

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS' BELIEFS TOWARDS PARTICIPATION
RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

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TUNA COŞKUN

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha ALTUNIŐIK
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science/Arts / Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof. Dr. Ceren  ZTEKİN
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science/Arts/Doctor of Philosophy.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Feyza
TANTEKİN ERDEN
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. YaŐar KONDAKÇI (METU, EDS) _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN (METU, ECE) _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Volkan ŐAHİN (METU, ECE) _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: TUNA COŞKUN

Signature :

ABSTRACT

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS' BELIEFS TOWARDS PARTICIPATION RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Coşkun, Tuna

M.S., Department of Early Childhood Education

Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN

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The aim of this study to explore the beliefs of ECTs concerning children participation rights as stated in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The data was collected between July and December in 2014 from 320 ECT in public and private kindergartens in Ankara. Early Childhood Teachers Children Participation Rights Belief Scale (ECTCPRBS) was constructed as a measuring tool and implemented to early childhood teachers in kindergartens. ECTs have neutral beliefs towards children's participation in decision-making process which affect children. Lastly, independent sample t-test results revealed that there is no difference between ECTs who are aware of UNCRC and not aware of UNCRC and there is no difference between ECTs who have attended any training program in pre-service related to UNCRC and have not attended. Additionally, there is a significant difference between ECTs who have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC and have not attended any of them yet, and there is a significant difference between ECTs who have read UNCRC and have not read yet.

Keywords: Children Participation Rights, UNCRC, Early Childhood Teachers, Beliefs

ÖZ

OKUL ÖNCESİ ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKLARINA İLİŞKİN İNANÇLARI

Coşkun, Tuna

Yüksek Lisans, Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi : Doç. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN

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Bu çalışmanın amacı Birleşmiş Milletler Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesinde (BMÇHS) yer alan çocukların katılım haklarına ilişkin, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin inançlarını belirlemektir.

Bu çalışma için veriler, 2014 yılı Temmuz-Aralık ayları döneminde, Ankara ilinde devlet ve özel anaokullarında çalışmakta olan 320 okul öncesi öğretmeninden toplanmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak, Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Haklarına İlişkin İnançları Ölçeği kullanılmıştır.

Betimsel istatistik sonuçlarına göre, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin, çocukların kendilerini ilgilendiren her konuda kararlara katılması yönünde görüşlerinin ne olumlu ne de olumsuz olduğu görülmüştür. Bağımsız örneklemeler t-testi sonuçlarında, BMÇHS'den haberdar olma durumu ile öğretmenlik yaşamına başlamadan önce BMÇHS'ye ilişkin herhangi bir eğitim almanın öğretmenlerin inançlarında anlamlı bir fark yaratmadığı, ayrıca, BMÇHS'yi okuma durumu ile, meslek hayatı döneminde BMÇHS'ye ilişkin katılan kurs, seminer, atölye vb. çalışmaların öğretmenlerin inançlarında pozitif yönde etkili olduğu bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocukların Katılım Hakkı, Birleşmiş Milletler Çocuk Hakları

Sözleşmesi, Okul Öncesi Öğretmenleri, İnançlar

"Hope" is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all.
Emily Dickinson, Maggio, 1996, p. 320

To whom dedicated their lives for the idea of democratic and free society.

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"When you get in a tight place and everything goes against you till it seems as though you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the time and the place the tide will turn."

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Maggio*, 1996, p. 514

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	v
DEDICATION	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvii

CHAPTERS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	The Significance and Purpose of the Study	6
1.2	Research Questions	9
1.3	Definition of Key Terms	10
2	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	12
2.1	General History of Children and Childhood	12
2.2	The Connection between Childhood and Education	16
2.3	The Concepts of Law and Rights	19

2.4	The History of Children Rights	19
2.4.1	Children’s Participation Rights	21
2.4.2	The Characteristics of the Right to Participation . .	23
2.4.3	Related Studies of Children’s Participation Rights .	26
2.5	Children’s Rights-Related Education	31
2.6	The Role of Early Childhood Education in Realizing Chil- dren’s Rights	34
2.7	Role of Early Childhood Teachers and the Importance of Their Beliefs in Realizing Children’s Participation Rights . .	36
2.8	Research on Children’s Rights in Turkey	39
2.9	State of Children’s Right to Participation in Pre-School Ed- ucation Program for Children Aged 36- 72 Months	42
2.10	Research on Children Rights in the International Context . .	43
2.11	Theoretical Background to the Study	46
3	METHODOLOGY	48
3.1	Research Design	48
3.2	Sampling Procedure	48
3.2.1	Characteristics of the Sample Participated in the Pilot Study	49
3.2.2	Characteristics of the Sample of the Main Study . .	50
3.3	Instrumentation	52
3.3.1	Scale Developmental Process of ECTCPRB	52
3.3.2	Validity Analysis of ECTCPR	55
3.3.2.1	Content-Related Validity Evidence . .	55
3.3.2.2	Construct related Validity Evidence . .	55
3.3.3	Reliability Analysis of ECTCPRBS	56
3.4	Data Collection Procedure	56

3.5	Data Analysis Procedure	57
3.6	Internal and External Validity	57
3.6.1	Internal Validity	57
3.6.2	External Validity	58
3.7	Ethical Issues	59
3.8	Assumptions of the Study	59
3.9	Limitations of the Study	59
4	RESULTS	61
4.1	Validity and Reliability For the Data Collection Instruments .	61
4.1.1	Exploratory Factor Analysis Results	61
4.1.1.1	Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of ECTCPRS	62
4.1.2	Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results	64
4.1.2.1	Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of ECTCPRB Scale	66
4.2	Descriptive Analysis of ECTCPRB Scale	69
4.2.1	Beliefs of Early Childhood Education Teachers' Towards Children Participation Rights As Stated in UNCRC.	69
4.2.1.1	Beliefs Regarding Expressing Views .	69
4.2.1.2	Beliefs Regarding Participation in Decision- making Process Which Affect Children	70
4.3	Differences in Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs by Lev- els of Awareness of the UNCRC, Reading of the UNCRC, Attendance of in-Service Training Program(Courses, work- shops, Seminars or Conferences and Attendance of Pre-service Training Programs	73
4.3.1	Assumptions for the Independent Samples t-test for the Status of Being Aware of UNCRC	73

4.3.2	Status of Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children Participation Rights by Levels of Awareness of the UNCRC	75
4.3.3	Assumptions for the Independent Samples T-Test for Status of Having Read UNCRC	76
4.3.4	Status of Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children Participation Rights by Reading of the UNCRC	78
4.3.5	Assumptions for the Independent Samples T-Test for Status of Having Attended any In-service Training (Courses, Workshops, Seminars, or Conferences) Related to UNCRC	79
4.3.6	Status of Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children Participation Rights by Attendance of any In-service Training Program (Courses, Workshops, Seminars or Conferences)	81
4.3.7	Assumptions for the Independent Samples T-Test for Status of Having Attended any Pre-service Training Related to UNCRC	83
4.3.8	Status of Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs towards Children Participation Rights by Attendance of any Pre-service Training Program	85
4.3.9	Open-ended Questions	86
4.4	Summary of the Findings of the Study	86
5	DISCUSSION	89
5.1	Validity and Reliability of the Data Collection Instrument	89
5.1.1	Discussion of Evidence for the ECTCPRB Scale's Validity and Reliability	89
5.1.2	Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights	91
5.1.3	Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Levels of Awareness of the UNCRC	93

5.1.4	Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Reading of the UNCRC . . .	94
5.1.5	Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Attendance of In-Service Training Programs (Courses, Workshops, Seminars, or Conferences)	94
5.1.6	Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Attendance of Pre-Service Training Programs	95
5.2	Educational Implications for Children's Participation Rights in Early Childhood Education	97
5.3	Recommendations for Further Research Studies	98

APPENDICES

A	PILOT VERSION OF ECTCPRBS	124
B	FINAL VERSION OF ECTCPRBS	127
C	TURKISH SUMMARY	130
D	ETHICAL PERMISSIONS	143
E	TEZ FOTOKOPISI İZİN FORMU	145

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

Table 3.1	Presentation of Schools That The Data is Collected	49
Table 3.2	Teachers' educational level in Pilot Study	50
Table 3.3	Teachers' educational level and age groups that they are engaging with	51
Table 3.4	Descriptive Statistics Including Teachers' Status of Being aware of UNCRC	51
Table 3.5	Descriptive Statistics Including Teachers' Status of Reading UNCRC	51
Table 3.6	Teachers' State of Attending Any In-service Training Programs, Seminar, Workshop or Conferences	52
Table 4.1	Exploratory Factor Analysis Results about Initial Eigenvalues of ECTCPRS	62
Table 4.2	Factor matrix of ECTCPR Scale	65
Table 4.3	Items According to Dimension of of ECTCPR Scale	65
Table 4.4	Reliability Analysis for Each Dimension of ECTCPRB Scale	66
Table 4.5	Missing Value Analysis	67
Table 4.6	Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Items in the First Dimension of ECTCPRBS	71
Table 4.7	Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Items in the Second Dimension of ECTCPRBS	72
Table 4.8	Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Status of Being Aware Of UNCRC or not	74
Table 4.9	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances Results	75

Table 4.10 Independent Samples t-test Results for status of being aware of UN-CRC or not in ECTCPRBS	76
Table 4.11 Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Status of Reading UNCRC or not	77
Table 4.12 Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances Results	78
Table 4.13 Independent Samples t-test Results for status of having read UN-CRC or not in ECTCPRBS	79
Table 4.14 Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Attending any Seminar, Workshop or Conferences Related to UN-CRC or not	80
Table 4.15 Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances Results	81
Table 4.16 Independent Samplet-test Results Status of Attending any Course, Seminar, Workshop or Conferences in In-service Related to UNCRC or not in ECTCPRBS	82
Table 4.17 Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Status of Attending any Training Programme in Pre-service Related to UNCRC or not	84
Table 4.18 Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances Results	84
Table 4.19 Independent Samples t-test Results Status of Attending any Training Programme in Pre- service Related to UNCRC or not in ECTCPRBS	85

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

Figure 4.1	Scree plot for ECTCPRBS	63
Figure 4.2	Hypothesized Model and Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of ECTCPRBS	68

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BTS	Bartlett's test of sphericity
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CRIN	Child Rights International Network
DAP	Developmentally Appropriate Practice
Df	Degree of freedom
ECTCPRBS	Early Childhood Teachers's Children Participation Rights Belief Scale
ERG	Eđitim Reformu Giriřimi
f	Frequency
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
ICESCR	United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OHCHR	The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
M	Mean
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
N	Sample size
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NC	Normed Chi-Square
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NFI	Normed Fit Index
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SD	Standard Deviation
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund

OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
WFFC	The World Fit for Children
WPAY	The World Program of Action for Youth

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on children's rights and it has thus become an issue of debate among policy makers, parents and educators (Didilica, 2011). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was opened for signature in 1989 and is currently ratified by 195 states, except Somalia and the United States. Making it the most widely ratified UN convention to date. Each state (some with stated reservations or interpretations) that is party to the UNCRC has agreed to guarantee all rights contained within the Convention and so has an obligation under Article 12 to involve children in decisions that affect them (Welty & Lundy, 2013).

Children's rights can be defined as the fundamental entitlements of every child that are protected by law to ensure healthy and normal development in terms of physical, mental, emotional, social and moral values in a broad sense. Children's rights have been considered a domain that draws the interest of lawmakers throughout history because all developmental measures affecting children are regulated by law (Akyüz, 2000).

The UNCRC is the most significant document that explicitly emphasizes and expresses the importance of children's rights. The Convention regulates children's rights in 54 articles, with the articles assigning responsibility to competent adults to favor children's improvement of their skills according to their own free will. The UNCRC is a legal document that holistically regulates all children's rights and guarantees all relevant human rights to children in general. In the context of children's participation rights, Articles 12 and 13 of the Convention regulate children's rights to participation in matters that affect them and to free expression. Article 12 of the Convention concerns children's participation rights and states: The outline of this study is summarized as the following:

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child,

the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989).

Article 13 of the Convention also provides children with the right to express themselves in different forms:

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
 - (b) For the protection of national security or of public order or of public health or morals" (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989).

Despite the popularity of the UNCRC, certain conflicts have arisen due to the belief that children lack the necessary reasoning, logic and skills to decide on important matters by themselves (Johnny, 2005). One of the main reasons to avoid awarding participation rights to children is the idea that the children might be disrespectful to their parents and that the responsibly may result in children becoming estranged from childhood. The UN Children's Rights Committee has suggested that state parties include articles concerning children's rights to participate effectively in their family, school and social lives and to provide them with a voice in relevant concerns in their national legislation (Hodgkin & Newell, 2002).

The participation of children in decisions that concern them allows the children to gain self-respect as well as new cognitive and applied skills. Different views and

experiences are shared between children of different ages and environments in order to make the world a better place. However, it is important that children accurately perceive the concept of participation, its significance, its justifications and their own roles throughout the process of exercising such participation rights. Children should be able to participate in all decisions and initiatives that concern them from a young age. Additionally, participation should be voluntary and children should be allowed to express different views and to change their minds as they participate in every step (Hodgkin & Newell, 2002)

The UNCRC suggests that the appropriate environments for facilitating children's participation rights are the family and the school. Schools have a specific role in this sense since they also serve as the environment in which young children learn democratic values. School should represent an environment where students learn about the culture of democracy and also experience it for themselves.

Participation is a process that encourages children to strengthen and increase their cognitive capacity in order to be involved in decisions that affect them. Participation also includes the freedom of expression and other basic civil rights (Erbay, 2013). Shier (2001) suggests that there are five levels of participation:

1. Children should be listened to.
2. Children should be supported in expressing their views.
3. Children's views should be taken into account.
4. Children should be involved in decision-making processes.
5. Children should share power and responsibility in decision-making processes.

With the help of participation rights, children will develop a sense of belonging and inclusion in addition to changing society in a democratic way (MacNaughton, Hughes & Smith 2007).

While participation constitutes the most general part of human rights, it does not only involve voting in elections but also means being effective in the decision-making process (Nayır & Karaman Kepenekçi, 2011). The right to participation is strongly associated with empowerment, which is a key human rights goal and principle (Sepulveda,

2013). Indeed, the degree of participation of individuals and the impact of participation on governance are both indicators of the degree of democratization of a society (Kılavuz, 2002). Democracy is today regarded as the ideal form of governance. Human rights and freedoms as well as pluralism, principles of law and participation form the basis of democracy.

In order to adequately consider principles of democracy in adulthood, it is important for individuals to learn the component of democracy from childhood. In fact, to ensure democracy in all the developmental areas of children, the family and the school are the most important agents to support children in terms of both specific children rights and more general human rights (Özyıldırım, 2007).

An ideal democracy should serve to protect and advance the pride and crucial privileges of individuals, to achieve social equity, to encourage the financial and social advancement of the group, to fortify the union of society and upgrade national serenity, and, in addition, to provide an atmosphere that is beneficial for worldwide peace (Inter Parliamentary Union, 1998).

In this context, it is crucial to implement perfect democracy in classrooms. Since the democratic participation of young children makes their inner world more meaningful, it is very important to let children experience decision-making processes (Danner & Joynniene, 2012). To make childhood experiences more valuable, there are ways for classrooms to promote children's participation rights. Here, early childhood teachers play one of the key roles in constructing child-centered classrooms that facilitate participation (Pianta et al, 2005).

In the early years of life, children get to know the world around them. In this period, parents are their first teachers and thus are the source of how children learn to speak, walk and feed themselves. After a couple of years, children require a more dynamic and active environment and to construct new relationships in their close environment. This is the point where early childhood education should start. It is in kindergarten where children start to share their experiences with others, with the help and guidance of early childhood professionals. Early childhood education provides children with an active learning environment as well as facilitating their exploration of new things and the wider social environment. As early childhood professionals, teachers in most

cases become the first source of information when it comes to sharing, learning new manners, constructing knowledge and adopting new perspectives (NAEYC, 2009).

Since children are seen as agents and also as members of cultures involving various influential activities, their experiences play a significant role from the beginning of their lives (Killen & Smenata, 2006). When we consider this context, after the family, schools are one of the most important institutions for socialization and cultural transmission. School is where children spend most of their time; therefore, schools are one of the institutions that need to be examined in terms of children's participation (Nayır & Kepenekçi, 2011). Starting in early childhood, we should create the necessary conditions to ensure that children have been informed about all issues affecting them and provided with an environment in which to freely express their views and ideas. This leads to the notion that teachers help to develop participatory citizens by making young children actively engage in activities concerning civic and community affairs, not only in kindergarten but also in their wider lives (Te One, 2011).

In order to integrate children's participation rights into early childhood education, early childhood teachers may have a key role. For example, Hess (1981) emphasized the important role of teachers' beliefs in influencing the behaviors of children, which may serve as cognitive mediators. Furthermore, in addition to Stipek et al.'s (1998) assertions about the influence of early childhood professionals on children's behavior, there is a significant correlation between practices in the classroom and the beliefs teachers have about appropriate practices for young children.

Since the drafting of the UNCRC, "child participation" has been the subject of an expanding group of activities, ranging from practice and conferences to significant projects. In recent years, the concept of "participation" has been widely accepted in an extensive variety of settings, including for children of all ages, in states throughout the world and in each possible social and financial circumstance. National and local governments, UN Agencies, universal and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), communities and schools have thus begun to investigate what is actually meant by participation, organization and strengthening (Landsdown, 2001).

However, there exists a significant contradiction between the theory of children rights and the actual practice of early childhood professionals. The educational practices of

early childhood teachers generally reflect how they prioritize discipline and obedience in the classroom instead of listening to children. The central problem of how to implement these rights in the educational arena hence became a divisive issue among early childhood professionals. Indeed, ideas of children rights often raise questions about democracy. Although there have been some initiatives taken by policy makers worldwide in terms of children's rights, several countries including Turkey still face severe difficulties with respect to the implementation of such rights. The majority of children in Turkey have not only been prevented from taking part in the activities that they want to do, but have also been directed to become involved in activities that they don't want to do (Değirmencioğlu, 2010).

In democratic kindergarten models, children are involved in decision-making processes such as determining social rules in the group and deciding on a program for the day (Danner & Jonyniene, 2012). In this way, children became a part of the society, which leads to children participating in all matters that affect their lives (Clark, 2005b).

As Kemp (2005) suggests, for children to be a part of a local community and at the same time responsible for a common world, they need to feel part of a community. Their interactions with other children in kindergarten are important in developing such feelings. The idea of supporting children in any area of development is thus a significant responsibility on the part of teachers and researchers. The role of teachers as agents is emphasized in the World Education Report and stress is placed on the importance of investment in teacher training programs since continued professional development is one of the major indicators of quality in early childhood education (UNESCO, 1998).

In this context, the beliefs of teachers working in preschools are crucial to the practical achievement children's right to participation and so this study will examine preschool teachers' beliefs about children's right to participation.

1.1 The Significance and Purpose of the Study

The obligation of adults to consider children's rights is well established. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the World Program of Action for Youth

to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY), the World Fit for Children (WFFC), the United Nations Millennium Declaration and other universal instruments and conventions all plainly state that children have the “right” to take part in public life (UNICEF, 1998). They further stipulate that families and groups, as well as national and international agencies, have an obligation to support this cooperation and to consider children’s perspectives when examining issues that influence their lives (UNICEF, 2000).

In addition to constructing a democratic society, young children’s experiences of democracy and related practices have a significant effect on their development (Pramling Samuelson & Kaga, 2008). When children participate in conversations and decision-making processes, there is a big contribution in terms of children’s development (Davis & Elliot, 2003).

The early childhood period is crucial for every child. The basis of intelligence, personality, and social behavior are formed during the early years of childhood. Many studies promote the idea that most habits are linked to experiences during the early years (UNICEF, 2013). Unfortunately, there are often barriers in place for children since children are “overcontrolled and underestimated” (Lansdown, 2005). In this situation, there is no opportunity for children to participate or to have the chance to attain the status of citizen in their society (Alderson, 1999 ; Smith, 2007). To overcome these difficulties, children should be encouraged to take part in and learn democratic ways of participating in decision-making processes and realizing the power of community since from an early age (Mackey, 2012).

As previously stated, favorable circumstances regarding the right to participation should be created in order to empower young individuals as much as possible in terms of participating in decision-making processes. It is important that children have the opportunity to recognize the issues that influence their lives and to decide on necessary regulations by themselves. This practice helps to build their self-confidence and makes them respectful of the rights of others (A Call for Action, 2000).

Recent studies indicate that children’s participation rights are one of the essential elements of a democratic society (Bennett & Race, 2008; Trent et al, 2010; Danner & Jonyniene, 2012). Some of the leading countries in this field, such as Canada, New Zealand and England, have specific children’s rights to education enshrined in their

kindergarten and teacher education programs (Howe & Covell 2005 ; Human Rights in Education, 2009; Hampshire Education Authority, 2003).

By virtue of being a signatory to the UNCRC, the Republic of Turkey acknowledges that every child has basic rights on an equal basis and undertakes to ensure that children's rights are as widely known by children as by adults. Article 90 of the Turkish Constitution states that in case of a conflict between the country's laws and international agreements, the provisions and principles of international agreements shall prevail (Batur Musaoğlu & Haktanır, 2006).

Evidence from studies conducted in Turkey underlines the importance of children's rights (Tuğrul & Şahin, 2011; Akyol, 2011; Doğan & Durualp, 2011; Uçuş, 2014). However the majority of these studies have involved primary and secondary school children. In reality, essential behaviors occur during the preschool years. Studies have demonstrated that young children who are encouraged and informed during this period have more developmental advantages and that early childhood is a significant period for brain, social-emotional and individual development (Atay, 2009). Therefore, training must begin in the early childhood period if a human rights culture is to be created in the general public.

Determining teachers' beliefs may emphasize how to affect children's beliefs about children's participation rights. These beliefs are also valuable in helping teachers to better understand themselves and their close environment (Taylor, 2003). As previously stated, due to the fact that there is a strong association between teachers' beliefs and their practices, the current study aims to investigate early childhood teachers' beliefs regarding children's right to participation, which is guaranteed by Article 12 of the UNCRC.

The current study is significant since it focuses on one of the crucial components of the UNCRC, namely the importance of children's right to participation no matter their age. Moreover, this study is valuable since it aims to examine the issue during the early childhood period. In Turkey, there is a lack of studies focusing on the right to participation of children during the early years; thus, this study is considered to make a significant contribution to underlining the significance of this right during this specific age period. Additionally, this study also produces data on how pre-service

and in-service training on children's participation rights affects teachers' current beliefs concerning children's right to participation. Thus, it will help to guide teacher training in terms of enriching the training with children's rights content. Finally, this study provides an essential resource for researchers who would like to conduct further studies on the same or similar topics.

1.2 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

- **Research Question 1:** What are the beliefs of early childhood teachers concerning children's participation rights?
- **Research Question 2:** Is there a significant difference in ECTCPRB Scale scores when compared according to early childhood teachers' awareness of the UNCRC, their reading of the Convention and their attendance of any training program during pre-service and any course, workshop, seminar or conferences related to UNCRC while in-service?

In light of the above research questions, the following hypotheses are offered:

- **Hypothesis 1:** There will be no statistically significant difference in ECTCPRB Scale scores when compared according to early childhood teachers' awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- **Hypothesis 2:** There will be no statistically significant difference in ECTCPR Scale scores whether early childhood teachers have read the Convention on the Rights of the Child or not.
- **Hypothesis 3:** There will be no statistically significant difference in ECTCPR Scale scores between early childhood teachers when compared according to whether or not they have attended any in-service any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC.
- **Hypothesis 4:** There will be no statistically significant difference in ECTCPR Scale scores between early childhood teachers when compared according to

whether or not they attended any pre-service training programs related to children rights.

1.3 Definition of Key Terms

Awareness of child's rights: It means the condition of right to participation as given in the UNCRC (1989) as well as provisions of Turkish Government on the rights of the child.

Belief: "It is an individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition. A judgment can only be inferred from a collective understanding of what human beings say, intend and do" (Pajares, 1992, p. 316). In this study, belief relates to early childhood teachers' judgment or agreement level concerning children's participation rights.

Children's rights: The basic human rights of children (child's right to survival, right to protection, right to development and right to participation as given in the UNCRC (1989) with specific attention paid to the rights of special protection and care provided by adults.

Children's participation rights: Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to participate in decision-making processes that may be relevant in their lives and to influence decisions taken within the family, the school or the community (UNICEF, 1990).

Democracy: Belief in or practice of the idea that all people are socially equal. Here, in the present study the term "democracy" is used as "participatory democracy" which tends to advocate more involved forms of citizen participation and greater political representation (Dib, 2013).

Early childhood: The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2014) explains the term as the period from birth to eight years of age. This period involves significant changes in brain growth, physical potential and learning and development capacity.

Early childhood professional: The National Association for the Education of Young

Children (NAEYC, 2014)) describes the term as individuals who work with children from infancy to age eight. In this study, the term corresponds to early childhood teachers working with young children from 36 months to 72 months old. The terms "early childhood teacher" and "early childhood professional" will be used interchangeably.

In-service: Taking place or continuing while one is fully employed. In this study, it is used for training undertaken by early childhood teachers during their professional life where they discuss methods, cases and workloads.

Pre-service: Activities that take place before a person takes up a job, which requires specific training. In this study, it is used to refer to training undertaken by early childhood teachers during their pre-service years.

