

"A BRIDGE BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL"  
PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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“A BRIDGE BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL”  
PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

### “A BRIDGE BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL” PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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This thesis analyzes the effects of portfolio assessment on preschool teachers, preschool children and their parents. In addition, the effects on school education system of portfolio assessment were examined. This study was conducted in a private preschool in Ankara and the participants included 6 preschool teachers, 10 6 year-old children and their parents. The study had been applied in this school for one year by the researcher. Observations, interviews and questionnaires were used during data collection. Participants were interviewed and questionnaires were used during and at the end of the study. Given the focus of the study to examine and describe the use of portfolio assessment in a preschool, qualitative procedure were used. An interpretive case study was selected to be the method of research design. In order to analyze the data coding system was developed and was used to organize and clarify data gathered from teachers, parents and children. Results of the study were examined based on the research questions. It was found that, preschool teachers had positive attitudes toward portfolio

assessment. In addition, this study showed that portfolio assessment supported preschool children's self-expression skills, self-confidence and their self-responsibilities. Parents also thought that portfolio assessment helped them to investigate their children's attitudes, interests and capabilities. Lastly, portfolio assessment application affected the preschool education system.

Keywords: Portfolio, Assessment, Early Childhood Education

## ÖZ

### “EV VE OKUL ARASINDAKİ KÖPRÜ” OKUL ÖNCESİ EĞİTİMDE PORTFOLİO DEĞERLENDİRME SİSTEMİ

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Bu çalışma portfolyo değerlendirmenin anaokulu öğretmenleri, çocuklar ve aileleri üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmıştır. Bunun yanında portfolyonun anaokulunun eğitim sistemi üzerindeki etkilerine de bakılmıştır. Araştırma Ankara’da özel bir anaokulunda, 6 anaokulu öğretmeni, 10 adet 6 yaş çocuğu, ve onların aileleri ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışma araştırmacı tarafından 1 senede tamamlanmıştır. Gözlem, mülakat ve anketler veri toplama aşamasında kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılara araştırma sırasında ve araştırma sonunda anketler dağıtılmış ve mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Portfolyo uygulaması sırasında nicel araştırma metodu kullanılarak örnek olay incelemesi yapılmıştır. Veri analizi kodlama sistemi kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları araştırma soruları temel alınarak açıklanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre anaokulu öğretmenleri portfolyo değerlendirme uygulamasına karşı pozitif bir eğilime sahiptir. Bunun yanında portfolyo çalışması anaokulu çocuklarının kendilerini ifade etme becerilerini, öz-güven duygularını ve öz- sorumluluk becerilerini pozitif yönde desteklemiştir. Aileler de portfolyonun çocuklarının eğilimleri, ilgi alanları ve becerilerini

keşfetmeleri için kendilerine yardımcı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Son olarak, anaokulunun eğitim sistemi de bu çalışmadan olumlu yönde etkilenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Portfolio, Ölçme- Değerlendirme, Okul Öncesi Eğitim



To my Parents, my Husband and Advisors

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiv
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Purpose of the study.....	4
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Research Questions .....	5
1.4 Significance of the study .....	5
1.5 Definitions of terms.....	7
1.6 Limitations of the study.....	8
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	9
2.1 General Information about Assessment.....	10
2.2 Different Perspectives of Assessment in Early Childhood Education.....	12

2.3	Theoretical Framework of Authentic Assessment.....	16
2.4	Implementation of Portfolio Assessment in Early Childhood Education.....	21
2.5	Summary of the Literature Review.....	29
3.	METHOD.....	30
3.1	Methodological Approach.....	32
3.2	School Setting.....	33
3.3	Participants.....	34
3.4	Procedure for Data Collection.....	34
3.4.1	Analysis during Data Collection.....	36
3.4.2	In Service Training.....	37
3.4.3	Training Procedure.....	40
3.4.4	Present Study.....	41
3.4.5	Interviews.....	46
3.4.6	Observations.....	47
3.4.7	Description of Questionnaires.....	48
3.5	Data Analysis.....	49
3.6	Coding Data for Reporting .....	50
4.	RESULTS.....	52
4.1	Findings from teachers, parents and children .....	52

4.2	Research Question 1	52
4.3	Research Question 2	59
4.4	Research Question 3	60
4.5	Research Question 4	63
4.6	Research Question 5	66
5.	DISCUSSION	70
5.1	Portfolio as a effective assessment	71
5.2	Portfolio as a systematic assessment	72
5.3	Difficulties of portfolio assessment	73
5.4	Portfolio from children’s world	73
5.5	Portfolio and children’s self-expression	74
5.6	Portfolio as an informative system	75
5.7	Portfolio as a bridge between home and school	75
5.8	Portfolio and education system	76
5.9	Portfolio as an ongoing process	76
5.10	Recommendations for Further Research	77
5.11	Summary	79
5.12	Reflections of the researcher	80
	REFERENCES	82
	APPENDICES	88

A. QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS.....	88
B. QUESTIONNAIRES FOR PARENTS.....	90
C. QUESTIONNAIRES FOR CHILDREN.....	91
D. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE OF THE SCHOOL.....	92
E. PORTFOLIO DESIGN WORKSHEET.....	93

## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLES

Table 1. Timeline of Data Collection.....	35
Table 2. Data Collection Techniques.....	37
Table 3. Rudimentary Coding Scheme.....	49
Table 4. Initial Coding.....	50
Table 5. Coding Scheme for Data Analysis.....	51
Table 6. Answers of Children.....	65

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE

Figure 1. Assessment- A Continuum.....13



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a systematic period, which helps children to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. It reveals the child's innate skills and improves and shapes these skills according to the child's unique learning way. In this special period children gain the important skills including self-control, freedom, self-regulation, independency of expression of thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

It is vital to define these skills or knowledge, by means of effective curricula, educational methods, and developmentally appropriate assessment techniques. Main purpose of early childhood education is to support all developmental areas by considering individual differences of children.

The importance given in the early childhood period has opened many doors for research and different applications. Studying children's achievement and performance in school, and even before school, has received increasing public attention during the latter 1980s and early 1990s. A general consensus for assessment reform is reflected by the volume and variety of professional literature on various methods of assessment and the number of states that are seeking alternative means to evaluate students (Bowman, Donovan, and Burns, 2001).

Obviously there is increased attention to assessment and documentation of children's early years. Since assessment tools for preschool age children are abundant, it is important to ask how and why assessment activities are practiced in early childhood programs.

Recognition of children's early development and the importance of skilled and trained teachers are receiving long overdue attention, at least by stakeholders beyond the classroom walls. For critics, the current emphasis on assessment overemphasizes early childhood achievement, leading to inappropriate teaching practices and decision-making not in a child's best interest. When high stakes are attached to assessment outcomes, apprehension and pressure may become characteristics of the assessment process for administrators, teachers, parents, and young children. Fortunately, many experts and professional organizations have outlined essential components of appropriate early childhood assessment, while cautioning against inappropriate methods or uses of assessment (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education [NAECS/SDE], 2003; Shepard, 1994; Shepard, Kagan, & Wurts, 1998).

Inappropriate assessment techniques such as standard testings procedures are decontextualized from children's natural, everyday routines, and thus, fail to capture the "true" functional capabilities of young children of varied ability levels. Only authentic or other alternative, observational assessment forms that meet current recommended practice standards of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC; Neisworth & Bagnato, 2000 , and NAEYC; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

In addition to the points mentioned above, the use of standardized tests with young children is particularly inappropriate and frustrating. According to Amspaugh (1990) both the time spent preparing the children to take the test and the long-term pressure on teachers and children were totally at odds with the goal of helping children become lifelong learners. Not only are the tests inappropriate for young children's developmental levels, but the

reliability and validity of test results are in question (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1986).

On the other hand, performance assessment as applied through portfolios provides a contrasting view of a child's progress. Instead of a one-time picture of what a child knows, a portfolio provides a multifaceted view of what child understands and can use. Moreover, the portfolio reflects growth and progress over time, which facilitates planning by the teacher and student for future learning goals and experiences. Portfolios empower students to become involved in self-evaluation and reflection and to have input into their own learning (Tierney, 1991).

The most significant reason of teachers' tendency to use performance assessment and portfolios is to improve learning. Teachers and students can set their own goals for the child's learning, as well as choose suitable assessments to glean information about student progress (Shepard, 1995). Assessments can be authentic in that they are contextual; they emerge from classroom work.

Portfolios are a widely recommended authentic assessment way to assess the work and document the progress of students of all ages. Allowing children to examine their work and reflect on its quality as they help select materials for inclusion is an important part of portfolio use (Klimenkov & LaPick, 1996). Children are able to look back on their earlier work and to reflect proudly upon their progress. The child who says she wants to include a piece in her portfolio because "I did it good," or who looks back on earlier work and sees that she now can write more neatly, experiences a real sense of accomplishment. In addition, portfolios are useful as a focus for parent conferences, as they provide concrete demonstrations of children's progress and allow parents to better appreciate and understand their children's work.

The development of children's self-assessment skills is another positive aspect of portfolio use. Towler and Broadfoot (1992), state that experiences with reflection and evaluation allow children to gain necessary self-assessment skills and to better communicate their assessments to others. Helping children to become more involved and responsible for their progress is consistent with a child-centered approach towards learning. Engaging children in the process of detecting knowledge areas in which they need improvement encourages a sense of both motivation and responsibility, and helps children to establish personal goals.

Considering the points mentioned above, portfolio assessment is a new and comprehensive method. There are several researches in other countries however, it needs to be made in-depth investigation about its effectiveness in our country.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of portfolio assessment to discover its effectiveness in early childhood education and to understand the reflections of children, parents and teachers about portfolio assessment.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Statement of the problem will be divided into three main categories as for teachers, for parents and for children.

For teachers; preschools in Turkey use classical assessment techniques which are teacher based , structured and limited to assess children as a whole. However, it should be more comprehensive, child centered and flexible. Because children grow and develop rapidly, they are different from each other in many aspects that is called is individual differences, and children are active participants of their progress. Portfolio considers those aspects of children and it is one of the most effective assessment tools used in early childhood programs in developed countries. If it is applied in more

preschools in Turkey, a more professional approach could be built in the assessment programs. By means of this, teachers would also see assessment as an important for early childhood education and they would have better understanding about assessing young children.

For parents; they may not aware of what their children do, and how they develop in an early childhood program exactly. Portfolio assessment is a technique that gives information about the “process” of development in detail. While doing this, it takes a picture of their children’s development. It is an attractive method for families to see everything in concrete evidence. By means of portfolio assessment, parent’s point of view about Early childhood education would change from a care giving center to a careful supporting center for their children in the all aspects about a child.

For children; portfolio assessment would improve children’s self-awareness. It gives opportunities to children make choice, create their own portfolios, share ideas and feelings, and also it gives the feeling of giving importance whatever the child does. By means of portfolio, children could become more self-confident. Because children would understand that their progress is followed by their own products as a result they could feel themselves important individuals.

#### *Research Questions*

The research questions proposed in this study are;

- 1- What are the reflections of preschool teachers about portfolio assessment?
- 2- What are the struggles of preschool teachers about the implementation of portfolio assessment?
- 3- How does portfolio assessment influence parents’ opinions about their children’s development process and early childhood education?

- 4- What does children understand about portfolio assessment and how they perceive portfolio assessment in their education and development?
- 5- What are the effects of portfolio assessment on preschool education system?

#### *Significance of the Study*

It can be said that assessment is a very important stage of education. Assessing young children and the usage of assessment in early childhood education is also an important issue. It is obvious that assessing young children is different from assessing older grades.

Assessment leads to improved knowledge about children. This knowledge is translated into improved curriculum implementation and teaching practices. Assessment helps early childhood professionals understand the learning of a specific child or group of children; enhance knowledge of child development; improve educational programs for young children, while supporting continuity across grades and settings and access resources for children with specific needs.

To enhance teaching strategies, or to identify children in need of further evaluation, the evidence used to assess young children's characteristics and progress is derived from real-world classroom or family contexts that are consistent with children's experiences.

This study is significant in the following aspects. Firstly, portfolio assessment is a new system for Turkey especially in the area of early childhood education. According to researcher's knowledge, there is no study about portfolio assessment conducted in Turkey in the area of early childhood education although a few study was conducted in elementary education and higher education. It is very important to implement this system and to make it used widely in early periods. Secondly, this study

aims to determine the effectiveness of portfolio not only for teachers and school but also for parents and children. It is a multi-dimensional study that considers parental point of view and children's perceptions because this assessment system needs parental involvement and children's progress with concrete data. Lastly, this study is a preliminary effort for guiding further research on new portfolio assessment in early childhood education in Turkey. It is important to conduct variety of studies in the field of assessing young children because assessment part is very important to get knowledge about children's whole developmental characteristics, interests, needs and attitudes.

#### *Definitions of Terms*

**Portfolio:** In other words; portfolio is a record of the child's process of learning: what the child has learned and how she has gone about learning; how she thinks, questions, analyzes, synthesizes, produces, creates; and how she interacts--intellectually, emotionally and socially--with others.

