predicted variable 'explains that.' Entering the fourth stage, the equation 'the place lived' the variable contribution of 10.4% of variance type. Predictor variables entered into the regression equation, the size of the parents' child-rearing attitudes on the bottom of the democratic-egalitarian explains 62% of the total variance [F = 29.931, p < .00]. The largest contributor to the equation variable 'Educational status', and the variables age and number of children were not contribute to the total variance significantly. The same regression analysis was applied to the other sub-dimensions, similar results were obtained.

Conclusion and discussion

In this study, living in the countryside and in the city center of parents with children 5-6 years of age, attitudes towards children living place, gender, and family type to be determined by the differences in how some of the variables studied and tried to determine predictors of parental attitudes. According to the findings parents' child-rearing attitudes scores show statistically significant differences in terms of gender. And democratic-egalitarian overprotective mothers than fathers, fathers have been identified as having a more disciplined attitude. These findings are in line with similar studies previously conducted. Studies examined the last 20 years with an increase in participation rates of women in business life and the democratic-egalitarian attitude scores decreased over-protectiveness, disciplined attitude, despite the increase in scores over-protectiveness and democratic-egalitarian attitude scores of men more disciplined attitude does not change the fact that lower scores. Inside-the instinct of motherhood can be said to be one of the biggest reasons of this situation. So, no matter what the conditions are more protective against the children of mothers than fathers will always be said.

According to the second finding of the study, parents living in rural areas in the city center (edge and rural areas) than the overly protective parents who live a more democratic, equitable, and less disciplined attitudes were observed. Family Research Council and a research made in 1995, reached similar conclusions. According to the study, especially to mothers living the city center attitudes extreme intervention and non-interference lost power and the rural and less developed regions show less moderate attitudes. Also, when gone to rural and underdeveloped regions, the view strict discipline in child education has strengthened and seen necessary. Social attributions, lifestyle and growing conditions can be seen as the reason of this situation. So, the reason why democratic-egalitarian attitude cannot be transferred to the children is that parents, living in rural areas, is being treated by excessive discipline by

their elders and it can be said that treatment caused stereotype to exhibit the excessive discipline attitude in order to lick their children into shape. However, the excessive discipline against children is changed into moderate, democratic and egalitarian attitudes in families living in the city center. Because of the differentiation in concept of child rearing as well as the increase in educational opportunities may lead to changes in child-rearing attitudes. There are not only the negative aspects of living in rural areas. In rural areas, respect, obedience and responsible behavior, emphasizing the culture, socialization, children, and natural movements in the hierarchy of age is facilitated by small businesses. For a child, living in urban, it can be dangerous to navigate around the city, may not be able to feed animals at home. In rural areas it is taught to children fitting to relatively unchanging environment; socializing in the city helps gain independence (Myers, 1996).

According to the third finding of the study, parents' child-rearing attitude scores indicate statistically significant differences in terms of type of family living. It can be said that parents living in extended families are more disciplined, less over-protective and less democratic-egalitarian in terms of attitudes than parents live in nucleus families. Considering large families which mostly live in rural, expected results are parallels with the result above. However, safe physical and emotional environment provided to children in extended families by physical proximity of the mother to the child and the number of the tolerant people may be under threat in nucleus families (Myers, 1996). Socialization of children in large extended, may be easier than children in nucleus families. While nucleus families guiding to individuality, extended families are guiding to union.

According to the fourth and final findings of the research, it is observed that educational status, gender, residential area and family type are significant predictors of child-rearing attitudes, but age and number of children has no significant effect in parent's child-rearing attitudes. Studies on the

factors affecting child-rearing attitudes it is encountered in that the results that are closer. For example, Mızrakçı (1994) and Güneysu (1982) found in their studies that, cultural differences in parents' education level and occupation, age, family relationships, and social child's relationships with the parents of the, gender, age, birth time; number of children, family socio- economic situation affects the families' child-rearing attitudes. In our study, there can be several reasons why age and number of children affect child-rearing attitudes of parents significantly. For example, since parents have fewer children than before their attitudes to first or second child, do not change significantly. In addition, the age of the parents in this study are close to each other, and many have secondary or high school education level of knowledge, so have more information on child development than elders. This creates the impression that there are not many differences in parents' child-rearing attitudes.

As a result, the parents' attitudes toward their children can be affected from the child's characteristics and their personality, and demographic characteristics. Form of communication in the mother-father-child triangle can create short or long term, positive or negative impacts on individuals; parents and children teach to act in accordance as well as acting in not accordance way (Güngör, 1995). Parents first of all should know developmental characteristics of children and act as adults who must respond appropriately to their needs while educating their children (Yörükoğlu, 2011; Yavuzer, 2010). According to the results, the following suggestions can be made for further studies on this subject: (i) first of all, the number of participants and the provinces in the study group may be increased; (ii) child-rearing attitudes of parents, living in rural and urban areas, can be examined; reasons for the differences could be discussed; (iii) factors affect child-rearing attitudes might be increased and discussions could be made deeper.

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