Training: Aims at improving the level of a trainee's competence in a specific area and so may be defined as the process of developing, changing or strengthening the knowledge, skills and attitudes of a specific group.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): An international treaty that protects the rights of children in all areas of their lives, which consists of survival rights, developmental rights, protection rights and participation rights (UNICEF, 1990)

Young children: Children aged from 36 months to 72 months.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to investigate early childhood teachers' beliefs regarding children's participation rights. With that in mind, this chapter consists of a summary of the literature related to children's rights within the theoretical framework of the study. Hence, in this chapter a general overview of children and childhood, as well as the history of children's rights in general and children's participation rights in particular, will be discussed. Additionally, the international perspective on children's participation rights and literature related to the present state of children's participation rights in Turkey will be addressed. The final section will consider the role of early childhood education in teaching children's rights. It will also discuss why early childhood teachers' beliefs are important since they are the key actors responsible for integrating children's rights into the curriculum. Lastly, the research on belief theories and the importance of early childhood teachers' beliefs will be presented in this section.

2.1 General History of Children and Childhood

Humans experience continuous development throughout their lives. A child possesses certain hereditary properties from his/her birth. These properties constitute the foundation of what s/he will gain throughout her/his life. S/he gains cultural properties related to her/his environment, which should benefit the future of society and humanity generally. The phase from birth up to 18-years-old is regarded as childhood and is a special phase of life. According to the modern interpretation, childhood is characterized by innocence and vulnerability. Children are separated from the world of adults, their freedom is restricted, and their education is foregrounded. They become dependent on the discipline of adults (İnal, 2014).

Childhood is a cultural configuration that has changed throughout history. It involves cultural diversity and relativity, and takes on different meanings according to different societies. A childhood exists in the period between birth and adolescence. Similar to adults, children are influenced by society (Turkish Language Association, 2014).

Some philosophers suggest that the child should not be regarded as simply an incomplete adult (Van Bueren, 1995; Archard, 2004). They argue that children are also individuals with unique personalities and needs, and that childhood is not a preparatory phase for "real" life. However, children have also been termed "not-adults" (Aries, 1962). In the dictionary of the Turkish Language Association (2014), a "child" is defined as a boy or girl who is young in age, a son or a daughter regarding lineage, a boy or girl in the development phase between infancy and adolescence, and a young male. Biologically, a child is an individual before the adolescence phase. In this phase before adolescence, s/he is regarded as dependent on his/her parents. A child is not always accepted as an individual and can be dismissively viewed as someone who does not demonstrate the maturity expected from an adult, who acts recklessly unfit to be an adult, who is immature, who cannot comprehend situations, who is naive, and who has simple thoughts and opinions that should be treated with tolerance (Archard, 2004).

Those who define a child in the negative ways mentioned above (i.e. underdeveloped emotionally and in terms of cognition, incapable of comprehension, naive, etc.), regard childhood as a temporary, preparatory phase prior adulthood. The child is not valued as an individual; the child is only a would-be adult (Corsaro, 2015). The situations of children vary greatly between different countries, cities and neighborhoods, due to poverty, lack of education, inadequacy of care, and inefficient or inappropriate governmental policies. Some children are better nourished, grow in a healthy way and receive a good education, while others grow up in poverty and lack a proper education. Hence, there are great contradictions. In addition, the number of children living in favorable conditions is distressingly low.

The first option when trying to understand what "child/young people" is the idea that children can be seen as "young people". According to this view, there is a big difference, known as "generation gap", between adults and children. In addition, a child is junior when compared to adults because there is an age difference.

This option is an acceptable approach when considering child development as only a growth process. For example, at first glance, it is thought that children only grow. Children are seen older than the babies and younger than teens and adults. According

to this observation, children start to live in a world where they surrounded by “giants”. Some of these giants try talking to children and learn to communicate with them, but most never forget their own perceived superiority. The first description of the child is mentioned in the historical process within this framework (Matthews, 2001).

Children and the childhood phase are an important part of life. Childhood shapes adolescence and adulthood. Governments should thus place importance on childhood care, education and social rights in their policies (Berk, 2013a). A healthy childhood phase influences the choice of profession, proper decision-making, and a physically and mentally healthy life. This phase is also important for individuals in a moral, successful, society. The challenges children face are mostly universal. Decisions regarding children anywhere therefore affect children all around the world. These challenges include, but are not limited to, the exploitation of child labor, armed conflicts, drugs, alcohol, smoking, helplessness, domestic violence, street children, sexual abuse, etc. Hunger, diseases, infant mortality, and malnutrition problems are the concerns of children worldwide. Governments are responsible for the vaccination of children. Even now, in some countries, children die of preventable diseases like rubella, pertussis and poliomyelitis (Onur, 2005). Malnutrition still plays a negative role in physical and mental development in many societies. In addition, children are forced into hard, manual labor for low wages in many places around the world. Today, it is estimated that 120 million children live on the streets, around 8 million are refugees, an estimated 115 million children aged 5-17 work in insecure conditions in sectors such as mining, construction, manufacturing, and, as of 2012, more than 60 million are deprived of primary education (Humanium Together for The Children’s Rights, 2015; ILO, 2015; UNESCO, 2012).

The human model desired by societies has affected the child’s importance and function in some aspects. The cultural and social progression of mankind, such society being nomadic, agricultural or warrior, influences their child rearing models. All in all, childhood does not signify a constant period in traditional societies since there is no universal meaning in today’s context (Doğan, 2000).

The era prior to the Middle Ages, in which there was no discrimination against children with regards to age, was not an ideal time for children. For example, in this

period the father used to decide whether a child was going to live or die. Prominent philosophers of the era, such as Aristotle and Plato, also argued that "the right to kill a child" should be given to the father (Elkind, 1987). The social order is based on obedience. It has long been believed that if children obey their parents, then the social order would be constructed in a proper manner. Laws and sacred documents often contain principles that strengthen family models (Doğan, 2000). Similar to Judaism, according to Christian principles the father has to take complete control over the child; the child is to be formed as easily as "wax" by the father. This process tries to maintain the effect of religion. The idea of raising Christian children who are obedient and disciplined (with absolute obedience to the father) continued until secular thoughts came to the forefront (Cunningham, 1998).

Different from Judaism and Christianity, in Islam children were not considered as fully responsible prior to puberty. Childhood was seen as a special biological phase; adulthood can only be reached at the end of a certain preparation period and adults were responsible for raising children. In this manner, children were not responsible for their actions before puberty. Children were under protection in terms of their lives, possessions and education. However, it is important to note that there is no mention of education of female children in these Islamic regulations (Onur, 2007).

Corresponding to these religious interpretations of childhood, children were employed in housework from the age of six or seven (Heywood, 2003). Parents used to send their children to other households and employed others' children in their own households. Children were fed, clothed and educated as compensation for their work (French, 1991).

In poorer households, the age of employment would have decreased to as low as three. The real exploitation of child labor, however, started when factories became widespread. While s/he was under the rule of the father, along with Christianity and the rise of states, the child fell under the rule of God and the state. The state legitimized its authority as an agent of God. In this era, high child mortality rates were apparent. Children worked from the age of eight or nine, and they were conscripted at the age of 12 or 13 (Heywood, 2003).

The notion of childhood underwent a change around the 1600s. Prior to the Renais-

sance, children were regarded as little adults. The private status of childhood evolved at the beginning of the 1700s (Hiner & Hawes, 1991). In this period, the child acquired the status of vulnerability and innocence for the first time (Gelis, 1986). Again, in this period, children began to be regarded as cute, nice, fun and simple. Many changes in children's lives were first seen in this century and these changes detached children from the world of adults. While children were depicted as little men and little women in paintings up until 12th century, from the 15th century children were depicted in groups and crowds as a child and, from the 17th century onwards, the depictions of children became more obscure (Aries, 1962). Clothes especially designed for children, instead of clothing them like adults, started around this time as well. Special toys, games and books for children all surfaced in this period. Further, sexual intercourse with children declined, they were estranged from work and were instead directed towards education and school. Although adults had previously been comfortable talking about sexuality with children around, this began to change as well. In the 1600s, sharing sexual experiences with children was regarded as normal. The average life expectancy was 30 and so the age of marriage for girls was 12 or 13 (Franklin, 1993).

The image of a grown-up child had its place in Turkish culture as well. As a consequence of nomadic lifestyles, invasion and war, children were equipped with skills such as enduring natural conditions, weaponry, sports, horsemanship, hunting, and animal breeding. A child would be granted a name only after proving himself with significant bravery. Children were often given adult responsibilities at a young age, and they were expected to behave like grown-ups (Onur, 2005).

2.2 The Connection between Childhood and Education

Between 1600 and 1800, several changes took place in terms of children's education. While children and adults shared the same educational environment in a life-long learning setting, formal education was restricted to children. With this understanding, children started to be seen as weak and innocent, and thus they were considered as individuals who were dependent on adults and were supposed to be disciplined. This change was not experienced equally and differed based on gender and social class (Aries, 1962). Girls, for instance, were not considered children. It was only boys who

benefited from these opportunities. While girls were learning how to do household chores, boys were going to school to receive an education since they were seen as potential workers in the industrial sector. This educational privilege did, however, also apply to daughters of upper class families (Postman, 1995).

In addition to gender differences, social class was one of the determining factors when it came to accessing to educational opportunities. There was an idea that children from working class families did not need education, since such children were subjected to class discrimination (Franklin, 1993). Nonetheless, mass education included these classes within the education system over the course of time (Cunningham, 2005). In paintings, working class children were depicted as wearing resized and worn out clothes that previously belonged to their parents. As a result of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, a new social class emerged along with urbanization and industrialization. In this new society of ever-developing science and technology, educated personnel were needed for the trade sector and other professions, and so new schools were founded to educate middle class male children.

The notion of childhood and adulthood has constantly changed (Carolyn, 1974). Aries (1962) considered education/school as an important step in the emergence of a different childhood world. As of the 17th century, the school began to take the place of apprenticeship and provide socialization. Children started to go to school according to their age group and thus adults and children were separated from each other (Aries, 1962).

In light of the above-mentioned developments in education, a large number of philosophers and theorists focused on the notion of children's education. With the purpose of criticizing the existing paradigm of education based on "all children are born as sinners", John Locke stated that children are neither good nor bad (Cunningham, 2005). Locke held the idea that children's minds are a *tabula rasa* (blank slate) and that their experiences determine their knowledge (as cited in Cunningham, 2005).

By following the idea of a *tabula rasa*, Locke emphasizes children's freedom of thought and play, and he suggested treating children as rational beings, answering children's questions and nurturing their curiosity (as cited in Cunningham, 2005). Based on Locke's ideas, Lynch (1991) also perceives the child as a blank slate, al-

though he believes that adults should form this slate since children will be the future businessmen. He holds parents, teachers and the state responsible for this process. In other words, being ignorant and rude is not the child's responsibility, but rather the adults'. Education is the process with which to mold the modern adult.

Pursuing Locke's arguments, Rousseau (1762/ 2011, p.31) claimed that children could only be raised happily in nature. He suggested that the child has specific forms of thinking and hearing. According to Rousseau, children have the right to be a child; authority and obligation, social institutions, prejudice and poor examples suppress the natural attitude of children. To protect children's potential, people should consult with the methods used by nature. Rousseau perceived the child as a wild flower. Childhood is the period of life closest to nature. Childhood hence represents naturalness, purity and joy. Education should be provided in such a way that it does not ruin the organic and natural development of the child. According to Rousseau, rational concepts of good and evil are alien to children and criminal enforcements are meaningless. Thus, children must be happy during childhood. Rousseau expressed his influential views on the philosophy of education in his book "Emile" in 1762. He defended the idea that children must be socialized in a good way to avoid corruption. He emphasized learning by experience and teaching children how to live properly (Rousseau, 1979). Similar to Rousseau, Piaget placed importance on children's own explorations and experiences (Essa, 2003). Piaget accepted that children, from the first days of their early years, elucidate, systematize and utilize the data from nature and come to develop mental structures of their physical and social environment (Corsaro, 2015).

Dewey (1938) suggests that a child's psychological needs should be defined based on what he/she is, and not what he/she will be. He suggests that, both at home and in school, adults should ask such questions as: "What does the child need right now? What sort of problems he/she should solve right now?" Dewey believes this to be the correct way for a child to become an efficient participant in social life (Cunningham, 2005).

2.3 The Concepts of Law and Rights

It is important to define the term "law" as well as its impact on social life before going on to explain the concept of "rights". The concept of "law" can be explained as "all of the rules governed by state which regulate social life" (Mumcu, 2004, p.9). In other words, the law is a normative science that creates a set of rights and regulations in order to show the person what is right and wrong and to entitle the person to share in the common good of the society (Wiener, 1973).

In the corresponding literature; the concept of "rights" utilized as the main component of the law. Rights are based on the demands of a certain power. In this context, possessing a right means having the authority to insist on demands that are based on legal grounds. In other words, this concept of rights determines the authorization of an individual to do something. The concept of rights is also a claim of legality and is the abbreviated formula whereby the individual is morally authorized to intrude on someone else's freedom in a given circumstance (Bozkurt, 2003). Briefly, "rights" are the benefits that the law protects. A "right" therefore entitles an individual to legal power, while using this power is the choice of the individual himself.

2.4 The History of Children Rights

Following the First World War and in order to protect children, the Child Protection Fund (now Save the Children Fund) was established in England in 1919. In 1922, Eglantyne Jebb, a key personality at the Fund, prepared a document on children's rights. In this first document, it was emphasized that children from every nation and race should be protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation; their physical, mental and moral development should be fully supported; and necessary responsibilities are underlined to prepare children for adult life (Corsaro, 2015).

In 1924, this document was adopted as the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child by United Nations. The Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child was the first international document that aimed to protect children's rights internationally. It highlights the importance of ensuring opportunities for the full development of the child, nourishing children, treating sick children, protecting abandoned children, helping children in emergencies, protecting children against abuse, and raising

children with the feeling of brotherhood (Cunningham, 2005).

The Universal Human Rights Declaration underlines that every individual has fundamental rights and basic freedoms. Additionally, it emphasizes that children have specific needs related to their development. This understanding of children mentioned in the Universal Human Rights Declaration was maintained by signing the Declaration of the Right of the Child in 1959. The General Assembly of the United Nations updated the Declaration of the Right of the Child on November 20, 1989, and re-named it the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention is the first legal document that sets out the universal standards for the rights of children and guarantees to protect children's right to education, health and safety through laws and governmental policies (Kanyal, 2014).

At the beginning of the 20th century, there was a changing of perspective and the first human rights document on children's rights, the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child, was adopted by the League of Nations. This document afforded children a very strong position in society (Backström, 1992). However, even though the document established essential rights, it was not legally binding on signatories. States parties to the Declaration affirmed their acceptance of the first international human rights document that specifically handled children's rights, but they did not commit to any legal obligations to do so (Franklin, 2005). The UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child, as adopted in 1959, extended the rights of the children. However, even though there were new principles protected by the state parties, children's needs and rights were to be totally met by adults.

The United Nations (UN) is the acceptable human rights mechanism all over the world, except for few countries. The UN documents include remarkable norms and set the standards on human rights guaranteed by Conventions (Donnelly, 1986). The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution on November 20, 1989 and was put into effect on September 2, 1990 (OHCHR, 1989). Today, only the United States of America, South Sudan and Somalia have not yet ratified the Convention. Furthermore, the Cook Islands and Niue, which are dependencies of New Zealand, and the Holy See (Vatican) ratified the treaty as permanent observer states. In 2006,

Montenegro ratified the Convention after becoming an independent state. Turkey has been a state party to the Convention since April 4, 1995.

The UNCRC contains 54 articles that are categorized in four different main themes that focus on survival, development, protection and participation of the child. Survival rights address children's right to life and highlight the importance of ensuring the survival of children to the greatest extent possible. Development rights focus on different aspects of life to ensure the full development of the child, such as the right to education, right to play and so on. Protection rights strive to protect the child from all forms of abuse and neglect. Finally, participation rights ensure the freedom of expression of the child and underline the importance of the fact that children have the right to a say in every issue that affects their lives. Since this study focuses on the participation rights of children, in the following sections the components of this right will be explained in detail.

2.4.1 Children's Participation Rights

In the Convention, children's participation rights are mainly stated in Article 12, which declares:

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law. (UNICEF, 1989).

Indeed, it is important to understand what Article 12 does and does not say. It does not give children the privilege of self-governance. It does not give children the privilege of control over all decisions, regardless of parents' suggestions, either for themselves or for others. It does not give children the right to to have control over the thoughts

of their parents (Landsdown, 2001). There is no lower age limit for the participation right of children that prevents them from taking part in the matters affecting them. Younger children and children with special needs may encounter challenges in articulating their perspectives by speaking; however, they can express themselves through play, writing, painting or using sign language and so on (UNICEF,1989).

Landsdown (2001) divides the participation right enshrined in Article 12 into four different categories:

1. **The right to express their views freely:** If children have the capacity to express their own perspectives, it is essential for adults to create an environment for children to do so. Article 12 forces a commitment on adults, calling on families, government officials and professionals to guarantee that children are empowered and urged to contribute their perspectives on all applicable matters. This does not, obviously, suggest that children ought to be obliged to give their perspectives in the event that they are not ready or not keen on doing so (Smith, 2007).
2. **The right to be heard in all matters affecting them:** The right to be heard reaches out to all activities and choices that influence children's lives – in the family, in school, in neighborhood groups, and at the national political level. It applies to both issues that influence children individually, for example choices about where they live after their parents' separation, and to children as a voting public, for example deciding on the base age for full-time work. It is critical to recognize that numerous public policies and enactments affect children's lives, for examples those concerned with transport, lodging, macro-financial aspects, environment, instruction, childcare and general wellbeing (Landsdown, 2005).
3. **The right to have their views taken seriously:** It is not sufficient to award children the privilege of being listened to. It is imperative to actually consider what they say as important. Article 12 demands that children's perspectives are given weight and influence choices made about them. Clearly, this does not imply that a child's every whim must be followed, but rather that all children's perspective are legitimate and should be considered.
4. **In accordance with their age and maturity:** The weight that must be given to

children's perspectives needs to mirror their level age and maturity. This does not imply that young children's perspectives will automatically be given less weight. There are numerous issues that young children are capable of comprehending and to which they can contribute mindful assessments. Competence does not develop consistently as indicated by inflexible formative stages. The social environment, the nature of the choice, the specific background of the children and the level of adult support will all influence the ability of children to comprehend the issues that affect them (Landsdown, 2001).

2.4.2 The Characteristics of the Right to Participation

The UN Committee emphasizes that effective and meaningful participation should take place in an environment where adults avoid the manipulation of children and do not limit children's expression of views. Based on this, the UN Committee challenges state parties to implement participation rights as characterized in General Comment No. 12. The qualities of children's participation are as follows:

- (a) **Informative** : Children should be provided with information that is fully articulated, accessible, and sensitive in terms of diversity and age with regard to their right to express their views freely. Their opinions should be given due weight. They should also be provided with information about how this participation will take place, as well as the scope, purpose and potential impact of this participation
- (b) **Voluntary** : Children should not be forced to express their views under conditions not desired by them, and they should be informed that they can stop participating whenever they like.
- (c) **Respectful** : The views of children should be treated with respect, and they should be given the opportunity to initiate ideas and activities. Adults working with children should accept, respect and build on the good instances of participation on the part of children. For example, they should do this with regard to the contribution of children to their family, school, culture and work environment. Adults should also develop an understanding of the socioeconomic,

environmental and cultural contexts of the lives of children. People and institutions working for and with children should also demonstrate respect for the views of children concerning their participation in public events.

- (d) **Relevant** : The issues on which children have the right to express their opinions should be really relevant to their own lives, and children should be given the opportunity to draw on their own abilities, knowledge and skills in expressing their own views with regard to these issues. Additionally, particular spaces should be created in order to make children able to emphasize and discuss the particular issues that are identified as of relevance and importance to themselves.
- (e) **Child-friendly** : The environments and working methods should be designed to reflect the capacities of children. Sufficient time and resources should be made available in order to ensure that children are properly prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to express their own views. Special consideration should be given to the fact that children will need diverging levels of support and forms of involvement with regard to their age and evolving capacities.
- (f) **Inclusive** : Participation should be inclusive, eliminate already existing forms of discrimination, and create opportunities for the involvement of marginalized children, which would include both boys and girls. As children do not constitute a homogenous group, participation should be designed so as to provide all children with equal opportunities for involvement, which should be free from any forms of discrimination on any grounds. Additionally, the programs designed should be sensitive to cultural diversity in order to ensure participation from all communities.
- (g) **Backed by training** : Adults need preparation, particular skills and informed support in order to enable the participation of children in an effective manner. For instance, these needs are important to provide children with particular skills in listening, working jointly with children and engaging them in an effective way that is compatible with their gradually evolving capacities. Concerning the question of how to promote participation in an effective way, the children

themselves can be actively involved with the trainers and facilitators. Furthermore, they might require capacity building to develop their skills in terms of, for example, awareness of their own rights concerning effective participation, and training in how to organize such activities as meetings, raising funds, dealing with the media, public speaking and advocacy.

(h) **Safe and sensitive to risk** : The expression of children's opinions might involve certain risks on some occasions. Adults working with children have the responsibility to take any necessary precautions to minimize risk that might arise in the forms of violence, exploitation or any other negative consequences of their participation. The actions that might be taken to provide children with proper protection mechanisms include the development of a precise protection strategy for children on the basis of the recognition of particular risks faced by particular groups of children and extra barriers they face in obtaining help from others. Children should have awareness of their right to be protected from harm, and know whom to consult if help is needed. Investments should be made in working with communities and families in terms of developing an understanding of the value and implications of children's participation. Such investments are also important in minimizing risks the children might be exposed to in the absence of family/community support.

(i) **Accountable** : Commitment to evaluation and follow-up is of the utmost importance. For instance, children should be fully informed in any research or consultative process in order to be aware of how their opinions are interpreted and utilized. If necessary, they should be provided with the chance to criticize and have an impact on the analysis of the findings. Children should also be supported with feedback on how their participation has had an impact on the outcomes. Therefore, the evaluation of the participation of children should be made with the children themselves (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009).

In the Guidelines for Promoting Child Participation prepared by Family Health International (2009), the qualities of participation are listed as follows:

1. **Voluntary** : Children should never be forced to participate. They should be

informed about the voluntary nature of their involvement at the very beginning of the program. They should not be forced to answer questions they do not want to answer nor to take part in activities they do not want to take part in. The written consent of both the children and their guardians would guarantee this principle.

2. **Informed** : Children and their guardians should know from the very beginning of the program the background, objective, risks and possible outcomes of their participation. Such information might be delivered to children through written texts, tape recordings, visual media, posters and presentations.
3. **Meaningful** : Participation should always be for the benefit of the child, as well as realistic and constructive.
4. **Respectful** : Children should be made to feel that their participation is important and that their views are taken into consideration.
5. **Safe** : The activities undertaken and the methods employed should never expose children or adults to any kind of physical, physiological or emotional harm.

2.4.3 Related Studies of Children's Participation Rights

Over the last two decades, activities have taken place to implement the UNCRC in different nations so as to include young children as essential members of a democratic society. For example, the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act (2000) obliges teachers to incorporate young children's perspectives in school improvement arrangements (Office of Public Section Information, 2006). There are also various associations that exist to advance the articles of the UNCRC and so to advance the rights of children. There is a "Child Day" in Canada to advance mindfulness and promote the UNCRC (Canadian Children's Rights Council, 2007). In Ireland, the Children's Rights Alliance advances the rights of young children as natives, and states that young children are young citizens who ought to play a dynamic role in the society in which they live despite the fact that they can't vote. The Children's Rights Alliance provides documents and information for adults and children with regards to policies, enact-

ment, and social services. A great number of associations take an interest and team up in conferences to implement young children's rights in Ireland (Children's Rights Alliance, 2008).

Child Rights International Network (CRIN) (2008) is a worldwide system that provides data to more than 2,000 associations and countless activists on young children's rights. Its framework is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The system provides resources from more than 150 nations and administrates the data needs of associations that have joined the system internationally to back children's rights. This includes data for children to help them comprehend their rights (Child Rights Information Network, 2008). This association encourages children's rights to participate in decision-making processes as public policy-makers, in play and entertainment in the United Kingdom with Article 31 Action Network. The international advancement of young children's rights is directed in cooperation with young children, and young children are educated about their rights in different ways. They are given information through books, the Internet and different new sources in different nations. An example of data prepared for young children by the Scottish Government Publications (Office of Public Section Information, 2006) incorporate the following statements: "You have the right to education, play and join in different exercises. You have the right to express your views and have your opinions listened to and taken seriously. When adults make a decision for you, you should say your opinion, too. You can give your opinion through speaking, writing, drawing, and sign language as long as it doesn't hurt you or the others. The Government ought to help you be included in activities and social exercises. Your education should help you improve your abilities and teach you about your rights."

In 2005, the Committee on the Rights of the Child published General Comment No. 7 - Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood, due the fact that some countries failed to implement children rights in early childhood education. To monitor implementation, the UN has created a committee to report on local changes and progress made to guarantee children's rights as stated in the UNCRC. Every five years, the Committee prepares a report to record all changes for state parties. Articles in the UNCRC created international awareness about children's rights and the importance of children's perspectives. In consideration of the UNCRC, there were a great number

of studies conducted throughout the world and some countries changed their thoughts about how to include in decision-making processes (Smith, 2007). However, there is still a contradictory belief that children cannot have rights until they are competent at decision-making (Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001). The Convention considers children's age and maturity as well as democratic ways of implementing decision-making.

As mentioned above, many international documents and individual state parties started to include children's participation rights in their programs. In this regard, a variety of perspectives on children's participation rights have come to light. Regarding children's participation rights, Ejiehuve Akinola's (2009) study of children's rights and participation in school work aims to investigate Nigerian primary school children's level of awareness and their opinions, as well as whether the children in the towns of Ile-Ife are aware of their rights, and to determine their views on the implementation of these rights. The research was conducted using a case study approach. The data for study was obtained from semi-structured interviews with the preparatory classes of four elementary schools and 144 students in the sixth grade. Data analyses indicated that the children had a very limited awareness of their rights. About a quarter of the children said they are not willing to use three of their rights. It has been determined that this opinion stems from cultural norms in Nigerian society and that the children believe they do not need children's rights. Besides, the researchers chose a school often preferred by intellectuals and middle class families, and it is stated that the situation is more worrying in other schools in the country. As a result, it can be said that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has not reached their goals in schools in the country.