**Assessment:** Assessment is the process of observing, recording and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it, as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child, including planning for groups and individual children, and communicating with parents. Assessment is also used to determine the extent to which an instructional strategy or program is working (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992).

**Authentic Assessment:** Authentic assessment refers to the systematic collection of information about the naturally occurring behaviors of young children and families in their daily routines. Authentic assessment is a deliberate plan for investigating the natural behavior of young children. Information is captured through direct observation and recording, interviews, rating scales and observed samples of the natural or facilitated play and daily living skills of children.

Students In Early Childhood Period: Children from the ages of 3 to 6 years old.

Early childhood education: Education that aims to support children 3 to 6 years olds intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially.

#### *Limitations of the Study*

There are some limitations of the study related to the implications of portfolio assessment. Firstly, the study was conducted in only one preschool and the number of participants was limited. In order to generalize the findings of the study for larger population, additional researches could be conducted in the future researches. Secondly, teachers of the school had background information about assessing young children, and this issue might affect their attitudes toward portfolio assessment application for this reason the application of study could be conducted easier than another school. Lastly, the study took about more than one year and the teachers might get familiar with the study and this could affect their opinions about the portfolio assessment both negatively or positively.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes: 1) general information about assessment, 2) different perspectives of assessment in early childhood education, 3) What does authentic assessment mean? 4) theoretical framework of authentic assessment, 5) portfolio as an authentic assessment, 6) implementation of portfolio assessment in early childhood education, 7) brief summary about related literature review about assessing young children and portfolio assessment.

Educational assessment is at the cornerstone of education in the 1990's. The current emphasis on assessment is resulting in an explosion of interest in alternative forms of assessment. Advocates for alternative assessment believe that the new tasks should be redesigned to more closely resemble real learning tasks. Both the process and the product should be examined, providing a clearer, more detailed picture of a child's abilities. Assessment should determine whether students can monitor and evaluate their own understanding (Rothman, 1988).

Alternative assessments demand more complex and challenging mental process from students. These assessments activate student's prior knowledge, recent learnings, and relevant skills in order to solve authentic problems. Alternative or authentic assessment may include performance-based tests, observations, open-ended questioning, exhibitions, interviews, and portfolios (Pett, 1990). Portfolio assessment is one form of authentic assessment that documents growth over time and focuses on the processes

with learning. Portfolios are a purposeful collection of student work that includes efforts, progress, and achievement. The collections of portfolio involved entries include student participation in the selection of the content and the reflection of the work (Johnson & Rose, 1997). Through self-assessment the child's awareness of his or her learning and growth develops. This awareness and involvement in learning and assessment in turn benefits the child's learning (Kohonen, 1992). Self-assessment is emphasized in the portfolio assessment which is a promising approach for securing quality and authenticity in assessment. For this reason, portfolio assessment in early childhood education has become an important authentic assessment technique.

#### *General Information about Assessment*

Assessment is the process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it, as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child. Assessment is integral to curriculum and instruction. (National Association for the Education of Young Children & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, 1990)

In addition; Dodge, Jablon and Bickart (1994) stated that assessment is the process of gathering information about children in order to make decisions about their education. Teachers obtain useful information about children's knowledge, skills, and progress by observing, documenting, and reviewing children's work over time. Ongoing assessment that occurs in the context of classroom activities can provide an accurate, fair, and representative picture of children's abilities and progress.

Moreover; assessment involves the multiple steps of collecting data on a child's development and learning, determining its significance in light of

the program goals and objectives, incorporating the information into planning for individuals and programs, and communicating the findings to parents and other involved parties.(Hills, 1992)

In addition to the points mentioned above, assessment of young children is very different from the assessment of older children and adults in several ways. The greatest difference is in the way young children learn. They construct knowledge in experiential, interactive, concrete, and hands-on ways rather than through abstract reasoning and paper and pencil activities alone (Bredenkamp and Rosegrant, 1992). To learn, young children must touch and manipulate objects, build and create in many media, listen and act out stories and everyday roles, talk and sing, and move and play in various ways and environments. Consequently, the expression of what young children know and can do would best be served in ways other than traditional paper and pencil assessments (Paulson & Paulson, 1991).

Moreover; a developing child exhibits periods of both rapid growth and frequent rest. Children develop in four domains—physical, cognitive, social, and emotional—and not at the same pace through each. No two children are the same; each child has a unique rate of development. In addition, no two children have the same family, cultural, and experiential backgrounds. Clearly, these variables mean that a “one-size-fits-all” assessment will not meet the needs of most young children (Shepard,1990).

In other words, the assessment of young children is truly a celebration of their lives and advancements if teachers view it as such. Information gained in the assessment process can also be used in the planning of work that addresses the needs of the child as evidenced in the collection of work samples and teacher observations. And most importantly, it can be used as a

tool in the sharing of progress with the child's family and with the child herself (Shepard, 1990).

*Different Perspectives of Assessment in Early childhood education*

According to Hills (1992) assessment is one of the most visible aspects of the public discussion of early childhood education. The decisions made about assessment today will have a significant impact on the early childhood profession and on the experiences of many young children for years to come.

There are some guiding principles that National Association for the Education of Young Children & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (1990), determined for assessment of young children. According to NEAYC; assessment involves regular and periodic observation of the child in a wide variety of circumstances that are representative of the child's behavior in the program over time. In addition; it relies primarily on procedures that reflect the ongoing life of the classroom and typical activities of the children. Assessment avoids approaches that place children in artificial situations, impede the usual learning and developmental experiences in the classroom, or divert children from their natural learning processes. Moreover; assessment relies on demonstrated performance during real, not contrived, activities, for example, real reading and writing activities rather than only skills testing.

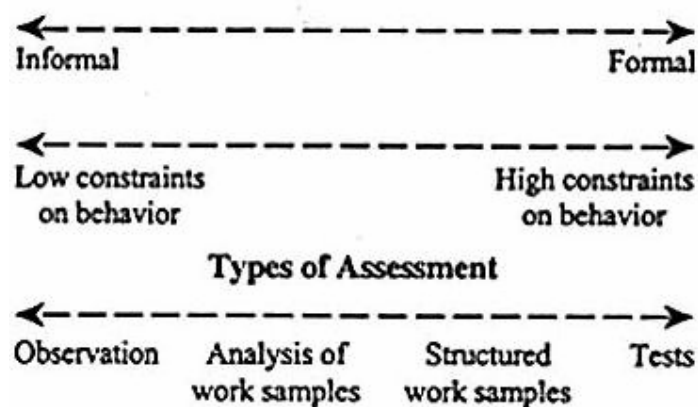
Hills (1992), describes the major purposes of assessment in programs for young children: 1) instructional planning and communicating with parents. 2) identification of children with special needs. 3) program evaluation and accountability.

Besides the purposes of assessment, the assessment technique is also

important. It leads how children should be assessed and it helps to clarify the main purpose for assessing young children. This can make to determine what kinds of assessments would be most appropriate. Assessment of individual children might serve one of the following purposes including; 1) determining progress on significant developmental achievements, 2) making placement or promotion decisions, 2) diagnosing learning and teaching problems,3) helping in instruction and curriculum decisions; serving as a basis for reporting to parents, and assisting a child with assessing his or her own progress (Hills, 1992).

According to Hills (1992), strategies for assessment must be related to the purposes of assessment. These strategies can be reached by using both formal and informal assessment techniques.

As it is shown in figure 1, formal and informal assessment techniques differ from each other in the aspects of instruments used for data collection and how they perceive the behavior.



Hills, 1992, p. 48

Figure 1. Assessment- A Continuum

Hills (1992) states that informal types of assessment are the most appropriate for young children as such assessments are qualitative in nature, allowing children to demonstrate what they know, in situations that are familiar and comfortable to them, and permitting teachers to document their progress. Informal assessment uses two basic approaches for collecting information on children's performance which are observation and recording and collection and analysis of representative samples of children's work.

On the other hand, formal assessment considers "product" rather than "process". Standardized test is one of the examples of formal assessment techniques. A standardized test is something that is administered under standardized or controlled conditions that specify where, when, how, and for how long children may respond to the questions or "prompts." Standardized tests should meet acceptable standards for technical qualities in construction, administration, and use (Goodwin & Driscoll, 1980).

The great majority of standardized tests are marketed by commercial test publishers, who have prepared them for use in a broad array of educational institutions in many different settings. This means that they are based on educational objectives common to such diverse schools, and "rarely will these common objectives coincide exactly with the specific objectives of the individual classroom teacher or project director" (Goodwin & Driscoll, 1980)

Individually administered standardized tests can serve important purposes when they are selected wisely and used as intended by the test developers, and their results are not over-generalized or misinterpreted. Hills (1992) notes that the primary strengths of standardized tests, if they are properly designed and properly used, are that they can eliminate biases in

assessment of individual children and that they provide data that can be aggregated, permitting comparisons of groups to a standard.

On the other hand, Powel and Sigel (1991) states that the overuse and misuse of standardized tests has motivated teachers and parents to advocate other approaches to assessment that will provide more valid and reliable information on children's progress. Abuses and misuses of tests include employing tests that require children to respond in unfamiliar ways, so that their capabilities (what they know and can do) are confused with their performance (whether they can demonstrate the former), using tests that are not logically matched to the objectives of the program, allowing testing programs to dominate and narrow the curriculum, and using tests scores as a sole basis for high-stakes decisions. These misuses or abuses are the focus of the following comments (Powel & Sigel, 1991).

The overuses or abuses on standardized tests resulted in the publication of critiques and opposing ideas and produced a lot of debate in the early childhood education field. Powell and Sigel (1991) note that traditional assessment processes are inappropriate for young children. They say that young children are not good candidates for taking traditional tests. The reliability and validity of test results are greatly compromised by the child's rapid changes in development, fluctuations in the intensity and focus of interests, and the unfamiliarity of the assessment situation (Powell & Sigel, 1991).

Shepard (1994), also writes of the "negative history of standardized testing of young children in the past decade," which includes a distortion of curriculum in the early grades, including a "skill-driven" kindergarten curriculum" and "escalation of curriculum" or "academic trickle-down". Developmentally inappropriate instructional practices, characterized by long

periods of seat work, high levels of stress, and a plethora of fill-in-the-blank worksheets, placed many children at risk by setting standards for attention span, social maturity, and academic productivity that could not be met by many normal 5-year-olds (Shepard,1994).

Meisels (1989), describes influences that caused many teachers to align their curriculum and instruction to the specific focus of the standardized test their districts mandated, thus reversing the relationship between curriculum, which had formerly guided assessment processes, and testing programs, which now drove curriculum and instruction. The results are a narrowing of the curriculum, a concentration on those skills most amenable to testing, a constraint on the creativity and flexibility of teachers, and a demeaning of teachers' professional judgment. These outcomes represent a vast alteration in educational policy, aided and abetted by the inappropriate use of tests; they are creating an emerging crisis in public early childhood education.

#### *Theoretical Framework Of Authentic Assessment*

Authentic assessment refers to the systematic collection of information about the naturally occurring behaviors of young children and families in their daily routines. Authentic assessment is a deliberate plan for investigating the natural behavior of young children. Information is captured through direct observation and recording, interviews, rating scales and observed samples of the natural or facilitated play and daily living skills of children (Pett, 1990).

Educators use the term authentic assessment to define the practice of realistic student involvement in evaluation of their own achievements. Authentic assessments are performance-based, realistic, and instructionally appropriate (Pett, 1990).



Assessments that are authentic are meaningful and real. Authentic assessments focus on what students have actually learned, rather than what it appears they have learned. Shepard (1993) states that assessment tasks should closely resemble real learning tasks. Assessments are real and relevant if they allow students to make connections between themselves and the outside world (Jakson & Davis,2000). Authentic assessment promotes this relevancy. According to Schurr (1998), authentic assessment is characterized by attempting to make the testing process more realistic and relevant.

The benefits of authentic assessment include: 1) providing clear information; 2)giving ownership of learning to the students; 3) emphasizing the positive; 4) meeting the individual needs of students; 5) improving learning and teaching (Schurr, 1998).

Meisels (1993), states that, to carry out the necessary responsibilities, teachers must acquire understanding and skills in collecting authentic evidence by 1) observing children in a representative range of classroom behaviors, 2) recording the data as objectively as possible, 3) organizing the information, reflecting on what the data means, and 4) using assessment findings effectively.

In addition to the term of “authentic assessment”, the concept developmentally appropriate has been promoted through policies and publications of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), which has a current membership of 93,000 early childhood educators in child care agencies, public and private schools, and postsecondary educational institutions. NAEYC's position statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8 defines developmental appropriateness in terms of two dimensions: age appropriateness and individual

appropriateness. Early childhood learning environments and experiences are age appropriate when they are consistent with knowledge of how young children of the particular age span typically develop. They are individually appropriate when they respond to the unique "pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background" of each child in the group (NAEYC, 1990).

