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THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN WHO USED THE BURSA ALİ PAŞA TOY LIBRARY

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the views of the children and parents who use the Bursa Ali Paşa Toy Library, which was a part of a joint project between Uludağ University and Bursa Metropolitan Municipality. "Mobile Educational Toy Library Project" was initially carried out in Turkey by two of the researchers named above. The research was carried out utilizing both qualitative research and general scanning methodologies. 53 parents and children of three parents, who come to the library, participated in the study. 50 parents, who use Bursa Ali Paşa Toy Library, completed the questionnaire, three parents were interviewed and their children were individually interviewed. As a result of the research, it was seen that the parents considered toy library an extremely useful facility worthy of recommendation. It was established that most of the parents, who participated in the research, played games with their children and played games with their children on a daily basis.

Keywords: play, toy, toy library

Toy libraries are resource centres which meet the educational materials needs of children through the process of "lending". The general purpose of a toy library is to meet children's need of playing games with toys which allow the child to grow up and develop in a healthy manner. Toy libraries enable children to socialize, enhance their intra-group behavioural skills and eventually access various toys with great ease. Besides, toy libraries are important for parents as they learn about child development, understand the importance of play, in a position to choose their children's toys, and appreciate the significance of toys. At the same time, toy libraries encourage disadvantaged families to enhance their social skills and play more often with their children at home and enable children to borrow their favourite special toys (Kamaraj, 2006; Myfield, 1993).



Figure 1. Opening Ceremony of Bursa Ali Paşa Toy Library

An old mansion in the Alipaşa District in Bursa was restored and Bursa Ali Paşa Toy Library was opened in 2015 as part of the "Mobile Educational Toy Library Project" conducted by us (Başal, Bağçeli Kahraman, Taner Derman and Şahin Zeteroğlu, 2013) in collaboration with Uludağ University and Bursa Metropolitan Municipality.



Figure 2. Bursa Ali Paşa Toy Library

The "Mobile Educational Toy Library Project" includes both a central library and a mobile toy library which features the delivery of toys to children living in distant and disadvantaged areas. The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Alipaşa Toy Library from the perspectives of children and parents.



Figure 3. Mobile Educational Toy Library

Method

Model of the Study

The study was conducted on a general survey model in order to identify the views of parents and children using the Alipaşa Toy Library.

Population and Sample

The population of this study are the parents and children who use the Bursa Alipaşa Toy Library. The sample of the study consisted of 50 parents using the library and three parents with whom interviews were conducted.

Data Collection

The data of the present study were collected through two questionnaires. These were used to identify the views of parents who used the toy library and identify the views of children who benefited from the library.

Analysis and Evaluation of the Data

The questionnaire data obtained from the 50 parents were evaluated in tabular form with percentages and frequencies. Moreover, within the scope of the study, in order to get clearer information, three parents participated in answering the "Questionnaire Surveying the Views of Parents Using the Toy Library and the Questionnaire Surveying the Views of the Children Using the Toy Library". The interviews were conducted with the flexibility to ask previously prepared questions and more detailed additional questions about these questions, focussing on the pre-prepared subjects and subject areas. The interviews lasted between 5 and 10 minutes. In order to reflect the views better, the data were given direct citations with a code (P1, C1 ...).

Findings and Evaluations

According to the findings obtained from the "Questionnaire Surveying the Views of Parents Using the Toy Library: Regarding the Alipaşa Toy Library", the percentage of those who responded the question "Have you heard of the toy library before?" as yes was 38% (f=19). The percentage of those who said no, on the other hand, was 62% (f=31). This percentage is quite important.

Therefore, most of the participants in the study became aware of the toy library when it was opened. While 98% (f = 49) of 50 parents included in the study answered the question "Do you think that the toy library is a useful practice?" as yes, 2% (f=1) responded as partially. Nearly all of participants included in the study thought that the toy library was a useful institution. This result shows that the toy library we opened achieved its purpose.

The percentage of the parents who answered the question "How often do you use the library?" as once a month was 10.4% (f=5). The percentage of the parents

who said twice a month was 16.7% (f = 8). The rate of the parents who said once a week was 22.9% (f=11). The rate of the parents who responded as 2-3 times a week was 41.7% (f=20). The percentage of parents who responded as every day was 8.3% (f = 4). It is clearly seen that nearly half of the people surveyed in the study used the library 2 or 3 times a week.

The percentage of parents who said yes to the question "Is the time allowed by the library for your child to play enough?" was 76% (f = 38). The rate of those parents who said was 24% (f=12). When the toy library was first opened, children were allowed 40 minutes to play with toys if request by the parents. Therefore, our toy library also undertook the function of "Play Room".