In this respect, Sandberg and Eriksson (2008) examined Swedish preschools' pedagogical activities offered to children of one to five years old who need special support. The goal of the project was to examine the ideas of staff working in pre-school educational institutions concerning children's participation in daily life as well as to determine the relevant experience. The sample consists of early childhood professionals from 20 pre-school institutions. The research was conducted with mixed method design. Initially, by using a qualitative content analysis approach, the definition of participation given by the pre-school employees was analyzed by a question-

naire consisting of 508 questions, which was applied to research participants. In the results of the study, pre-school is perceived as a safe environment in which staff and teachers support the daily work and educational activities. According to the results, the best indicators of a high degree of participation are fostering children's free will and the administrator role in everyday life.

Moreover, the importance of teachers in participation is stressed in Hannikainen and Puttonen's (2010) research concerning encouraging the participation of children. The aim of this study was to provide insight into the social structure of participation in pre-school and primary schools in Finland. Two issues were examined in this study: (1) how teachers encourage participation in pre-school classes compared with an elementary school class and (2) what are the similarities and differences between these two classes. In the study, data obtained from surveys conducted in 2003, 2005 and 2007 was used. The research is classified as descriptive and ethnographic research. The results indicate that pre-school and primary school teachers use similar properties to realize the needs of children, offer children alternatives to the decision-making process, and develop problem-solving skills. However, it is explained that together with joyful activities, active participation in pre-school and teacher support for intimate relationships enrich the children's curiosity and feed their motivation for academic learning. The research results also indicate that while teachers focus on the children's participation and interaction in periods, in elementary school primary importance is given to academic learning.

As seen in the research, early childhood teachers should develop characteristics to integrate children's participation rights in early childhood education in an efficient way. One of the important points is to help children with special needs to participate in the process in classroom settings. As early childhood teachers are seen as responsible for children's active engagement (NAEYC, 2011). Research by Gray and Winter (2011) aimed to ensure the participation of 36 pre-school age normally developed children and special needed children in all stages of a research project. The research sample consisted of 18 girls and 18 boys between the ages from 10 months to 5 years. Eight of the 18 children with special needs had autism, four had attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, three had visual impairment, two had Down syndrome and one had cerebral palsy. The institution's staff consisted of 16 teachers, and their ages

ranged from 23 to 56. The findings of the study indicate that when children are seen as equal, they will actively participate in daily activities.

To create an equal environment for all children, Clark, Kjørholt and Moss (2005) used the Mosaic approach to develop a toolbox. The toolbox contains a Molly doll, stickers, smiley faces, drawings, disposable cameras and voice recorders. The presence of different tools in the toolbox created the opportunity to use the proper tools for preschool children who may have difficulty expressing them verbally. In the framework of the social constructivist approach to children, child-friendly tools were used to conduct research about their favorite and less favorite things in preschool education. As a result, it was concluded that both normally developed children and special needed children can participate in all stages of the research process, giving their views by choosing things with adult guidance.

To focus on children's participation, Emilson and Folkesson (2004) investigated what children's participation is and how teachers' control affects it. The data was retrieved from videos that showed the teacher-child interactions of three different children who studied in three different educational institutions. These videos contain teacher-child interactions that were recorded over 13 months. In the recordings, two different types of interactions were determined, one in which the control of the teacher is higher and another in which it is more flexible. In the one where the teacher's control was high and child's participation was thought not to be encouraged, it was observed that at first the child tried to understand the subject, while later s/he tried to please the teacher and then s/he tried to inform the teacher of her/his own perspective. In the other interaction, where the control of the teacher was more flexible and the child's participation was thought to be encouraged, it was seen that in the beginning the teacher and the child started talking, the teacher supported the child and later they agreed on a mutual subject. In the environments where the control of the teacher is higher, it was seen that the teacher directed things and that this created a risk factor for children's participation. In the interactions in which the control of the teacher was more flexible, however, it was concluded that children's participation was supported. As a result of the research, the importance of creating a supportive environment for children to participate in educational environments is emphasized.

2.5 Children's Rights-Related Education

As a privilege or special right that was given certain classes in some societies throughout the centuries, education is now accepted as one of the fundamental human rights. Instead of raising children to be obedient and docile, education now aims to develop self-sufficient and self-determining children who are responsible for their decisions and capable of carrying their rights and responsibilities in a balanced way (Oktay ve Kumbaracıoğlu, 2011).

Education, whether it is provided in school or home or somewhere else, is designed to give children free self-expression skills and make them participate in a school life that is free from violence but enhances democracy and toleration in order to create an environment where children can grow into responsible citizens (Dewey, 1938). In terms of children's rights, education is identified as an activity that contributes to developing children's abilities and so allowing them access to the full remit of their fundamental rights. The 4-A model (Availability - Accessibility - Acceptability - Adaptability) has been introduced to help all types and levels of education adopt a consistent approach in all states that are party to international contracts on the right to education (Tomasevski, 2001). The concept of Availability, which is referred to in this model, stresses the availability of free education with appropriate equipment and a sufficient number of teachers as a state funded service. The Accessibility concept refers to a state in which educational institutions are accessible to everyone without discrimination, neither physical nor economic. While Acceptability refers to a type of education that is culturally appropriate, highly rigorous and meaningful for all individuals in society, Adaptability signifies that education must be flexible so as to be capable of adapting to the changing needs of societies and communities (United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural (ICESCR), 1999).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child identifies the social purpose of education in a society where the child is encouraged to establish healthy relationships and, in line with this purpose social purpose, education must consider the development of children's observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural identity, language and values, and respect for the natural environment. The individual objectives of education are defined as the ability to grow as individuals

who participate in all areas of child development and respect for human rights, taking into account the individual differences that occur in the areas of development, in line with community contributions (UNICEF, 2009).

International Action Aid evaluated various international declarations, such as UNICEF's Manual for Child Friendly Schools (2005) and the English Right to Respect for Schools Award, and determined ten basic topics of the right to education. These facets are: the right to free and compulsory education; right to non-discrimination; right to adequate infrastructure; right to highly trained teachers; right to a safe and non-violent environment; right to relevant education; right to be informed about their rights; right to participate; right of access to transparent and accountable schools; and right to attend a qualified learning environment. In addition to these basic facets, the right to education can only be met if teachers receive adequate training on children's rights that stresses the importance of children's participation in school-based decision-making processes in accordance with the children's ages and developmental levels (Action Aid, 2011).

To achieve the social and individual objectives of education, a move away from the traditional approach and towards more "child-centered" education has been at the forefront of recent educational development. Such an education process should nurture individuals who have scientific thinking skills, enjoy learning, can research information and be productive, have the ability to communicate, have adopted universal values, can effectively use technology, and are self-motivated. All of these characteristics will also help learners to participate in the development of education (ICESCR, 1999; Eğitim Reformu Girişimi, 2009).

The Convention on the Rights of Children desires the formation of a common "good" for children and the determination of the rights of children while still guarding their highest benefit. It is therefore necessary for children to be directly aware of the principles and provisions of a Convention that is so directly related to their rights. This situation is expressed in Article 42 of the UNCRC: "States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike." As stated in this Article, there is an obligation that the principles and provisions of the Convention be learned not only by

adults but also by children themselves.

Article 42, which foresees education in the realm of children's rights, is at the same time concerned with the education of children in the realm of general human rights. Those children who are informed about their existing rights will be conscious people during adulthood terms of using and protecting their own rights and respecting the rights of others. Therefore, it can be said that Article 42 of the Convention is closely related to education concerning human rights (Kanyal, 2014).

The idea of the rights of children is an important part of human rights as is the case with women's rights, consumers' rights and patient rights etc. Hence, the emergence, realization and development of children's rights must be explained with reference to the development of human rights in general (Doğan, 2000). The most fundamental objective of human rights education is to provide a person with the feeling of respect for others, to educate her about her rights, and to demonstrate to her the ways of protecting such rights. The primary way to attain this objective is foster a democratic and respectful environment for children to live in. The influences of school, the classroom and the teacher are highly important in terms of education concerning rights (Kepenekçi, 1999a).

The Recommendation on Teaching and Learning about Human Rights in Schools issued by the Council of Europe in 1985 (Recommendation 85-7) is a detailed document that considers the developments achieved throughout the ten years prior to its initiation, as well as the attitudes of the state parties regarding this issue. The appendix of Recommendation 85-7 is entitled "Suggestions for teaching and learning about human rights in schools" and includes concrete recommendations on this issue. These recommendations include: how the issue of human rights will be incorporated into the school curriculum; which skills need to be gained to understand and protect human rights; what knowledge will be gained in the education of rights; and the features of the school environment (Franklin, 2005).

Training programs, teachers and school implementations are the most important instruments in this respect. If the content and awareness of rights are taught alongside lessons in schools, there will be educated individuals with the knowledge of and concern for the protection of rights. Osler and Starkey (1994) advise the teachers make

reference to the international treaties in their lessons. Such fields of activity should operate in conjunction with the education programs prepared by the relevant ministries of education. Osler and Starkey (1994) argues that the most important role of the teacher is the arrangement of instruments of the formal education system in accordance with the subjects and creation of education procedures in conformity with the rights of children. Lansdown (1995) supports education rights for children in order that they might think seriously about rights. Griffiths and Davies (1995) argue that schools should be places where impartiality, honesty and justice are taught in order to create better societies. According to another view on the rights of children, providing opportunities for rights does not make children into dictators. This is a phenomenon that includes values and social structures and creates participatory individual and social relations in their lives (Jenkins, 1999). For this reason, it is clear that we do not have sufficient information about the rights of children. They can be discovered through formal and informal education programs and through in-school arrangements and organizations. Besides, they can be employed in any social programs as well. Within this context, those children who have learned about their rights during primary education would protect their rights during secondary education and at undergraduate levels as well as in real life. This idea will also lay the foundation of a democratic society. Having relied on this idea, this study aims to shed light on the arrangements of and views on the rights of children in primary education programs and implementations in schools.

2.6 The Role of Early Childhood Education in Realizing Children's Rights

The formation of children's attitudes towards society and social lives, in addition to how well s/he will get on with others, are mostly based on the learning experiences she experienced during her early life. Such experiences depend on the opportunities provided to children, the motivation they have to make use of such opportunities, and the guidance provided by family members, teachers and other adults. All these factors have an impact on how the child learns socialization, her position in the group and her social development. When it comes to the place and importance of social development in human life, it can be observed that individuals comply with group norms and values with regard to their forms of perception, reactions, attitudes and

habits (Yavuzer, 1996). Within this context, school constitutes an important element in shaping a child's life. Children spend most of their time in school. Therefore, in terms of the formation of a child's personality and skills, school plays a major role. In this respect, the definitions and scope of the concept of school need to be scrutinized.

The school is the first fundamental social institution involved in the socialization process, and as such carries the responsibility for the realization of particular learning patterns. School is considered successful only if it ensures students learn the subjects that they need to comply with society and to be happy (Ramey & Ramey, 1994). For Dewey (1938), school ensures a purified action level by minimizing harmful environmental factors by way of simplifying complex knowledge, and so rescues the individual from the constraints of her close environment and places her in touch with the wider environment. School as a social institution has two fundamental functions in the process of socialization: first, the responsibility for the realization of a set of learning types on its own and, second, the function of filling the gap left by other social institutions. The emphasis of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the right to high-quality education constitutes the driving force behind innovations in the field of education in Turkey as well as in the rest of the world. The vision of education quality extends to the management of the education system. A high quality school demands quality-focused teachers. If we embrace management by the leader, the oppressive attitudes of the teacher can be diminished in an easier manner. Such attitudes are endemic in today's education system, and they reduce the effectiveness of teachers. A high quality school system is based on the levels of competence of the students as well as their work. A good quality school is thus never punitive. All students have the chance to learn, learning is indexed to time, and the general tests measured through machines are never applied. In fact, if alternative measurement methods, including the self-evaluation of students, are applied, then standardized tests can be abandoned (Glasser, 1999). The Turkish Ministry of National Education put into effect the Total Quality Management Implementation Directive and Project on October 19, 1999 for this purpose. It brought onto agenda the modern management understanding and philosophy in the central and peripheral educational institutions (Cilga, 2001 , the success attained by children until the age of 18 is explained by their successes in the pre-school period (33%), primary school period (42%), and secondary school period

(25%). Such findings demonstrate that the differences in the success levels of children in their secondary school and undergraduate years are largely related to their education and learning experiences in the pre-school and primary school periods. In this context, it becomes clear that if children are educated about their rights from an early age (pre- school and primary school periods), they better comprehend such rights. In this way, the children acquire consciousness about rights in a more effective manner. Osler and Starkey (1994) thus emphasize that kindergarten should be one of the places where children learn and implement their rights.

2.7 Role of Early Childhood Teachers and the Importance of Their Beliefs in Realizing Children's Participation Rights

In today's world, the role of an informative teacher and the listener-learner role in traditional education has been taken by the participator, explorer, and encourager who is more active in guiding the transfer of information to children. In parallel with the changing paradigm, school programs and program structures started to change and become more child-centered. Programs are now being prepared according to the objectives of children's rights and the perspectives suggested in the UNCRC. Children's participation started to have a more significant place in such programs due to guidance provided by adults (Hart, 1992).

To avoid violating children's right to participation in the classroom environment, teachers, who are responsible for the application of the education program, should avoid directing and providing prepared environments, and should instead allow the children to plan, arrange, question, investigate and produce as much as possible, while still taking children's individual and developmental characteristics into consideration (Lansdown,2001 ; Action Aid, 2011).

However, in an education environment, teachers with a negative opinion about the strength of children's rights, a lack of desire to listen to children, and an inability to manage children's participation, tend to discriminate among children and, as a result, children are afraid to express their opinions and so their participation is inhibited. The application of traditional approaches instead of child-centered approaches by teachers also creates negative results in terms of the participation right (Milne, 2011).

The UN Children's Rights Convention (2008) recommended constituting councils for the participation of children in school life, school clubs and the student council. Schools should take advantage of joint discipline teaching to make full use of the rights-based approach to education and should also assess children's participation in the educational environment in a wider frame than general remarks regarding education purposes (OHCHR, 2008, 2009; Action Aid, 2011).

The notion that young children ought to have participation rights is a consequence of recognizing that they are citizens in a democratic society. Dewey (1938) underlined that the improvement of democracy relies on young children practicing democracy in their educational surroundings. A well-founded society evolves when young children get to play a role through their own particular exploration, shared comprehension and interests (Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001).

According to Piaget (1932), when a child must always obey an adult's decisions in the classroom setting, and if classroom activities require children to strictly follow teachers' instructions, then children will not learn how to think and behave freely. However, the idea according the child-based perspective is that children should be placed in a socio-cultural context and recognized as social actors, which is the only way that they are seen as genuine participants in real life (Corsaro, 1997).

The UNCRC introduces democratic standards with the perspective that young children are rights-holders who can effectively take part in choices about their own lives (Smith, Taylor & Gollop, 2000). Global convictions about young children's rights fostered by the UNCRC have had a remarkable impact on worldwide mindfulness concerning young children's rights and the significance of young children and their surroundings, including consciousness of how to incorporate young children's viewpoints in matters that relate to them (Christensen & James, 2000).

Contrary to the intentions of the UNCRC, some researchers and philosophers (Giedd et al, 1999 ; Laughlin & Creamer, 2007) reported adults think that young children are not sufficiently skillful to participate in decision-making processes. Additionally, they hold the idea that their age and maturity are insufficient to make their own decisions. However, recent research has indicated that social experience is a more determinant factor of competence and maturity (Waksler, 1991; Solberg, 1996). The claim that

young children do not have sufficient comprehension and knowledge is overturned by the idea that children should experience a positive environment in which to participate in decision-making processes and express their views (Kellett, 2005).

From this point of view, early childhood teachers play a key role in socializing young children and transmitting social values, for instance democracy, through their learning surroundings. A sample of early childhood teachers from various districts in Ankara was thus included in this study to understand early childhood teachers' beliefs regarding children's participation rights in early childhood settings.

According to Mansour (2009), beliefs are the most troublesome ideas to characterize. Although the literature has given careful consideration to educators' beliefs, there is still no agreeable on the actual meaning of "beliefs" (Savaşçı Açıklan, 2009). As Pajares discussed, "the trouble in examining teachers' beliefs has been created by definitional issues, poor conceptualizations, and varying meaning of beliefs and beliefs systems." (1992, p.307) In this manner, the meaning of beliefs has been fluctuated in the literature. Pajares (1992) proposed that specialists need to concede the significance and conceptualization of beliefs.

A recent study by Mansour (2009) showed that since teachers' beliefs have a tendency to be more experience-based than hypothesis-based, beliefs cannot be unmistakably characterized, nor do they have only a single correct definition. In this manner, different researchers give diverse definitions of beliefs. For instance, Pajares (1992) reviewed the educational literature of beliefs and reported that beliefs were characterized in many studies as a "theoretical resource". He defined belief as an individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition, a judgment that can only be inferred from a collective understanding of what human beings say, intend, and do. Standen (2002) proposed the idea that beliefs can be grouped as far as individual uncertainty about connections, information and society; proficient beliefs about showing and learning; and beliefs about change and improvement.

While these studies showed a direct relationship between beliefs and practice, a few studies have demonstrated a complex relationship between them. In general, it is hard to build up an acceptable understanding of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practice in light of the fact that "scientists have characterized beliefs

as far as their own particular motivation or their associations with other cognitive or full of feeling structures” (Pajares, 1992, p. 326). Also, not all scientists concur that educators’ beliefs offer a more prominent insight into their practice, while others failed to discover a reasonable relationship between teachers’ beliefs and practice in light of different components.

As per Pajares (1992), the examination of educators’ beliefs is an essential method for instructive exploration and training. Having the capacity to distinguish and portray the impact of educators’ beliefs on instructional activities would therefore extend and advance our comprehension of the showing methodology (Aguirre & Speer, 2000). On the other hand, both Bandura (1977) and Pajares (1992) note that beliefs may be the best markers of the decisions people make and of the perspectives they shape. Furthermore, beliefs affect demonstrating practices (Clark & Vinger, 1977).

Teachers’ beliefs are essential to the understanding and enhancing of instructive procedures. They are closely connected to instructors’ procedures for adapting to difficulties in their everyday working life and to their general prosperity, and they shape students’ learning environment as well as impact their inspiration and accomplishments (OECD, 2014). Stipek and Byler (1997) found that early childhood educators who held stronger beliefs in teacher-directed instruction were more averse to embracing child-centered practices, while early childhood educators who had stronger beliefs in a child-centered educational program esteemed the independence of the child and respect for oneself.

2.8 Research on Children’s Rights in Turkey

The studies undertaken on the issue of children’s participation rights in Turkey are quite limited. Such studies do not generally deal with the issue of "children’s participation rights" in a direct manner, but instead focus on the attitudes and opinions regarding children’s rights education in general. By way of using a children’s rights attitude scale, Karaman Kepenekçi (2006) demonstrated that female students and university students who received children’s rights education have a more positive attitude towards children’s rights as compared to male students and those who did not receive human rights education.

With regard to studies undertaken on the issue of human rights education, which is indirectly related to children's rights education, it has been observed that such studies generally evaluate the perceptions of teachers, students and school administrators at the postgraduate level, as well as the programs, text books and implementations of Citizenship and Human Rights Education, and Life Sciences and Social Studies lessons (Akbaşı, 2000; Aras, 2000; Çetinkaya, 1998).

However, all of these studies were conducted on the basis of the programs of the old primary education system. For instance, Citizenship and Human Rights Education lessons have been removed from the new education programs and are associated with the programs of other lessons as an interim discipline.

It is believed that social scientists could make significant contributions to the implementation and interpretation of the Convention by way of making its rules and principles their subject matter. Taking teacher education as the starting point, Akyüz's (2000) study on the "Protection of Rights and Security of the Child in National and International Law" analyzes and interprets national legislation in light of the Convention and provides suggestions for those working with children. Salman-Osmanoğlu (2007) reported that senior high school students' views on children's rights vary according to the variables of gender, parents' attitudes, home regions and social activities. Similarly, Ay Zöğ (2008) examined the relationship between academic achievement and the children's rights awareness level of high school students based on the variables of school type, category of rights, gender, and education level of parents.

In parallel with this study, Çetinkaya (1998) grade students' and teachers' views on children's rights in terms of several variables. According to her study, students' views on children's rights differ based on the variables of age, gender, school type, and parent's educational level, while teachers' views on children's rights differ based on experience and specialty. In addition, the views of teachers and students on children's rights differ significantly from each other while the importance and realization of children's rights varies based on the school and family environment.

Supporting the results of Çetinkaya's study, Özyıldırım's (2007) research results indicated that the views of teachers regarding students' right to participation differentiate based on years of experience, classroom size, socio-economic and the cultural envi-

ronment of the school. It was also reported that students whose schools belong to a higher socio-economic environment and cultural atmosphere, as well as students who attend a school with a medium sized number of students, make more use of their right to participation. In addition, the views of teachers related to hindrances to the right to participation differ based on the school's student numbers and the socio-economic and cultural environment of the school.

Moreover, a study conducted by Tunç Çakır (2008) demonstrated how the experts from the Ministry of National Education show a consensus about the need and importance of reflection on related rights in educational politics in order to build a more democratic society, and to avoid authoritarian education, to raise a generation who are self-confident and know their rights. However, they disagree regarding the reflection on children's rights of protection, participation, survival and development, which are determined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child in educational politics.

On the other hand, Yurtsever (2009) investigated the attitudes of parents with children aged between 6 and 14 concerning children's rights based on the category of care and protection and respect for making one's own decisions. According to results of the study, all parents demonstrated attitudes of favoring care and protection if they had a daughter or more than one child. Fathers favored respect for making one's own decision if they had a son or only one child. According to the children's age, all parents favored the care and protection if the children were younger, while the fathers favored the respect for making one's own decisions if the children were older. Parents with a higher educational level, a higher income, who are more permissive favored care and protection, whereas parents who are more authoritative favored the respect for making one's own decisions.

Lastly, Akyol's (2011) research intended to draw attention to the subject of children as free and important individuals whose views should be respected. In this study, the historical process in terms of the child and children's rights, the current state of the issues and, within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the principles of respect for the child's views were investigated. Examination identified a new tendency whereby children should be more active in decision-making, although it is noted that the traditional approach still continued and, as a result of this approach,

child's views are not sufficiently taken into account. One of the results of the research indicates that during the European Union accession process Turkey had not reached the criteria that had to be fulfilled regarding children's rights.

2.9 State of Children's Right to Participation in Pre-School Education Program for Children Aged 36- 72 Months

The entire program does not include any negative statement opposing to the participation rights of children. However, there was no instruction describing the violation of participation rights in the explanation section of the curriculum. Participation right is mentioned directly in three items of the main principles of the curriculum, while being indirectly mentioned in one other item. Similarly, participation right is mentioned directly in four items of the main requirements of the curriculum, while being indirectly mentioned in one other item (Gürkan & Koran, 2014).

The participation right is observed to be directly included in the field of social and emotional development since it is closely associated with these concepts. On the other hand, none of the objectives of motor development field covers participation rights directly or indirectly since this field mainly focuses on motor skills and relevant educational requirements, (that are mainly low level mental activities compared to participation) as it was already expected. The relevant educational requirements for participation rights are covered in the field of social and emotional development in the widest sense.

The existing objectives in all development fields should be reviewed to be able to improve the education process in terms of emphasizing children's participation rights. Additionally, the significance of taking children's rights into consideration should be highlighted in the activities as part of Children's Rights Day and Human Rights and Democracy Week that are among the suggested important days and weeks to be celebrated in the preschool education institutions.

The explanations for children's participation as a part of their evaluation should be added into the sub-section titled as 'evaluation of daily education process and activities'. Besides, further researches may be conducted to analyze the status of covering other dimensions of children's rights in the existing curriculum. Another extensive

research topic could be about examining the historical development of preschool curriculums regarding children's rights in Turkey. Finally, preschool education of Turkey and other countries could be compared in terms of covering children's rights in their respective curriculums in future studies (Gürkan & Koran, 2014).

2.10 Research on Children Rights in the International Context

Studies conducted on the theoretical framework of education concerning children's rights and the levels of knowledge of children about their rights (knowledge, attitude, behavior) are still quite limited. Having said that, many studies have been conducted since the 1970s on the attitudes of children and adults towards the rights that children have or ought to have. As these studies will provide us with clues about the levels of knowledge concerning the rights of children, as well as shedding some light on the studies still to be carried out on this subject, they will be briefly discussed. Issues such as citizenship education, character education, and democracy and human rights education will be given particular attention both here and throughout the thesis in so far as they are evaluated within the context of the theoretical framework of education regarding children's rights.

In research conducted by Taylor, Smith & Nairn (2001) in New Zealand, some 821 secondary students and 438 adults (teacher, school administrator, psychological counselor, and school health officer) were asked about what they understood of the concept of a "right" and which rights were most important for them. The results of this research demonstrated that students have a perception rights that is quite similar to the generally accepted notion of a "right", although 85% of them had not heard of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Conversely, 85% of the adults knew about the convention. While the adults had heard of the Convention mostly from newspapers, the sources of information for students were mainly teachers and the television. It was also stated that television was a source of information for the adults as well. As another interesting finding of the research, the students perceive the rights pertaining to participation as more important for themselves than for the adults. The adults stated that the rights concerning the protection, and especially security, were more important for children. The researchers are currently undertaking a qualitative study that complements this quantitative research and analyzes in a deeper sense how children

perceive the concept of a right.