The concept of developmental appropriateness is applied to assessment in the following instances: In real life, children are most themselves when they are in familiar environments with adults and children whom they know and trust, engaged in tasks that allow them to use the modalities with which they are most comfortable. In such situations they will most likely demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that truly represent their attainments. When we introduce strange people, unfamiliar surroundings, demands for responses to atypical tasks, and constrictions on their usual behaviors, we will likely elicit behaviors that are neither valid nor reliable samples of the children's development and learning (Hills, 1993).

National Association of State Boards of Education (1991) stated that good schools for young children move away from reliance on standardized achievement tests of basic skills, as well as policies of tracking or retaining children. They move toward a philosophy of assessment that is continuous, based on children's performance, and directed by the teacher.

Meisels (1993) describes the skills and knowledge that teachers need to carry out developmentally appropriate assessment. He says that teachers must learn to become better observers. Part of being a better observer is knowing what to look for and knowing that looking is not identical with judging. Teachers must train themselves to focus their attention on all of the children in their classrooms and to be self-critical about reactions that may

reflect more about teachers' preconceptions than about children's actual performance. Above all, teachers must learn how to use their observations to effect changes in their curriculum--changes that will tell them whether a child knows something by eliciting the best that a child has to offer in a developmentally meaningful situation.

To carry out the necessary responsibilities, teachers must acquire understanding and skills in collecting authentic evidence by observing children in a representative range of classroom behaviors, recording the data as objectively as possible, organizing the information, reflecting on what the data means, and using assessment findings effectively (Nebraska Department of Education & Iowa Department of Education, 1993).

Mc Coll (2001, says that there are 4 major differences between authentic assessment and conventional testing: 1) where it's done, 2) what is assessed, 3) how it's done, and 4) who does it. First, a crucial distinction is the context (the where) for assessment. Authentic assessment relies on information that can be obtained only in the child's natural environments. These environments are the ongoing, daily routines, and typical circumstances of the child. Examples of natural environments are children at play in their own preschools, at home during bath time, at childcare, in the supermarket. This contrasts with the decontextualized, contrived arrangements that characterize conventional, psychometric practices (Hart, 1994). Conventional testing environments typically employ a clinic or "laboratory" setting such as testing rooms of schools or hospital examination rooms. Second, conventional testing focuses upon standardized item content (the what) and has little instructional use. By contrast, items for authentic assessment are real behaviors that have functional importance to the child and his progress. Third, conventional testing records the child's narrow

response to standardized objects and procedures and does not permit accommodations for special needs (the how). Authentic assessment relies on natural observations of the child's response to daily routines; in this context, the child can demonstrate competency in any way possible. As an example, the child who is blind can show object permanence by exploring the environment tactilely in search of a hidden toy; authentic assessment does not require the child to show only the narrow response of finding and seeing a hidden toy under a standard cup. Fourth, authentic content invites teaching because the items are part of the curriculum. With a functional approach, the playing field for documenting capabilities becomes level and noninferential. Conventional psychometric items are not building blocks for future competency, and psychometric procedures prohibit "teaching to the test" and, thus, are insensitive to functional progress and outcomes (Hart, 1994).

Some researches support for the authentic alternative. Bagnato, Suen, Brickley, Smith-Jones, and Dettore (2002) published a longitudinal study of the developmental impact and outcomes of an early childhood intervention model for children in high-risk communities. An "authentic assessment and program evaluation" model was employed with 1350 children over a 3-year period of intervention to profile child progress. The Developmental Observation Checklist System (DOCS; Hresko, 1994) was modified so that over 125 early-care and education providers could use it to record natural observations of child skills in everyday classroom routines. A weekly mentoring system was employed to teach the providers the specifics of conducting child quarterly assessments that would inform classroom learning activities, communications with parents, and documentation of child progress. The results of the 3-year study demonstrated the feasibility,

utility, and validity of the authentic assessment methodology and the efficacy of the program.

In another study, Bagnato and Neisworth (1995) documented the extent to which traditional tests of intelligence and development are inappropriate and fail to accomplish early intervention purposes for eligibility determination and assessment in the actual daily activities of over 250 preschool psychologists in 33 states with over 7000 children. In summary, the national survey research demonstrated that nearly 60% of the children were or would have been declared "untestable" if the psychologists followed procedures in the test manuals. Major reasons for the child's inability to respond to the tests included behavior at odds with test requirements, lack of language, poor motor skills, poor social skills, and lack of attention and other self-control behaviors. On average, psychologists followed their state requirements to use traditional tests by devoting about 90 minutes to each testing, achieving "untestable" results. After futile effort, however, these expert psychologists were able to work with their teams to declare over 90% of the children as eligible for early intervention services by using alternative and authentic measures to guide their decisions; the appropriate measures used included parent observations and reports, curriculum-based assessments by teachers and providers, play-based assessments, and observations of behavior at home or in the preschool. Clearly, both the required standardized tests and inflexible state regulations served as barriers to appropriate evaluations.

Performance-based or authentic assessment has been studied also for children in kindergarten and the early primary grades. (Meisels et al., 2002). The results of these studies demonstrate clearly that ongoing teacher assessments of children's learning within the school curriculum that are

structured by a type of curriculum-based instrument accurately identify and predict those children performing well and those who are at risk. In addition, the CBA instrument (Work Sampling System) enhanced teaching, improved learning through feedback, and boosted scores on conventional group accountability tests of achievement.

*Implementation of portfolio assessment in early childhood education*

Portfolio assessment has been considered as an authentic and developmentally appropriate assessment techniques. It was seen that the use of standardized assessment instruments, such as intelligence, readiness, and achievement tests, is not the best way to evaluate the progress of young children. Preschoolers vary from moment to moment and day to day in their ability to concentrate on what they are interested in. Because it is vital to understand the development of the whole child, teachers' observations about children's growth provide a much more individualized, accurate, and up-to-the minute picture. These insights, along with samples of children's work, can be used to create valuable portfolios (Murphy & Smith,1990), .

Portfolios are collections of students' work over time. A portfolio often documents a student's best work and may include other types of process information, such as drafts of the student's work, the student's self-assessment of the work, and the parents' assessment. Portfolios may be used for evaluation of a student's abilities and improvement (Paulson, 1991).

In recent years, portfolios of students' performance and products have gained impressive degrees of support from educators, who view them as a way to collect authentic evidence of children's learning (Owings & Follo, 1992). For many early childhood educators, portfolios are an attractive alternative to more traditional assessment approaches. Often, however, teachers raise important questions about what portfolios contain, what

benefits they will bring to the classroom and the children, and how they can be managed.

Çetin (2005), states that one of the elements of education program is assessment. In traditional curriculum, assessment is conducted commonly with examinations. Assessment which is applied with examinations is generally related to only one type of object behavior. New approaches in curriculum brought also using some alternative assessment methods. As new curriculum approaches is focus on individual gains and learning process, tendency of using portfolio evaluation which focuses on learning process and development of students in this process is emerged. Portfolio evaluation gathers evidence which shows students' development individually in learning process. It provides students' participation into this process effectively and gain skills which are not possible to gain with examinations. Portfolio evaluation also provides concrete indications of those which students can succeed to appear. In addition, each student's needs are individualized.

Teachers who have experience with portfolio assessment report that it complements such developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction as whole language, hands-on approaches, and process mathematics. It also allows them to assess children's individual learning styles, enhances their ability to communicate with parents about children's learning, and helps to fulfill professional requirements of school and community accountability (Polakowski, 1993). Implemented well, portfolios can ensure that the focus and content of assessment are aligned with important learning goals.

The planning, collecting, storing, and interpreting of authentic information on children's progress over time is time consuming. Many teachers are initially hesitant or resistant to use portfolio assessment because

they fear that adding it to their existing responsibilities may prove overwhelming (Koretz,1994).

Teachers who have made the transition from traditional assessment to portfolio assessment stated that it requires a refocusing, not a redoubling of teacher effort. Since the kinds of materials collected are typical classroom tasks, assessment and instruction are joined together with curriculum. Time spent in this kind of assessment, then, is not time taken away from teaching and learning activities (Polakowski, 1993). Moreover, Plakowski (1993) addressed that a teacher is able to engage in one-to-one assessment conferences or instructional conversations and collect products for assessment purposes by using portfolio.

According to Cohen (1999), portfolio assessment offers a variety of benefits. First; it is a record of a child's ongoing development over time. Portfolios contain examples of children's work at different time periods in a school year. For instance, a photograph of a child's completed block structure in the fall, winter, and spring. Or a child can draw and file a series of self-portraits can be good examples.

Second; it serves information to help designing instruction. Portfolios help teachers begin to construct a well-rounded and authentic picture of each child so educators are better able to plan their program to build on individualized strengths and support each child's growth.

Third; children's involvement in assessing their own work is important. As children participate in the portfolio process, they begin to reflect on and understand their own strengths and needs. This, in turn, helps them feel responsible for their own learning. Children also enjoy comparing examples of their past work with what they are doing in the present. Educators can help children recognize their own progress by asking



questions and commenting as they compare such things as drawings or photographs of math manipulatives, block structures, or writing samples. Another one is that it is a method of communication. Portfolios are a collaborative effort involving teachers, children, parents, and, often, other family members too. They are great to share at family-teacher conferences (Cohen, 1999).

The process of assessment in elementary classrooms is undergoing changes that impact instructional practices. Alternative means of assessment are being implemented that reflect developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood classrooms. portfolio assessment has been offered as an alternative assessment procedure that may adhere more closely than traditional methods to principles supportive of young children's learning (Gilman et al, 1995).

In a study which was conducted by Weldin and her colleagues in 1997, they described a portfolio assessment program including requirements for implementation, staff training, involvement and support of parents, stages of portfolio assessment use, home-school connections and a celebration of the year-long commitment to using portfolio assessment. The program placed particular emphasis on parent involvement in portfolio assessment process. The study was conducted in a large suburban elementary school of approximately 630 students ranging in age from infancy through grade five. The school implemented portfolio assessment on a school-wide basis in 1994. The researchers observed and documented the portfolio assessment process. At the end of the semester interviews were conducted with the teachers, students and parents. According to the reflections of researchers at the end of their observations and documentations, portfolio assessment empowered both teachers and

students to design, implement and evaluate instructional strategies and programs. It encouraged a “bottom-up” approach for diagnostic and instructional goal setting. The researchers also reported that through a collaborative approach, teachers and students assessed growth, reflected on strengths and established individual goals for the future. portfolio assessment promoted self-regulated student learning and ownership. Main purpose of the researchers was to determine parent’s reflections about portfolio assessment. And they reported that approximately 85% of the parents said that the portfolio enabled them to gain better understanding of how their child was learning and growing.

In another study conducted by Kankaaranta in 1996, the researcher aimed to examine the effects of portfolio for children’s self-assessment. The study was conducted in a kindergarten in Finland. The researcher described the experiences from the first year of the experimentation with portfolios in the kindergarten as a means of self-assessment in the early years. Activities in the kindergarten and school were documented and assessed by the children through portfolios. Portfolios were primarily regarded as the children’s property.

One of the central goals of the study was to create a connection from kindergarten to school through portfolios. Children passed themselves information of their development and learning to the next stage of learning. Portfolios were warmly welcomed in the school and they continued to grow and develop there together with the children. In that way it was possible to enhance flexibility and continuity in the children’s lives in their different learning environments.

Another qualitative study conducted by Rachele (1995) investigated that portfolio implementation to determine its effectiveness as an evaluative

tool to document student progress, monitor teacher instruction and communicate growth and development to parents and students.

Throughout this study, students became more proficient at making specific and individualistic assessment decisions about their work and setting more realistic goals for themselves. Evidence of increased student self-esteem and pride in work were also acknowledged as a result of utilizing portfolio assessment.

Parents supported the use of portfolio assessment as a supplement to traditional grading measures. Data reflected that parents felt the portfolio helped to verify how their child was progressing whereas the report card served as an indicator of growth in comparison with others and the child's own growth over time.

In addition to the studies mentioned above, there is another one which was conducted by Norman (1998) in order to investigate the use of portfolio as an alternative assessment procedure. Study participants included two first grade teachers, 59 students and the parents of 59 students. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, portfolio data and questionnaires. portfolio assessment was implemented in those 59 students and the results were placed in three categories: 1)teachers use of portfolio assessment, 2)student's responses, and 3)parental response to portfolios. According to findings of the study, participating teachers demonstrated their resolve for successful implementation by employing classroom activities that lessened their concerns about portfolio implementation. In addition, documentation verified that students became more effective as self-assessors and in setting goal for themselves. Student self-esteem and pride in their work as a result of utilizing portfolios were found in this study. Moreover, the role of portfolio in the assessment process was defined as a support to the

traditional grading system. Parental data reflected their view of portfolios as a means to explain “how” and “why” students were given particular grades. The traditional report card was viewed by parents as an indicator of individual progress in comparison with the whole group.