It was found that while nearly all of the participants included in the study thought that the time allowed by the library was sufficient, only a small proportion of parents found it insufficient.

The proportion of those parents who responded the question "Is the time allowed by the library for your child to play sufficient? Why?" positively saying that it enhanced their motivation to come to the library was 2.9% (f = 1). The proportion of parents who said that it was sufficient for children's attention span was 58.8% (f = 20). The proportion of parents who said that the play time period should be increased was 35.3% (f = 12). The proportion of parents who said that the play time period should be diminished was 2.9% (f = 1).

The proportion of parents who said 'yes' to the question, "The usage fee of the library is 20 turkish liras (= 3 euros) per year. Do you think this is appropriate?" was 84% (f = 42). The proportion of parents who said 'no' was 16% (f = 8). Nearly all of the participants included in the study thought that the usage fee of the library was appropriate. The rate of parents 'no' in the group who said that the usage fee should be reduced was 6% (f = 3). The rate of increase in the price of dialysis is 6% (f = 3). The proportion of those parents who said that the library should be free was 4% (f = 2). The proportion of parents who said that the usage fee was appropriate was 42% (f = 21).

The rate of parents who responded the question "Which type of toys does your child prefer to play with most?" as 'all of them' was 31.9% (f = 15. The rate of parents who stated that their daughters played with dolls was 10.6% (f = 5). The proportion of parents who stated that their sons played with cars was 19.1% (f = 9). The proportion of parents who said their children played with Lego was 10.6% (f = 5).

The proportion of parents who said yes to the question "Is there a toy that your

child often desires to have but you cannot afford? If yes, what is that toy?" was 28% (f = 14). The proportion of parents who said no was 72% (f = 26). However, it is clearly seen that more than half of the parents included in the study managed to afford the toys desired by the child. The proportion of the parents who stated "insufficient financial resources" was 6% (f = 3). The proportion of parents who indicated the fee was "high" was 14% (f = 7). The proportion of parents who said that their child was "too young" was 4% (f = 2). The percentage of parents who responded as "İt is because we do not want our child to be spoilt" was 6% (f = 3).

The proportion of parents who responded to the question "Who chooses the toys that your child will play within the toy library?" as 'parents' was 8% (f = 2). The proportion of parents who responded the same question as 'the child him/herself' was 64% (f = 32). The proportion of parents who responded as 'together' was 32% (f = 16). The proportion of parents who said yes to the question "Do you play together with your child in the library?" was 90% (f = 45). The proportion of parents who said 'no' to the same question was 8% (f = 4). It was revealed that nearly all of the participants included in the study played together with their children in the library and only few parents did not.

The proportion of parents who said 'yes' the question "Would you recommend the library to the people around you?" was 100% (f = 50). It is clearly observed that all of the participants included in the study indicated that they would recommend the library to the people around them. This result demonstrates that the toy library opened by us in Bursa was approved by the parents and children.

The percentage of parents who responded the question "Would you recommend the library to the people around you? Why?" as 'to spend quality time' was 34.5% (f = 10). The percentage of parents who stated 'socialization' as a response was 20.7% (f = 6). The percentage of parents who stated 'reading habit' as a response was 3.4% (f = 1). The percentage of parents who stated 'for the benefit of all' as a response was 37.9% (f = 11). The percentage of parents who stated 'because of the high diversity of plays' as a response was 13.8% (f = 4).

The proportion of parents who answered the question "What are your expectations from the library?" as 'the library meets our expectations' was 25.5% (f = 12). The proportion of parents who responded negatively was 46.8% (f = 22). The proportion of those who stated that 'the diversity of plays could be increased' was 8.5% (f = 4). The rate of the workshops was 4.3% (f = 2). The proportion of wider playgrounds is 2.1% (f = 1). The proportion of parents who stated 'workshop activity' was 6.4% (f = 3). The proportion of those who demanded a larger play areas was

2.1% (f = 1). The rate of those stating 'borrowing book' in their response was 2.1% (f = 1).