Morine (2000) grade students and their families in order to investigate the attitudes of children and parents regarding children's rights and parenting styles. The results of the study demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between the attitudes of family responsibilities and the children's rights to emotional and physical care and support. Children reported the importance of participation in decision-making, whereas the parents found care and protection in terms of children's rights to be the most important.

As part of a project entitled "Individual rights at schools" conducted between 1996 and 1998, Alderson and Arnold (1999) asked students aged 7-17 and their teachers about their opinions on the rights of children. In the study, which was conducted with 2,272 students in England and Northern Ireland, 75% of the children stated that they had never heard of the Convention on the Rights of the Child before. The rest of the students stated that they had little information about the Convention. Some 40% of the students and 11% of the teachers stated that students had very few rights at school. With regard to their answers to the question about the class and school councils, which are important indicators of the realization of the right to participation in schools, the children could separate an effective school council from those councils having only symbolic existence even in terms of the lowest age groups. While half of the students stated that they had school councils at their school, only one fifth of them mentioned the existence of effective school councils at their schools. Alderson (2004) later made a comparison between the answers given by the children in the 7-11, 11-13 and 14-16 age groups. From this comparison, the author identifies that as their age rises, the children reported more often about the difference between the actions of the school personnel and the actions that are suggested to be appropriate. Alderson's (2005) study is particularly important for understanding the level of the realization of rights at school and for making changes after identifying existing inadequacies. The survey and other research instruments utilized were also employed to increase the awareness of the children and their teachers about the rights of children.

Rogers and Wrightsman (1978) conducted research on the attitudes of high school students, students of the faculty of education and other faculties, and adults towards

the rights of children in general and the rights concerning children's nurturant rights and their self-determination rights. Results of the study indicated that high school students had a significantly more positive attitudes towards the enhance self-determination rights and significantly less positive attitudes towards to promote nurturant rights to children than other groups.

Campbell and Covell (2010) conducted research on the influence of education concerning children's rights on the knowledge of adults about the Convention, rights and values as well as the perception of children as the property of the family. The most important constraint to the realization of the rights of children is the perception of children as property of the family and lack of knowledge about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In Canada, where this study was undertaken, the issue of educating children about their rights has been highly debated in recent years and many steps have been accordingly taken. Additionally, children's rights education has not been sufficiently delivered to the families, and the aforementioned perception still persists. As the studies demonstrate, the education children receive with regard to their rights does not result in their non- obedience to familial authority (Covell & Howe, 1999). Similarly, as families acquire more information about children's rights, their worries on this issue decrease and their perception of children as property is changing.

In their study, Campbell and Covell (2001) analyzed and compared the levels of knowledge and attitudes of third year university students who had taken a course on children's rights, with those of third and fourth year university students who had not taken the course, both before and after the course. A positive increase was noted in the levels of knowledge and the attitude towards supporting children's rights on the part of those who took the course. With regard to those students who did not take the course on children's rights, there was no difference detected between the initial and subsequent test. Accepting that attitudes and beliefs provide a basis for behaviors, it can be said that education on the rights of children would create significant changes at the levels of individuals, family and society, and this change would result in policy and implementations based on respect for rights. Similarly, it would be insufficient for adults or children to receive education about the rights of children on their own. If adults with respect for the rights deliver the education concerning children's rights and if all those adults working for and with children receive education on

this issue, more effective and enduring results would be attained. In this regard, the rights of children should be an integral part of the education of families. According to the research results, different from what is indicated in the premise, a significant increase was not observed in the groups in terms of support for the rights of the adults. This premise was determined on the basis of the results of research conducted with teenagers. As can be inferred from this, the children's rights education received at an early age becomes a part of the development of the child's personality as well as the teenager, and so the respect for rights is more internalized. The children's rights education delivered during later ages can make changes to stereotypes and perceptions; however, this might not turn into moral values as a part of the personality. Yet, the impact of children's rights education in early and later ages is an issue that should be studied in a more systematic manner.

The need to conduct research and develop the content, method and materials with regard to educating children in the principles and provisions of the Convention arose immediately after the ratification of the Convention (Cohen & Naimark, 1991). Even though there exist many studies in the international literature on this issue, the studies conducted using an interdisciplinary approach have not yet reached the desired level.

2.11 Theoretical Background to the Study

The ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) was one of the main theoretical frameworks used in building this study. This theory puts the direct and bidirectional influences of the environment on the individual, along with the different cultural and structural influences. With this attitude, a much-expanded perspective can be developed on the features of early childhood education shared between people and environments. This can be achieved not only by defining the influences at a microsystem level, but also by considering the external influences. These external influences may be derived from cultural policies and guidelines defined through the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) program or from the developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) approach utilized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). The mutual characteristics of this shaping can also be examined (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). According to the guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices, the best condition for learning is an environment of community,

and the participation of children in the community is extremely important. Following this view, families, schools, communities and broader societies are all-relevant in the process of developing children (Crain, 2005; Bredekamp, 2011).

The socio-cultural theory was the second theoretical key in framing this study. According to this theory, all the knowledge and also the knowledge-making tools within any community are positioned in a socio-historical context (Vygotsky, 1978). Learning is a process of sharing knowledge between the more experienced and less experienced members of the community (Crain, 2005). In understanding this process, it is important to have knowledge of the cultural (community) contexts in which these interactions occur. Furthermore, a separation between human development and culture (community) is unimaginable (Thomas, 2005).

In this study, the beliefs of early childhood professionals regarding the rights of young children are examined by considering the active social participation of children in their environment as a "right". Using this approach, the aim of this study is to offer a better understanding of children's development by employing Bronfenbrenner's (1979) and Vygotsky's (1978) community-based theories.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter research design, sampling, data collection instruments, and data collection procedures and data analysis were covered. Internal and external validity threats, assumptions and limitations of the study were stated.

3.1 Research Design

The main goal of this study was to describe early childhood teachers' beliefs and investigate these beliefs in terms of various variables. Causal comparative research was conducted as a method. Causal comparative studies are conducted to find a relationship between dependent and independent variables after an event has occurred. Causal-comparison studies seeks to identify reasons of existing or naturally occurring condition or the cause of the incident emerged, and to determine what variables are those reasons. In causal-comparative research, there are two groups affected or not affected by the same condition or affected in different degrees. Some variables are examined in order to determine possible causes of current situation in different groups (Cohen and Manion, 1994). Causal comparison studies are similar to experimental research in terms of investigating cause- effect relationship. However, unlike experimental research, the group differences are already existed and not manipulated by the researcher. In this case the researchers are working to identify possible and affecting causes of current situation (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2008).

3.2 Sampling Procedure

The target population of this study was all early childhood educators working with children from 36 months to 72 months in public or private schools in Ankara. These schools were under the supervision and control of the state namely, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Moreover, accessible population was determined because of the fact that there is no possibility to reach the target population. Thus, all

early childhood educators working in central districts of Ankara are described as the sample of the current study. There are eight central districts of Ankara. These districts are Altındağ, Çankaya, Yenimahalle, Keçiören, Mamak, Sincan, Etimesgut and Gölbaşı.

Table 3.1: Presentation of Schools That The Data is Collected

Number of Schools			
District	Independent Kindergarten	Private Kindergarten	Total
Keçiören	11	24	35
Çankaya	10	21	31
Mamak	4	14	18
Yenimahalle	10	15	25
Gölbaşı	3	2	5
Sincan	8	3	11
Etimesgut	10	4	14
Altındağ	4	4	8

The sample of the present study was totally 320 early childhood teachers in 2014. Looking of the percentages by means of gender, 13 (4.1 %) are male early childhood teacher and 306 (95.6 %) are female early childhood teachers. Random sampling method was administered since considering generalization issue. In random sampling, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected as a participant. There are various types of random sampling which are simple random, stratified, cluster, systematic, multistage sampling. In this study cluster random sampling is used in which the researcher randomly selects clusters from the entire population to include in the sample (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In current study, list of all kindergartens are prepared in the population and from the list, kindergartens are selected with simple random sampling strategy. All early childhood teachers in the sampled clusters are selected for the survey .In single-stage cluster sampling, all the elements from each of the selected clusters are used.

3.2.1 Characteristics of the Sample Participated in the Pilot Study

ECTCPRB Scale was piloted with 284 early childhood (95.4% female and 4.6 male) teachers in five different districts (Çankaya, Keçiören, Mamak, Yenimahalle, Sincan)

in Ankara. The mean age of early childhood teachers were 28.1 years.

Table 3.2: Teachers' educational level in Pilot Study

Educational Level	N	Percent
Early Childhood Teacher Program	143	50.1
Department of Child Development	27	9.5
Department of Child Development with associate's degree	4	1.5
Other departments	20	7
Girl's Vocational School	64	22.5
Teacher with PHD degree or ongoing	6	2.1
Teacher with Master's degree or ongoing	20	7

Participants of the pilot study were graduated from different programs as seen in Table 3.2. However majority of the participants were graduated from Early Childhood Teacher Program 143(50.1%). Distribution of the education level demonstrated that 27 (9.5%) were graduated from Department of Child Development, 4(1.5%) of the participant were from Department of Child Development with associate's degree, while the number of the teachers graduated from other departments was 20 (7%). A considerable number of teachers were graduated from Girl's Vocational School with number of 64 (22.5%). Additionally, 6(2.1%) teachers have doctoral of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree or their Phd studies are ongoing. Similarly 20 (7%) early childhood teachers have Master's degree or still their studies are ongoing.

3.2.2 Characteristics of the Sample of the Main Study

This part of the study was performed by the administration of ECTCPRB Scale to 320 early childhood teachers in central districts of Ankara. Majority of participants are consisted of 306 (95.6 %) female early childhood teachers, while percentage of male teachers are 13 (4.1%). The mean age of the early childhood teachers are 29 years. Participant of the main study graduated from different educational level and were engaging with different aged group children. In Table 3.3 with the distribution of respondents by means of their educational level and age groups that teachers are engaging with were represented.

Some items related to children participation rights (such as being aware of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, having read Convention on the Rights

Table 3.3: Teachers' educational level and age groups that they are engaging with

Educational Level	N	Percent
Early Childhood Teacher Program	159	49.7
Department of Child Development	32	10
Department of Child Development with associate's degree	4	1.2
Other departments	22	6.9
Girl's Vocational School	75	23.4
Teacher with PHD degree or ongoing	6	1.9
Teacher with Master's degree or ongoing	20	6.3
Age Groups That Teachers Engaging With	N	Percent
36 months	27	8.4
36-48 months	41	12.8
48 months	35	10.9
48-60 months	87	27.2
60 months	43	13.4
60-72 months	76	23.8
72 months and up	4	1.3
Other	6	1.9

of the Child or not, having attended any training in pre-service years) was asked in the demographic information of the scale to the participants. These statistics including descriptive information about participants are stated in Table 3.4, 3.5, 3.6. As seen in the Table 3.4 number of the the 270 (84.4 %) of early childhood professionals are aware of UNCRC, whereas 49 (15.3%) haven't heard about UNCRC.

Table 3.4: Descriptive Statistics Including Teachers' Status of Being aware of UNCRC

Being aware of UNCRC	N	Percent
Yes	270	84.4
No	49	15.3

As displayed in Table 3.5 the majority of early childhood teachers are reported that they have read UNCRC with the percentage of 201 (62.8%) while 118 (36.9%) of the teachers have not read yet.

Table 3.5: Descriptive Statistics Including Teachers' Status of Reading UNCRC

Reading UNCRC	N	Percent
Yes	201	62.8
No	118	36.9

The rate of respondents who have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to children rights in in-service is displayed in Table 3.6. As indicated in Table 3.6 early childhood professionals who have attended any pre-service training related to children’s rights are 45 (14.1%), while early childhood professionals who have not attended any training course are 274 (85.6%). Furthermore; early childhood professionals who have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service are 37 (11.6%), whereas early childhood professionals have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service are 278 (86.9%).

Table 3.6: Teachers’ State of Attending Any In-service Training Programs, Seminar, Workshop or Conferences

Attending any pre-service training courserelated to UNCRC	N	Percent
Yes	201	62.8
No	118	36.9
Attending any In-service Course, Workshop, Seminar, or Conferences related to UNCRC	N	Percent
Yes	37	11.6
No	278	86.9

3.3 Instrumentation

ECTCPRB was developed by the researcher to define early childhood teachers’ beliefs towards children participation rights addressed in Article 12 of UNCRC. The final version of the scale consists of 21 items with a 5- point Likert scale. Scale was constructed to determine dimensions of children participation rights stated in Article 12 of UNCRC. High scores in this scale show supporting beliefs for ECTCPRB whilst low scores addressing opposed beliefs towards ECTCPRB. Steps were followed throughout the development of the scale were explained in detailed in the following sections.

3.3.1 Scale Developmental Process of ECTCPRB

Constructing an Item Pool

The related literature was examined and the instrument items were written by the

researcher based on the literature review. In order to determine the context for the scale, The EBCOhost, ERIC, and ULAKBIM were guided as databases and journals, articles, and periodicals were examined associated with ECTCPRB (Daniels-Simmonds, 2009; Kaya, 2011; Baumrind, 1978; Buri, 1991). In addition to these, population course books and some other scientific books covering population chapters (Franklin, 2005; O' Neill ,1988 ; Percy Smith and Thomas, 2010;Kanyal, 2014) were also taken into consideration in details. Additionally; statistical indicators of UNESCO, UNICEF, Turkish Statistical Institute and Ministry of National Education were also reviewed in order to acquire knowledge about the present state of teachers and descriptive statistics in early childhood programs in the world and in Turkey. In short, such a review of broad and complex literature on children participation rights indicated that the emerging issues on children participation could be listed as teacher beliefs towards participation; debates on the children participation rights and lack of educational policies in terms of children's participation.

It was also revealed that there have been many research studies in several disciplines, but neither a theoretical framework on children participation and children rights education nor a belief scale specifically developed for early childhood teacher education has been constructed yet. For this study, definition of participation, current debates towards participation and Article 12 of UNCRC specifically to be used as a framework of the present study. To be more specific, in order to discuss the children rights policies or democracy in classroom, having awareness on the issues of participation has to be realized.

Popular debates on children's participation on young children's development and building a democratic society extensively investigated. These issues elaborated on various aspects like children's capability of expressing, expressing their views freely, to be heard in all matters affecting them and taken seriously and in accordance with their age and maturity take part in decision making process.

The researcher in the light of children participation literature constructed some of the items. 10 items were adapted from two instruments on children participation rights (Daniels Simmonds, 2009; Kaya, 2011) and included in the item pool.

Deciding about the ECTCPRB items-1st

As a result of evaluating the items collected in the pool, 30 Likert-type draft items were decided to make up ECTCPRB Scale Edward's Criteria (Anderson, 1988) were considered while writing the items. Two experts from Faculty of Education Department of Early Childhood Education reviewed the items and suggested 2 dimensions; (1) expressing their own views freely, and (2) taking part in decision-making process. Moreover, some items were rewritten or deleted in the light of their suggestions and 21 items were remained. Other four experts from early childhood education department from Hacettepe University and Gazi University evaluated the items and their dimensions.

Deciding about the ECTCPRB items-2nd

After necessary expert evaluations and revisions, 25 items were decided to use in the pilot version of the ECTCPRB Scale (Appendix 1). The distribution items among the dimension and sample items for the pilot version of ECTCPRB Scale, there were two dimensions; dimension 1 (expressing their views freely) is that there are 14 items in , and dimension 2 (take part in decision making process) including 12 items. ECTCPRB Scale, on the one hand, was designed as a 5-point Likert type, ranged as strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Pilot Testing the Scale

The pilot version of ECTCPRB Scale including 25 items was administered with 284 participants. Based on the result of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and reliability analysis, item deletion and revisions were performed. The results of the pilot study are presented in details in the result section.

Final Version of the Scale

The final version of ECTCPRB including 21 items (Appendix 2) was administered with 320 early childhood teachers in Ankara, Based on the result of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and reliability analysis, 21 items were decided as a final version of the scale (ECTCPR). The results of main study are given in the result section.

3.3.2 Validity Analysis of ECTCPR

In order to test the validity of ECTCPR scale, expert opinion was taken as content-related validity evidence and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted for construct-related validity evidence.

3.3.2.1 Content-Related Validity Evidence

For the content-related validity evidence, expert opinion was taken at some stages in the present study. In the first place, two experts studying on children rights reviewed 30 draft items. Based on their suggestions 5 items were removed and some items were rewritten. A total of 25 items were sent to four other experts from Hacettepe University and Gazi University Department of early childhood education. These experts were requested to review items by means of appropriateness for the content and to confirm their relevance within dimensions. In the light of their recommendation, some of the 25 items were rewritten and decided to use for the pilot study. A teacher by means of comprehensibility of test and its duration tested pilot version of the scale.

3.3.2.2 Construct related Validity Evidence

In order to test construct-related validity evidence, EFA and CFA were conducted. Factor analysis is one of the widely used techniques to acquire construct-related validity evidence for test constructions and adaptations in social sciences (Çokluk , Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2012). This technique was used to propose a construct a model by using EFA and confirm the model that was estimated in EFA by CFA. EFA is a statistical technique used to determine latent variables in theoretical construct based on observed variables (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2012). Using EFA is recommended in first stages of test construction to explore dimensions without generating a model on the data (Tosunoğlu, 1993). However, as nature of the study is determined, EFA may not be helpful for the next stages of measurement. However, CFA confirms the model where the latent variables were defined by the researcher based on the EFA data. CFA is more powerful technique than EFA in order to detect

construct-related validity evidence, develop and/of confirm a theoretical framework (Erkuş, 2003).

In pilot version of this study, EFA was administered since ECTCPR was constructed by the researcher and required to explore the dimensions of the scale. The statistical software, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was utilized to analyze the scale's dimensionality. Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin (KMO) value was analyzed in order to measure factorability. Analysis of promax rotation of maximum likelihood factor method was used and eigenvalues, scree plot, rotated factor loadings, communalities and item-total correlation were considered. In the main study, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used confirm the dimensions as proposed in EFA. LISREL 8.8 was administered and fit indices such as Chi-Square, RMSEA, NFI, NNFI, CFI, and GFI were reported. The results of pilot study and the main study were given in results section.

3.3.3 Reliability Analysis of ECTCPRBS

Reliability analyses were utilized for each dimensions and whole scale by calculating Cronbach alpha coefficient in SPSS Statistical Software Program 20. Cronbach alpha coefficients were reported for both the results of the pilot study and the main study. According to Pallant (2007) , Cronbach's alpha value between 0.6 – 0.7 shows acceptable reliability, 0.7 – 0.9 shows good reliability, and 0.9 and higher represents excellent internal consistency. Overall, the alpha value of the pilot scale produced a value of 0.668, while alpha value for the main study is 0.737. Besides, based on this criterion, the alpha values reflected that both the pilot and the main study version of the scale were reliable. The results of reliability analysis are given in results section.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The permission from Research Center for Applied Ethics at Middle East Technical University (UEAM) is required due to ethical concerns. Then the permission from the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is obtained. Following getting approval from MoNE ECTCPRB scale has been conducted. The data collection period began in July 2014 and completed until December 2014.

Data collection procedure has been realized in the independent and private kindergartens. All participants filled out the questionnaire voluntarily and all the data were gathered by the researcher. All participants were informed about the aim of the study. No question is included related to their identity. The questionnaire lasted approximately 10 minutes.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

To be able determine dimensions of the scale EFA and CFA analyses were performed. The dimensions of the scale were formed based on the model proposed in EFA of pilot study and confirmed in CFA of main study. On the other hand, in order to answer the first and second research question, descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test analysis method were performed. The beliefs of early childhood teachers were described through descriptive data and independent samples t-test analysis.

IBM SPSS 20 Statistical Software Program and LISREL 8.8 were utilized to analyze the data of the present study collected from early childhood teachers in Ankara. The responses of the items which ordered from strongly disagree to strongly agree were coded as from 1 to 5, respectively.; educational level as valued from 1 to 6, years of experience as 1 to 6, age of engaged children from 1 to 8, being aware of UNCRC or not 1 to 2, Reading UNCRC or not 1 to 2, attending any training related to children rights 1 or 2, lastly attending any course, seminar,workshop or conferences from 1 to 2 . In addition to these, “excluded cases pairwise” is selected for dealing with missing data.

3.6 Internal and External Validity

3.6.1 Internal Validity

Fraenkel and Wallen said that (2006) , “When a study has internal validity, it means that any relationship observed between two or more variables should be unambiguous as to what it means rather than due to -something else-.” (p.169). In the present study, internal validity threats were reported as subject characteristics, location, and instrumentation. Subject Characteristics is one of the internal validity threats and defined as choosing of the participants for a research may leads to differences in

unintended ways that are correlated one of the variables that are defined in the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). This threat may occur in this study since their beliefs towards children participation rights may change considering being aware of UNCRC or not, Reading UNCRC or not, attending any pre-service training related to children rights, lastly attending any seminar, course, workshop or conferences in in-service.

For instance, if some of the participants take part in any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service including children rights may have positive beliefs towards children participation rights. Another example is that the beliefs on children participation rights may change regarding participants' awareness of UNCRC. Hence, the answers may change among participants. This threat can be a threat for internal validity and leads to a limitation for the present study.

Location threat refers to the conditions where the instrument is conducted may influence the answers of the participants (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Even though all the answers were collected in different school settings, school environment may change from one school to another. However, due to conducting questionnaire in the school environment, location threat was minimized in this study.

Instrumentation threat is that the ways that instruments were utilized may pose a threat for internal validity like instrument decay, data collector characteristics, and data collector bias. In order to eliminate or minimize these threats, all data were collected by the researcher and instrument was constructed to administer easily.

3.6.2 External Validity

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) defined the external generalizability as (p. 104) "... the extent to which the results of a study can be generalized determines the external validity of the study". Due to not employing random sampling, results may not be generalized to early childhood teacher population in Turkey.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) ecological generalizability refers to "... the degree to which the results of a study can be extended to other settings and conditions" (p.106). The results of the present study are more suitable for ecological generalizability since random sampling technique was used. Hence, it can be asserted that

this study can be generalized to a population which has early childhood teachers are included in the same conditions and settings.

3.7 Ethical Issues

Every study includes human subject has some ethical regulations. Therefore, a researcher should confirm that the research that will be conducted is ethical. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), there are 3 issues which should be regarded i.e., protecting participants from harm, ensuring confidentiality of research, and deception of participants. This proposed study fits the guidelines for exempt status because it comes any harm to anyone neither physical nor psychological as a result of the research. It is asked that what their beliefs about the children participation rights are and tried to find the dimensions lying beyond these beliefs. Collecting and holding data in confidential is also regarded as an ethical dimension. Moreover, participants did not deceive all the aspects of the research topic will be explained and they will allow leaving the questionnaire any time they want.

3.8 Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of the study can be listed as following:

1. The dimensions of the belief scale that selected for this study indicate the universe of all possible aspects of ECTCPR.
2. Participants' answers are assumed to be reliable.
3. No other extraneous variable affects the dimensions of the study.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

1. There is no belief scale towards the children participation rights. Therefore, constructing items was challenging. Some point of views can be missed.
2. There is no consensus on the all dimensions of children participation rights.
3. Beliefs that are evaluated depend on the usage of self-measurement.

4. Since each respondent have an unique opinion,open-ended question part may not work properly in a large population.
5. Participants may not answer the open-ended questions with in a limited time.
6. Participants may choose to not answer all questions in open-ended section.
7. The newly developed scale is prepared specifically only for the current study. Although validity and reliability issues are considered, it needs to be revised.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In the current study, difference between early childhood professional's ECTCPRB scores and status of being aware of UNCRC, reading UNCRC, and attending any course, seminar, workshop or training programme regarding the children's rights is investigated. In accordance with this purpose, data analysis results are explained in this section. Thus, this chapter includes exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis of data collection instruments, descriptive analysis results for the data obtained from ECTCPRB Scale, independent samples t-test results in order to test differences in beliefs regarding status of being aware of UNCRC, reading UNCRC, and attending any course, seminar, workshop or training programme regarding the children's rights.

4.1 Validity and Reliability For the Data Collection Instruments

In the present study, the data collected through newly developed scale called ECTCPRBS. Before administration it is required to implement exploratory factor analysis to find structure of the factor pattern of the scale and confirm this factor pattern via confirmatory factor analysis (Çokluk et al, 2010) Therefore, exploratory factor analysis was applied with the data obtained from pilot study and subsequently, confirmatory factor analysis was applied with the data obtained from main study in order to get validity evidences for the data collection instruments. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis results for ECTCPRBS is explained in the following section.

4.1.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

ECTCPRS was administered to 284 early childhood professionals in the pilot study and the data obtained from pilot study was analyzed with exploratory factor analysis techniques through PASW 20. Exploratory factor analysis results and hypothesized factor pattern of ECTCPRS is explained in detail below.

Table 4.1: Exploratory Factor Analysis Results about Initial Eigenvalues of ECTCPRS

Factor	Total	Initial Eigenvalues % of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.035	28.139	28.139
2	3.194	12.775	40.914
3	1.320	5.282	46.196
4	1.246	4.986	51.181
5	1.173	4.693	55.874
6	1.044	4.177	60.051
7	.920	3.682	63.733

Note: Principal component analysis method was used for the factor analysis

4.1.1.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of ECTCPRS

Exploratory factor analysis was applied by using the PASW 20 statistical package programme to establish the factor structure of ECTCPRBS. Before conducting the factor analysis, KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity was checked whether these are appropriate for factor analysis. For ECTCPRS, KMO value was calculated as 0.87 and can be interpreted as very good (Çokluk et al,2010). Bartlett's test of sphericity was found as significant (BTS Value=2590.660) which is desirable for the factor analysis (Büyüköztürk, 2002). These values indicated that the data set of belief scale is appropriate for factor analysis. Principal component analysis method was used since it gives the best result for correlated variables(Costello & Osborne,2005). Subsequently, factor analysis was applied and 6 factors emerged which have eigenvalues greater than one as indicated with Table 4.1 However, it should be noted that, first two factors' eigenvalues are quite higher from the other four factors and last four factors' eigenvalues are close to one.