Another study that was conducted by Bailey (1997) aimed to define teacher perceptions of the usefulness of portfolio assessment in early childhood settings. Interviews were used as the data collection method. Study participants consisted of 19 early childhood educators who had received training in developmentally appropriate assessment techniques such as portfolio assessment. According to the findings of study from the interviews, teachers believe that portfolio assessment process is beneficial to children. In addition teachers believe that it is beneficial in individualizing instruction and planning and designing curriculum. Moreover, teachers reported that portfolio assessment is vital to identify children with special needs. It also enhanced the communication with parents.

As it was mentioned, there are several researches and studies related with assessment, authentic assessment and portfolio assessment in early childhood education in different countries. When it is looked at Turkey, there is no study related with portfolio assessment in early childhood education. The researches about portfolio were conducted for primary grade students and there are a few studies about assessment of young children. Researches showed that, assessment in Turkey is mostly done with traditional testing methods. However; a few studies showed that different perspectives in assessment has been started to apply.

An experimental study which was conducted by Bolat (2004) aimed to examine the application of portfolio in the primary schools for German language education. In this study, the portfolio has been applied to students

who learn German as a second foreign language in three different primary schools in Samsun. The control group has been assessed with traditional exams and the test group's performance has been evaluated with their portfolios. According to the findings of the study, portfolio assessment is an effective assessment tool for grade 6 and 7 in primary school for assessing their second language learning. Findings also found that portfolio assessment appealed student's attraction because they involved their own evaluation and they had chance to see their own progress. In addition, teachers believed that portfolio assessment gives the teachers to determine student's needs and weak and strong sides about second language learning process. Lastly, portfolio assessment has been found a developmentally appropriate assessment tool for primary grade students.

In another study that was conducted in Turkey by Erdiller & McMullen (2003). The subject of the study was the Turkish teacher's beliefs about developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education. The study examines the self-reported beliefs of Turkish in service early childhood education teachers living in Turkey in order to develop an understanding of the beliefs held by Turkish teachers about appropriate early childhood education practices, to get a sense of the perceived barriers to effective practice. Twelve teachers participated in in-depth interviews from early childhood centers serving children ages 3 to 6 years located in Ankara and Istanbul. Results indicated that Turkish teachers' beliefs were closer to the developmentally appropriate side of the developmentally appropriate versus developmentally inappropriate continuum considering the main points of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) curriculum.

Another study related with assessment in early childhood education in Turkey was conducted by Mağden (2002). The research was planned to assess the basic academic abilities of five to six years old children who are attending preschool educational institutions. The study was performed with 291 five-year old children (114 girls and 147 boys) and 266 six-year old children (129 girls and 137 boys), totally 557 children. A “Control List for Based Basic Academical Abilities” which was prepared by the researchers was used for data collection. Control list was applied to each child individually. The data were analyzed by t-test. According to the results of the study, no significant difference was found by gender for both five and six-year old children in gaining basic academic abilities. However, an increase in these abilities was observed as age increases.

As it was seen, there are a few studies about assessment in the field of early childhood education in Turkey when compared with other countries.

#### *Summary of the literature review*

According to the detailed review of related literature about portfolio assessment in early childhood education has been a new topic for assessment of young children. The current emphasis on assessment is resulting in an explosion of interest in alternative forms of assessment of young children. (Kohonen, 1992). Researchers developed new approaches that would use in assessment in education as more effective, long lasting, child-centered and teacher directed. portfolio assessment has been considered as one of the most comprehensive assessment techniques used in early childhood education. This system is a new subject for early childhood education field, for this reason there aren't variety of studies according to the researcher's review of literature. In addition, there are a few there researches about assessment of young children and portfolio assessment in Turkey. It can be said that

assessment is mostly done with traditional techniques because the studies that were conducted are mostly related with standardized testing techniques in the area of assessment in education.

Considering the points mentioned above, this study is significant for the literature with respect to application of portfolio assessment in Turkey, effects of this system on teachers, children, parents and the school system. In addition, this study would lead to conduct further researches about assessing young children.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

In this study the perceptions of early childhood educators, preschool children and their parents about portfolio assessment were examined from different perspectives. The specific research questions included: 1) What are the reflections of preschool teachers about portfolio assessment? 2) What are the struggles of preschool teachers about the implication of portfolio assessment? 3) How does portfolio assessment influence parents' opinions about their children's development process and early childhood education? 4) What do children understand about portfolio assessment and how they perceive portfolio assessment in their education and development 5) What are the effects of portfolio assessment on school preschool education system?

In order to find answers to those questions, I conducted the study in 2005 in a private preschool in Konutkent-Ankara. The school included children serving from 3 to 6 year olds.

The study had been applied in this school for one year by the researcher. Before the first semester, I conducted a training procedure about portfolio assessment. After that, the study started. Observations, interviews and questionnaires were used during data collection. Six preschool teachers, ten 6 year old children and their parents participated in the study and they were interviewed and questionnaires were used during and at the end of the study.



### *Methodological Approach*

Given the focus of the study to examine and describe the use of portfolio assessment in a preschool, qualitative procedure were used. Qualitative research allows the researcher to become a part of the culture of the setting being studied which provides additional perspectives to the study.

An interpretive case study was selected to be the method of research design. The strength of the case study design lies in its ability to tell the story of a phenomenon in the context in which it is happening. A case study is set apart from other qualitative research because it involves issues that demand the attention of teachers, administrators, parents, and children (Lancy, 1993). Interpretive case study can be useful by offering descriptions of innovative practices while interpreting or theorizing about a phenomenon (Merriam, 1988).

Based on the Merriam's explanations, the case study approach was chosen as research methodology for two reasons. Firstly, case studies permit the study of process. Process in terms of portfolio construction occurred within a specific context (time and place). Secondly, case studies are reflective, allowing the participants to develop individual perspectives regarding the process (Geertz, 1983). This study was unique to the teachers, parents and children of one preschool. Since this study's main focus was to look at the effectiveness of portfolio assessment in a long progress, case study was an appropriate method to use to discover that process.

Because the effectiveness and utilization of portfolio assessment are somewhat new, an interpretive case study is an appropriate avenue for investigation of teachers' reflections portfolio assessment, children's perceptions about portfolio assessment and parent's opinions about portfolio assessment.

### *School Setting*

The purpose of this study was to apply portfolio assessment in this school and to see its effects on teachers, parents and children from 3 to 6 years.

Application of portfolio assessment was conducted in a private preschool in Ankara. This preschool was located in Konutkent and it was established in 1996. It serves children from 3 to 6 ages. The school consists of 8 classrooms, one conference hall, one dining room, principle and coordinator rooms and a big garden. In addition, there is a big play area inside the school. All the classrooms can use this area furnished with the soft large-motor activity equipment. The preschool uses one of the approaches used in early childhood education that is "creative drama". For this reason, there is flexible, creative and open-ended atmosphere in the school.

I chose this school for portfolio assessment application because I made an application about observing and assessing young children in 2004 in this preschool. This application was a kind of basement for portfolio assessment because they were highly related with each other. Another reason for choosing this school was that it had experienced educators and most of them graduated from universities. Usually, preschools in Turkey work with the teachers who have vocational high school graduation. portfolio assessment is a new system that needs an educational background of teachers. This school has been various researches for ten years about drama in education, orff education, traffic education so its teachers and principle were used to that kinds of studies.

Considering the points mentioned above, purposeful sampling was used to conduct the study.

### *Participants*

The study was conducted with 6 preschool teachers, 10 6 year-old children and their parents. Before beginning the study, an interview was conducted with the principle of the school and backgrounds of teachers were defined. In addition, questionnaires and interviews helped the researcher to get the demographic data about teachers and parents.

There were 6 teachers in the school. 4 of them graduated from university and 2 of them graduated from vocational high school. One of the teachers had master degree about drama in early childhood education. Another one had background information about orff education. Two of them study with 3 year-olds, two of them study with 4 year-olds, one studies with 5 and one of them studies with 6 year-olds. Four of the teachers had experience between 4 and 6 years and two of them have studied for two years in the area of early childhood education. All the teachers had little and limited information about portfolio assessment at the beginning of this study. According to the interviews with the teachers, they didn't use portfolio assessment in their profession before.

The parents participated in this study were mostly graduated from university. Most of the mothers were working. They had one or two children. Three of the mothers were working in the field of education. Parent's ages varied between 30 and 52 including fathers and mothers.

### *Procedure for Data Collection*

Based on the purpose of the study, first need was to determine the backgrounds of the teachers about assessment, assessment techniques, and portfolio. In 2004, I studied "observation" and "observation techniques" with the same teachers in the same preschool. According to the feedbacks of teachers and parents, I thought that a systematic and ongoing application was very effective for the area of assessment of preschool children. This was

a motivation for my study to continue these applications one step further. “Portfolio” was this step to assess children more comprehensive way.

Study about portfolio assessment started before the first semester, in September 2005. For this reason, in service training started in the middle of July 2005 and a training study was conducted during August 2005. After those preparations, the study started to be applied for two semesters.

Merriam (1988) suggests the details of qualitative data can be obtained by getting close to the participants and representing them in their own terms. Data were collected through observations, formal and informal interviews, and questionnaires for teachers, children and parents. Description of perceptions of portfolio assessment, quotes from participants, and analysis of portfolio contents were also used as data collection techniques.

Table 1. Timeline of Data Collection

TIME LINE OF DATA COLLECTION	COLLECTED DATA
July, 2005	In service training
August, 2005	Training period Interviews with teachers
September, 2005	Revision of the study procedure Parents meetings to inform about Portfolio Introduction of function of portfolio to the 6 year old children
October, 2005	Classroom observations Monitoring students’ portfolios Meetings with classroom teachers
November, 2005	Classroom observations Monitoring students’ portfolios Meetings with teachers

Table 1.(continued)

December, 2005	Classroom observations Monitoring student portfolios Meetings with teachers Informal interviews with teachers
January, 2006	Detailed examination of students' portfolios Revision of objectives about portfolios Brief information to the parents about portfolio assessment progress
February, 2006	Monitoring students' portfolios Meetings with teachers about portfolio assessment process Classroom observations
March, 2006	Monitoring student Portfolios Collaborated with teachers Informal interviews with children
April, 2006	Introducing students portfolios to childrens' parents Interviews with the children Concluded classroom observations
May, 2006	Questionnaires were sent to parents, teachers and children Data were collected and questionnaire were analyzed Organized and clarified all data from questionnaire, interviews and observations Interviews with the teachers about portfolio assessment progress Interviews with the principle of the school about benefits of portfolio assessment

*Analysis during Data Collection*

Timing of analysis in qualitative research distinguishes it from traditional positivistic research because the design is emergent (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Merriam, 1988; Yin 1994). Analysis during data collection

serves to focus the researcher on the activities of the participants. Attempts were made throughout the study to review data as collected, from hypotheses, and focus the study as needed. A system of regular reports and memos was used during the study to examine progress of the research. Professional views regarding the direction of the study were sought through periodic consultation with colleagues.

Table 2. Data Collection Techniques

MAIN DATA SOURCES	PARTICIPANTS	PURPOSE
Interview	Teacher, Parents Principle and educational coordinator of the school	-To get the feelings, opinions and attitudes about portfolio assessment before, during and end of the study
Observation	Teachers and children	-To follow the progress of portfolio assessment in the classroom during the whole study
Questionnaire	Parents, Teachers, Children	-To get the answers some of the research questions at the end of the study.
SECONDARY DATA SOURCES		
Informal interviews/ conversations	Teachers, Children and Parents	-To get the perceptions about portfolio assessment progress

*In Service Training*

At beginning of the study, I decided to start studying with the subject of “assessment in early childhood education”. Firstly, in each week, I conducted two meetings. The subject of those meetings was “the assessment of young children”. I informed the teachers about what early childhood assessment is, what approaches are used in assessment of young

children, how assessment techniques are used in the classroom settings. In addition, I introduced the concept of Developmentally Appropriate Assessment in early childhood education.

During these meetings, teachers prepared questions and shared their daily experiences about assessing young children. The answers and comments were discussed, based on related literature.

At the end of these meetings, the participants came up with some important conclusions. The underlying idea of the meetings was that the assessment of young children should be flexible, comprehensive, multiple-sourced, child-centered, age-appropriate. Also, it should consider individual differences, age properties, universal characteristics, cultural appropriateness, should include family involvement and should make the teacher use practically during early childhood education process.

Based on those conclusions mentioned, "Portfolio" was decided to be the subject of the following two weeks. First, I gave general information about portfolio assessment to the teachers. Teachers asked several questions and they tried to understand the difference between Portfolio & other assessment techniques. A common expectation of the teachers was to see some samples about portfolio. For the second meeting, the questions were taken from the teachers and some written documents about portfolio were distributed to them by the researcher. In the second meeting, I demonstrated some examples of portfolio to the teachers. After this presentation, they had reached a better understanding about portfolio. The decision for the next meetings was to talk about each age group specifically. All the teachers participated in all the meetings and starting from 3 year-olds' classrooms, teachers told about their classrooms' characteristics, the number of children, educational and developmental objectives, parents' profiles and personal objectives of teachers about that classroom. Other age group teachers told

about their opinions, comments and offers. As a result, the meetings became more effective, open-ended and also more specific for all the age groups.