Within the scope of the study, three parents were also interviewed. The question "Do you think the toy library is a useful practice? If yes, what are the benefits of it as far as you are concerned?" were answered positively as 'yes' by the three parents. When the responses of the parents were examined, it was found that the following views were expressed: *"We found materials that belonged to Montessori here.", "There are high quality, world class toys.", "There are toys that not every budget can easily afford.", "We prefer to come here since there are good quality and hygienic toys." "The greatest benefit is that it enabled our child to get used to with kindergarten easily", "The library in my child's 'language' was "toy school", which helped him to love it." "There are toys which we cannot afford. Or the child gets bored with it quickly. He satisfies his desire with the toys in the toy library and does not force us to buy him the toy.", "The library helps the child to satisfy his/her desire with toys."*

The parents who responded to the question, "The usage fee of the library is 20 tl (3 €) annually. Do you think this fee is appropriate" When the views of the parents were examined, it was revealed that they expressed their views as in the following: *"When you think about the market value of books and toys, they are very convenient", "If we bought a new toy, it would cost an additional expense to my budget, so our child gets to come across with new and different toys here."*



Figure 4. Children are choosing toys in Mobile Educational Toy Library

Those who said yes to the question "Is the time allowed by the library for your child to play enough?" expressed their views as in the following; "*Children can feel bored if they stay longer.*", "*They leave for home just on time without getting bored.*", "They yearn for it.", "*It the play time was longer, they would not want it that much.*" Those who said no to this question expressed their views as in the following; "*If I could stay 1 more hour, it would be great.*", "*The time allowed expires when the child just starts to get the most out of the boo*k." "*Since there is variety of toys, the time is never enough for them to play and feel satisfied.*"

11 sets of data were obtained regarding the question "Which type of toys does your child prefer to play with most?" Parents stated the affixing and matching type of toys, cars, repair toys, Ciciobellea, sticky toys with internal organs, the audio toys, wooden repair toys and car parks. When evaluated in general; the parents said that their children played with all the toys in the library.

All the parents answered the question "Is there a toy that your child desires to have but you cannot afford? If yes, what is that toy?". When views of parents were examined, it was seen that one parent mentioned *"pickup truck, car, articulated lorry*"; and another parent mentioned "*Ciciobellea (the sick and spoiled dolls)"*. The parents stated the "*insufficient financial resources*" as their reason why they could not afford them.

Regarding the question "Who chooses the toys that your child will play with, in the toy library?", some parents also expressed the following views; "*Sometimes we do not get the toys they actually like, but we find inappropriate*", "*they decide and choose together*", "*Generally, it was their children who chose the toys*" and "*we do not get the toys they actually like, but we find inappropriate*".

All the parents said 'yes' to the question "Do you play together with your child in the library?". Some parents also expressed the following views; "*We also experience our own childhood*", "*We play together with the Lego-type toys*", "*We get the cars to talk*".

All the parents said 'yes' to the question "Is there any other toy you wish to see in the library?". The following are the views expressed by the parents; "*I would like to see more educational toys.*", "*Intelligence games (for small age groups) can be made available.*", "*Puzzles, wooden toys, flat boards are useful for children to do something about themselves.*"

All the parents said 'yes, I already do' to the question "Would you recommend the library to the people around you?" When views of parents were examined, the

following were the views they expressed; "*The library has both a book and a toy section.*", "*This library is a place where our children can spend time in warm and clean environment even with the family in the winter months*.", "*The other children usually go to kindergarten, but I still recommend the library*.", "*I have been recommended to come here*.", "I have found it very useful.", "*Children desire various toys. This library both meets the needs of the child and provides financial support to the family*."

Seven sets of data were obtained regarding the question "What are your expectations from the library?" One parent who wished to see the library to be open on Sundays too stated that "*I would like the library to be open on Sundays too; so that the kids could come and play together with their fathers. This would allow the fathers to be in close contact with the children and the mother would have their own 'me time'"*. The participants stated that they wished to have a cafeteria, a baby-care room, the play time duration and workshops to be increased, to be open on Sundays and their children to spend time together with their fathers.

Conclusion

It was found that majority of the participants included in the study would recommend the toy library to the people around them since they wanted everyone to benefit from it; since the toy library offered opportunities for the children to spend quality time, help them socialize, wanted to see more variety of games in the library, and to acquire reading habits.

Nearly half of those participated in the study indicated that they did not have any specific expectations from the toy library; the other half stated that they wanted the toy variety to be increased, have a larger playground, workshop activities, social activities and cafeteria. Similarly, the parents who were interviewed stated that generally the toy library was useful and met the toy needs of their children.

As far as the findings obtained in the present study are concerned, the families indicated that due to insufficient financial resources and high price of toys, they had difficulty in purchasing toys for their children, but thanks to the Bursa Alipaşa Toy Library, their children had the chance to come in contact with and play with numerous high quality toys. Consequently, it is recommended that toy libraries are to be expanded to the all the other provinces in our country and the number of toys increased.

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