Costello and Osborne (2005) stated that establishing factor number by eigenvalues greater than one method may lead to too many factors and thus, using scree plot to interpret the number of factors will give best result. As shown in Figure 4.1, third factor seems to be breaking point in the scree plot which means there are two factors which are above the break point.

According to the scree plot and eigenvalues, it was decided that two factor structure is

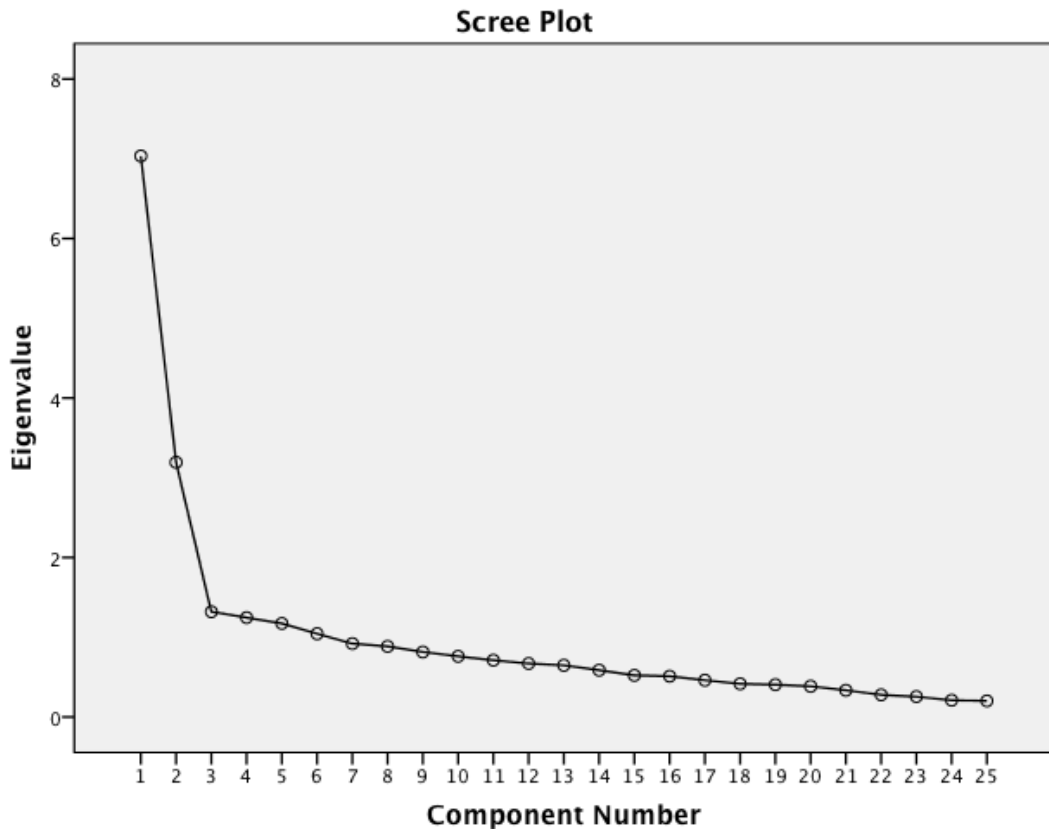


Figure 4.1: Scree plot for ECTCPRBS

appropriate for this scale since third factor seems to be the breaking point in the scree plot and first two factors' eigenvalues are quite higher than the other factors. These two factors explain almost 41 percent of the total variance.

Subsequently, oblique rotation was applied to be able to interpret the results since in social sciences correlation among factors are expected and oblique rotation gives better results when the factors are related (Costello & Osborne, 2005). According to Tabachnik and Fidell (2001), item is acceptable for the scale if its communality value is greater than 0.32. In this data set, all the communality values of items are higher than 0.32, except the items 22, 23, 24, 25. However, these four items' communality values are very far to 0.32. Therefore, it was concluded that these four items in the scale are not appropriate for the scale according to their communality values. Stevens (2002) suggested using items with minimum 0.30 factor loadings. In this scale, 21 items have higher factor loadings than 0.30 and furthermore, there is no cross loading for any of the items in this scale. Therefore, it was concluded that two factor structure

is appropriate to be interpreted. Items loaded in the first dimension are related with expressing views and have their views heard. These 11 items are about right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child in terms of children participation rights. Therefore, this dimension was named as “expressing views and have their views heard”. Ten items which were loaded in the second dimension are related with participation in decision-making process which affect children. So, second dimension is named as “participation in decision-making process which affect children”. Factor matrix of ECTCPRB Scale items in the pilot study is given in Table 4.2. In this table, factor loadings are values which get from Pattern Matrix. Principal component analysis method and promax with Kaiser Normalization rotation method was applied for the exploratory factor analysis. Factor loadings which are greater than 0.30 are indicated.

After deciding on factor pattern of the scale, Cronbach alpha coefficient values were calculated for each dimension of ECTCPRB Scale in order to interpret the internal consistency of early childhood professionals’ answers to the scale. As indicated with Table 4.4, Cronbach alpha coefficient values were calculated as 0.89 and 0.70 respectively for the two dimensions in the scale, which can be interpreted as satisfactory (Pallant, 2007). Furthermore, deleting any of the items did not increase Cronbach alpha coefficient value which indicates that all of the items have a positive impact on reliability. To sum up, there seems to be no problem for the internal consistency of each dimension of ECTCPRB Scale.

4.1.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Confirmatory factor analysis is a higher order research technique which enables researcher to test the relationship between observed variables and latent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). For the newly developed scales in order to give evidences for the validity of scales, it is suggested to establish factor pattern of scales with exploratory factor analysis and then confirm the fit of this pattern with confirmatory factor analysis (Çokluk et al, 2010). In accordance with this suggestion, exploratory factor analysis was conducted for ECTCPRB Scale with pilot study and moreover, confirmatory factor analysis was applied for these scale with the main study. Confir-

Table 4.2: Factor matrix of ECTCPR Scale

Item	Factor Loadings		Communality
	Factor 1	Factor 2	
13	.838		.680
17	.802		.623
9	.800		.610
3	.762		.548
10	.737		.552
11	.734		.395
8	.690		.521
14	.671		.525
15	.654		.508
4	.617		.441
1	.607		.362
7		.725	.493
5		.664	.455
20		-.620	
6		.615	.395
2		.605	.434
16		.568	.418
21		-.513	.340
12		.504	.310
18		.458	.321
19		-.392	.2
23			.044
22			.164
24			.122
25			.289

Table 4.3: Items According to Dimension of of ECTCPR Scale

Name of the factor	Item number
Expressing views	1-3-4-8-9-10-11-13-14-15-17
Participation in decision-making process which affect children	2-5-6-7-12-16-18-19-20-21

matory factor analysis procedure and results for ECTCPRB Scale explained in detail in this section.

Table 4.4: Reliability Analysis for Each Dimension of ECTCPRB Scale

Early Childhood Teachers Children Participation Rights Belief Scale		
Dimension	Expressing views	Participation in decision-making process which affect children
Number of Items	11	10
Cronbach Alpha	.89	.70

4.1.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of ECTCPRB Scale

According to the exploratory factor analysis results of ECTCPRB Scale, factor pattern with two dimensions was established. In order to confirm this factor structure, confirmatory factor analysis was applied with the data obtained in the main study through the statistical program of LISREL 8.8. Before conducting confirmatory factor analysis, missing values were replaced with mean scores (Table 4.5) since the proportion of missing values are lower than ten percent.

After this step, hypothesized model was tested with confirmatory factor analysis. In accordance with the findings of exploratory factor analysis, it is hypothesized that items 1-3-4-8-9-10-11-13-14-15-17 load on the dimension of expressing views and have their views heard and items 2-5-6-7-12-16-18-19-20-21 load on the dimension of participation in decision-making process which affect children. Hypothesized model for the ECTCPRB Scale and confirmatory factor analysis results is given with Figure 4.1.

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is one of the fit indexes offered by confirmatory factor analysis. RMSEA represents the error between proposed model and predicted model. RMSEA value is about .05 accepted as good fit, the value between .05 and .08 accepted as reasonable fit of the model (Kline, 1998). Moreover, the value of NFI and CFI greater than .95 explained as good fit; the value between .90 and .95 indicates reasonable fit. On the one hand, the value of RMR less than .05 indicates a good fit, the value between .05 and .08 represents reasonable fit (Brown, 2006).

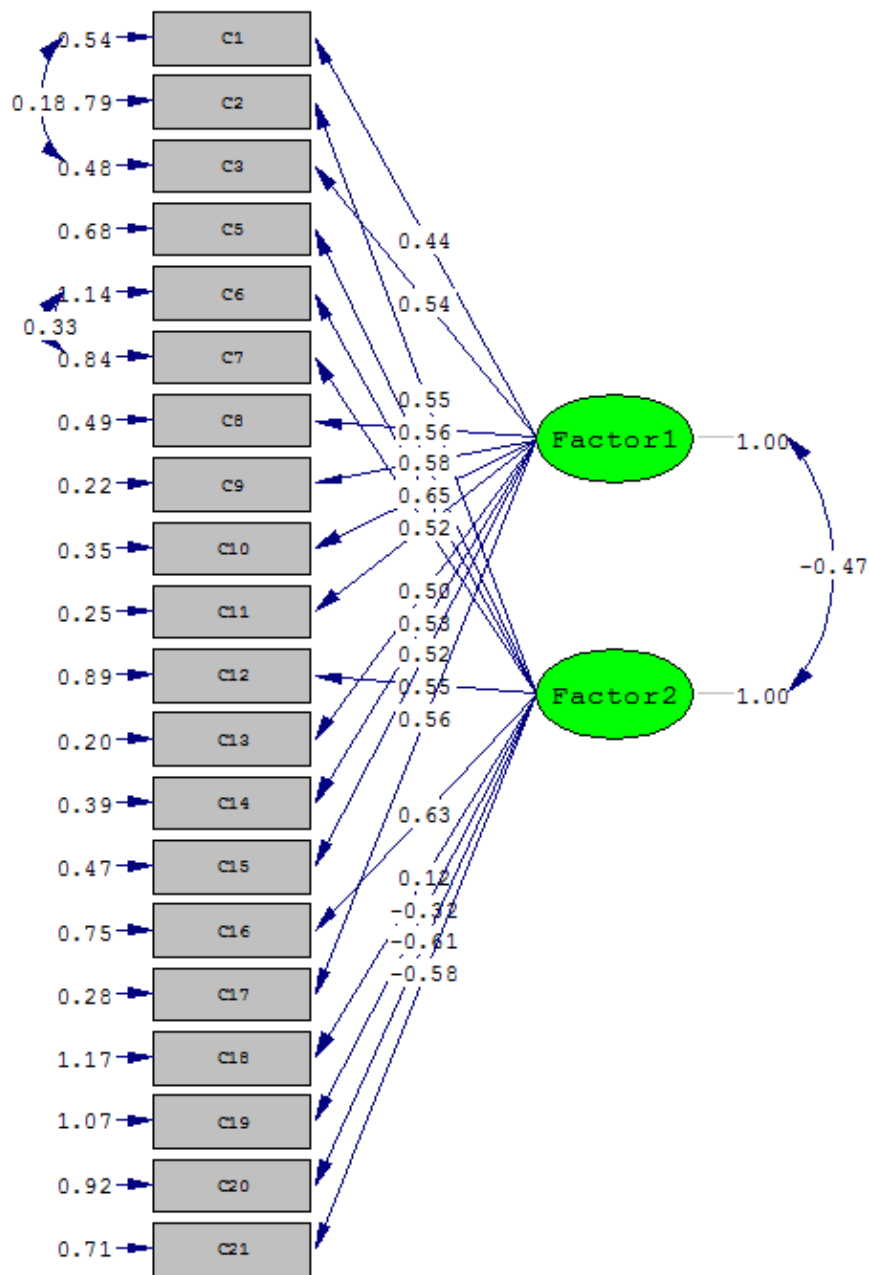
RMSEA value was calculated as 0.082. To be able to obtain good fit, two modifica-

Table 4.5: Missing Value Analysis

EM Means ^a	
item 1	4.49
item 2	2.18
item 3	4.55
item 4	4.24
item 5	2.36
item 6	3.73
item 7	3.05
item 8	4.03
item 9	4.53
item 10	4.43
item 11	4.55
item 12	2.29
item 13	4.52
item 14	4.35
item 15	4.42
item 16	2.01
item 17	4.52
item 18	2.33
item 19	3.73
item 20	3.3405
item 21	3.4876

Little's MCAR test: Chi-Square = 449.749, DF = 288, Sig. = .630

tions was done. With two modifications offered by the program, RMSEA value was calculated as 0.068 which was interpreted as reasonable fit. Modifications were made between the item "Children should express their views in any way that they want." and "Children should be able to express her/ his views on any issue concerning classroom", moreover between "When children act against the teacher's decisions, they should be encouraged to behave as expected." and "The teachers should decide to do class activities without consulting children". After the modifications finding RMSEA value 0.068 accepted as one of the evidences of reasonable fit but investigating more fit indexes to evaluate the tested model is suggested in the literature (Matsunaga, 2010). For that reason, indices such as Normed Chi-Square (NC), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) were evaluated for ECTCPRBS. Normed Chi-Square is calculated by dividing Chi-Square value to the degrees of freedom value



Chi-Square=412.68, df=167, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.068

Figure 4.2: Hypothesized Model and Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of ECTCPRBS

was calculated as 2.47 for ECTCPRBS which can be accepted as good fit. Furthermore, CFI(0.95) and GFI (0.89) values were both calculated. The value NFI (.92) also represents reasonable fit. As a result, LISREL output confirm that the values of the main study represented reasonable two-factor model of ECTCPRBS.

In addition to the fit indices via confirmatory factor analysis, Cronbach alpha coeffi-

coefficients were calculated for each dimension of the scale in order to check the internal consistency of the data obtained from main study. Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated as 0.89 and 0.70 for the two dimensions of ECTCPRBS. Although first dimensions' Cronbach alpha coefficient value is interpreted as good, the value of 0.70 for the second dimension is interpreted as acceptable (Pallant, 2007).

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of ECTCPRB Scale

Factor model of ECTCPRB Scale was established via exploratory factor analysis with the data obtained from pilot study and then, these models were confirmed via confirmatory factor analysis with the data obtained from main study. Latest version of ECTCPRB Scale can be seen in Appendix B. After establishing and confirming factor models, data obtained from main study was analyzed with descriptive statistics techniques in order to determine early childhood teachers' beliefs towards children participation rights. Results of these analyses will be given as Beliefs of early childhood education teachers' towards children participation rights as stated in UNCRC.

4.2.1 Beliefs of Early Childhood Education Teachers' Towards Children Participation Rights As Stated in UNCRC.

According to the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis results, it was decided that ECTCPRB Scale composed of two dimensions which are expressing views and attending in decision-making process which affect children. In order to have a better understanding about early childhood teachers' beliefs towards children participation rights as stated in UNCRC, descriptive statistics were calculated for each dimension and will be explained in the following two subheadings.

Research Question 1 : What are the beliefs of early childhood teachers towards children participation rights?

4.2.1.1 Beliefs Regarding Expressing Views

In ECTCPRB Scale , there are 11 items which were loaded in the expressing views dimension. The mean score of these 11 items was calculated as 4.42 out of 5 which

can be interpreted as quite high. This high mean score indicates that Early childhood teachers believe expressing views in early years is very important. To have a better understanding about in children can express their views, Table 4.6 indicates mean scores of each item in the first dimension. For each question in the dimension, minimum value was calculated as 1 while maximum value calculated as 5. Therefore, it is possible to say that, for each item there are both positive and negative beliefs related to expressing views in early years. However, mean scores on items in the first dimension show that early childhood teachers generally have very positive beliefs regarding expressing views in early years. Almost all items have mean score higher than four out of five which indicate that early childhood teachers think expressing views is very important. Encouraging children to express their views, to take children views in problem-solving process, to help children express their views are the outstriking items in the scale when considering early childhood teachers' answers. With respect to other items, deciding without taking children's views and consulting to children in every situation had lower mean scores but it should be noted that these two items' mean score are 4.03 and 4.24. which are still quite high.

In summary, although there are contradictory beliefs in the sample for each question, mean scores of each item show that early childhood teachers strongly believe that young children should express their views and be given to opportunity to express their views in any situation concerning them.

4.2.1.2 Beliefs Regarding Participation in Decision-making Process Which Affect Children

In ECTCPRBS, there are 10 items about to make children attend in decision-making process which affect them. Similar to the items in the first dimension, the maximum value calculated as 5 while minimum score calculated as 1 for each item in the second dimension. The mean score of these 10 items was calculated as 3 out of 5 which can be interpreted as early childhood teachers have neutral beliefs in children's decision making process. In the 5 point Likert type 3 corresponds to neutral and four of the ten items have lower mean scores than 3 which means that most of the early childhood teachers believe that teachers should make decisions without ask-

Table 4.6: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Items in the First Dimension of ECTCPRBS

Item in the ECTCPRBS	Mean	SD
Children should express their views in any way that they want.	4.49	.85
Children should be encouraged to express their views on any topic in the classroom.	4.55	.88
Teachers should consult with children for every situation concerning them.	4.24	.91
Teachers should not decide without taking children's views in the classroom.	4.03	.89
The appropriate environment should be established for children to express their views in the classroom.	4.53	.74
It is important that children express their opinions while determining the classroom rules.	4.43	.87
Children should be able to express her/ his views on any issue concerning classroom.	4.56	.72
It is possible to learn new/ different things from the views of children.	4.45	.66
Children should be supported to express their ideas/ opinions about issues concerning them.	4.35	.81
Children should be given the opportunity to express themselves during the activity in a way that they want (music, video, painting etc.)	4.31	.86
When there is a problem in the classroom, it is important to take the views of children to solve it.	4.52	.77

ing them, teacher shouldn't convince children when there is a contradiction between children and teacher about an issue concerning children, children shouldn't always obey the rules that established by the teachers and teachers don't believe that children shouldn't object that when teachers make any decisions affecting them. However, six of the ten items which are: "As a child, making his/her own decisions by him/herself is inconvenient (M=3.90)", "Children are not qualified enough to make decisions by themselves. (M=3.49)", and "When children act against the teacher's decisions, they should be encouraged to behave as expected. (M=3.74)", "Children should be encouraged to express themselves by choosing one of the ways that the teacher determined such as music, video, painting, etc. while doing the activity. (M=3.73)", "Children are not mature enough to make their own decisions about themselves. (M=3.34)" have higher mean scores than 3. Lastly "The teachers should decide to do class activ-

ities without consulting children. (M=3.05)” item has a mean score which is accepted as neutral means early childhood teachers are not sure to consult children in planning steps of class activities which will be held on Therefore, it is possible to say that most prominent beliefs regarding to make children to attend in decision making process have a contradictory beliefs which will be discussed in detail in Discussion section. In general, items in the second dimension which are related to make children attend in decision making process which affect them have lower mean scores when compared with the items related to expressing views . Detailed information for mean and standard deviation distribution for each item is presented in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Items in the Second Dimension of ECTCPRBS

Item in the ECTCPRBS	Mean	Sd
Teachers should be able to make decisions about children without asking them	2.18	1.04
When the teacher makes a decision about any issue concerning children, the children should not object that.	2.36	1.06
When children act against the teacher’s decisions, they should be encouraged to behave as expected.	3.74	1.12
The teachers should decide to do class activities without consulting children.	3.05	1.07
Children should be convinced to act in accordance with the teachers’ decisions.	2.29	1.09
Children should always obey the teacher’s decisions.	2.01	1.06
Children should be encouraged to express themselves by choosing one of the ways that the teacher determined such as music, video, painting, etc. while doing the activity	3.73	1.08
Children are not mature enough to make their own decisions about themselves.	3.34	1.08
Children are not qualified enough to make decisions by themselves.	3.49	1.13
As a child, making his/her own decisions by him/herself is inconvenient.	3.90	1.02

4.3 Differences in Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs by Levels of Awareness of the UNCRC, Reading of the UNCRC, Attendance of in-Service Training Program(Courses, workshops, Seminars or Conferences and Attendance of Pre-service Training Programs

Independent samples t-test was used in order to investigate differences in status of being aware of UNCRC, having read UNCRC, having attended any in-service training and having attended any pre-service training in early childhood teachers' beliefs. Assumptions for the independent samples t-test, inferential statistic results are given in the following sections.

4.3.1 Assumptions for the Independent Samples t-test for the Status of Being Aware of UNCRC

Research Question 2.1 : Is there a statistically significant mean difference between statuses of early childhood teachers' being aware of UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights?

H_0 : There is no statistically significant mean difference between status of early childhood teachers' being aware of UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights.

Before implementing and interpreting independent samples t-test for the data obtained from ECTCPRBS, assumptions for the independent samples t-test were investigated. From the viewpoint of Pallant (2007), there are five main assumptions of independent sample t- test which are level of measurement, random sampling, independence of observations, normal distribution and lastly homogeneity of variance. In this section, these five assumptions were investigated in order to run independent samples t-test for the data obtained from ECTCPRBS.

As a first assumption, level of measurement was investigated. In order to assure this assumption, dependent variable must be measured at the internal or ratio level and must be continuous (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, to be able to identify status of being awareness differences in beliefs, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS was

used as dependent variables which are continuous not categorical. Therefore, it can be concluded that level of measurement assumption is assured.

Independent samples t-test assumed that data obtained from the randomly selected sample (Pallant, 2007). In this study random sampling was used to get data.

Independence of observations is another important assumption of independent sample t- test and means that participants of the study would not influenced by any other factors and must be independent of each other (Pallant, 2007). In the data collection process no events that may influence participants’ responses were observed and so, it is assumed that this assumption is not violated. In order to assure normality assumption, each group must have normally distributed scores on the dependent variable (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, there are two groups for the independent samples t-test which are aware of the UNCRC and not aware of it. Skewness and kurtosis values for these groups on the dependent variables which are mean score of ECTCPRBS is given with the Table 4.8

Table 4.8: Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Status of Being Aware Of UNCRC or not

Groups	ECTCPRBS Mean Scores		
	Skewness	Kurtosis	N
Being Aware of UNCRC	-2.06	13.28	270
Not Aware of CRC	-1.44	3.42	49

As can be seen in Table 4.8, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS did not normally distributed for the groups since kurtosis value is higher than 2. In such a case, violation of this assumption did not cause major problems when the sample size is larger than 30 (Pallant, 2007). In accordance with this statement, it is assumed that high kurtosis values for ECTCPRBS mean scores of participants who does not aware of UNCRC would not constitute an impediment to run independent samples t-test since the number of the both groups is quite higher than 30.

As a last assumption, homogeneity of variances is investigated via Levene’s test for equality of variances. As can be seen in Table 4.9, Levene’s test was found as significant (<.05) for the mean score obtained from ECTCPRBS interpreted as the groups

of status of being aware of UNCRC and not aware of UNCRC have equal variances (Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.9: Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances Results

	Levene’s test for equality of variances	
	F	Sig.
ECTCPRBS mean scores	4.24	.04

Briefly, five assumptions for the independent samples t-test were checked and it was decided that there is no problem to run independent samples t-test in order to investigate status of being aware of UNCRC and not being aware of UNCRC in early childhood teachers’ beliefs. Results of independent samples t-test analyses are given in the following subheadings.

4.3.2 Status of Early Childhood Teachers’ Beliefs About Children Participation Rights by Levels of Awareness of the UNCRC

In accordance with the third research question of the study, status of being aware of UNCRC or not in early childhood teachers’ beliefs towards children participation rights as stated in UNCRC was investigated in this section.

To be able to answer this research question, mean difference between participants who is aware of UNCRC and not aware of UNCRC answers to ECTCPRBS was investigated via independent samples t-test. According to the independent samples t-test results that given in Table 4.10, there was no significant mean difference in beliefs towards children participation between participants who are aware of UNCRC and who are not aware of UNCRC in beliefs towards children participation ($t(58) = 1.12$, $p = .26$). Therefore, there is not enough evidence to conclude that participants who aware of UNCRC ($M = 3.75$, $SD = .33$) have significantly higher beliefs than who are not aware of UNCRC is ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .44$).

According to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines, the magnitude of the differences in the means calculated as .005 is very small. Eta squared interpreted as the magnitude of the differences in ECTCPRBS means is very small (Cohen, 1988). Calculating eta squared as .005 indicates that 0.5 percent of the variance in beliefs in children

Table 4.10: Independent Samples t-test Results for status of being aware of UNCRC or not in ECTCPRBS

t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	T-test for Equality of Means	
					% 95 Confidence Interval of Difference	
					Lower	Upper
1.12	58	.26	.07	.06	-.05	.20

participation is explained by status of being aware of UNCRC (Pallant, 2007).

To sum up, mean score of early childhood teachers who are aware of UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.75 with the standard deviation of .33 while mean score of early childhood teachers who are not aware of UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.68 with the standard deviation of .44. Independent samples t-test revealed that there is no statistically significant mean difference between early childhood teachers who are aware of UNCRC and not aware of UNCRC towards children participation rights. In other words, there is no evidence early childhood teachers who are aware of UNCRC hold more positive beliefs towards children participation than teachers not aware of UNCRC. Therefore, it is not possible to say that early childhood teachers who are aware of UNCRC have more positive beliefs towards children participation when compared with teachers not aware of UNCRC.

4.3.3 Assumptions for the Independent Samples T-Test for Status of Having Read UNCRC

Research Question 2.2 : Is there a statistically significant mean difference between statuses of early childhood teachers' reading UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights?