At the end of third meeting, the ideas about how portfolio will be constructed had become clearer. Each classroom would prepare their portfolios. Each age group had different age characteristics and needed different developmental and individual characteristics to be followed. (For example; for a three year old child, self-help skills is very important to be improved, while a six year old child needs to be developed some basic skills for primary school years). Based on the priorities of each age group, the objectives were specifically and clearly defined in the meetings. This approach helped teachers to have a more positive view about applying portfolio in their classrooms. Because, it was a very new subject for them, they needed clearly defined objectives and directions to follow. In addition, another reason to define the objectives was to prevent teachers from over-documenting, time consuming and difficulty in interpreting portfolios. They were a kind of “key” for teachers “what to look for” in children. For this reason, following objectives were determined with the teachers, educational coordinator and principle of the school.

For three-year old classrooms, self-help skills, basic developmental characteristics of this age, and individual characteristics of the children would followed by the help of portfolio. For four-year olds, main objective was to follow children’s inter and intra personal skills, their self-expression and language development. In addition, other developmental characteristics and individual differences are aimed to follow by the help of portfolio. Objectives of portfolio for five-year olds were to look at basic academic skills, and social-emotional abilities. Individual differences and universal developmental characteristics were also in the objectives. Six year olds’ objectives were the skills that were basement for first primary grade. In



addition, self-awareness, problem solving abilities, self- confidence were the priorities to follow by the help of portfolio.

After determining these objectives, teachers were informed about how, why and which documents would be included in a portfolio. Teachers had the idea that parents, teachers and children themselves would contribute in portfolio assessment procedure. Everything that was related with the children's development and individual differences could be a data for portfolio.

The criteria for data collection, and the main characteristics of portfolio design were introduced to the teachers. After determining the objectives , the meetings for in service training ended. Teachers were distributed a form to design their portfolios. (see in Appendix D). And a training procedure started.

#### *Training Procedure*

Teachers attended to several meetings in order to get a clear idea about portfolio assessment. For about 6 weeks, they received an in-service training and after that, a training procedure conducted that lasted about 4 weeks.

Considering the age group objectives, each teacher chose two children from her classroom randomly. Hard-covered files were obtained in order to store the data.

I distributed developmental checklists and rating scales that are appropriate for the children in their classrooms. In addition, they used other observational techniques such as running records, anecdotal records, time samples or event samples to collect data for the portfolios. Moreover, teachers collected all the documents that they thought best represent the children. At the end of the first two weeks, I conducted a meeting. General design of the portfolios, age appropriateness, order of the documents, and

variety of sources were examined. Teachers expressed their opinions, concerns and posed their questions regarding portfolio assessment process.

The following two weeks, collecting data for portfolio continued. And last meeting about the training procedure was conducted by the researcher in order to begin the study by correcting all the deficiencies about application of portfolio. At the end of this procedure, I conducted interviews with the teachers to get their ideas and struggles about the application of this system.

#### *Present Study*

In the middle of September 2005, I started the application of portfolio assessment in the preschool after in service training and training procedure completed.

In the beginning of study, the objectives and procedure of the portfolio was revised and decided with the teachers of each age group. I asked the teachers about their own goals and general characteristics of their age-group. At the end of those interviews, important notes were written and following objectives were concluded for the procedure of study. According to the result of this meeting, the purposes were, 1) to provide data on children's main interests, dispositions and attitudes, 2) to document children's growth in all developmental areas over time or in one particular area, such as literacy, 3) to assess children's learning relative to individual benchmarks established for each child, 4) to highlight children's accomplishments, 5) to keep track of the processes that children use in learning. In addition, another purpose was 1) to provide family members with concrete and extensive evidence of children's progress, 2) to enable children to reflect upon and analyze their own learning process, 3) to keep records that will accompany children as they move from one grade to the next, 4) to provide information that may be useful in determining children's special needs, 5) to furnish data for use by

teachers, administrators, and family members to evaluate program effectiveness.

In addition to these purposes, one of the primary goals was to help teachers and others concerned with children's progress make short and long term decisions about instruction that are appropriate for both individual children and the class as a whole.

After these purpose statements, each child's involvement, the type of portfolio to use, and which samples best document and demonstrate development were decided with the teachers by the researcher.

In order to do this in the most effective way, the researcher and the teachers decided to answer the question of: "who should contribute to what types of document?" And these contributions were divided into three main parts as; the teacher contributions, child contributions and parent contributions. After this decision, subtitles to gather the documents properly were decided.

Teachers were informed about some documentation and observation techniques that should be included in the portfolios. Anecdotal records, checklists, rating scales, teacher's notes, reflective journals, conference notes, and program goals and objectives were used as teacher contributions. Some terms and techniques were unfamiliar for teachers and they were informed in the meetings to the educators in detail.

For child contributions, it was decided to collect data from children's variety of works such as; literacy samples, project work documents, photographs of children, work samples, and video and tape recordings.

For parent contributions, work samples of children that they did at home or outside from school setting, formal or informal conference notes of the parents with the teachers were collected as data for portfolio.

After this meeting, a presentation was provided for the parents. They were informed about portfolio assessment, its benefits and general properties. Parents were very enthusiastic about this system; they listened carefully and asked several questions about the procedure. Teachers explained what their expectations were from parents. Parents were told that they were important participants in the portfolio assessment. Parents were asked about whether they heard about portfolio assessment before or not. A few of them knew portfolio from their children who were in elementary grades but none of them heard about portfolio in Early childhood education. For this reason, it was a new subject for families. The reason of this meeting was to inform parents about Portfolio and to make them involve in this process. This expectation was clearly defined to the parents.

Before portfolio was introduced to the children, the teachers and the researcher made some classroom arrangements. Hard-packed files were obtained for each child individually. Their names, photographs, date of birth, age-group, and teacher's name were placed on the covers of files. These files were placed on the child-sized shelves.

When we met with the children for introducing portfolio, the teachers explained portfolio with simple words to be understood easily. Children were told about those files function. They were told that hands-on activities, photographs, and any other activities could be put into this file. And the rule was that, children should bring the activity to the teacher to have their names written on the activities. And main purpose of that rule was to write down the date, place, and the explanation or child's expressions about this activity. Six year olds wrote their names and the date by themselves and they were more flexible than other age groups. Also they were told that these folders' names as "portfolio".

In order to prevent over-documenting or mixing all data, teachers kept their own documents and parents contributions in another file. Teachers organized the children's documents at the end of each week. The reason of this organization was that, children could put too much activity into their files and those activities might not be very important for collecting as a data for their assessment. In addition, teachers collected some works of children into their portfolio and all these documents needed to be organized well until the end of the semester.

Adhering to those rules, portfolio assessment study started. In the beginning of the first weeks of school, main objective of the preschool's education program was to adapt children to the school in the most effective way. And the goal for the portfolio was the same; to monitor and to collect data about first experiences of children in the school. The objectives of school's program and portfolio's goals went parallel with each other. In order to do this in the most effective way, monthly objectives of the school were followed carefully and at the end of each meeting, the following month's objectives were discussed with the teachers and coordinator. According to these documents, specific objectives for portfolio contents were revised and organized.

At the end of each month, portfolios were analyzed. The files were divided into social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language development parts in order to make teachers aware of whether enough data were collected or not. In addition parent contributions were collected into a separate file and all the files are stored into the hard-packed folders.

While revising the portfolios of children, three major characteristics were concerned. These were balancing of the documents, dating of each item and annotating the document.

Monthly meetings became more specific and each group teachers involved in the meetings individually. In addition to examine the portfolios, teacher brought several questions about children, and individual planning process for children started by the help of portfolio assessment. During this progress, teachers used anecdotal records, checklists, rating scales, reflective journals and program objectives to collect multiple sources to get the most effective portfolios for each child in their classrooms.

The documentation of portfolios continued until the end of first semester. On September, October, November, December 2005, 4 meetings were conducted in order to organize and revise all the portfolios. In the beginning of January 2005, it was decided to present the portfolios to the parents. A meeting was held on to plan the organization of portfolio presentations.

In order to present those documents to the parents at the end of first semester, meetings were arranged for each child's parents individually. Portfolios of children were revised, organized and prepared for the presentation. The teachers divided the document into some developmental and content areas according to their age groups. For example; cognitive development area, social-emotional development area, physical development area are labeled. The documents in the portfolios were hanged on the walls of the classrooms. The activities and other documents were put on the walls according to the date order. All the activities are collected under developmental or content areas based on the time sequence. The scene looked like a "film band". Parents saw where their child was at first, what kind of a process he/she had during semester and where he/she was at the end. Teachers read their anecdotes, children's own expressions, summaries

of parent-teacher conferences; they showed developmental rating scales and checklists of the child to the parents.

Three, four and five year olds' portfolios were presented by the teachers but the works that were kept by the children were introduced to the parents as informing their children's choice with the explanations of children's own expressions written down on the activity.

Six year-old children were included in the portfolio presentation. Meetings with each child were conducted and each child was expected to choose a few activities that they wanted to present their parents from their portfolios. After that each child preferred their works to show and explain their parents in the portfolio presentation.

Firstly, the classroom teacher presented her preparations about portfolio to the parent and then the child was included into the presentation and he/she showed his/her documents to the parent. All the documents were seen by the parents for the first time. They asked several questions to their children during this presentation about the activities and works.

At the end of these presentations, teachers kept all data into the portfolios to continue documentation for the following semester. For this reason, document weren't given to the parents.

In the second semester, same procedures with the first semester continued. And at the end of second semester same meetings, discussions and presentations to the parents were conducted.

At the end of May 2005, questionnaires about the study were distributed to the teachers, parents and six year-old children.

### *Interviews*

Interviews were conducted with the teachers as an important data source for this study. Interviews were conducted at the beginning and

during the study. Interviews were important for the researcher because, they gave data that may not be directly observed. As a result, it helped the researcher to see the feelings and experiences of teachers closely.

The reason for interviews in the beginning was to determine the teacher's current knowledge about portfolio assessment, their educational and professional backgrounds and opinions about this study.

In the middle of the semester interviews were conducted with the teachers in order to follow the application procedure closely. The questions were related with the teacher's opinions and feelings about portfolio assessment and how portfolio was affecting the classroom atmosphere. The answers were noted and they were kept in order to use in data analysis.

In addition to the interviews with the teachers, informal interviews with children were conducted in order to capture their perceptions about portfolio assessment during the study. Moreover, teachers made some informal interviews with the parents and took some notes to get the parent's opinions and feelings about portfolio assessment procedure.

Lastly, interviews with the principle and the educational coordinator of the school were conducted at the end of the study in order to determine their feelings and opinions about how portfolio assessment affected their school education system. The interview questions were structured by the researcher (see in Appendix D).

### *Observations*

Observations were one of the most important components of the study. Being aware of how the application was conducted, observations gave important data for the researcher.

The researcher participated in the classroom activities as an observer. The teachers were informed before the researcher came into the classroom. Most of the observations the observer had no interaction with the children.



However, during some interactions with the children or parents, the researcher participated in the conversations.

The reasons for those observations were to see general atmosphere of the classrooms, interactions, daily activities, and some applications about portfolio assessment.

#### *Description of Questionnaires*

At the end of the study, on April 2005, questionnaires were distributed to the teachers, parents and six-year old children. Because those children didn't know reading and writing, their teachers asked the questions and wrote their answers. Each child was asked questions individually.

The teacher questionnaire consisted of three parts and totally twelve questions. Three of the questions were multiple choices and the rest of them were open-ended questions. The first part of the questionnaire was developed in order to get basic demographic background information from the teachers who participated in the study. In the second part, teacher's knowledge and their own perceptions about portfolio were wanted to answer. In the last and the third part, teachers were asked what they thought about portfolio assessment's benefits for themselves, for children and for parents (see in Appendix A).

The questionnaire for parents consisted of two open-ended questions. Focusing on the benefits of portfolio for their children, parents explained the description of portfolio in their own point of view (see in Appendix B).

The questionnaire for children consisted of three questions. The questions were open-ended and they were read by the teacher to the 6 year-old children. One of the questions was about what portfolio was, the other one was related with the content of portfolio and the last one was about the function of portfolio (see in Appendix C).

### *Data Analysis*

Data analysis functioned as a means of reporting observations, interviews and questionnaire and classifying phenomena into discrete units. The objective was to describe meaningfully the effects of portfolio assessment on teachers, parents and children.

Strauss (1991) suggested that illustrative data be used to give a sense of reality to the account, so that readers will feel they are there, in some sense as the researcher has been there. It can be used deliberately to convey the viewpoints of actors.

Jorgensen (1989) described analysis as a “sifting”, “sorting” and “searching” process whereby data are broken up, separated or disassembled into parts or manageable pieces. Data analysis of this study is a through procedure with the aim being the explanation of the phenomena which occurred.

Analysis of data included reviewing, categorizing, synthesizing, looking for patterns, and interpreting collected data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Merriam, 1992; Yin, 1994). Questionnaires from teachers, children and parents, contributed to the collection of data. Data from interviews, portfolios, observations, and questionnaires documented evidence for answers to the research questions.

Coding system was used to organize and clarify data gathered from teachers, parents and children.

Table 3. Rudimentary Coding Scheme

CODE NAME	DESCRIPTION
TS	Teacher Struggle
TPP	Teacher’s Perceptions of Portfolio
TR	Teacher reflection

Table 3. (continued)

TPA	Teacher's point o views on portfolio assessment
CPP	Children's perceptions of Portfolio
PET	Portfolio effects on teacher
PEC	Portfolio effects on children
PEP	Portfolio effects on parents
PPP	Parent's perceptions of Portfolio
PPA	Parental point of view on portfolio

Table 4. Initial Coding

CODING FOR DATA SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
R	Researcher: Tuba EREN
T	Teachers
C	Children
C6	6 years old children
O	Observations
I	Interviews
Q	Questionnaires
P	Parents
M	Principle
E	Educational coordinator

#### *Coding Data for Reporting*

Coding categories were developed for data analysis (Glesne & Pehkin, 1992). After coding, Merriam (1988) suggests "having a conversation with the data" (p. 131). Major themes which reoccur were listed separately and used in the categorizing process. Various analytic techniques helped from explanation-building categories (Yin, 1994). Data were collected from three main groups: teachers, children and parents. In addition, data was obtained from interviews with the principle and educational coordinator of the school. Research questions were used to categorize data and identify patterns. As common themes emerged from the data coding, they were noted

and organized for reporting. Interpretations were formed based on what were the effects of portfolio assessment and its application.

Table 5. Coding Scheme for Data Analysis

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	INTERVIEWS	QUESTIONNAIRES
#1	RO	TI	TQ
#2	RO	TI	TQ
#3	RO		C6Q
#4	RO	PI	PQ
#5	RO	MEI	

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The study findings are presented in four research questions regarding the implication of portfolio assessment proposed by the researcher provided the basis for analysis.

The research questions are;

- 1- What are reflections of preschool teachers about portfolio assessment?
- 2- How does portfolio assessment influence parents' opinions about early childhood education and about their children's development process?
- 3- What are the struggles of preschool teachers about portfolio assessment implementation?
- 4- What does children understand about portfolio assessment and how they perceive portfolio assessment in their education and development?
- 5- What are the effects of portfolio assessment on school education system?

The findings of the study will be explained based on four research questions.

*Findings from teachers, parents and students*

*Research Question 1:* What are reflections of preschool teachers about portfolio assessment?

This chapter section describes the experience of six teachers as they implemented portfolio assessment into their classrooms. The teachers' perceptions of portfolio assessment are discussed. The reflections and

concerns of the teachers are shared for the benefit of others considering implementation of portfolio assessment. The data for results was obtained from questionnaires, interviews and observations. The six preschool teachers involved in the study shared many beliefs about portfolio assessment and its application.

The questionnaire for teachers consisted of twelve questions. The first three questions were related with the general information about the 6 preschool teachers' professional life including, age group they were studying with, how long have they been teachers, where did they graduate from?

Of all the teachers who participated in the study, two of the teachers were working with 3 year-olds, two of them were working with 4 year-olds, one of the teachers were working with 5 year olds and one was the teacher of 6 year-olds. Four of the teachers have been studied for more than four years in early childhood education field, and two of them had experience less than four years. In addition, four of the teachers graduated from university from the department of early childhood education, one of them had master degree and two of the teachers were vocational high school graduates.

A following question was related with how long the teachers have had information about portfolio assessment and its implication. According to the answers, only two of the teachers heard about portfolio assessment before the study started but they informed that they had very limited knowledge about what portfolio was. Four of the teachers informed that they first met with portfolio in this study.

The question addressed teacher's feelings about portfolio assessment were answered by teachers as follows. Three of the teachers said that portfolio seemed to be a complex and time consuming system. One of the teachers said; "When I first met with portfolio assessment, I was scared about

how to select documents based on my purposes, because everyday children produce many things that could be seen as data for portfolios". In addition, collecting data seemed to be difficult to the teachers. One of the teachers said; "I thought that the documents that we will collect for portfolios can be mixed and we may not order them according to our objectives". Another teacher was concerned about the effectiveness of portfolio assessment application in Early childhood education and she said; "I was very confused that how a portfolio can reflect an early grader?" On the other hand, some of the teachers reported that, when they were presented this system, they thought that portfolio was an effective and professional assessment system. One teacher reported; "Portfolio is a system that looks confusing but applying it is easy". Lastly, another teacher reported "The presentation of portfolio assessment affected me positively, because it gave detailed information about the application progress for this reason I had positive attitudes towards application of portfolio in our school, and this feelings affected me until the end of the year". As a result, some of the teachers reported their feelings as confusing, while others described their opinions as more positive about portfolio assessment when they were first introduced about the system.

Another question was related with how teachers organized portfolio content through the study. They reported that; they collected work products done on paper, samples of cutting, drawing, painting, printing related with art, activities about math, science and writings that reflects their experiences and growth, records of data collection about social studies and health. In addition, teachers reported that, photographs of a child engaged in significant work or play, audio tapes and video tapes, participation chart were included in the portfolio. Moreover, time sample or count of what a

child did on a given day or period, anecdotal records, structured observations, running records, developmental checklists and rating scales according to the age group, families' comments, informal conversation notes with parents were also included in the portfolios according to the answers of teachers.

In order to understand teacher's attitudes toward portfolio assessment at the end of the study, teachers wanted to explain their feelings and opinions when the application finished. Teachers reported that, during application of portfolio system they reached a better understanding of what a portfolio is. The documents in the portfolios represented children's developmental characteristics and individual differences comprehensively. One of the teachers reported:

During application of portfolio system I better understood what portfolio is. The documents that I collected were kind of proofs about the child's individuality.

In addition, the teachers told that documentations for portfolio were very systematic and this consistency made portfolio more effective. One teacher said; "from the beginning to the end of the semester, portfolio documentation should be done regularly". This can help teachers to organize portfolios easier.

Moreover, teachers stated that, "they took the photographs of children's whole development". And teachers also reported that during this procedure, their' points of views were always considered. What's more, teachers said that, one of the most important properties of portfolio is flexibility. This feature helped them to adapt it into their age groups and classroom atmosphere. One teacher said;

At the beginning of portfolio application, I was scared how to collect data from all children and how to select necessary documents. However, I saw



that portfolio is a flexible system that I always had chance to reorganize it during semester.

In addition to the points mentioned above, one of the teachers had a different idea about portfolio assessment. She said;

I am sure alternative assessment methods could be derived from portfolio assessment. Portfolio is flexible and comprehensive approach that researchers can make some additions or changes on this system.

Lastly, when they were asked about presenting portfolios to the parents, their feedback showed the effectiveness and success of portfolio from the parent's point of views. One of the teachers said;

In one of my presentations, a parent said that she didn't know her child's many characteristics and she found this chance by means of portfolio in the most detailed way. This comments affected me a lot, and I felt more confident about my job.

In order to determine the teacher's point of view about the benefits portfolio assessment for children, one of the questions in the questionnaire was related with this subject. They reported that, children's self-expression developed by the help of portfolio. One teacher said;

Children put their activities, pictures or other documents into their portfolios. In order to explained them children used their social-emotional and language skills and this helped them to improve their self-expression.

According to the teachers, children also improve their self-responsibility and they discover their abilities and capabilities. As a result, this system supports the improvement of self-confidence in children. One teacher stated;

Children had the idea that whatever they did it could be a document for their portfolios. Children felt that whatever they did were precious. This feeling improved their self-confidence. I could observe this change in my classroom.

In addition to these, teachers said that portfolio would present concrete information about children's developmental characteristics, individual differences and academic backgrounds before the primary grades for their teachers in the future. One teacher said;

It is a very good chance for a child to look at his/her history by the help of portfolio, and to have the opportunity to see the differences and similarities of himself/ herself between the past and the future.

When teachers were asked about the characteristics of portfolio and its application that they like most, they reported that, the progress of the children could be understood well. One of the teachers said; "Everyone can see the changes of children, at the beginning, during and at the end of the semester by examining a portfolio." Moreover, according to the teachers, portfolio gave concrete information by documenting a developmental property of children in continuous way and step by step. One of the teachers defined portfolio as "free spirit". She reported "it is flexible, not structured, child centered, and children construct their own assessment procedure". She also said that while presenting portfolio to the parents, teachers can also include their style and point of views and this makes portfolio authentic. Lastly, it was reported that individual differences of children are understood well by the help of portfolio assessment. One teacher said; "Development and individual differences of children can be followed in chronological order, this makes portfolio assessment reliable".

Teachers explained about the benefits and/or effects of portfolio assessment for themselves in another question. They said that they became better observers. One of the teacher stated; "I realized that I became more careful about catching every detail about all children's developmental characteristics". Moreover, teachers reported that individual differences of children could be seen obviously because of collecting documents for each child. This style helped them to see these differences and to develop individual planning for each child. One teacher said; "We could find the chance to see many details about all children from the beginning to the end of the semester ". In addition, teachers told that their attitudes toward

structured teaching changed with the child-centered and teacher-directed teaching by the help of characteristic of portfolio. One of them said; "I thought that I have a flexible and open-ended approach to the teaching. However, portfolio guided me about this attitude and I became more child-centered teacher". In addition, teachers said that, self-evaluation of teachers increased and their job became ordered. What's more, portfolio provides information to help the teacher design instruction. According to what teachers reported, they began to construct a well-rounded and authentic picture of each child so they are better able to plan their program to build on individualized strengths and support each child's growth. Teachers described "portfolio" as a "method of communication". According to their answers, portfolios are a collaborative effort involving teachers, children, parents and often family members too. They are great to share at family-teacher conferences. Lastly, portfolio helped them to understand what early intervention is. Some children seemed to help need, or couldn't reach the regular developmental age characteristics. Teachers told that portfolio is an effective tool for early intervention in preschools.

When teachers were asked about the benefits of portfolio assessment for parents, they reported that parents could see their children's development by concrete data and they realized their child's developmental properties and other individual characteristics in a realistic way. One of the teachers said: "Parents had chance to realize that their children have both developed and need to be developed sides. Portfolio gives this chance to the parents in an objective, realistic and concrete data". Moreover, as teacher reported; parents' point of view about "early childhood education" changed in a positive way. One teacher said;

Most of the parents think preschool as a “care-giving center. However, portfolio showed what their children do, and what the school gives to their children in a day and during the semester. They had the chance to see all the school program, activities, and objectives with the documents.

In addition to the points mentioned above, teachers said that, parent realized that Early childhood education supports their children’s development in an effective way. One teacher told;

I think most of the parents send their children to a preschool because of their job or busy life. They just care about children’s eating and sleeping habits. It can be difficult for them to follow many details about school program. By the help of portfolio, parents saw how early childhood education supports their children’s development as a whole.

Also they reported that the quality of communication between teachers and parents increased because the idea about teachers changed from “caregiver” to “early childhood educator”.

*Research Question 2:* What are the struggles of preschool teachers about implementation of portfolio assessment?

Teachers were asked about the negative aspects of portfolio assessment from their point of views. They reported that, documentation during class activities was sometimes difficult. A teacher stated;

I tried to collect data for portfolios as soon as an activity is finished or during the activity. However, I could roughly handle both managing the class and documenting for portfolios.

In addition, teachers reported that, the documents are open to subjectivity. An activity, or an observational record of a child could be interpreted subjectively. One of the teachers said;

I believe that the flexibility is needed in an early childhood setting, for this reason portfolio assessment fits with this opinion. However, the documents that we put into portfolios can be examined differently by teacher to teacher. In order to prevent this; observation techniques should be learned and applied well. Dating, notes from the activities, explanations with no comments can prevent the subjectivity.

Lastly, some of the teachers stated that documentation might be difficult in crowded classrooms because of limited time, lots of activities, and different needs of children. Especially in the younger ages like 3 three-year old classrooms, regular documentation for portfolios might be difficult.

*Research Question 3:* How does portfolio assessment influence parents' opinions about Early childhood education and about their children's development process?

In order to determine the parent's opinions about portfolio assessment and its influences on their children and on early childhood education, two questions were asked to the parents in a questionnaire. In addition, interviews were conducted with the parents. These interviews were conducted after portfolio presentations of children in order to draw some conclusions for the second research question.

There were twenty parents who were interviewed and were sent questionnaires. Most of them were graduated from university. Most of the mothers were working. They live close to the school building and most of the children were brought to the school by their parents. For this reason, it was easier to conduct informal interviews with those parents when they came to the school.

Parents were asked about the benefits of portfolio for their children and early childhood education. The general theme emerged from their answers were, they became aware of their children's capabilities and interests. One of the parents reported: "We don't have enough time to share our children's interests and capabilities. By means of portfolio, we had idea about how to support their attitudes in the most effective way". Another parent said, "we see our children only certain times in a day, and in those times, we can't share everything about school experiences". Therefore,

parents told that portfolio is a concrete evidence for them to see and investigate about activities that their children did during the day. In these activities, children's interests, attitudes or capabilities could be seen obviously.

In addition, parents reported that they had a chance to see the overall development of their children. They reported that, by the help of developmental checklists, and various assessment techniques in the portfolio, they had a clear idea about their children's development.

One of the parents said;

I thought that our child's developmental level was perfect and we didn't exactly know about developmental characteristics of our child. For this reason, we became more careful and conscious about our children's development.

According to parents, portfolio assessment is very effective for seeing the school process. They reported that they had chance to see educational progress of the school and their children's improvements in this system. By the help of various activities conducted in the school, parents had chance to see different interests or capabilities that they didn't know before.

One parent said;

Portfolio is an in-depth investigation of our child's whole characteristics. In addition, we get ideas how to support our children's development in the most effective way.

Parents also stated that they became more objective about their children. Because they became aware of their children's individual needs and differences. They said that their children may have some attitudes to be supported. Everything is not perfect in their children's life. Parents see these things in the portfolio obviously. Responses to the questionnaires revealed that parents believed portfolios to be beneficial to assessment practices in early grades. One of the parents said;

I appreciate the amount of information we received from reviewing the portfolios. I think that portfolio gives individual information and it is informative on weak areas of our children that is very objective approach for us.

In addition, parents reported that they started to see early childhood education as very professional and important area.

Moreover, parents were also asked to explain portfolio with their own point of view. The purpose of that question was to determine the perceptions of parents about portfolio assessment before, during and after the study.

Almost all parents, referred portfolio was a beneficial system that presents children's characteristics about their capabilities in a concrete way. One of the parents stated; "portfolio assessment is a program that tries to find capabilities, attitudes and interests of children".

In addition to the points mentioned above it was reported by the parents that portfolio was a kind of evidence to get detailed information about their children's whole development. One parent stated; "As I understood from the applications during the year, portfolio is a system that determines the overall development and progress of our children".

When parents were asked about what kind of assessment system portfolio was. They explained portfolio as a detailed assessment system for their children. Parents said that they could find the chance to get detail information about individual characteristics and developmental levels. One of the parents told;

I didn't have enough information about my child's developmental characteristics. By the help of documents in the portfolio, I gained much information about my child's age properties.

Moreover, most of the parents reported that portfolio was concrete evidence that their children's development is an ongoing period. They also said that they could see how rapidly their children develop in early childhood period.

When parents were asked about how portfolio assessment affects parents-school interaction, they reported that portfolio made the communications stronger between school, child and parents. That is, portfolio assessment supported the family involvement in the school. In addition; parents reported that portfolio was a system that contains both audio-visual data about children. One parent told; "Various types of documents in the portfolio makes it a multi-dimensional assessment model"

Lastly, parents reported that portfolio was a practical and easy system that seemed as a part of daily activities. One of the parents said;

When I first heard about portfolio in school meeting, I found it to be a confusing system however when my child's portfolio was introduced to me, I thought that it is a part of early childhood education progress.

*Research Question 4: What do children understand about portfolio assessment and how they perceive portfolio assessment in their education and development?*

In order to determine what children understand about portfolio assessment and their perceptions about portfolio assessment in their education and development, 6 year-old children were asked three questions including what portfolio is, its content and function. The questions were asked by the 6 year-olds' classroom teachers. The teacher made these interviews with each child one by one. The answers of these interviews and classroom observations were used to draw conclusions for this research question.

Firstly, the children were asked about what a portfolio is. Children described portfolio as their file and most of them showed their own portfolios when the teacher first asked its meaning. Some of the children described portfolio as activity storage. One of the children said: "It is my file on that shelf". Another one said "That file! I put my pictures in it". One told "I put my activities inside the file. I wrote my name and the date". Based on the observational data during study, it was observed that all children used



their portfolios in order to put their activities. Based on the observational data of the researcher, it was observed that children wrote their names, and the date on their activities, and they always asked the teacher to put them into their portfolios. Teacher used to ask some questions and took notes on the activities according to the descriptions or explanations of children about the activity. As a result, portfolios were used by children and teacher actively during whole semester.

In another question children were asked that what can be put into portfolio. Children stated that, hands-on activities, pictures, math and science activities, English activity papers, photographs and pictures that their friends did for themselves can be put into portfolios. Moreover, children told that they brought activities and photographs from their home in order to put into portfolios. One of the children said; "I brought photographs from my house and put them into my file. I showed them to my teacher and my friends. After that, I put them into my file". Another child said, "We put our activities by writing our names and date on it". In addition, one of the children said," I bring my activity to my teacher, I explained why I did this picture and she wrote them on my paper and I put it into my portfolio".

Lastly, children were asked about the function of portfolio. Children reported that they used their portfolios to put the activities that they liked most. They explained that, if they put all the activities in that file, there wouldn't be any space for the following days. For this reason children told that they chose some of their activities that they really wanted to put into their portfolios. One of the children said; "When I draw a picture about cars, I put them into my portfolio because I will buy a car and join into the car races". Moreover another child told; "I draw some pictures for my best friends as a present and they put them into their files". Another child said; "I

brought a photo of me with spider man costume from our home and put it into my file”.

In addition, children stated that their portfolios were introduced to their parents and they also explained some of the activities to their parents . A child said “I chose a picture that I draw my dog and my mother. My mother came to the school and I showed this picture and explained it to her”. Moreover some children stated that they would bring their files when school finished and they will show it to other friends who are out of school.

According to the data gathered from observations, children were shown all their activities and they were wanted to choose a few of them to introduce when their parents came to the portfolio presentation. Children chose a few activities from their portfolios, and explained them to their parents after presentations of their teachers. Observations showed that all 6 year-old children explained and described their activities to their parents on a table. Parents asked some questions about details of drawings and children answered those questions.

Table 6. Answers of Children

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS OF CHILDREN
What is portfolio?	“It is my file on that shelf”. “That file! I put my pictures in it”. “I put my activities inside the file. I wrote my name and the date”. “It is my activity file.”

Table 6. (Continued)

<p>What does a portfolio include?</p>	<p>"I brought photographs from my house and put them into my file. I showed them to my teacher and my friends. After that, I put them into my file".</p> <p>"We put our activities by writing our names and date on it".</p> <p>" I bring my activity to my teacher, I explained why I did this picture and she wrote them on my paper and I put it into my portfolio".</p>
<p>What is the function of portfolio?</p>	<p>"When I draw a picture about cars, I put them into my portfolio because I will buy a car and join into the car races".</p> <p>"I draw some pictures for my best friends as a present and they put them into their files".</p> <p>"I brought a photo of me with spider man costume from our home and put it into my file".</p>

*Research Question 5:* What are the effects of portfolio assessment on school education system?

In order to determine how school system was affected from portfolio assessment, interviews with the principle and the educational coordinator of the school were conducted.

The principle and the educational coordinator were asked about the effects of portfolio assessment for their school education system.

According to the answers; they divided those effects in four parts: the effects on teachers, children, parents and the school system. According to the principle of the school, teachers self confidence increased, and their attitudes toward teaching became positive. Teachers started to improve themselves by

making several searches about assessing young children, portfolio system and their age-groups' developmental characteristics in detail. Their attitudes about using portfolio assessment made them feel themselves professional. In addition, some problems between teachers and teachers with themselves decreased. Those problems were generally related with lack of communication between teachers. However by the help of this system teachers started to share their experiences, their documents with each other. In the meetings about portfolio, they supported or gave some ideas to other teachers. And there was a peaceful environment in the school between the teachers.

Considering the effects of portfolio assessment on children, the principle of the school and the educational coordinator stated that children became active participants of their developmental progress. They saw the interaction between home and school, they had chance to observe how their parents involved in their portfolio assessment process by bringing documents from their home. In addition, all children had equal chance to see their progress by audio-visual documents which was a very effective data for children to improve their self-awareness. In addition, their self-esteem also increased because all children made contributions into their portfolio documents and they chose their documents by themselves. This feeling was very helpful for their self-confidence. In addition to those points, the principle of the school reported that, children had chance to see how they improved and developed in all areas. They could see the differences between the beginning , during and at the end of the semester on themselves.

The principle of the school continued with the effects of portfolio system on parents. She said that portfolio assessment was very helpful to build effective and positive relationships with the parents. She said;

Their points of view changed dramatically towards early childhood education and preschool. While they were asking just about daily routines of their children, their questions changed over time. They started to ask questions about development, assessment and educational program.

According to the educational coordinator of the school, parents appreciated this system after the portfolio presentations. According to her, most of the parents investigate their children's needs, interests and attitudes during those portfolio meetings. She said; "All the parents could find the chance to see each detail in each developmental area about their children".

Moreover, the principle and the educational coordinator of the school stated about the benefits and effects of Portfolio system for their school. They reported that, there was a strong relationship between educational program and documenting portfolios. Because assessment was the most important part of early childhood education, the school gave much more importance to the assessment than the years before. Teachers were informed about the activities or applications in detail. They were directed how those applications could be assessed.

In addition, the coordinator of the school stated that they started to develop individualized educational programs. By the help of portfolios, they could see each child individually, and their individual needs and differences could be discovered. Some activities and applications were re-organized according to those differences.

Moreover, the educational system started to renew itself because it was seen that children develop rapidly, their needs changed in each age group. For this reason, more careful selections of activities occurred.

Lastly, the school principle said that, they became conscious that Early childhood education had many sub-titles to be learned and applied. The

applications and changes never stopped in this period. For this reason the school would always be open to new ideas.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to analyze the implementation of portfolio assessment to discover its effectiveness in early childhood education and to understand the reflections of children, parents and teachers about portfolio assessment. The study was guided by five research questions and findings were obtained from children, parents, teachers and principals of the school. Discussion of the findings of this study includes a review of data from teachers, parents and children in respect to literature and conclusions drawn. Conclusions drawn from teachers, children, and parents will be discussed one by one. In addition, how the study affected early childhood education system of the school will also be discussed in this chapter.

#### *Portfolio as an effective assessment*

How portfolio assessment affected preschool teachers was the first question asked by the researcher in the study. According to the findings of the study, preschool teachers found portfolio assessment very effective for both their profession and children. In addition, teachers found portfolio assessment as a comprehensive and detailed system. According to Tierney et al. (1991), portfolios contain several features which make their use beneficial to students and educators alike. Moreover, teachers also reported that portfolio assessment affected their point of views about teaching. They felt themselves more self-confident. It can be said that portfolio is a visible and accessible volume of work and this concrete data gave teachers to be more objective and realistic approach about all children. This study also gave the teachers to

have a chance about seeing the whole process of children and while they were implementing portfolio assessment, teachers also learned many things with children. Brandt (1987) agrees that portfolios become a database to see what has been done and what has been learned. Portfolios are a trustworthy approach to assessment which leads to more and better learning by both students and teachers (Cambourne & Turbill, 1990).

In addition to the points mentioned above, teachers also had chance the developmental characteristics and individual differences of children by implementing portfolio assessment. Teachers became empowered to select and create measures of students' talents and weaknesses so that instructional opportunities could be provided. All of the information gathered allows teachers to make a more accurate diagnosis of students' abilities (Costa, 1991; Perrone, 1992; Valencia & Paris, 1991). Moreover, this study showed that preschool teachers had an agreement about assessing of young children should be flexible, open to creativity, and it should be multi-dimensional. In addition teachers agreed that process of children is more important than their products. Heald and Taylor (1989) stated that portfolio used as an assessment tool show educators that process knowledge is as important as skill knowledge. Teachers agree that assessment should be authentic, continuous, multidimensional, and collaborative. portfolio assessment meets these requirements (Jonhs & Van-Leirsburg, 1990).

#### *Portfolio as systematic assessment*

According to the results of the study, teachers gained the information about different types of assessment techniques like various types of observational methods. To gather various types of data about children, teachers used these observational techniques. Moreover, teachers also used various types of educational practices because they believed that portfolio



needed variety types of data. The diversity of educational practices results in a diversity of learners requiring a diversity of assessment techniques (Ponder & Holmes, 1992). Portfolio assessment gave this chance to the teachers and teachers could gain more divergent perspectives about teaching and assessment of young children.

#### *Difficulties of portfolio assessment*

Based on the answers of teachers, it can be said that there are some concerns about the implementation of portfolio assessment. Teachers reported that time management, documenting systematically and involving parents and children might be difficult through the semester. In order to minimize these difficulties, teacher's concerns and questions were corroborated with previous studies and findings of these studies about portfolio implementation (Adams, 1998; Benson, 1995; De Fina, 1992; Glazer & Brown, 1993; Herbert, 1998).

#### *Portfolio from children's world*

When it is examined how children perceive portfolio assessment after this study, it can be said that children's responsibility and self awareness characteristics were supported. This study allowed students to see what they are capable of doing. Moreover, children showed high responsibility while putting their activities in their portfolios. They wrote their names, and the date. They always showed their activities to the teachers before putting them into portfolios. Those behaviors showed that children showed responsibility during portfolio assessment process.

#### *Portfolio and children's self-awareness*

In addition to the points mentioned above, children had chance to see that their performance is important and whatever they did could be a data

for their portfolios. For this reason, children's classroom performance and participation in activities increased. Perrone (1992) stated that assessment by portfolio is closer to student learning than using scores from standardized tests. The data obtained are directly related to performance and understanding, making it more authentic (Perrone, 1992). In addition, children became aware of their interests, attitudes and progress in their classroom by looking at their portfolios. They had chance to see their individual differences by the help of concrete data. In addition, children saw that they formed their own portfolios and they were active participants of their developmental process. Tierney et al (1991) and Worthen (1993) say that portfolios must grow from student's work, interests, projects, and activities pursued by the student or by the class. Portfolio assessment helped this opinion to occur during the whole semester or year.

#### *Portfolio and children's self-expression*

Portfolio assessment also helped children to improve their self-expression. During the portfolio meetings they introduced their activities to the parents and they used their language abilities and self-expression skills. This application was very effective for introverted children as well as extraverted ones. Because some children may not express him/her in a group but when they were alone with their teachers and parents, children felt themselves more confident about the usage of language and self-expression skills.

Another important side of this study for children is that children improved a sense of what assessment was. They had chance to see their activities, participation in the educational process, home activities etc were all valuable information for teachers, parents and the school system. Children brought activities and pictures from their home, their works were

seen as a data for their portfolios. These applications supported children's feeling that they are valuable individuals.

Lastly, children developed a perception about what portfolio was, the content and the function of portfolio. All of them described portfolio as a file that contains variety of activities.

#### *Portfolio as an informative system*

When it was looked at about how parents perceived portfolio assessment, it can be said that parents discovered the usefulness of portfolios when work samples are shared with them. Cooper & Brown (1992) seeing work in progress along with completed tasks while talking with teachers improves home/ school communication. Parents are able to see the child's academic development and progress. In addition, parents were informed about early childhood education process of the school and they were seen active participants of this process.

The contents of portfolios were used as a tool for gaining a more powerful understanding of the achievement, knowledge, and attitude of students for their parents. And parents reached the understanding of those characteristics of their children. Moreover, parent's perception about early childhood education became as a professional area. They could see that many techniques and approaches were used in the area of early childhood education.

#### *Portfolio as a bridge between home and school*

In addition to the points mentioned above, the relationship between home and school became closer and more positive. Parents informed what was going on at home to the teachers, and teachers informed concrete data about what was going on at school. So that parents had more clear idea about educational and developmental progress of their children.

Lastly, parents found portfolio assessment as a powerful and effective method for assessing children. They could find the chance to see individual and universal characteristics of their children in an objective and concrete way.

#### *Portfolio and educational system*

Portfolio assessment also affected school educational and assessment system. Based on the interviews with the principles of the school, it can be said that school educational system improved by the help of this system. Assessment system of the school became multi-dimensional and broader. Tierney, Carter and Desai (1991) write that assessment of young children should consist of broad-based measures employed over time in different settings and different situations.

Based on the results of this study, school educational system also renewed itself because portfolio assessment is flexible, multi-dimensional, opens to creativity and it needs various types of data about all developmental areas. Effective assessment demands that different methods to be used to evaluate academic achievement and skill development of young children. Portfolios are the result of an educational approach that utilizes multiple indicators and multiple sources to obtain information about students and their development as learners (Murphy,1994). Portfolios represent a philosophy that demands that assessment be an integral component of instruction. Portfolios possess an interactive nature in that teachers and students interact with each other.

#### *Portfolio as an ongoing process*

In addition to the points mentioned above, instructional techniques of the teachers varied and school management supported this by providing some in service training for teachers. Teachers should integrate the creation

of portfolios with instruction and curriculum as they occur in individual classrooms. Creating a portfolio must in itself be a learning experience (Camp, 1990). Portfolios are an important component of the educational program (Farr, 1990). The portfolio process is a powerful educational experience.

The school assessment system became more professional and individual differences , divergence of children were accepted in more objective way. The intersection of assessment and instruction is as varied as the students (Paulson et al, 1991). Assessment must become more personalized, thus making traditional reporting systems no longer functional (Measselle & Egol, 1990).

Portfolios are part of an educational movement toward authentic instruction and assessment. They incorporate several different assessment strategies from informal teacher observation to formal testing (Lamme & Hysmith, 1991). Valencia and Paris (1991) state that using portfolios involves authentic activities embedded in curriculum interwoven with instruction. They include evidence from a variety of multidimensional tasks.

The school system improved the relationships with the parents by conducting meetings for portfolio introduction. In addition, the motivation of teachers was supported by the school management in order to apply this system in the most effective way.

Lastly, educational system of the school was revised and they established a connection between learning activities and assessment.

Based on the findings of this study, the usage of portfolio assessment in early childhood education has a positive impact on preschool teachers, children and their parents. In addition, portfolio assessment is also beneficial for school educational system. It can be said that portfolio assessment

supports individual conferencing with children and parents, awareness of developmental characteristics and individual differences of children, involvement of parents in early childhood education, self confident and self-expression skills of children. In addition, portfolio assessment supports school educational system with respect to integration of assessment and educational programs. This leads to develop individualized programming and developmentally appropriate approach in early childhood education process.

#### *Recommendations for Further Research*

This study provided an opportunity to investigate the effects and benefits of a developmentally appropriate and authentic assessment system which is portfolio assessment, in an early childhood education setting. Multi-dimensional approach with variety types of data collection techniques made the study to reach some effective solutions. Especially this system can be seen as a new approach for Turkey in the area of Early childhood education. Studies in other countries and this study supported that portfolio assessment is a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate system. Additional studies may help to improve the usage of portfolio assessment and they might let to implement it in more preschool settings. The techniques, data collection methods, observation of young children, the concept of authentic assessment and developmentally appropriate practice could be understood clearly. The following recommendations might be considered for further researches about portfolio assessment in Early childhood education.

- 1) In-service teacher training programs about portfolio assessment could be applied and the process of this program might be examined. Teacher's reflections, participations, opinions and background information about assessment of young children can be searched in a study.

2) A portfolio assessment can be applied and parental involvement, their reflections and perceptions can be studied in an in depth investigation. With a larger sample size, this study can be improved.

3) An experimental study could be applied in two different groups and the effects of traditional assessment system and portfolio assessment can be compared with respect to their authenticity, and developmentally appropriateness.

4) The effects of portfolio assessment usage for ages under three could be studied. Because of the rapid growing characteristics of these young ages, the data collected about those children could be seen more obviously. Participation of children in their portfolios might occur with the cooperation with the parents and teachers' collection of data. By the help of this study, it might be seen whether portfolio assessment could be used in very early ages or not.

5) The impacts of portfolio assessment on preschool age children, on their teachers and parents can be studied with a large group in more than one preschool setting and the differences can be searched.

6) In another study, whether teacher's educational background affects portfolio assessment implementation or not can be searched.

7) portfolio assessment can be applied for children with special needs. In order to make in depth investigation about those children's characteristics, and needs portfolio can be used and its effects might be examined.

8) Lastly, portfolio assessment might be used for early intervention. Whether it is a useful method for early intervention or not could be studied by the researchers.

### *Summary*

Portfolio assessment provides many advantages for preschool teachers, children, and their parents and for educational system of the school. It is obvious that traditional assessment methods like standardized testing are not appropriate for young children. Assessing young children needs flexibility. Portfolio assessment considers children's individual differences, age and developmental characteristics, and it consider process rather than product. In order to follow whole process of a child in an early childhood education program, portfolio is one of the most comprehensive and effective methods. In conclusion, portfolio assessment offers preschool teachers, children and parents the opportunity for understanding and following student progress. In this progress, children, teachers and parents are always seen as active participants of assessment. For this reason, portfolio assessment gives concrete data about children's whole developmental and individual characteristics.

### *Reflections Of The Researcher*

This study aimed to determine the effects of portfolio assessment on preschool teachers, preschool children and their parents.

Before this research, I studied with the same teachers about observing young children. This study motivated me to work with those teachers about assessing young children. Based on my prior researches about assessment in early childhood education, portfolio assessment attracted my attention and I started to search about it in depth. Because we studied about observing young children before, teachers could gain basic information about assessment. For this reason, I decided to conduct my study with the same teachers in the same school.



Throughout the study, I gained several experiences as a researcher. While conducting my research, I could find the chance to study with teachers, children, parents and the principle of the school. This was multi-dimensional and comprehensive study about portfolio assessment in early childhood education.

During the study, it was very effective to follow the reflections of teachers, parents and children closely. Teachers' feedbacks were positive, and they were very enthusiastic about this application. All of them said they started to feel themselves as more professional teachers. Moreover, parents' reflections were affected me a lot. While presenting their children's portfolios, some of them became very emotional, and they said that they could investigate their children's attitudes, abilities and interests that they weren't aware of before.

It was an effective experience for me to see children's awareness about their assessment process. Children started to understand that they were active participants of their assessment. Whatever they did was precious and their teachers gave importance in their performance. This feeling supported their self confidence and children gained some responsibilities. For example, all children wrote their names and the date on their activities, and they brought to their teachers in order to explain their drawings or activities and put them into their portfolios.

Moreover, the school educational system was affected from this study positively. Some justifications were done curriculum, and portfolio was included in the educational program of the school. It was very good to see that this school continued portfolio assessment after my study. This showed that portfolio assessment was a useful assessment technique in an early childhood education setting.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### ÖĞRETMEN ANKET FORMU

- 1-Kaç yaş grubuyla çalışıyorsunuz?
- 2- Kaç yıldır bu alanda çalışıyorsunuz?
- 3- Mezuniyetiniz ve eğitim geçmişiniz hakkında kısaca bilgi verir misiniz?
- 4- Portfolioyu kaç yıldır uyguluyorsunuz?
- 5- Portfolionun içeriğinde en çok bulundurduğunuz dökümanlar nelerdir?
- 6- Portfolio ile ilk tanıştığınızdaki düşünceleriniz nelerdi?
- 7- Çalışmanın sonunda portfolio hakkındaki düşünceleriniz nelerdir?
- 8- Portfolio sisteminin en beğendiğiniz yönlerini kısaca anlatın
- 9- Portfolio sisteminin negatif yönleri olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Nelerdir?
- 10- Sizce portfolionun çocuk açısından önemi /yararı nedir?
- 11- Portfolio sisteminin öğretmen açısından yararları nelerdir?
- 12- Sizce portfolionun aile açısından yararları nelerdir?

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

- 1- Which age group are you currently working with?
- 2- How long have you been working in this field?
- 3- Could you give brief information about your graduation and educational background?

- 4- How long have you applied Portfolio Assessment System?
- 5- Which documents are mostly included in a child's portfolio?
- 6- What were the first opinions when you first met the Portfolio Assessment System?
- 7- What are the opinions after you completed the study on portfolio?
- 8- Could you briefly explain the characteristics about Portfolio that you like most?
- 9- Do you think that there are negative aspects of Portfolio? If so, please explain
- 10- What are the benefits and importance of Portfolio Assessment for children?
- 11- What are the benefits of Portfolio Assessment System for teachers?
- 12- What are the benefits of Portfolio Assessment System for parents?

## APPENDIX B

### AİLELER İÇİN ANKET SORULARI

- 1- Portfolio sistemini tanımak, bir veli olarak size ve çocuğunuza neler kazandırdı?
- 2- Portfolio sistemini kendi bakış açınızla kısaca anlatır mısınız?

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

- 1- What have you and your child gained from Portfolio Assessment System in your opinion?
- 2- Could you briefly describe Portfolio Assessment System in your own point of view?

## APPENDIX C

### ÇOCUKLAR İÇİN ANKET SORULARI

- 1- Portfolio nedir?
- 2- Portfolionun içeriğinde neler bulundurabiliriz?
- 3- Portfolio ne işe yarar?

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN

- 1- What is Portfolio?
- 2- What can be included in a Portfolio?
- 3- What is the usage/ function of a portfolio?

## APPENDIX D

### OKUL MÜDÜRÜ VE EĞİTİM KOORDİNATORÜ İLE YAPILAN RÖPORTAJ SORULARI

- 1- Portfolio sisteminin öğretmen, çocuk ve aile açısından yararları sizce nadir?
- 2- Portfolio sisteminin, okulunuzun eğitim sistemine katkıları neler oldu?

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH THE MANAGER AND EDUCATIONAL COORDINATOR OF THE SCHOOL

- 1- What do you think about the benefits of Portfolio Assessment System for children, parents and teachers?
- 2- What has your educational system gained from Portfolio Assessment System?

## APPENDIX E

### GETTING STARTED PORTFOLIO DESIGN WORKSHEET

- 1- What are your objectives for assessment?
- 2- Which type(s) of portfolio best meets the above objectives?
- 3- Will the portfolio be organized by developmental areas or content areas?
- 4- Who will make contributions to this portfolio?
- 5- What type of container will be used for storage?
- 6- What methods will be used for:  
Balancing?  
Dating?  
Annotating?
- 7- How often will data be collected?
- 8- Other notes