H_0 : There is no statistically significant mean difference between status of early childhood teachers' reading of UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights.

As a first assumption, level of measurement was investigated. In order to assure this assumption, dependent variable must be measured at the internal or ratio level and

must be continuous (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, to be able to identify status of reading differences in beliefs ,mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS was used as dependent variables which are continuous not categorical. Therefore, it can be concluded that level of measurement assumption is assured.

Independent samples t-test assumed that data obtained from the randomly selected sample (Pallant, 2007). In this study random sampling was used to get data. Independence of observations is another important assumption of independent sample t- test and means that participants of the study would not influenced by any other factors and must be independent of each other (Pallant, 2007). In the data collection process no events that may influence participants’ responses were observed and so, it is assumed that this assumption is not violated. In order to assure normality assumption, each group must have normally distributed scores on the dependent variable (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, there are two groups for the independent samples t-test which are having read UNCRC and have not read yet UNCRC. Skewness and kurtosis values for these groups on the dependent variables which are mean score of ECTCPRBS is given with Table 4.11

Table 4.11: Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Status of Reading UNCRC or not

ECTCPRBS Mean Scores			
Groups	Skewness	Kurtosis	N
Reading UNCRC	-2.47	15.16	201
Have not read CRC	-1.21	4.44	118

As can be seen in Table 4.11, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS did not normally distributed for the groups since kurtosis value is higher than 2. In such a case, violation of this assumption did not cause major problems when the sample size is larger than 30 (Pallant, 2007). In accordance with this statement, it is assumed that high kurtosis values for ECTCPRBS mean scores of participants who have read and have not read yet UNCRC would not constitute an impediment to run independent samples t-test since the number of the both groups is quite higher than 30.

As a last assumption, homogeneity of variances is investigated via Levene’s test for equality of variances. As can be seen in Table 4.12, Levene’s test was found as non-significant ($>.05$) for the mean score obtained from ECTCPRBS interpreted as the

groups of status of reading UNCRC and not reading UNCRC have equal variances (Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.12: Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances Results

	Levene’s test for equality of variances	
	F	Sig.
ECTCPRBS mean scores	.22	.06

Briefly, five assumptions for the independent samples t-test were checked and it was decided that there is no problem to run independent samples t-test in order to investigate status of reading of UNCRC and not reading of UNCRC in early childhood teachers’ beliefs. Results of independent samples t-test analyses are given in the following subheadings.

4.3.4 Status of Early Childhood Teachers’ Beliefs About Children Participation Rights by Reading of the UNCRC

In accordance with the fourth research question of the study, status of reading UNCRC or not in early childhood teachers’ beliefs towards children participation rights as stated in UNCRC was investigated in this section. To be able to answer this research question, mean difference between participants who has read UNCRC and has not yet read UNCRC answers to ECTCPRBS was investigated via independent samples t-test. According to the independent samples t-test results that given in Table 4.13 there is a significant mean difference in beliefs towards children participation between participants who have read UNCRC and have not read yet UNCRC in beliefs towards children participation ($t(317)= 2.50, p= .013$). Therefore, there is an enough evidence to conclude that participants who have read UNCRC ($M=3.78, SD=.34$) have significantly higher beliefs than who have not read yet UNCRC is ($M=3.68, SD=.34$).

According to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines, the magnitude of the differences in the means calculated as .005 is very small. Calculating eta squared as .005 indicates that 0.5 percent of the variance in beliefs in children participation is explained by status of reading UNCRC (Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.13: Independent Samples t-test Results for status of having read UNCRC or not in ECTCPRBS

t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	T-test for Equality of Means	
					% 95 Confidence Interval of Difference	
					Lower	Upper
2.50	317	.01	.10	.04	.02	.17

To sum up, mean score of early childhood teachers who have read UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.78 with the standard deviation of .34 while mean score of early childhood teachers have not read UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.68 with the standard deviation of .34. Independent samples t-test revealed that there is a statistically significant mean difference between early childhood teachers have read UNCRC and not have not read yet UNCRC towards children participation rights. In other words, there is a strong evidence that early childhood teachers who have read UNCRC hold more positive beliefs towards children participation than teachers have not read yet UNCRC. Therefore, it is possible to say that early childhood teachers who have read UNCRC have more positive beliefs towards children participation when compared with teachers have not read yet UNCRC.

4.3.5 Assumptions for the Independent Samples T-Test for Status of Having Attended any In-service Training (Courses, Workshops, Seminars, or Conferences) Related to UNCRC

Research Question 2.3 : Is there a statistically significant mean difference between statuses of early childhood teachers’ attending any course workshop, seminar or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights?

H_0 : There is no statistically significant mean difference between status of early childhood teachers’ attending any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights.

As a first assumption, level of measurement was investigated. In order to assure this assumption, dependent variable must be measured at the internal or ratio level

and must be continuous (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, to be able to identify status of attending any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC differences in beliefs, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS was used as dependent variables which are continuous not categorical. Therefore, it can be concluded that level of measurement assumption is assured.

Independent samples t-test assumed that data obtained from the randomly selected sample (Pallant, 2007). In this study random sampling was used to get data.

Independence of observations is another important assumption of independent sample t- test and means that participants of the study would not influenced by any other factors and must be independent of each other (Pallant, 2007). In the data collection process no events that may influence participants’ responses were observed and so, it is assumed that this assumption is not violated. In order to assure normality assumption, each group must have normally distributed scores on the dependent variable (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, there are two groups for the independent samples t-test which are having read UNCRC and have not read yet UNCRC. Skewness and kurtosis values for these groups on the dependent variables which are mean score of ECTCPRBS is given with the Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Attending any Seminar, Workshop or Conferences Related to UNCRC or not

Groups	ECTCPRBS Mean Scores		
	Skewness	Kurtosis	N
Have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC	.52	.05	45
Have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC	-2.31	11.48	274

As can be seen in 4.14, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS did not normally distributed for the groups since kurtosis value of early childhood teachers who have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC is lower than 2 and for early childhood teachers who have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC is higher than 2. In such a case, violation of this assumption did not cause major problems when the sample size is larger than 30 (Pallant, 2007). In accordance with this statement, it is assumed that high and

low kurtosis values for ECTCPRBS mean scores of participants have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC and have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC would not constitute an impediment to run independent samples t-test since the number of the both groups is quite higher than 30.

As a last assumption, homogeneity of variances is investigated via Levene's test for equality of variances. As can be seen in Table 4.15, Levene's test was found as non-significant ($>.05$) for the mean score obtained from ECTCPRBS interpreted as the groups of status of attending any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC or not have equal variances (Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.15: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances Results

	Levene's test for equality of variances	
	F	Sig.
ECTCPRBS mean scores	.28	.59

Briefly, five assumptions for the independent samples t-test were checked and it was decided that there is no problem to run independent samples t-test in order to investigate status of have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC and have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC in early childhood teachers' beliefs. Results of independent sample t- test analyses are given in the following section.

4.3.6 Status of Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children Participation Rights by Attendance of any In-service Training Program (Courses, Workshops, Seminars or Conferences)

In accordance with the fifth research question of the study, status of attending any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC in in-service in early childhood teachers' beliefs towards children participation rights was investigated in this section. To be able to answer this research question, mean difference between participants who has attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC or not answers to ECTCPRBS was investigated via independent samples

t-test. According to the independent samples t-test results that given in Table 4.16 there is a significant mean difference in beliefs towards children participation between participants attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC and have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC in beliefs towards children participation ($t(317)= 2.11, p=.035$). Therefore, there is an enough evidence to conclude that participants who have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC ($M=3.84, SD=.33$) have significantly higher beliefs than who have not attended any course seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC is ($M=3.73, SD=.35$).

Table 4.16: Independent Samplet-test Results Status of Attending any Course, Seminar, Workshop or Conferences in In-service Related to UNCRC or not in ECTCPRBS

T-test for Equality of Means						
t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	% 95 Confidence Interval of Difference	
					Lower	Upper
2.11	317	.03	.11	.05	.00	.22

According to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines, the magnitude of the differences in the means calculated as .014 is very small. Calculating eta squared as .014 indicates that 1.4 percent of the variance in beliefs in children participation is explained by status of attending any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC (Pallant, 2007). To sum up, mean score of early childhood teachers who who have attended any course,seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.84 with the standard deviation of .33 while mean score of early childhood teachers who have not attended any course,seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.73 with the standard deviation of .35. Independent samples t-test revealed that there is a statistically significant mean difference in beliefs between early childhood teachers who have attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC and early childhood teachers and who have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC towards children participation rights. In other words, there is an evidence that early childhood teachers who have attended any course,seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC have more positive beliefs towards chil-

dren participation than teachers who have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences related to UNCRC.

4.3.7 Assumptions for the Independent Samples T-Test for Status of Having Attended any Pre-service Training Related to UNCRC

Research Question 2.4: Is there a statistically significant mean difference between statuses of early childhood teachers' attending any training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights?

H_0 : There is no statistically significant mean difference between status of early childhood teachers' attending any training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC in beliefs in ECTCPRB Scale scores towards children participation rights.

As a first assumption, level of measurement was investigated. In order to assure this assumption, dependent variable must be measured at the internal or ratio level and must be continuous (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, to be able to identify status of attending any training programme related to UNCRC differences in beliefs, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS was used as dependent variables which are continuous not categorical. Therefore, it can be concluded that level of measurement assumption is assured.

Independent samples t-test assumed that data obtained from the randomly selected sample (Pallant, 2007). In this study random sampling was used to get data.

Independence of observations is another important assumption of independent sample t- test and means that participants of the study would not influenced by any other factors and must be independent of each other (Pallant, 2007). In the data collection process no events that may influence participants' responses were observed and so, it is assumed that this assumption is not violated. In order to assure normality assumption, each group must have normally distributed scores on the dependent variable (Pallant, 2007). In the current study, there are two groups for the independent samples t-test which are having read UNCRC and have not read yet UNCRC. Skewness and kurtosis values for these groups on the dependent variables which are mean score

of ECTCPRBS is given with the Table 4.17

Table 4.17: Skewness and Kurtosis Values for ECTCPRBS Mean Scores Regarding Status of Attending any Training Programme in Pre-service Related to UNCRC or not

Groups	ECTCPRBS Mean Scores		
	Skewness	Kurtosis	N
Have attended any training programme related to UNCRC	.55	.34	37
Have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC	-.89	3.9	278

As can be seen in Table 4.17, mean scores obtained from ECTCPRBS did not normally distributed for the group who have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC since kurtosis value of this group is higher than 2 .In such a case, violation of this assumption did not cause major problems when the sample size is larger than 30 (Pallant, 2007). In accordance with this statement, it is assumed that high kurtosis values for ECTCPRBS mean scores of participants have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC would not constitute an impediment to run independent samples t-test since the number of the group is higher than 30.

As a last assumption, homogeneity of variances is investigated via Levene’s test for equality of variances. As can be seen in Table 4.18, Levene’s test was found as non- significant ($>.05$) for the mean score obtained from ECTCPRBS interpreted as the groups of status of attending any training programme or not UNCRC have equal variances (Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.18: Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances Results

Levene’s test for equality of variances		
	F	Sig.
ECTCPRBS mean scores	.28	.59

Briefly, five assumptions for the independent samples t-test were checked and it was decided that there is no problem to run independent samples t-test in order to investigate status of having attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC and having not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC in early childhood teachers’ beliefs.

Results of independent samples t-test analyses are given in the following section.

4.3.8 Status of Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs towards Children Participation Rights by Attendance of any Pre-service Training Program

In accordance with the sixth research question of the study, status of attending any training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC or not in early childhood teachers' beliefs towards children participation rights as stated in UNCRC was investigated in this section. To be able to answer this research question, mean difference between participants who has attended any training programme in pre-sevice related to UN-CRC or not answers to ECTCPRBS was investigated via independent samples t-test. According to the independent samples t-test results that given in Table 4.19 there is no significant mean difference in beliefs towards children participation between participants who have attended any training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC and have not attended any any training programme related to UNCRC in beliefs towards children participation ($t(313)= 1.58, p= .11$). Therefore, there is not an enough evidence to conclude that participants who have attended any training programme related to UNCRC ($M=3.83,SD=.27$) have significantly higher beliefs than who have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC is ($M=3.75, SD=.30$).

Table 4.19: Independent Samples t-test Results Status of Attending any Training Programme in Pre- service Related to UNCRC or not in ECTCPRBS

t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	T-test for Equality of Means	
					Lower	Upper
1.58	313	.11	.08	.05	-.02	.18

According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the magnitude of the differences in the means calculated as .001 is very small. Calculating eta squared as .001 indicates that 0.1 percent of the variance in beliefs in children participation is explained by status of attending any training programme related to UNCRC (Pallant, 2007).

To sum up, mean score of early childhood teachers who who have attended any training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calcu-

lated as 3.83 with the standard deviation of .27 while mean score of early childhood teachers who have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC responses for ECTCPRBS is calculated as 3.75 with the standard deviation of .30. Independent samples t-test revealed that there is no statistically significant mean difference in beliefs between early childhood teachers who have attended any training programme related to UNCRC and early childhood teachers and who have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC towards children participation rights. In other words, there is no evidence that early childhood teachers who have attended any training programme related to UNCRC in pre-service have more positive beliefs towards children participation than teachers who have not attended any training programme related to UNCRC.

4.3.9 Open-ended Questions

The participants of the study have not answered open-ended questions completely. The researcher couldn't get data from the completed cases since the data may not represent the sample's ideas. Furthermore, nonresponses to open-ended questions may stem from participants' lack of information about the topic (Geer, 1988). However, it would be more detailed study to get direct view of respondents' own thinking related to issue. Otherwise, participants of the studies may answer as to fill open-ended questions, not for giving their underlying ideas (Schuman, 1966).

4.4 Summary of the Findings of the Study

One of the aim of the study is to investigate beliefs of early childhood teachers towards children participation rights. In accordance with the first question, ECTCPRB scale was constructed. To develop valid and reliable scale in order to measure early childhood teachers' beliefs towards children participation rights; firstly expert opinions consulted for determining dimensions and item appropriateness. Then, exploratory factor analysis was utilized to explore dimensions of the scale with 284 early childhood teachers who work in Ankara.

According to EFA results in pilot study, ECTCPRBS consisted of 25 items with two dimensions as expressing their own views freely and attending decision-making

which affect children. In order to confirm the factor structure of the study CFA was conducted with the data of the main study obtained from 320 early childhood teachers. The RMSEA value is found to be .068, the values of NFI(.92) and CFI(.95) represents also close fit. Chi-Square value was calculated as 2.47 for ECTCPRBS which can be accepted as good fit. These values accepted as an evidence to confirm the model obtained in exploratory factor analysis. In addition to check reliability of the scale realibility analyses were conducted and The Cronbach alpha value was found to be .89 for the first dimension and .70 for the second dimension. The reliability of the entire scale was calculated as .70.

In accordance with the descriptive statistics results were utilized to identify early childhood teachers' beliefs towards ECTCPRBS. Mean scores, standard deviations, and skewness and kurtosis values were interpreted in order to identify the information about the participants. According to descriptive analysis results, the mean score of items in first dimension with the value found to be 4.42 reflected that early childhood teachers hold a strong belief towards children's expression of views rights. On the other hand the mean score of 3 in the second dimension indicates that early childhood teachers are neutral towards attending any decision-making process which affect children. It can be infered that in the second dimension, early childhood teachers were generally have undecided beliefs towards attending any decision-making process which affect children.

Lastly,independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate difference between status of being aware of UNCRC, reading UNCRC, attending any course, workshop, seminar or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC and training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC. According to test results early childhood teachers who are aware of UNCRC do not have higher beliefs than early childhood teachers who are not ware of UNCRC yet. On the other hand, it was concluded that early childhood teachers who have read UNCRC have positive beliefs towards children participation rights than early childhood teachers who have not read UNCRC. Yet another result was early childhood teachers who have attended attended any course, seminar, workshop or conferences in in-service related to UNCRC hold positive beliefs than early childhood teachers who have not attended any course, seminar, workshop or conference related to UNCRC in beliefs towards children participation. Despite the fact

that there was no difference in beliefs of early childhood teachers between who have attended any training programme in pre-service related to UNCRC and have not attended any any training programme related to UNCRC in beliefs towards children participation.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This research aimed to identify early childhood teachers beliefs toward children participation rights and comparing these rights to the teachers' level of awareness of the UNCRC, as well as whether they had read this convention, attended any pre-service courses, workshops, or seminars and completed in- service training courses. In this chapter, findings associated with this purpose are discussed, after which implications and recommendations for further studies are given in this section.

5.1 Validity and Reliability of the Data Collection Instrument

In order to interpret any study's findings accurately, the first step is to ensure the measurement instrument used is valid and reliable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Therefore, this section discusses the evidence for the ECTCPRB Scale's validity and reliability.

5.1.1 Discussion of Evidence for the ECTCPRB Scale's Validity and Reliability

While developing the ECTCPRB's items, previous research on child participation and associated beliefs was reviewed in detail, and the ideas of early childhood education experts were taken into consideration. After the related literature was examined, the items were then written based on this review's results. In light of the children participation literature found, the researcher also adapted 10 items from two instruments developed to assess children's participation rights issues (Daniels-Simmonds, 2009; Kaya, 2011) and included these in the item pool.

The items collected in the pool were then evaluated, and 30 Likert-type draft items were selected to make up the ECTCPRB Scale (see Appendix 1). Edward's criteria (Anderson, 1988) were considered while writing the items. Two experts from the Faculty of Education's Department of Early Childhood Education reviewed the items. Some items were rewritten or deleted in the light of these experts' suggestions, leaving 26 items. A further four experts from the Early Childhood Education

Departments of Hacettepe University and Gazi University evaluated these items and the related dimensions. These steps can be interpreted as powerful indicators of the scale's construct validity (Crocker & Algina, 1986).

Because the literature review revealed no unique scale measuring beliefs about children's participation rights, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted to establish the scale's factorial structure in a pilot study and then this established model was tested through confirmatory factor analysis (Pallant, 2007). The data obtained from the pilot study were analyzed with exploratory factor analysis techniques using PASW 20, and the data from the main study were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis via LISREL 8.8. Based on the analyses' results, the researcher decided that the ECTCPRB Scale was composed of two dimensions called "expressing their own views freely," and "taking part in decision-making processes." These two factors explain almost 41% of the total variance. According to Stevens (1992), factor loading needs to be higher than 0.30 for each item, and cross loading should not be present for any of the scale's items. For the ECTCPRBS's final items, no cross loading was found. Therefore, the results show that all the items had sufficiently powerful relationships with the dimensions on which they loaded (Çokluk et al., 2010).

After the ECTCPRBS's factor structure was established, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted with the data obtained from the main study. Based on the findings of the exploratory factor analysis, the two dimension model "expressing their views freely" (14 items) and "taking part in decision-making processes" (12 items) was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis. In this analysis, after two modifications, a root mean square error of an approximation value of 0.068 was accepted as evidence of reasonable fit (Steiger, 1990).

To be acceptable, the comparative fit index (CFI) and goodness of fit index (GFI) values need to be close to 1 in well-fitted models (Çokluk et al., 2010). In this study, the CFI value of 0.95 can be accepted as an indicator of good fit (Kelloway, 1998). However, the GFI value of 0.89 is accepted as an indicator of only reasonable fit. Next, the normed chi-square was calculated as 2.47 for the ECTCPRBS, which also indicates good fit (Kelloway, 1998). According to Matsunaga (2010), different fit indexes exist for confirmatory factor analysis, so evaluating the model's fitness using multiple fit

indices helps researchers make better decisions. Therefore, the hypothesized model of the ECTCPRB Scale was examined using different fit indices and, based on these findings, the hypothesized factor model of ECTCPRB Scale was found to explain the scale's underlying structure to a good degree. This process of establishing the factor structure and then subjecting this structure to confirmatory factor analysis provided strong evidence for the scale's construct validity (Crocker & Algina, 1986).

After establishing the ECTCPRB Scale's factor pattern, the internal consistency of the participants' answers to the scale was examined by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficients. For the main study's data, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 was found for "expressing their views freely" and 0.70 for "taking part in decision making processes." The first value shows good internal consistency for the first dimension (Pallant, 2007), but the second value for the second dimension appeared to be low until the scale's number of items and measured construct were considered, after which this finding was accepted as sufficient for internal consistency (Vaske, 2008).

In summary, this section presented the evidence for the ECTCPRBS's validity and reliability. However, this new scale still requires further evidence of validity based on different samples.

5.1.2 Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights

According to the descriptive analyses results for data gathered using the ECTCPRBS, the current study's participants were found to have either positive or negative attitudes toward children's participation rights. In other words, while some teachers expressed positive beliefs regarding these rights, others perceived these last in a negative light. The results are similar to previous studies, which have revealed both strengths and weaknesses in educators' understanding of children's participation rights.

Regarding classroom content, the early childhood teachers studied strongly believe that children need to be encouraged to express their views on any classroom topic, which is an approach commonly mentioned in children's participation rights literature (e.g., Alderson, 2000). Furthermore, they believe that participation is a quite effective way of teaching democracy to young children, a result also referred to in

various studies (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Jonson & Ivan-Smith, 1998; Trent, Cho, Rios, & Mayfield, 2010). The benefits of encouraging children to express their views in classrooms include improving young children's participation in all democratic processes, not only because they practice voting but also they learn to decide more wisely as a result of gaining critical thinking while participating in classroom activities (Paddison, Docherty & Goodlad, 2008).

In Whitty and Wisby's (2007) study, almost all teachers who had participated in child-based activities reported that they experienced substantive change in their classroom environments. Consistent with these findings, some items' mean scores in the present study showed that early childhood teachers believe that children's participation needs to be supported as an important way to learn different things from other children's views. These beliefs can arise from actively practicing child participation in classroom.

According to the descriptive analysis results for items in the ECTCPRBS dimension "taking part in decision-making processes," early childhood teachers also do not have positive beliefs in various ways. From Harcourt and Conroy's (2011) viewpoint, what determines whether teachers believe children are "sophisticated thinkers and communicators" capable of deciding any issue in their classroom is how teachers and young children get involved in learning programs (p.567). Based on the current study's results, the participants believe that children cannot make decisions without the help of adults. They believe that both early childhood teachers and young children make their own decisions, but, when it comes to putting these into practice, they need to ask each other's opinions. Another key issue that arises from the study's findings is the need to encourage early childhood teachers to create environments that let children articulate their views and ideas and engage in decision-making processes actively. Most probably, barriers to children's decision-making stem from adults' belief in children's inadequate capacity to think clearly and the adults' self-interest in maintaining their dominance over children (Hill, Davis, Prout, & Tisdall, 2004, p. 82). In parallel with this idea, adults believe that children lack the cognitive abilities and experiences to engage in meaningful discussions (Johnny, 2005). To promote early childhood teachers' positive attitudes toward children's participation rights, the UNCRC is a key document in strategic planning for early childhood education, as a tool that brings a

focus on children's participation into early childhood settings (Smith, 2007).

Recognizing the many factors affecting teacher's beliefs and practices, Pajares (1992) proposed a model that highlights the direct influence teacher pre-service and in-service education programs have on teachers' attitudes. Conversely, these programs need to consider research on teachers' beliefs and practices. This section, therefore, discusses the findings on early childhood teachers' beliefs regarding children's participation rights, as presented below in four subsections.

5.1.3 Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Levels of Awareness of the UNCRC

The current study found that no significant difference exists between early childhood teachers when compared by their awareness of the UNCRC. Furthermore, the effect size was calculated as quite small. In the literature, Dunmore (2011) reported that teachers show little awareness of the UNCRC because pre-qualification programs put little emphasis on this and no on-going training is offered on the topic in teacher education programs. The cited author also mentioned that teachers do not feel part of the rights-based approach because policy makers often stress the term "child-centered," instead of "rights-based." In Waldron et al.'s (2011) study, 152 teachers from 110 schools indicated their level of knowledge of human rights programs and institutions using a four-point scale. Thirty-eight percent reported that they were familiar or extremely familiar with the UNCRC. In the present study, 84.4% of participants (n=320) reported that they were aware of the UNCRC, but this high level of awareness did not change their beliefs about the UNCRC. This result might show a lack of pre-service training programs concerning children's participation rights. Another reason might be that teacher-training programs need to be revised to consider these rights (Dunmore, 2011).

5.1.4 Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Reading of the UNCRC

Scores on the ECTCPRBS varied significantly by reading of the UNCRC. Most participants (62.8%) reported having read the UNCRC. This contrasts with Daniels-Simmonds's (2009) report that no significant correlations existed between reading the UNCRC and early childhood teachers' beliefs regarding children's participation rights.

5.1.5 Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Attendance of In-Service Training Programs (Courses, Workshops, Seminars, or Conferences)

According to the data gathered with the ECTCPRBS, participants have beliefs consistent with research findings in the literature on training programs. For instance, Hall (2013) proposed that one result of teacher training is the idea that children's experience of responsibility causes empathy to develop among children. This also has been found to change in teachers' beliefs after in-service training programs. The present study's findings may be similar to with the results of Stipek and Byler's (1997) research. They found in-service training programs for early childhood teachers had important implications for teachers' approaches, as changes in beliefs meant changes in practice. Furthermore, these finding correlate with Boulton's (2014) study, which suggested that in-service training has an impact on teachers' beliefs when more teachers are encouraged to implement the training content effectively. Similar to the studies mentioned above, Darling-Hammond (2006) found that in-service educational programs lead to changes in young children's full participation in civic, political, and economic aspects of their society. Apparently, in-service programs facilitate change in early childhood teachers' attitudes toward children's participation rights.

Based on this view, the researcher thought that investigating how early childhood teachers' beliefs vary based on whether they have attended in-service training related to children's rights would be beneficial, since few studies focused on these issues in the literature. Furthermore, this study may not reflect teachers' beliefs entirely,

possible neglecting some aspects to which early childhood teachers prefer to give more importance.

5.1.6 Early Childhood Teachers' Beliefs About Children's Participation Rights by Attendance of Pre-Service Training Programs

According to descriptive analyses obtained through the ECTCPRBS, participants were found not to have beliefs that might consistently indicate pre-service training programs influence teachers' attitudes, in contrast to the findings of some studies in the literature. For instance, in this present study, taking any training course during the pre-service period did not influence early childhood teachers' beliefs in a positive way. Overall, the existing literature has focused more broadly on the effects of pre-service training on teachers' beliefs (Clark & Peterson, 1986). For example, Calderhead and Robson's (1991) study claimed that training programs during pre-service years could strongly influence teachers' interpretation of their experiences in undergraduate courses. In addition, Richardson (2003) suggested that teachers' beliefs during pre-service training play a role in their approach to teaching strategies as professionals. Some previous studies on beliefs also have emphasized the role of pre-service teacher-training programs in shaping teachers' beliefs about teaching (Nettle, 1998; Richardson, 2003).

Despite these studies' findings, the current study's results do not support the idea that pre-service training programs have a strong impact on early childhood teachers' beliefs about children's participation rights. In other words, pre-service programs about children's rights do not shape early childhood teachers' beliefs. This finding contrasts with previous belief studies that indicated that pre-service teacher-training programs could influence teachers' beliefs (Ambrose, 2004). As a result, the role of pre-service training programs in developing teachers' beliefs needs to be examined further.

Although no evidence was found regarding to what extent training programs influence pre-service teachers' beliefs, strong evidence has been found that supports the idea that pre-service teachers' beliefs change during these programs (Florio- Ruane & Lensmire, 1990; Tamir, 1991). As to integration of children's participation rights into

pre-service training programs, previous studies have highlighted that these programs appear to enhance teachers' beliefs (Skipper & Quantz, 1987 ; Tamir, 1991). In this regard, the difference between the current study's findings and previous studies might be related to the priorities of pre-service training programs in Turkey. The course content offered might need to be developed further in terms of children's participation rights. In consequence, early childhood teachers' beliefs appear not to have been changed by any pre-service programs.

This result could be due to the nature of quantitative research methods. In this kind of study, qualitative data can play a key role in developing a deeper understanding through detailed information about participants (Creswell, 2009). This study's participants did not provide support for the idea that pre-service training programs contribute to teachers' beliefs. Their attitudes toward children's participation rights were not consistent with previous research that revealed that pre-service programs support teachers' beliefs about children's rights. Based on findings in Turkey, children's right to participate is not on the agenda of pre-service training.

The current study's results, therefore, reveal a need to improve this country's training programs in terms of children's participation rights in order to change teachers' beliefs. Contrary to traditional practices, professionals need to take the initiative in implementing children's rights by improving the training programs' contents (Bae, 2009). This research's findings provide a clear suggestion for how to understand teachers' beliefs better, in order to improve children's participation rights in their classes.

To analyze a data set and then offer critiques of early childhood teachers' beliefs (i.e., only focusing on children's participation rights) is easy, but to discover why pre-service training programs appear not to influence teachers' beliefs is more difficult. This study suggests that, to achieve a deeper understanding of teachers' attitudes regarding children's rights, further research needs to focus on training programs and their essential role in teachers' beliefs.

5.2 Educational Implications for Children’s Participation Rights in Early Childhood Education

In this study, early childhood teachers’ beliefs were examined. This section presents possible implications for education programs based on the results. In the national early childhood education curriculum, children’s participation rights are mentioned as an important dimension (Gürkan & Koran, 2013). Although children’s participation thus has a place in the curriculum, not enough importance is given to this in the curriculum’s explanatory segments, so that no instructive information is provided to teachers for how to include children’s participation in in-class activities and how to avoid violations of participation rights. To make early childhood teachers more aware of the need to consider children’s rights, they need to be encouraged to implement activities that include Children’s Rights Day and Human Rights and Democracy Week, which are among the possible important days and weeks to celebrate in preschool institutions (Gürkan & Koran, 2013). Incidentally, future research that analyzes inclusions of children’s participation rights in the curriculum might include a focus on early childhood teachers’ beliefs. In this way, these teachers might come to feel themselves more a part of their education communities, and they might contribute to the topic of rights by sharing their experiences.

In the present study, although 84.4% of the participants (n=320) reported that they were aware of the UNCRC, this high level of awareness did not affect their beliefs concerning the UNCRC. The reasons behind this might be examined in a more extensive way, looking at some factors such as the lack of training programs, limitations set forth by school policies, and other children participation issues.

According to descriptive analysis results obtained with the ECTCPRBS, early childhood teachers lack positive beliefs about children’s participation rights in the dimension of “taking part in decision-making processes that affect them.” This finding can be interpreted as reflecting the idea that young children are too immature to make decisions on their own (Bae, 2009). Early childhood teachers might need support in terms of theoretical reconstructions that enable teachers to strengthen young children’s right to make their own decision.

As for children’s participation rights, this study’s results emphasize the lack of pre-

service teacher-training programs. The participants did not have positive beliefs about some aspects of children's participation rights. At this point, factors such as course content, the measurement methods used, and trainers' lack of professional development need to be considered, and different analysis techniques could be employed in further studies. Universities can use this study's findings to gain a better understanding of how to develop their programs in terms of training, support, and education that promote children's participation rights, including courses that raise the profile of children's rights in order to maintain a high level of belief in these rights.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research Studies

This section offers recommendations for researchers to guide them in further research directions on children's participation rights and the related beliefs of early childhood teachers. These recommendations are detailed in the following paragraphs.

In the present study, data were obtained using a newly developed scale called ECTCPRBS. This scale was constructed with the goal of filling a gap in the literature on teachers' beliefs about children's participation rights. Even though some evidence of the scale's reliability and validity is presented above, further research is needed to provide more evidence.

A causal-comparative survey was conducted to determine early childhood teachers' beliefs about children's participation rights. For further research, qualitative research methods and longitudinal studies can be employed to observe changes and to promote a deeper understanding of this study's results.

In the international context, the number of research studies investigating early childhood teachers' attitudes toward children's rights are limited. Similarly, few studies in the national context have focused on the impact of pre-service and in-service training programs on early childhood teachers' beliefs. Therefore, children's participation rights need to be embedded into the curricula of undergraduate training programs in universities. As Dunmore (2011) stated, little awareness of the UNCRC can be found during pre-service years, so the UNCRC needs to be placed at the core of teacher-training programs and all segments of education communities (e.g., parents, policy makers, and school administrators) can be incorporated in programs to make these

actors feel a part of any rights-based approach. In the light of the studies conducted by Nettle (1998) and Richardson (2003) in which the potential effects of beliefs on further teaching behaviors were considered governments and communities can be encouraged to enhance policies on children's participation rights.

More research is needed on children's rights, including young children's perspectives on all matters affecting them. Researchers should incorporate children's ideas into their studies.

To improve children's participation in classrooms, early childhood teachers need to start by getting children involved in planning in-class activities. By encouraging participatory environments, teachers can make children feel worthwhile (Gollob et al., 2010). When children are given a chance to improve their participation skills, their self-confidence develops, and they take the initiative, thereby gaining valuable life skills (Berk, 2013b). As a result, whenever early childhood teachers pay attention to promoting participation, children become more willing to participate in decision-making processes.

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Appendix A: Pilot Version of ECTCPRBS

ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKKI ANKETİ	
<p>Sevgili Öğretmenler,</p> <p>Bu anketin amacı, siz öğretmenlerin çocukların katılım hakları ile ilgili görüşünü almaktır. Anketi doldurmak ortalama 10 dakikanızı alacaktır. Vereceğiniz bilgiler sadece bu çalışma kapsamında kullanılacak olup kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Bu çalışma ile ilgili soru ve önerilerinizi ctuna@metu.edu.tr e-posta adresine iletebilirsiniz. Bu çalışma Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi İlköğretim Bölümü Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Anabilim Dalından Doç. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Ankete ayırdığınız zaman ve doldururken gösterdiğiniz özen için şimdiden çok teşekkür ederiz.</p> <p>Arş. Gör. Tuna COŞKUN Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi</p>	
A) GENEL BİLGİLER	
1.	Cinsiyetiniz: <input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek
2.	Eğitim Durumunuz: <input type="checkbox"/> Kız Meslek Lisesi <input type="checkbox"/> Çocuk Gelişimi Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/> Diğer Lütfen lisansüstü eğitim yaptığınız alanı belirtiniz
3.	Yaşınız : <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 <input type="checkbox"/> 60 ve üstü
4.	Mesleki tecrübeniz: <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 21-25 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 25 yıl ve üstü
5.	En çok hangi yaş grubuyla çalışıyorsunuz? <input type="checkbox"/> 36 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 48 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 60 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 72 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 36-48 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 48-60 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 60-72 ay <input type="checkbox"/> Diğer
6.	Sınıfınızda öğretmen başına düşen öğrenci sayısı kaçtır?
7.	Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesinden haberiniz var mı(Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesini duydunuz mu)? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır
8.	Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesini okudunuz mu? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır
9.	Öğretmenliğe başladıktan sonra Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesi ile ilgili hizmet içi eğitime (seminer, çalıştay, kongreye) katıldınız mı? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır Cevabınız EVET ise katıldığınız hizmet içi eğitimle(seminer, çalıştay, kongre vb, etkinliklerle) ilgili detayları kısaca açıklayabilir misiniz?

<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>					
10.	<p>Öğretmenliğe başlamadan önce (okul döneminde) Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesini içeren bir eğitim aldınız mı?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır</p> <p>Cevabınız EVET ise ne zaman, nerede ve ne kadar süre ile aldınız?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>				
11.	<p>Çocuk Hakları deyince aklınıza ne geliyor?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>				
12.	<p>Çocukların Katılım Hakkı deyince aklınıza ne geliyor?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>				
<p>B) ÇOCUK HAKLARI</p> <p><i>Bu bölümdeki soruları okuduktan sonra size en uygun seçeneği işaretleyiniz.</i></p>					
	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	1	2	3	4	5

gelmemesi gerekir.					
6. Çocuklar, öğretmenin beklentilerine uygun olmayan davranış sergilediklerinde, beklentilere uygun davranmaya teşvik edilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. Öğretmenler, çocuklara danışmadan sınıf içerisinde hangi etkinliklerin yapılacağına karar verebilir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. Öğretmenler, sınıf içerisinde çocukların görüşlerini almadan karar vermemelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. Çocukların sınıf içinde kendi düşüncelerini belirtmeleri için uygun ortam hazırlanmalıdır.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. Sınıf kurallarını çocuklarla beraber oluşturmak gerekir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. Çocuğun kendisini ilgilendiren her konuda görüşlerini ifade etmesi önemlidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Çocuklar, öğretmenle aynı fikirde olmadığında fikri kabul etmeye ikna edilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. Çocukların düşüncelerinden farklı şeyler öğrenilebilir.					
14. Çocukların kendi kendilerine karar alması desteklenmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. Çocuklar etkinlik sırasında kendilerini istedikleri şekilde (müzik, video, resim vb.) ifade etmelerine fırsat verilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. Çocuklar, öğretmenin kararlarını daima yerine getirmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. Sınıf içerisinde bir problem olduğunda çocuklarla beraber çözüm aramak gerekir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. Çocuklarla etkinlik yaparken öğretmenin belirlediği müzik, video, resim vb. yollardan birini seçmeleri teşvik edilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. Çocuklar kendileri ile ilgili kararları verebilecek olgunluğa sahip değildir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
20. Çocuklar kendi kendilerine karar alabilecek yeterlilikte değildir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
21. Çocukların kendi kendilerine karar alması sakıncalıdır.	①	②	③	④	⑤
22. Çocuklar, öğretmenlerin beklentilerini karşılamadığında cezalandırılmaları gerekir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
23. Çocuklarla kendilerini ilgilendiren her konuda ebeveynlerinden bağımsız olarak mülakat yapılmasında bir sakınca yoktur.	①	②	③	④	⑤
24. Çocuklar oynayacakları oyunu belirleyecek olgunluğa sahiptir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
25. Çocukların sınıf kurallarını belirleme sürecine katılması gerekmez.	①	②	③	④	⑤

B) DÜŞÜNCE VE ÖNERİLERİNİZ

Aşağıdaki bölüme düşünce ve önerilerinizi yazabilirsiniz.

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Appendix B: Final Version of ECTCPRBS

ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKKI ANKETİ	
<p>Sevgili Öğretmenler, Bu anketin amacı, siz öğretmenlerin çocukların katılım hakları ile ilgili görüşünü almaktır. Anketi doldurmak ortalama 10 dakikanızı alacaktır. Vereceğiniz bilgiler sadece bu çalışma kapsamında kullanılacak olup kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Bu çalışma ile ilgili soru ve önerilerinizi ctuna@metu.edu.tr e-posta adresine iletebilirsiniz. Bu çalışma Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi İlköğretim Bölümü Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Anabilim Dalından Doç. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Ankete ayırdığınız zaman ve doldururken gösterdiğiniz özen için şimdiden çok teşekkür ederiz. Arş. Gör. Tuna COŞKUN Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi</p>	
A) GENEL BİLGİLER	
1.	Cinsiyetiniz: <input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek
2.	Eğitim Durumunuz: <input type="checkbox"/> Kız Meslek Lisesi <input type="checkbox"/> Çocuk Gelişimi Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/> Diğer Lütfen lisansüstü eğitim yaptığınız alanı belirtiniz
3.	Yaşınız : <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 <input type="checkbox"/> 60 ve üstü
4.	Mesleki tecrübeniz: <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 21-25 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 25 yıl ve üstü
5.	En çok hangi yaş grubuyla çalışıyorsunuz? <input type="checkbox"/> 36 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 48 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 60 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 72 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 36-48 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 48-60 ay <input type="checkbox"/> 60-72 ay <input type="checkbox"/> Diğer
6.	Sınıfınızda öğretmen başına düşen öğrenci sayısı kaçtır?
7.	Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesinden haberiniz var mı(Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesini duydunuz mu)? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır
8.	Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesini okudunuz mu? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır
9.	Öğretmenliğe başladıktan sonra Çocuk Hakları ile ilgili hizmet içi eğitime (seminer, çalıştay, kongreye) katıldınız mı? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır Cevabınız EVET ise katıldığınız hizmet içi eğitimle(seminer, çalıştay, kongre vb, etkinliklerle) ilgili detayları kısaca açıklayınız?

.....					
10.	Öğretmenliğe başlamadan önce (okul döneminde) Çocuk Hakları ile ilgili eğitim aldınız mı? <input type="checkbox"/> Evet <input type="checkbox"/> Hayır Cevabınız EVET ise ne zaman, nerede ve ne kadar süre ile aldınız?				
11.	Çocuk Hakları deyince aklınıza ne geliyor?				
12.	Çocukların Katılım Hakkı deyince aklınıza ne geliyor?				
B) ÇOCUK HAKLARI <i>Bu bölümdeki soruları okuduktan sonra size en uygun seçeneği işaretleyiniz.</i>					
	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6.	①	②	③	④	⑤

7. Öğretmenler, çocuklara danışmadan sınıf içerisinde hangi etkinliklerin yapılacağına karar verebilir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. Öğretmenler, sınıf içerisinde çocukların görüşlerini almadan karar vermemelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. Çocukların sınıf içinde kendi düşüncelerini belirtmeleri için uygun ortam hazırlanmalıdır.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. Sınıf kurallarını çocuklarla beraber oluşturmak gerekir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. Çocuğun kendisini ilgilendiren her konuda görüşlerini ifade etmesi önemlidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Çocuklar, öğretmenle aynı fikirde olmadığında fikri kabul etmeye ikna edilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. Çocukların düşüncelerinden farklı şeyler öğrenilebilir.					
14. Çocukların kendi kendilerine karar alması desteklenmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. Çocuklar etkinlik sırasında kendilerini istedikleri şekilde (müzik, video, resim vb.) ifade etmelerine fırsat verilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. Çocuklar, öğretmenin kararlarını daima yerine getirmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. Sınıf içerisinde bir problem olduğunda çocuklarla beraber çözüm aramak gerekir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. Çocuklarla etkinlik yaparken öğretmenin belirlediği müzik, video, resim vb. yollardan birini seçmeleri teşvik edilmelidir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. Çocuklar kendileri ile ilgili kararları verebilecek olgunluğa sahip değildir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
20. Çocuklar kendi kendilerine karar alabilecek yeterlilikte değildir.	①	②	③	④	⑤
21. Çocukların kendi kendilerine karar alması sakıncalıdır.	①	②	③	④	⑤
C) DÜŞÜNCE VE ÖNERİLERİNİZ					
<i>Aşağıdaki bölüme düşünce ve önerilerinizi yazabilirsiniz.</i>					

Appendix C: Turkish Summary

GİRİŞ

Küçük çocukların demokrasi ve benzeri uygulamalar ile ilgili deneyimleri, demokratik bir toplum inşa etmeye ek olarak çocukların gelişimleri üzerinde de belirgin bir etkiye sahiptir (Pramling Samuelson Kaga, 2008). Çocukların konuşmalara ve karar verme süreçlerine katılmalarıyla gelişimlerine önemli bir katkı sağlanmaktadır (Davis Elliot, 2003).

Her çocuk için erken çocukluk dönemi çok önemlidir. Zeka, kişilik ve sosyal davranışların temeli çocukluğun ilk yıllarında atılmaktadır. Pek çok çalışma, kötü alışkanlıkların erken yaşlardaki deneyimlere bağlı olduğu düşüncesini öne çıkarmaktadır (UNICEF, 2013). Çocuklar gereğinden fazla kontrol edildikleri ya da hafife alındıkları için çoğunlukla çeşitli engellerle karşılaşmaktadırlar (Landsdown, 2005). Bu durumda toplumda çocuklar için katılım ya da bir vatandaşlık statüsü elde etme fırsatı bulunmamaktadır (Alderson, 1999; Smith, 2007). Çocuklar, bu zorlukların üstesinden gelmek için çocuklar karar verme süreçlerinde yer almaya ve demokratik katılım yöntemlerini öğrenmeye teşvik edilmelidir.

Daha önceki çalışmalarda belirtildiği gibi, genç bireylerin katılım hakkı bakımından mümkün olduğu kadar güçlendirilmesi için katılım hakkı ile ilgili avantajlı durumlar yaratılmalıdır. Çocukların, kendi yaşamlarını etkileyen sorunların farkına varmaları ve bu sorunlara yönelik gerekli düzenlemeler hakkında karar vermeleri önemlidir. Bu uygulama özgüven kazanmalarına ve başkalarının haklarına saygı duymalarına yardımcı olur (A Call for Action, 2000). Son dönemde yapılan çalışmalar, çocukların katılım haklarının demokratik bir toplumun en önemli özelliklerinden biri olduğunu göstermektedir. Kanada, Yeni Zelanda ve İngiltere gibi bu konuda öne çıkan bazı ülkeler anaokullarında ve öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında saygın bir yere konulan özel çocuk hakları düzenlemelerine sahiptir (Howe Covell 2005; Human Rights in Education, 2009; Hampshire Education Authority, 2003).

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, BMÇHS'yi imzalayan devletlerden biri olması nedeniyle, her

çocuğun eşitlik temelinde bazı haklarını kabul etmektedir ve çocuk haklarının yetişkinler kadar çocuklar tarafından da geniş ölçüde bilinmesi sorumluluğunu üstlenmektedir. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasasının 90. maddesi, uygulama boyutunda ülke yasaları ve uluslararası anlaşmalar arasında bir tutarsızlık olması durumunda, uluslararası anlaşmaların hüküm ve şartlarının yürürlükte olacağını beyan etmektedir - (Batur Musaoğlu Haktanır, 2006).

Türkiye’de gerçekleştirilen çalışmaların bulguları çocuk haklarının önemini altını çizmektedir (Tuğrul Şahin, 2011; Akyol, 2011; Doğan Durualp, 2011; Uçuş, 2014). Ancak, bu çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğu ilk ve ortaokul çocuklarını kapsamaktadır. Gerçekte temel davranışlar okul öncesi yıllarda gerçekleşir. Konu ile ilgili çeşitli çalışmalar, teşvik edilen ve bilgilendirilen küçük çocukların daha çok gelişimsel üstünlüğe sahip olduğunu ve erken çocukluk döneminin bilişsel, sosyal-duygusal ve bireysel gelişim için önemli bir dönem olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, toplumda bir insan hakları kültürü yaratmak için eğitimlere erken çocukluk döneminde başlanmalıdır.

Çocukların katılım hakları konusunda, kendi inançlarını şekillendiren etmenler, öğretmenlerin inançları belirlenerek ortaya çıkarılabilir. Bu inançlardan ayrıca öğretmenlerin kendileri ve yakın çevrelerini daha iyi anlamaları konusunda da yararlanılabilir. Daha önce belirtildiği gibi, öğretmenlerin inançları ve uygulamaları arasında güçlü bir ilişki olduğu için bu araştırma okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin BMÇHS’nin 12. maddesi ile güvence altına alınan çocukların katılım hakkı konusundaki inançlarını incelemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Çalışmanın Önemi

Bu çalışma özellikle çocukların yaşlarından bağımsız biçimde katılım hakkı olmak üzere BMÇHS’nin önemli bileşenlerine odaklandığı için önemlidir. Diğer taraftan, bu çalışma konuyu okul öncesi dönemde incelemeyi hedeflediği için de değerlidir. Türkiye’de özellikle erken çocukluk yıllarında, çocukların katılım hakkına odaklanan çalışmalarda önemli bir eksiklik vardır. Böylece bu çalışmanın bu hakkın sözkonusu yaş aralığındaki önemini altını çizme açısından önemli bir katkı yapacağı düşünülmektedir. Ek olarak, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi eğitimlerin, öğretmenlerin çocukların

katılım hakkı konusundaki mevcut inançlarına nasıl etki ettiği ile ilgili veriler üretmesi açısından önem teşkil etmemektedir. Böylece, çocuk hakları ile ilgili içeriklerin zenginleşmesi bakımından öğretmen eğitimlerini yönlendirmeye yardımcı olacaktır.

Çalışmanın Amacı

Öğretmenlerin inançları, çocukların katılım hakları konusunda çocukların düşüncelerinin nasıl etkilenebileceğini belirler. Bu inançlar aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin kendilerini ve yakın çevrelerini daha iyi anlamaları bakımından da değerlidir. Bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin inançlar ve uygulamaları arasındaki güçlü bir bağ olması nedeniyle, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların BMÇHS'nin 12 maddesi ile güvenceye alınan katılım hakkı konusundaki inançlarını incelemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Son olarak, bu çalışma aynı ya da benzer konular üzerinde daha ileri çalışmalar yürütmek isteyen araştırmacılar için temel bir kaynak sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin çocuk hakları konusundaki inançlarını daha iyi kavrayabilmek için eğitim programları ve bu programların öğretmenlerin inançları üzerindeki esas rolü hakkında daha kapsamlı araştırmalar yapılması gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Önemli Terimlerin Tanımları

Çocuk Hakları Konusunda Farkındalık: BMÇHS'de (1989) verilen hak durumu ile birlikte Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti'nin çocuk hakları konusundaki hükümlerinden haberdar olma anlamına gelir.

İnanç: Bir bireyin, bir önermenin doğruluğu ya da yanlışlığı ile ilgili yargısıdır. Bir yargılama insanların söyledikleri, istedikleri ve yaptıklarına yönelik toplu bir anlayış ile yapılabilir (Pajares, 1992, p. 316). Bu çalışmada inanç kavramı, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım hakları konusundaki yargılarıyla ya da uyum düzeyiyle ilgilidir.

Çocuk Hakları: Çocukların temel insan hakları (çocukların yetişkinler tarafından özel bakım ve korunma haklarına özel vurgu yapılarak BMÇHS'de (1989) belirtilen yaşam, korunma, gelişme ve katılım haklarını ifade eder.

Çocukların Katılım Hakları: BM Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesinin 12. maddesi, çocuk-

ların kendi yaşamlarıyla ilgili konularda karar alma süreçlerine katılım ve aile, okul ya da topluluk içinde alınan kararları etkileme hakları olduğunu belirtir (UNICEF, 1990).

Demokrasi: Tüm insanların toplumsal olarak eşit olduğu düşüncesine dayanan inanç ya da uygulamadır. Bu çalışmada demokrasi terimi vatandaş katılımının daha kapsamlı biçimleri ve daha geniş siyasi temsiliyeti savunma eğilimindeki katılımcı demokrasi anlamında kullanılmıştır (Dib, 2013).

Erken çocukluk dönemi: UNESCO bu terimi doğumdan sekiz yaşına kadar olan dönem olarak açıklamaktadır. Bu dönem beyin gelişimi, fiziksel gelişim ve öğrenme ile gelişme kapasitesindeki belirgin değişimleri kapsar.

Erken Çocukluk Eğitimi Öğretmeni/ Okul Öncesi Öğretmeni: NAEYC(2014) bu terimi bebeklikten sekiz yaşına kadar çocuklarla çalışan bireyler olarak tanımlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada ise, 36 ve 72 aylık arasındaki çocuklarla çalışan okul öncesi öğretmenlere karşılık gelmektedir (NAEYC,2014).

Hizmet İçi Eğitim: Bir kişinin çalışma yaşamının içindeyken, gerçekleşen ya da devam eden faaliyetleri kapsar. Bu çalışmada hizmet içi eğitim; okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin meslek yaşamlarında çocuk haklarına yönelik yöntem, vaka ve işyükünü tartışarak yürüttükleri eğitimler için kullanılır.

Hizmet Öncesi Eğitim: Bir kişinin çalışmaya başlamadan önceki dönemde belirli bir konuda, eğitim gerektiren faaliyetlerini kapsar. Bu çalışmada, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin hizmet öncesi yıllarında üstlendikleri eğitimlerden bahsederken kullanılmaktadır.

Eğitim: Mesleğe yönelik belirli bir bilgiyi edinmeye çalışan kişinin özel bir alandaki yeterliliğini artırmayı hedefler ve bu nedenle bilgi, yetenek ya da tutumları geliştirme, değiştirme ya da güçlendirme süreci olarak tanımlanabilir.

Birleşmiş Milletler Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesi (BMÇHS): Yaşama, gelişim, korunma ve katılım haklarını içeren, çocukların haklarını yaşamlarının her alanında korumaya yönelik uluslararası sözleşme. (UNICEF, 1990)

Küçük çocuk: 36-72 aylık çocukları ifade eder.

YÖNTEM

Bir nedensel karşılaştırma araştırması olan bu çalışmada okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin inançları, daha önceden BMÇHS'nden haberdar olup olmama, BMÇHS'yi okuyup okumama, çocuk haklarına yönelik hizmet içi bir eğitime katılıp katılmama ile mesleğe başlamadan önceki dönemde çocuk haklarına yönelik bir etkinliğe katılıp katılmama değişkenleri açısından incelenmiştir. Araştırma Ankara ili merkez ilçelerinde çalışmakta olan öğretmenler ile yürütülmüştür. Veri toplama aracı olarak, araştırmacının hazırladığı "Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Haklarına Yönelik İnançları Ölçeği (KHÖ)" kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler SPSS 20 paket programı ile çözümlenerek, bağımsız gruplar t-testi analizi ile yorumlanmıştır.

Araştırma Soruları

1. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım haklarına ilişkin inançları nelerdir?
2. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım haklarına ilişkin inançları - BMÇHS'den haberdar olup olmama, BMÇHS'ni okuyup okumama, çocuk haklarına yönelik hizmet içi eğitim alıp almama, mesleğe başlamadan önce çocuk haklarına ilişkin eğitim alıp almama değişkenleri açısından anlamlı bir farklılık göstermekte midir?

Evren ve Örneklem

Araştırmanın evrenini Ankara ilinde 36-72 ay arası çocuklarla çalışmakta olan okul öncesi öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemini ise Ankara ili merkez ilçelerde 36-72 ay arası çocuklarla çalışmakta olan okul öncesi öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemine dahil edilecek örneklem adayları, olasılıklı örnekleme yöntemlerinden küme örnekleme yöntemiyle oluşturulmuştur. Araştırmaya Ankara ili merkez ilçelerinde çalışan 320 öğretmen katılmıştır.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Bu araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak “Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Haklarına Yönelik İnançları Ölçeği ” kullanılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı üç bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm, katılımcılara ilişkin genel bilgileri, ikinci bölüm 5’li Likert tipi ve 21 çoktan seçmeli soruyu, üçüncü bölüm ise çocuk haklarına ilişkin açık uçlu sorulardan oluşmaktadır. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin 36-72 ay çocuklarla çalışıyor olması temel alınmıştır.

Verilerin Toplanması

Çalışmanın verileri, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Uygulamalı Etik Araştırmaları Merkezi ile Milli Eğitim Bakanlığında alınan izinler sonrasında, Temmuz- Aralık 2014 döneminde 36-72 aylık çocuklar ile çalışmakta olan okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan veri toplama aracı aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Veri toplama süresi ortalama 10-20 dakika arası sürmüştür.

Verilerin Analizi

Hazırlanan ölçeğin boyutlarını belirlemek amacıyla açımlayıcı ve doğrulayıcı faktör analizi yapılarak, ölçme araçlarından elde edilen verilerin çözümlenmesinde nicel verilerin analizinde kullanılan istatistiksel yöntemlerden bağımsız gruplar t-testi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular

KHÖ kullanılarak toplanan verilerin betimleyici analiz sonuçlarına göre, mevcut çalışmanın katılımcıları çocukların katılım haklarına yönelik olarak olumlu ya da olumsuz inançlara sahiptir. Diğer bir deyişle, bazı öğretmenler bu haklar ile ilgili olumlu inançlara sahipken, diğerleri olumsuz algılarını sürdürmüşlerdir. Sonuçlar, çocukların katılım hakları konusunda eğitimcilerin güçlü ya da zayıf yanlarını ortaya koyan önceki çalışmalarla benzerlik göstermektedir.

Okul öncesi öğretmenleri ile gerçekleştirilen çalışmalar kapsamındaki sınıf etkinlikleri göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, çocukların sınıfta tartışılan herhangi bir konu hakkında görüşlerini ifade etmeleri konusunda teşvik edilmeleri gerektiği önemle vurgulanmaktadır. Ayrıca, okul öncesi öğretmenleri pek çok çalışmada değinildiği gibi katılımın küçük çocuklara demokrasi kavramını öğretmek için oldukça etkili bir yöntem olduğuna inanmaktadırlar. Çocukların sınıf ortamında görüşlerini ifade etme konusunda teşvik ederek, oy verme deneyimi kazanmalarının yanında eleştirel düşünce ile daha akıllıca karar vermeyi öğrenmeleri amaçlanır.

Whitty ve Wisby (2010) çalışmasında yer alan öğretmenlerin neredeyse tümü sınıf ortamlarında sürekli bir değişim deneyimlediklerini bildirmişlerdir. Bu değişim bulgularıyla uyumlu biçimde, mevcut çalışmada bazı maddelerin ortalama puanları, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılımının diğer çocukların görüşlerinden farklı şeyler öğrenilebilmesi için desteklenmesi gerektiğine inandıklarını göstermektedir. Bu inançlar aktif biçimde çocuk katılımını deneyimlemekle ortaya çıkabilmektedir.

KHÖ'nin karar alma süreçlerinde yer alma boyutundaki maddelerin betimleyici analiz sonuçlarına göre, okul öncesi öğretmenleri çeşitli açılardan olumlu olmayan inançlara da sahiptir. Harcourt ve Conroy'un bakış açısına göre, öğretmenlerin çocukların sınıf içindeki herhangi bir konu ile ilgili karar verebilecek gelişmiş düşüncelere ve iletişim yöntemlerine sahip olup olmadığı konusundaki inançları, öğretmenlerin ve küçük çocukların eğitim programlarına dahil olma durumuna göre belirlenmektedir. Mevcut çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre katılımcılar, çocukların yetişkinlerin yardımı olmadan karar veremeyeceklerine inanmaktadırlar. Katılımcılar, okul öncesi öğretmenleri ve küçük çocukların kendi başlarına karar aldıklarını, ancak sıra bu kararları uygulamaya geldiğinde birbirlerinin görüşlerini sormaları gerektiğini düşünmektedirler.

Çalışmanın bulguları sonucunda ortaya çıkan bir diğer önemli konu ise okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların görüş ve düşüncelerini ifade etmelerine ve karar alma süreçlerine etkin biçimde dahil olmalarına olanak tanıyan ortamlar yaratmalarının teşvik edilmesidir. Büyük olasılıkla, çocukların karar almasının karşısındaki engeller, yetişkinlerin çocukların doğru düşünmek için yeterli kapasitelerinin olmadığı inançlarından ve çocukların üzerindeki egemenliklerini sürdürmede gördükleri kişisel çıkarlardan kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu düşünce ile benzer biçimde, yetişkinler çocuk-

ların anlamlı bir tartışma yürütmek için gerekli bilişsel yeteneklerden ve deneyimden yoksun olduklarına inanırlar. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım haklarına yönelik olumlu tutumlarını desteklemek için, erken çocukluk döneminde çocukların katılımına odaklanan BMÇHS, okul öncesi eğitimin stratejik planında kilit bir belgedir.

Pajares 1992 yılında öğretmenin inançlarını ve uygulamalarını etkileyen pek çok ölçütü kabul ederek, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi uygulanan eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin inançları üzerinde doğrudan etkilerini vurgulayan bir model önermiştir. Diğer taraftan bu programlar öğretmenlerin inançları ve tutumlarına yönelik araştırmaları göz önünde bulundurmalarıdır.

BMÇHS Farkındalık Düzeyine Göre Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Hakları Konusunda İnançları

Mevcut çalışmaya göre okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin aralarında BMÇHS konusundaki farkındalıkları açısından belirgin bir fark yoktur. Dunmore(2011) çalışmasında, ön yeterlilik programlarının konu hakkında çok az vurgu yapmasından ve öğretmen eğitim programlarında konu hakkında sürekli eğitimleri olmamasından dolayı, öğretmenlerin BMÇHS konusunda çok az farkındalıkları olduğunu bildirmiştir. Aynı zamanda siyasetçilerin “hak temelli” kavramı yerine “çocuk odaklı” kavramını uygulamalarından dolayı öğretmenlerin kendilerini hak temelli yaklaşım kavramına yakın hissetmediklerini belirtmektedir. Bu çalışmada katılımcıların %84.4’ü BMÇHS’nin farkında olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir, ancak bu yüksek farkındalık düzeyi katılımcıların BMÇHS hakkındaki inançlarını değiştirmemiştir. Bu sonuç, çocukların katılım hakları konusunda hizmet öncesi eğitim programlarının eksikliğinden kaynaklanıyor olabilir.

BMÇHS’nin Okunma Durumuna Göre Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Hakları Konusunda İnançları

KHÖ sonuçları ve puanları BMÇHS’nin okunma durumuna göre önemli ölçüde değişmiştir. Pek çok katılımcı (%62.8) BMÇHS’yi okuduklarını bildirmiştir. Bu sonuçlar,

BMÇHS'nin okunmuş olması ve okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım hakları konusundaki inançları arasında belirgin bir bağlantı bulunmadığını bildiren Daniels-Simmonds'un 2009 yılındaki çalışması ile farklılık göstermektedir.

Hizmetiçi Eğitim Programlarına (Ders, Çalıştay, Seminer, Konferans) Katılma Durumuna Göre Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Hakları - Konusunda İnançları

KHÖ ile toplanan verilere göre katılımcıların inançları ve literatürdeki eğitim programlarına yönelik araştırma bulguları birbiri ile tutarlıdır. Örneğin, Hall(2011)'in çalışmasında öğretmen eğitimlerinin bir sonucu olarak, çocukların sorumluluk deneyimleri konusundaki fikirlerin çocuklar arasında empati gelişmesine neden olduğunu sunmuştur. Aynı zamanda hizmetiçi eğitim programlarından sonra öğretmenlerin inançlarının değiştiği de görülmüştür. Bu çalışma sonucunda ortaya çıkan sonuçlar Stipek ve Byler (1997) çalışmasıyla benzerlik gösterebilir. Sözkonusu çalışma inançlardaki değişimlerin uygulamalardaki değişimler anlamına gelmesinden dolayı hizmetiçi eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin yaklaşımları üzerinde saklı etkileri olduğunu göstermektedir. Öte yandan bu bulgular, daha çok öğretmenin eğitim içeriğinin etkin biçimde uygulaması teşvik edildiğinde hizmetiçi eğitimlerin öğretmenlerin inançları üzerinde etkileri olduğunu bildiren Boulton(2014)'un çalışması ile bağlantılıdır. Yukarıda belirtilen çalışmalara benzer biçimde Darling-Hammond (2006) çalışması ile hizmetiçi eğitim programları küçük çocukların yurttaşlık, siyaset ve ekonomi açılarından topluma tam katılımı yönünde etkilere yol açtığını ortaya koymaktadır. Buradan anlaşıldığı üzere hizmetiçi eğitim programları okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım hakları konusundaki inançlarında değişiklikler meydana gelmesini kolaylaştırmaktadır.

Hizmet Öncesi Eğitim Programlarına Katılma Durumuna Göre Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Hakları Konusunda İnançları

KHÖ ile elde edilen betimleyici analiz sonuçlarına göre, literatürdeki bazı çalışmaların aksine mevcut çalışma sonuçları, hizmet öncesi eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin inançlarını tutarlı biçimde etkilediğini gösteren inançlara sahip değildir.

Örneğin, bu çalışmada hizmet öncesi dönemde alınan bir eğitim dersinin, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin inançlarını olumlu biçimde etkilemediği gözlenmiştir. Mevcut çalışmalar, genel olarak hizmet öncesi eğitimlerin, öğretmenlerin inançları üzerindeki etkilerine daha geniş biçimde odaklanmıştır (Clark Peterson, 1986). Örneğin Calderhead ve Robson'un (1991) çalışması, hizmet öncesi yıllardaki eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin lisans derslerindeki deneyimlerini yorumlama biçimlerini önemli ölçüde etkilediğini öne sürmektedir. Buna ek olarak, Richardson (2003) öğretmenlerin hizmet öncesi eğitimlerdeki inançlarının bir profesyonel olarak öğretim stratejilerine yönelik yaklaşımlarında rol oynadığını ileri sürmektedir. İnançlar konusundaki bazı önceki çalışmalar, öğretmenlerin öğretim ile ilgili inançlarını şekillendirme konusunda hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitim programlarının rolünü vurgulamaktadır (Nettle, 1998; Richardson, 2003).

Bu çalışmaların bulgularının aksine mevcut çalışmanın sonuçları hizmet öncesi eğitim programlarının okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım hakları konusundaki inançları üzerinde güçlü bir etkisi olduğu fikrini desteklememektedir. Bu bulgu hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin inançlarını etkileyebileceğini gösteren önceki çalışmalarla (Ambrose, 2004) çelişki göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, hizmet öncesi eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin inançlarını geliştirme konusundaki rolü daha kapsamlı biçimde incelenmelidir.

Bu çalışmada eğitim programlarının hizmet öncesi dönemde öğretmenlerin inançlarını ne ölçüde etkilediği konusunda herhangi bir kanıt bulunmamış olmasına rağmen, hizmet öncesi dönemde öğretmenlerin bu programlar sırasında inançlarının değiştiği fikrini destekleyen güçlü kanıtlar bulunmaktadır (Florio-Ruane Lensmire, 1990; Tamir, 1991). Çocukların katılım hakları konusunun hizmet öncesi eğitim programlarına dahil edilmesine ilişkin olarak, önceki çalışmalar bu programların öğretmenlerin inançlarını geliştirmekte olduğunu altını çizmişlerdir. Bu bağlamda, mevcut çalışmanın ve daha önceki çalışmaların bulguları arasındaki fark Türkiye'deki hizmet öncesi programların önceliklerine bağlı olabilir. Sunulan ders içeriğinin çocukların katılım hakları bakımından daha fazla geliştirilmesi gerektiği düşünülebilir. Sonuç itibarıyla, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin inançları herhangi bir hizmet öncesi program tarafından değiştirilmiş gibi görünmemektedir.

Bu sonuca nicel araştırma yöntemlerinin doğasından ötürü varılmış olabilir. Bu çeşit çalışmalarda nitel veri, katılımcılar hakkında ayrıntılı bilgiye dayalı derin bir kavrayış geliştirme konusunda kilit bir rol oynayabilmektedir (Creswell, 2009). Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları hizmet öncesi eğitim programlarının öğretmenlerin inançlarına katkısı olduğu fikrine destek vermemişlerdir. Katılımcıların çocukların katılım haklarına yönelik inançları hizmet öncesi programlarının öğretmenlerin çocuk hakları ile ilgili inançlarını desteklediğini ortaya koyan önceki araştırmalarla tutarlı değildir. Türkiye’de çocukların katılım hakları henüz hizmet öncesi eğitimler alanında gündemde değildir.

Bu nedenle, mevcut çalışmanın sonuçları, ülkenin eğitim programlarının ve öğretmenlerin inançlarını değiştirebilmek için çocukların katılım hakları bakımından geliştirilmesi ihtiyacını ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Geleneksel uygulamaların aksine, uzmanların eğitim programlarının içeriklerini geliştirerek çocuk haklarının uygulamaya geçirilmesi için önayak olmaları gerekmektedir (Bae, 2009). Bu araştırmanın bulguları çocukların sınıflardaki katılım haklarını artırmak için öğretmenlerin inançlarının daha iyi nasıl anlaşılacağı üzerine açık bir öneri ortaya koymaktadır.

Okul Öncesi Eğitimde Çocukların Katılım Haklarına Yönelik Öneriler

Çocukların katılım hakları, ulusal okul öncesi eğitim programında önemli bir boyut olarak belirtilmiştir. Çocukların katılımı konusunun programda yeri olmasına rağmen, programın açıklayıcı kısımlarında bu konuya yeterli önem verilmemektedir ve böylece öğretmenler için çocukların katılımının sınıf içi faaliyetler arasında nasıl yer alabileceği ve katılım haklarının ihlalinin nasıl önlenebileceği konularında öğretici bilgiler bulunmamaktadır. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocuk hakları konusunda farkındalıklarını artırmak için, okul öncesi kurumlarda kutlanması olası günler ve haftalar olan Çocuk Hakları Günü, İnsan Hakları Günü ve Demokrasi Haftası gibi faaliyetlerin de dahil olduğu uygulamaları gerçekleştirmeleri teşvik edilmelidir (Gürkan Koran, 2013). Bu arada, programa çocukların katılım haklarının dahil edilmesini inceleyen gelecekteki araştırma konuları, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin inançlarına odaklanabilir. Bu yolla, öğretmenler kendilerini eğitim topluluklarının daha önemli bir parçası olarak görebilirler ve deneyimlerini paylaşarak “haklar” konusuna katkı

sağlayabilirler.

Bu çalışmada katılımcıların (N=320) %84.4'ü BMÇHS'nin farkında olduklarını bildirmelerine rağmen, bu yüksek farkındalık düzeyi BMÇHS hakkındaki inançlarını etkilememiştir. Bunun arkasındaki nedenler; eğitim programlarının eksikliği, okul idareleri tarafından konulan kısıtlamalar ve çocukların diğer katılım sorunları ölçütlere bakarak geniş çaplı olarak incelenebilir.

KHÖ'den elde edilen betimleyici analiz sonuçlarına göre okul öncesi öğretmenleri, kendilerini etkileyen konularda karar alma süreçlerinde yer alma boyutunda çocukların katılım hakları konusunda olumlu inançlardan yoksundurlar. Bu bulgu küçük çocukların kendi başlarına karar alma konusunda hiç olgunlaşmamış oldukları fikrini (Bae, 2009) yansıtıyor olarak yorumlanabilir. Okul öncesi öğretmenleri küçük çocukların kendi kararlarını alabilme haklarını pekiştirmek için teorik yeniden yapılandırma anlamında desteğe gereksinim duyduklarını düşündürmektedir.

Çocukların katılım hakları için ise bu çalışmanın sonuçları hizmet öncesi öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının eksikliğini vurgulamaktadır. Katılımcılar çocukların katılım hakları hakkında bazı açılardan olumlu inançlara sahip değildirlen. Bu noktada; ders içeriği, kullanılan ölçüm yöntemleri ve eğiticinin profesyonel gelişim eksikliği gibi ölçütler göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. İleride yapılacak çalışmalarda farklı analiz teknikleri kullanılabilir. Öğretmen yetiştirme programları, bu çalışmanın bulgularını ders içeriklerini, çocuk hakları temelli bir biçimde çocukların katılım haklarını teşvik ederek nasıl geliştireceklerini daha iyi anlayabilmek için kullanabilirler.

Gelecekteki Araştırma Çalışmaları için Öneriler

Bu çalışmada, veriler KHÖ ismi verilen ve bu çalışmaya özgü hazırlanan yeni geliştirilmiş bir ölçek kullanılarak elde edilmiştir. Hazırlanan ölçeğin güvenilirliği ve geçerliliği üzerine bazı kanıtlar sunulmuş olmasına rağmen, daha fazla kanıt sağlamak için daha ileri araştırmalar yapmak gerekmektedir.

Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım hakları konusundaki inançlarını belirleyebilmek için bir nedensel karşılaştırma çalışması yürütülmüştür. Daha ileri araştırmalarda, değişikliklerin gözlenmesi ve bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının daha iyi anlaşılabilmesi için araştırmalar yapılabilir.

bilmesi için nitel araştırma yöntemleri ve boylamsal çalışmalar kullanılabilir.

Uluslararası bağlamda, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocuk hakları konusundaki inançlarını inceleyen araştırma çalışmalarının sayısı sınırlıdır. Benzer biçimde, ulusal bağlamda pek az çalışma hizmet öncesi ve hizmetiçi eğitim programlarının okul öncesi öğretmenleri üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanmıştır. Bu nedenle, çocukların katılım hakları üniversitelerin lisans eğitim programlarına yerleştirilmelidir. Dunmore'un (2011) ifade ettiği gibi öğretmenlerde, BMÇHS hakkında hizmet öncesi yıllarda çok az farkındalık bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle BMÇHS, öğretmen eğitim programlarının çekirdeğine yerleştirilmelidir ve hak temelli yaklaşımların parçası gibi hissedebilmeleri için eğitim topluluklarının tüm kesimleri (ebeveynler, politika belirleyiciler ve okul idarecileri) bu programlar bünyesinde toplanmalıdır. İnançların daha ilerideki eğitim davranışları üzerinde olası etkilerini değerlendirilen Nettle (1998) ve Richardson (2003) tarafından yürütülmüş çalışmalar ışığında, devletler ve topluluklar, çocukların katılım hakları konusundaki politikaları iyileştirmek için teşvik edilebilirler.

Özellikle küçük çocukların kendilerini etkileyen tüm konulardaki bakış açıları da dahil olmak üzere çocuk hakları konusunda daha fazla araştırma yapılması gerekmektedir. Araştırmacılar çocukların fikirlerini araştırmaları kapsamına almalıdırlar.

Çocukların sınıflardaki katılımlarını arttırmak için, okul öncesi öğretmenleri çocukları sınıf içi faaliyetlerin planlanması işine dahil etmeye başlayabilirler. Katılımcı ortamların teşvik edilmesiyle, öğretmenler çocuklara zaman ayırmaya değer bir iş yaptıkları hissini verebilirler (Gollob et al., 2010). Çocuklara katılım yeteneklerini artırma konusunda bir şans verildiğinde, öz güvenleri gelişir ve öncelik (inisiyatif) alırlar. Dolayısıyla değerli yaşamsal yetenekler kazanmış olurlar (Berk, 2013). Sonuç olarak okul öncesi öğretmenleri katılımı arttırmaya önem verdikleri zaman, çocuklar karar alma süreçlerine katılmaya daha istekli hale gelirler.

Appendix D: Ethical Permissions

ODTÜ ETİK KURULU

İnsan Arařtırmaları

Öğretmenler İçin Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Orta Doęu Teknik Üniversitesi Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlięi Ana Bilim Dalında Yüksek lisans yapmaktayım. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Çocukların Katılım Haklarına ilişkin inançlarının belirlenmesi amacıyla kendi hazırladığım çoktan seçmeli ve açık uçlu sorulardan oluşan bir ölçme aracı aracılığıyla siz öğretmen arkadaşarımdan veri toplamayı amaçlamaktayım. Bu doğrultuda yüksek lisans tez çalışmam için sizden katılımcı olarak yer almanızı rica ediyorum.

Çalışmaya katılma konusunda gönüllü iseniz;

Sizden, ortalama 10-20 dakika sürebilecek veri toplama aracını doldurmanız istenecektir. Anket soruları çoktan seçmeli olup, 5'li Likert tipi bir ölçme aracı olarak tasarlanmıştır. Anket sonunda yer alan açık uçlu soruları doldurmanız çalışma açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Katılımınız tamamen gönüllük esasına dayanmaktadır.

Katılımcılar için herhangi bir risk teşkil etmeyen bu çalışmadan, istediğiniz zaman ayrılabilirsiniz. İsminiz, gizlilik ilkesi gereęi çalışmada yer almayacaktır.

Sormak istediklerinizi ölçme aracını doldurmaya başlamadan önce sorabilirsiniz.

Katılım Sonrası Bilgi Formu

Bu çalışma daha önce belirtildiği üzere Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği Bölümü Öğretim üyesi Doç. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN'in danışmanlığında yüksek lisans tez çalışması olarak yürütülmektedir. Bu araştırmanın amacı okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların katılım haklarına ilişkin inançlarının araştırılmasıdır.

Küçük çocukların demokrasi ve benzeri uygulamalar ile ilgili deneyimleri, demokratik bir toplum inşa etmeye ek olarak çocukların gelişimleri üzerinde de belirgin bir etkiye sahiptir . Çocukların konuşmalara ve karar verme süreçlerine katılmalarıyla gelişimlerine önemli bir katkı sağlanmaktadır . Her çocuk için erken çocukluk dönemi çok önemlidir. Zeka, kişilik ve sosyal davranışların temeli çocukluğun ilk yıllarında oluşmaktadır. Pek çok çalışma alışkanlıkların erken yaşlardaki deneyimlere bağlı olduğu düşüncesini öne çıkarmaktadır.

Öğretmenlerin inançları çocukların katılım hakları konusunda çocukların düşüncelerinin nasıl etkilenebileceğini belirler. Bu inançlar aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin kendilerini ve yakın çevrelerini daha iyi anlamaları bakımından da değerlidir. Daha önce belirtildiği gibi, öğretmenlerin inançları ve uygulamaları arasındaki güçlü bağ nedeniyle, bu çalışma okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların BMÇHS 12. maddesi ile güvenceye alınan katılım hakkı konusundaki inançlarını incelemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Elde edilen bilgiler sadece bilimsel araştırmalarda kullanılacaktır. Çalışmanın sonuçlarını öğrenmek ya da bu araştırma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için aşağıdaki iletişim bilgilerini kullanabilirsiniz. Bu araştırmaya katıldığınız için çok teşekkür ederiz.

Arş. Gör. Tuna COŞKUN (Ofis: EFA-37; Tel: 0312 210 7508; ctuna@metu.edu.tr)

Appendix E: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı :
Adı :
Bölümü :

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: