

FIRST GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS'
FEELINGS AND PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

FIRST GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' FEELINGS AND PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL

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The objective of this study was to investigate first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school. In line with this purpose, how students attending schools located in different SES neighborhoods perceived the school and what their feelings about school were as well as whether there was a change in students' feelings and perceptions of school in fall and spring semesters were investigated. This qualitative phenomenological inquiry was carried out in three elementary schools in Ankara, Turkey. The participants selected through purposeful sampling were first grade students. Data of the study, which was conducted in two phases, was collected through students' drawings and semi-structured interviews. In data collection process, 133 students in the first phase and 118 students in the second phase drew pictures of the school concept in their mind. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 52 students in the fall semester, and 30 students in the spring semester. The whole data was analyzed through content analysis to enable in-depth understanding of the phenomena studied. The results of the study indicated

that students mainly perceived school as a playground where they could play with their friends. It was also found out that they perceived school as a social environment where they could make new friends and become socialized as well as have good relations with their teachers and peers. Moreover, it was concluded that they perceived school as a nice place and physical environment. However, it was found that school was perceived as a learning environment by a limited number of students. Also the results of the study showed that some of the students had negative feelings about school and perceived school as an unfriendly environment.

Keywords: Perception of school, feelings about School, students' drawings, first grade students.

ÖZ

İLKOKUL BİRİNCİ SINIF ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN OKUL ALGILARININ VE OKULA İLİŞKİN DUYGULARININ İNCELENMESİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algılarını ve okula ilişkin duygularını incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, sosyoekonomik açıdan farklı özelliklere sahip mahallelerde bulunan okullarda öğrenim gören öğrencilerin okulu nasıl algıladığı ve okula ilişkin duygularının neler olduğu araştırılmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin güz ve bahar yarıyıllarında sahip olduğu okul algıları ve okula ilişkin düşüncelerinde bir farklılık olup olmadığı incelenmiştir. Olgubilime dayalı bu nitel araştırma Ankara'da bulunan üç ilkokulda gerçekleştirilmiştir. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi ile belirlenen bu çalışmanın katılımcılarını ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. İki aşamada yürütülmüş olan çalışmanın verileri öğrencilerin çizimleri ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Veri toplama sürecinde, birinci aşamada 133 öğrenci ikinci aşamada ise 118 öğrenci zihinlerindeki okul kavramına ilişkin resimler çizmişlerdir. Buna ek olarak birinci aşamada 52, ikinci aşamada da 30 öğrenci ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışılan olgunun derinlemesine anlaşılabilmesi için veriler içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Çalışmanın sonuçları öğrencilerin okulu daha çok

arkadařlarıyla oynayabildikleri bir oyun alanı olarak algıladıklarını göstermiştir. Öğrencilerin aynı zamanda okulu arkadaş edinebilecekleri, sosyalleşebilecekleri ve öğretmenleri ve arkadaşları ile iyi ilişkiler kurabilecekleri sosyal bir ortam olarak algıladıkları da belirlenmiştir. Buna ek olarak, okulun güzel bir fiziksel ortam olarak algılandığı anlaşılmıştır. Bununla birlikte, az sayıda öğrencinin okulu bir öğrenme ortamı olarak algıladığı görülmüştür. Yine bazı öğrencilerin okula ilişkin olumsuz duyguları olduğu ve okulu kötü bir ortam olarak algıladıkları da saptanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul algısı, okula ilişkin duygular, öğrenci çizimleri, birinci sınıf öğrencileri.

to my beloved husband and son...

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study involving research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and definition of terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

Education which is not a process taking place in a particular period of life refers to acquiring both some skills, knowledge and some moral values to have educated individuals (Peters, 2010). Thus, education as an ongoing process from birth till the end of one's life contributes to individuals' intellectual and social development a great deal. It also plays a critical role in shaping each and every individual's life in the manner that they can keep up with the changing conditions of the society. On the basis of methods, materials used in teaching and learning process, and context, education has different types which are formal, non-formal and informal. Of those types of education, formal education points out the structured type of education in which a written curriculum is followed whereas non-formal education indicates the type of education taking place out of the formally structured schools like education programs for adults outside of school. As for informal education, it is somewhat different from non-formal education. It is related to acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes through daily life experiences. In other words, informal education can take place anywhere from home to playground (Ngaka, Openjuru, & Mazur, 2012).

Countries all over the world have implemented different schooling systems to ensure formal education. However, in most of the countries, public schooling systems have problems in meeting the demands of different stakeholders; therefore, they find it

necessary to improve, and expand their system of education (Morpeth & Creed, 2012). Similarly, in Turkey, which is one of those countries that feels the need to improve its schooling system and to provide quality education, a new schooling system called 12-Year Compulsory Education (4+4+4) has been started to be implemented since 2012-2013 school year. This new schooling system corresponds to 4-year-elementary education, 4-year- lower secondary education and 4-year- upper secondary education. With the new schooling system, the children who are 66 months old are required to enroll in an elementary school. Furthermore, those who are between 60-66 months old can also be registered in an elementary school by means of their parents' consent (MoNE, 2012).

In this regard, formal education, more specifically schooling system, is implemented in schools. In line with this implementation, the meaning, purpose and function of schools have been discussed widely by different stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, educators, researchers, policy makers, etc. for many years. Educational philosophies, which are Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism and Social re-constructionism have also explained the meaning, purpose and function of school in different ways. Of these educational philosophies, Perennialism explains that schools aim to search for truth. According to Essentialism, schools are the places to teach basic skills and subjects. On the other hand, Progressivism sees schools as community centers where students can express themselves freely and explicitly. Moreover, Social re-constructionism explains the role of school as enabling the students to question the culture they live (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

Along with these purposes and functions of school proposed by a variety of educational philosophies, there are also specific aims regarding the stages of schooling system. In this sense, the aims of elementary education are declared in the Basic Law of National Education (1973) as follows:

1. To enable all the students to gain the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to be a good citizen,

2. To prepare all students for future life and an upper level of education by training them in accordance with their interests, abilities and skills,
3. To inform students about their choices of profession in the last term of elementary education.

Regarding that, elementary education is important in terms of having aware and competent individuals in the society. More specifically, first grade education is highly critical as it provides the basis of future education life (Yamaç, 2014). The base of basic skills and knowledge that will be used throughout one's life is founded within that period (Temur, Özyeğit, Divrenge, Özkara & Ayyıldız, 2012). Moreover, students' experiences in their very first year of education can predict successes and failures in their future life of education (Stuhlman ve Pianta, 2009).

As regards to the importance of first grade education, the students' perceptions and feelings about school where first grade education takes place become meaningful because the way students make sense of school in their first year of education could give clues about whether they are pleased with the school environment, and their relations with their teachers and friends. Hence, whether students are pleased with the school environment could lead to positive or negative feelings and perceptions of school. With reference to the fact that academic development and learning is valued in a positive school environment (Özdemir, Sezgin, Şirin, Karip, & Erkan, 2010), positive feelings and perceptions of school in first grade education are possible to result in success while negative perceptions and feelings about school in first grade education could bring about failure throughout one's life since students' perceptions of school has an significant effect on academic success (Ford & Ill, 2008)

Perception refers to what someone or something symbolizes to a person (Despaigne, 2010) and feeling refers to a combination of complex, hidden emotions, real states and thoughts having influence on majority of our attitudes (Andre, 2012). Through investigating students' feelings and perceptions of school, their

thoughts, beliefs, views and feelings in relation to school can be found out. Perceptions of school can be identified by means of different techniques including survey (Gray & McLellan, 2006; Holfve-Sabel & Gustafsson, 2005) students' metaphors (Engin Demir, 2007; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Saban, 2008) and students' drawings (Dockett & Perry, 2004; Yıldız, 2012;). Of these techniques, students' drawings are especially useful to reveal young-aged students' perceptions and feelings about the phenomena studied. Malchiodi (1998) argues that drawings serve as one of the most effective ways in order to know about children's inner world. Actually, there are considerable number of studies carried out using drawings to get to know children's perceptions of different topics. The research studies that investigate the children's perceptions of school violence (Yurtal & Artut, 2010), numerical conceptions (Pavlovicova & Svecova, 2011), environment (Özsoy, 2012), good readers (Cobb, 2012), nature (Ülker, 2012), tropical rainforests (Bowker, 2007), Anıtkabir (Uysal & Selvi, 2012), Internet (Ersoy & Türkkkan, 2009), animals (Kubiatko, 2012), war (Buldu, 2009), water (Havu-Nuutinen, Karkkainen & Keinomen, 2011), and scientists (Buldu, 2006) are examples of the ones in which drawing technique is used to get to know children much better. In this sense, students' drawings were used in this study to investigate their perceptions and feelings about school.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine first grade elementary school students' perceptions and feelings about school. The study aimed to reveal how students at three schools located in different SES neighborhoods perceived the school and what their feelings about school were, and to identify whether there was a change in students' feelings and perceptions of school in the fall and spring semesters. From this point of view, the study addressed the following research questions;

1. What are the first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school?

2. How do first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school change according to school they attend?
3. How do first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school change in the fall and spring semesters?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Schools are places having a variety of functions such as providing a learning and social environment for students. They are also places where a considerable part of one's life is spent. In this regard, school is one of the most important institutions shaping one's life following family (Yıldız, 2012). On the other hand, elementary education, in particular first grade education, is highly critical since individuals acquire some basic skills, knowledge and some other competencies required in their future life in this period (Özbaş, 2009). The success in their education life and in other fields is built upon that period (Kutluca Canbulat & Tuncel, 2012). From this point of view, investigating students' feelings and perceptions of school in first grade education were considered significant.

In an attempt to identify how students in their first grade education perceived the school, and what their feelings about school were, the study aimed to reveal significant results regarding those students' interests as well as why schools were important for them. Considering that students are one of the main stakeholders of schooling process, getting to know about their feelings and perceptions of school could be useful in curriculum development process. In other words, what appeals first grade students at school could be helpful for curriculum planners in developing and revising the first grade curriculum. Hence, the results of the study aimed to contribute to the field of curriculum and instruction.

Moreover, the study intended to reveal the first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school by means of their drawings and the interviews carried out based on their drawings. In fact, drawings are one of the most effective

ways of disclosing how children perceive a subject matter and what they feel about an issue. Regarding that children reflect what is in their mind by means of their drawings, their drawings aimed to generate valuable data on their feelings and perceptions of school. However the literature review revealed a limited number of studies that used students' drawings to identify their perceptions of school and school experiences. Therefore, it is expected that this study will contribute to literature a great deal.

1.4. Definition of Terms

Perception: The processes that organize information in the sensory image and interpret it as having been produced by properties of objects or events in the external, three-dimensional world (Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2002). In this study, perception of school is related to how students understand school, what they think about school and what school symbolizes to them.

Feeling: Combination of thoughts and emotions, as well as expression of the things taking place around us (Andre, 2012). In this study, feelings of school is related to liking or disliking school, feeling happy, unhappy, anxious or lonely at school.

Children's drawings: Drawing is a way to communicate. Thus, children's drawings give the opportunity to get to know about their personality, their thoughts and feelings (NDF, 2015).

Low SES neighborhood: The neighborhood in which individuals who have lower income and have lower level of educational background. The individuals in this environment are widely primary school graduates or illiterate ones.

Middle SES neighborhood: The neighborhood in which individuals have higher income and higher level of educational background than those in low SES

neighborhood. The individuals in this environment are generally high school graduates and sometimes have bachelor degree.

High SES neighborhood: The neighborhood in which individuals have quite high income and high level of educational background. Nearly all the individuals in this environment have bachelor, master or PhD degree.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of literature focusing on the school in educational philosophies and different sociological theories, characteristics of children, the meaning of perception and feeling, and children's drawings.

2.1. School in Educational Philosophies and Sociological Theories

In this part, how school is defined in different educational philosophies and sociological philosophies was presented.

2.1.1. School in educational philosophies

Philosophy enabling individuals to organize their thoughts and point of view contributes to understanding the role and functions of school a great deal (Onstein & Hunkins, 2004). In this sense, educational philosophies which are Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism and Social reconstructionism define and interpret the functions and purposes of the school in different ways. These different perspectives on school might be helpful to understand the meaning of school.

The first educational philosophy Perennialism, which is the oldest one, has its roots in Idealism. According to Perennialists, the answer of the educational questions underlies the question of what human nature is. Concerning that individuals can question and understand the universal truths, education aims to reveal the universal truths through developing the rational person and training of the intellect (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). In this regard, schools are the institutions established to improve human intelligence. According to them, schools do not aim to train individuals so

that they can get a job in future and enable emotional wellness rather the purpose of schools is to search for truth. In this sense, in the classrooms which ensure students' intellectual development teachers need to have the desire to lead students towards seek for truth. Moreover, a Perennialist teacher highlights the importance of learning reading writing and computation which will guide students throughout their life in the pursuit of truth (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

The second educational philosophy essentialism has its roots in Idealism and Realism. Unlike Perennialism, Essentialism deals with the contemporary scene more. Similar to Perennialists, Essentialists indicate that education should give priority to acquiring the essential skills, facts and concepts that are the base of subject matter (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Having similar ideas about schooling, education and knowledge to Perennialism, Essentialism sees schools as places organized in order to civilize individuals and to teach basic skills and subjects. In line with the ideas of Essentialism, there is no need to have alternative programs in schools that undermine mastery of skills and subjects. The teachers in essentialism serve as transmitters the cultural heritage to students though skills and subjects in which they should be specialists (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

The third educational philosophy Progressivism, which rooted in Pragmatism, emerged as opposed to Perennialist philosophy. Progressivism is regarded as a contemporary movement in education, society and politics. Contrary to Perennialists and Essentialists, Progressivists emphasize *how* to think rather than *what* to think. On the basis of the Progressivist philosophy, problem-solving strategies and scientific inquiry as well as cooperative behaviors and self-discipline are also underlined (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Rejecting the traditional schooling system and applications in traditional schools, Progressivism proposes different views on schooling. While child-centered Progressivists view schools where children experiment, play and express themselves freely, the Progressivists who tend to have a more societal viewpoint view schools as community centers. They object to the

race, class and creed discrimination. The Progressivist teachers serving as facilitators integrate group work, problem solving and projects into their teaching style (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

The last educational philosophy Social reconstructionism, which has roots in pragmatism, points out that education aims to improve the society and that education serves as change and social reform (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). According to Social reconstructionist point of view, education needs to try to solve the inconsistencies and inequalities in society. In this sense, the function of schools and teachers is to adopt an approach that questions the culture in which they live. Moreover, one of the roles of schools is to put forward some suggestions for changing society and improving the standards of human life. In the way of creating a new society, teachers are required to support students to investigate major problems of human beings living on Earth (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

2.1.2. School in sociological theories

There are different explanations of school in different sociological theories as well. In this part, how Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Interpretivist Theory see the school concept was presented.

According to Functionalism, schools are places functioning as “the production cognitive skills, sorting and selection of talents and creation of an informed citizenry” (Hurn, 1993, p. 47). In this sense, schools function as maintaining the existent social order in societies together with other institutions. (Ballantine & Spade, 2015). Moreover, schools do not only aim to provide individuals with cognitive skills and the other skills that are necessary for a variety of jobs, they also assure a society supporting freedom and justice (Hurn, 1993).

Interpretivist theory, the second sociological theory, offers a different point of view to explain the function of school, and the relation between school and society. As

reported by the interpretivists, schools have different roles in different societies and contexts. Having a local rather than global orientation, Interpretivism deals with the culture-bound framework of particular schools. They see schools as places where individuals communicate with each other through “rules of the game”. Thus, according to them, their main task is to illustrate what is going on in particular instances of schooling and to interpret the ways individuals think and act in schools. As to the relationship between school and society, they see this relation as the expansion of a shared social structure of intelligibility (Feinberg & Soltis, 1992).

Contradicting with the Functionalist Theory, the Conflict Theory highlights the connection between schools and the demands of elites instead of the needs of whole society. Moreover, it emphasizes the link between schooling and the learning of docility and compliance rather than acquiring cognitive skills. Functionalists regard schools as relatively efficient mechanisms to sort and select talented individuals and to produce cognitive skills whereas conflict paradigm sees schools as serving the interests of elites, as strengthening existing inequalities and as producing attitudes that promote acceptance of the status quo (Hurn, 1993). In other words, according to the conflict theory, schools are places where loyal, obedient, easy-going individuals are educated in compliance with the interests of elites.

Moreover, school is also interpreted differently by two concepts, which are social capital and cultural capital, within the scope of the contemporary theories attempting to reveal the relationship between school and society. Of those concepts, social capital explain the role of schools as reproducing social class by social capital (Coleman, 1988, as cited in Ballantine & Spade, 2015). According to cultural capital, the other concept, schools serves as keeping on the differences in cultural capital by means of preserving the homogenous groups in terms of class backgrounds (Ballantine & Spade, 2015).

2.2. Characteristics of Children

The children who participated in the study are elementary school first grade students. Their physical, social, emotional and cognitive characteristics are thought as crucial in terms of giving clues about how they perceive school and what their feelings about school are, their experiences at school and their relations with the individuals around them.

Based on the children's age level which corresponds to 5-8 years, their physical, social, emotional and cognitive characteristics summarized by Snowman and Biehler (2000) were presented below.

The elementary grade children's physical characteristics are provided as follows:

- Elementary grade children are still highly active. As the children are often wanted to perform seat work, such nervous habits as pencil chewing, fingernail biting, and general fidgeting come up.
- Children in these ages need breaks since they get exhausted quickly owing to the physical and mental exercises.
- Many children's ability of eye-hand movement is not developed enough; therefore, manipulating a pencil is difficult for the children at these ages especially for boys.
- Concentrating on small print or objects is difficult for lots of elementary grade children. Of these children, only some of them can be farseeing.
- For the children at this age, there is a tendency to perform extremely physical activities. They can control their bodies in an excellent way and rely on their skills to a great extent. Thus, they frequently undervalue the dangerous activities.
- The children's bones are not developed enough at these ages; thus, their bones and ligaments cannot endure excessive pressure.

Social characteristics of the elementary grade children are presented as follows:

- Children get more rigorous while selecting their friends and it is probable that they make somewhat permanent best friend.
- Organized games in small groups are the children's favorite games at these ages; however, they involve themselves in rules too much and are carried away by team spirit.
- Children at these ages still quarrel with their peers frequently. They generally prefer words to physical aggression. Nonetheless, especially boys may enjoy punching, wrestling and showing.

Emotional characteristics pertaining to the elementary grade children are summarized as follows:

- The students in elementary grades are sensitive to being criticized and ridiculed. Also it may be difficult for these students to get used to failure.
- Many children in elementary grades are willing to make their teacher happy.
- Sensitiveness to the feelings of others is one of the characteristics of the children at these ages.

The elementary grade children's cognitive characteristics are presented as follows:

- Children at these ages are not competent enough to learn in an efficient way as much as older children. Therefore, it is better to give rather short tasks to elementary grade children, and the activities might sometimes be cognitively exhausting and sometimes less exhausting.
- Children at these ages are eager to talk and better at speech than at writing.
- Since the primary grade children can interpret the meaning of the rules literally in this stage of development, they can have a tendency to gossip and complain about their friends to their teacher.

2.2.1. Theories of development

Considering age level characteristics of the children, it was considered to be meaningful to associate those characteristics with the stage theories. In this regard, to which stage these characteristics correspond in Piaget's cognitive development, Erikson's psychosocial development and Piaget's moral development was thought to be beneficial in terms of examining the children's development from a holistic perspective.

Based on Piaget's cognitive development who offers four stages to explain children's cognitive development as sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational stage (Woolfolk, 2014), the elementary first grade children are at the transition stage from preoperational to concrete operational stage.

According to the Erikson's psychosocial development theory, the stages of personality development are trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus role confusion, intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and integrity versus despair (Erikson, 1963). Of these stages, psychosocial development of the elementary grade children corresponds to the fourth stage in the theory which is industry versus inferiority.

Two concepts morality of constraint and morality of cooperation were proposed by Piaget to refer to children's moral thinking. Accordingly moral thinking of the children who are till ten years old corresponds to morality of constraint and that of the children who are eleven or older corresponds to morality of cooperation. Kohlberg elaborating on Piaget's views on moral thinking introduced three levels including six stages to moral reasoning. These are preconventional morality comprised of punishment-obedience orientation stage and instrumental relativist orientation stage, conventional morality including good boy-nice girl orientation and law-and-order orientation, and postconventional morality covering social contract

orientation and universal ethical principle orientation (Snowman & Biehler, 2000). In this sense, the moral development of the elementary first grade children's corresponds to morality of constraint based on Piaget's ideas and pre-conventional morality based on Kohlberg's ideas.

Application of stage theories of development to the elementary grade years was presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Applying Stage Theories of Development to the Elementary Grade Years

Stage of psychosocial development	Industry vs. inferiority: By completing their tasks successfully, students need to develop a sense of industry. It is necessary to decrease the students' failures in order to hinder developing sense of industry.
Stage of cognitive development	Transition from preoperational to concrete operational stage: Students gain the ability of solving problems through generalizing from concrete experiences.
Stage of moral development	Morality of constraint, pre-conventional: Rules are regarded as edicts stated by the authority. Students focus more on physical consequences. In other words, obeying rules should be beneficial in return.
General factors to keep in mind	Students' first experiences related to school shape. They are generally willing to learn reading and writing, and it is possible that they get upset due to lack of progress. Students' first attitudes towards school and schooling are being formed. Roles such as leader, follower, loner, athlete, and underachiever in a group begin to be established.

Adapted from Snowman and Biehler (2000), p. 79.

2.3. The Concepts of Perception and Feeling

Within the scope of this study, it was aimed to investigate first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school. In this sense, providing the meanings of perception and feeling was considered to be useful. First of all, perception is defined in Merriam-Webster dictionary as 'the way you think about or

understand someone or something'. According to Edwards (1999, p.101), perception is 'the filter through which sensory data are strained'. Moore (2007) underlines that perception is relevant to social psychology, sociolinguistics, sociology and anthropology (as cited in Despaigne, 2010). Moreover, Barbot and Camatarri (1999) indicate that perception is related to attitudes and ideas that a person reveals unconsciously (as cited in Despaigne, 2010). For instance, to investigate perceptions of English, perception refers to what English represent for them and what the symbol of English is (Despaigne, 2010). In this regard, perception of school in this study points out how students understand school, what they think about school and what school symbolizes to them.

Secondly, feeling is defined as a combination of complex, hidden emotions, real states and thoughts having influence on majority of our attitudes. In other words, rather than only emotions or thoughts, feelings are a mixture of them. Moreover, feelings are expressing what happens both in and around us (Andre, 2012). In this sense, feelings about school refers to whether students like school, feel happy, anxious and lonely at school.

Feelings and perceptions of school can be influenced by different factors including school readiness and school bullying. Of those factors, school readiness means to attain some emotional, behavioral and cognitive skills to a certain degree required in order to achieve, learn and function well in school (Çelebi Öncü & Ünlüer, 2013; Ülkü, 2007). Age, parents' SES background and preschool experience can have an impact of school readiness.

According to Moore (2008), a variety of factors including chronological age, gender, previous experience, social skills, intelligence, general health, and socioeconomic status can influence school readiness. Regarding the effect of age on school readiness, Gündüz and Çalışkan (2013) underline that there is a mutual relationship between age level and school maturity or school readiness, that is, rise in age level

results in higher level of school maturity. In our country, with the new schooling system, some of the parents send their children to school at an earlier age level, that is below 66 months old, but it was observed that the younger ones could not do the assigned activities as their muscle development has not been completed yet, and they could not focus on lessons and realize the importance of the activities they did because of their incomplete cognitive development (Doğan, Demir, & Pınar, 2014). In this sense, it can be concluded that those younger students might not be ready to start school. In addition, parents' educational background and socio economic status can change level of school maturity. To illustrate, the students living in a high SES environment were found to have higher level of school maturity when compared to the ones who live in low SES environment (Erkan, 2011; Yılmaz, 2003). For children grown up in a disadvantaged family environment, preschool education can be significant to ensure that they are ready to start school. Preschool experiences provide children with the required skills and qualifications just before beginning primary school (Senemoğlu, 1994). Thus, the children who had preschool experience were found to be more ready to start primary school compared to those who did not have any preschool experience (Erkan, 2011). In this sense, preschool experience can be suggested to play a significant role in preparing children for primary school (Barnett & Hustedt, 2003; Erkan, 2011; Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005; Pehlivan, 2006).

As regards to the issues about school readiness, when a child is not ready to start school and experiences a variety of difficulties in this process, s/he is likely to develop negative attitudes towards school and even to develop school phobia (Canel & Yukay Yüksel, 2015; Gündüz & Çalışkan, 2013). Nevertheless, school readiness is not regarded as the only factor affecting feelings and perceptions of school. School bullying and violence among peers can be considered to play an important role in how school is perceived by first graders, as well.

According to Olweus (1993, p. 9), ‘a student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students’. Bullying types emerges as physical, verbal and relational bullying (Olweus, 1993). Of these bullying types, physical bullying was regarded as the most severe one among elementary students (Chen, 2015). Considering that elementary grade students are not happy with being bullied and victimized, feelings and perceptions of school and school environment have been associated with problematic behaviors like bullying victimization (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, & Gottfredson, 2005). Moreover, it is less likely that bully victims feel safe than bullies at school. In addition to perception of school, school bullying affects children’s school performance, as well (Hugh-Jones & Smith, 1999).

Feelings and perceptions of school can be investigated through different techniques including metaphors and drawings. In this study, drawings were used mainly to examine feelings and perceptions of school. Along with the students’ drawings, metaphors were used to identify first grade students’ feelings and perceptions of school. They are among the major means individuals have developed to realize and express their world (Munby, 1987). In this sense, they can be a suitable way to get to know about individuals’ perceptions about an issue. Thus, metaphors were used in different studies to investigate perceptions of school (Balçı, 1999; Cerit, 2006; Engin Demir, 2007; Saban, 2008). Nonetheless, drawings can be more effective and suitable to elicit young aged students’ feelings and perceptions of school.

2.4. Children’s Drawings

Children use a variety of ways to communicate with the people around them. ‘Facial expressions, gestures, body language, speech, socio-dramatic play, dancing, singing, manipulating objects, as well as mark making and drawing’ can be acknowledged among the ways to communicate (Anning & Ring, 2004, p. 1). Of these ways to get in contact with the ones around them, drawing is seen as one of the most crucial one for children to express themselves (Malchiodi, 1998; Yavuzer, 2011).

Drawing is one of the most enjoyable activities for children. They generally do not feel bored while drawing something. They draw the pictures instinctively (Yolcu, 2009); thus, children's drawings resemble to dreams in that both of them reveal children's unconscious mind (Wilson, 1993). Therefore, drawings, which are regarded as one of the most suitable way to get to know about children's perceptions and their individuality (Pavlovičová & Švecová, 2011), give clues about children as it is difficult to find out what is happening in their inner world. Drawings seen as a stronger way of expression than words in younger ages reflect children's inner world as long as they are analyzed effectively (Yavuzer, 1993). Drawings and pictures substitute for language for children.

2.4.1. History of children's drawings

Children's drawings and their drawing ability has been used to obtain various information related to children by researchers and educators from past to present. Interest in children's drawings can date back to the late 18th century. Even so, this interest began in the late 19th century (Kelly, 2004). Yavuzer (2011) also mentions that quite a lot of interest in children's drawing and art can be seen between the years 1885-1920. With respect to the research in relation to children's drawings, the beginning of the research for children's drawings dates back to the end of the 19th century (Harris, 1963). Early research studies regarding children's drawings focus on how they are used to determine intelligence level. The first one of these studies belongs to Burt who used drawing a person as one of the intelligence tests in 1921. In this study, he found out that children's drawings were more related to reading, mathematical or writing skills than children's intellectual abilities. Afterwards, Goodenough examined children's drawings in 1926 and developed a test called Draw-A-Man (DAM) test which is based upon that children's mental age is associated with certain aspects of drawing performance. With regards to this issue, Goodenough in 1926 and later Harris in 1963 specified age norms for human drawings in which they associate drawings with mental age rather than chronological

age. Additionally, Buck studied on them in 1948 with House-Tree-Person test and Machover examined them in 1949 with Draw-A-Person projective test. Children's drawings were not only used to determine intelligence level but they were also used to indicate development by Koppitz in 1968 and to determine personality characteristics by Machover in 1949, Hammer in 1958 and Koppitz in 1968 (Malchiodi, 1998).

2.4.2. Approaches to children's drawings

The reasons why children draw pictures are explained by means of several approaches. The views that deal with drawings from a theoretical perspective are developmental approaches, projective approaches, artistic approaches and symbolic approaches. Firstly, developmental approaches argue that children regard drawings as a game. Within the scope of this approach, Piaget explains drawings by means of symbolic games and mental images. Secondly, projective approaches deal with drawings in estimating personality. Thirdly, artistic approaches examine children's drawings in terms of what they can draw in accordance with their age. In this respect, children begin to have simple scribbles towards the age of two. They can generate clear images when they are two or three years old. By the time they reach at the age of three or four, they can create meaningful images. The age in which they can draw people, animals, buildings, etc. corresponds to almost their fourth age. Fourthly, symbolic approaches put forward that drawings symbolize and express children's interests and experiences (Yavuzer, 2011).

2.4.3. Developmental stages of children's drawings

The expressions in art refer to children's abilities developing in years such as 'motor skills, perception, language, symbol formation, sensor awareness and spatial orientation' (Malchiodi, 1998, p.66). In other words, art expressions are reflections of the changes occurring in children's various abilities depending upon their age. Hence, to be informed of how children express themselves by means of their

drawings at different age levels is required to make sense of their drawings (Malchiodi, 1998).

Children display some developmental stages in art activities in line with their physical and cognitive development. Beginning from the age of two, the developmental stages as scribbling, preschematic, schematic, dawning realism, pseudorealism and period of decision were introduced as follows:

The Scribbling Stage (2-4 years): The first stage of children's artistic development is the scribbling stage. The initial drawings in this stage are disordered scribbles and mostly based on kinesthetic activity. Over time, these disordered scribbles take different shapes like circles. During most of this stage, marks are not linked to representation. Towards the end of the stage, children begin to give names to the scribbles, which is seen as the turning point in this stage since there is a development in the child's mental growth and thus their thinking changes in this stage (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).

The children's drawings including mostly scribbles in this stage reflect their mental and emotional development. Children generally enjoys this activity and continues scribbling. This activity shows also the children's muscle development. They get visual control by looking at those scribbles, and they realize the freedom as they create their own work (Yavuzer, 2011).

The Preschematic Stage (4-7 years): The second stage of children's artistic development is preschematic stage. Contrary to the scribbling stage in which drawing is regarded as a kinesthetic activity, there is a tendency to establish a relationship to the representation of what a child wants to draw in the preschematic stage. Children begin to realize the links between what they draw and the real world and draw representational symbols for something real in the environment. Firstly, they attempt to draw a person and then their drawings get more complex as reflections of the world they observe (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).

Concerning the students' preference of colors, there is not a relationship between the preferred color and the object drawn. The children at those ages generally use the color they like. Moreover, this stage is the one in which a difference and flexibility is observed in children's drawings, which allow us to know about the children's thinking process (Yavuzer, 2001).

The Schematic Stage (7-9 years): The schematic stage is the third stage of children's artistic development. The child develops a schema in this stage in order to make their drawings. They can draw correct shapes to represent the object they want to draw. They use baseline and there is a definite order in their drawings, that is, there is a clear differentiation between the sky and ground in their drawings. Moreover, they draw the objects which are more important for them larger when compared to the other objects (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).

In this stage, the relationship between object and color is not formed. In other words, it is possible that children do not use the correct color to color an object. The children's drawings also inform us about their physical development. For instance, a child who is physically more energetic can draw figures moving. Furthermore, this stage is important in terms of children's artistic development since they may not continue drawing when they are discouraged in school environment and by adults (Yavuzer, 2001).

Dawning realism (9-11 years): The dawning realism stage is the fourth stage in children's artistic development. The objects are depicted in a more detailed way in this stage. The children can describe the spatial depth and colors similar to how objects appear. They are also more critical about their own work and they can compare their work with those of others (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).

In terms of the choice of colors in this stage, children do not use colors randomly or just because they like that color anymore. They start to select the right color to color an object. In this stage, children also reflect the difference between clothes of the male and female. They start to draw the relationship between figures and objects properly (Yavuzer, 2001).

Pseudorealism (11-13 years): The pseudorealism stage is the fifth stage in children's artistic development. The children are much more critical of human figures, environment and their own drawings. Adult-like drawings and increase in detail are observed in children's drawings. Space is perceived and described as three-dimensional on paper. This period is also seen as the period in which artistic development ends for many children (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).

In this stage, which corresponds to the beginning of puberty, children attempt to reflect proportions, dimensions and depth of the objects around them in their drawings. Moreover, human figures are drawn in detail, and children can use colors very well (Yavuzer, 2001).

Period of decision (adolescence): The period of decision is the sixth stage in children's artistic development. Artistic development only continues if children are encouraged to make art and they decide consciously to improve their own drawing skills. Therefore, not all the children can attain this stage. This stage is also regarded as a critical one to development of an artist. As children criticize themselves a lot and can be discouraged easily, it is necessary to motivate them (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).

Furthemore, Artur (2009) introduces the primary school first and second grade children's ability to perceive some elements which constitute art such as line, shape, toning, space, color, objects, and design.

Line: They can use a variety of lines to express their feelings and can call these lines as thick, straight, wavy, etc. They can make drawings on various kind of paper a variety of tools.

Shape: They can identify basic shapes such as circle, square, rectangle and their dimensions. They can examine the changes in shapes and display the characteristics pertaining to schematic stage in which the objects important to children are drawn bigger.

Toning: The children are aware of the concepts such as shading, light, dark but they cannot make shading. They can find the primary tone of simple shapes and paint them.

Space: They cannot use the real proportion. They generally draw objects one after another. They acquire the concept baseline and draw some shapes whose interior and exterior parts are seen together in some pictures. They know the concepts right-left, center and corner.

Color: Children in the first grade use colors instinctively. The enthusiasm in them pushes them to use which color they want. They can identify the main colors and are aware of the similarities and differences among colors. Moreover, they are curious about the relationship between colors and feelings and discuss this relationship.

Objects: They recognize the objects in the environment. The details in pictures draw their attention. They write various statements on their drawing and they try to write these statements in different colors and styles.

Design: They are natural designers. They sometimes draw nonsymmetrical objects and includes repetitions unconsciously.

2.5. Related Studies on Perceptions of School and Children's Drawings

The current study focused on determination of first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school. Also, it was aimed whether there was a change in feelings and perceptions of first grade students in three elementary schools towards school as well as whether there was a change in their feelings and perceptions of school in fall and spring semesters of 2014-2015 school year. In order

to investigate the students' feelings and perceptions of school, mainly the students' drawings were used. Related studies on perceptions of school and children's drawings were presented below.

In order to investigate perception of school, different techniques can be used. Metaphors, scales and drawings, in particular for children, can be regarded among the leading techniques to examine perceptions of school. Using a scale to examine perceptions of school, Fan, Williams and Corkin (2011) carried out a study on social and academic risk factors affecting students' perceptions of school climate. The results of this study showed that parents' education level, gender, ethnicity, and having behavior problems at school are among the factors that have an effect on how students perceive school climate.

As for the studies in which metaphors were used as a technique to identify how school is perceived, Cerit (2006) conducted a study on the school metaphors produced by students, teachers and administrators. According to the results of this study, metaphors having negative meanings such as prison and factory were not produced by the participants. Rather, they saw schools as nice and beautiful places and as places for illumination, improvement and growing up. Family and team were also metaphors produced by the participants.

Similarly, Saban (2008) carried out a study regarding metaphors of school by means of collecting data from students, teachers and pre-service teachers. He found out in his study that schools were mostly seen as places for knowledge and illumination, and for love and cooperation. The metaphor prison was used by only a small part of the students.

Differently from the abovementioned studies in which metaphors having positive meanings were produced, Engin Demir (2007) conducted a study with middle school students from Turkey and America. The results of the study revealed that Turkish

students perceive school more positively than American students. While the Turkish students saw school as family-like, care-giving place and produced metaphors like home and family, the American students regarded school as crowded, boring, chaotic and wild.

In a comprehensive study about metaphors of school, Balcı (1999) collected data from students, teachers and parents regarding how they perceive school. To strengthen perception of school, participants were also asked metaphors about the teacher, the student, the school principal and the parent. According to the results of the study, the data of which was collected through interviews and questionnaire, school was seen as a care-giving place functioning to transmit knowledge and cultivate young people. Nevertheless, schools were also found to have a disciplined, chaotic and authoritarian atmosphere.

Next, Lahelma (2002) carried out an ethnographic study the title of which is 'School is for meeting friends: secondary school as lived and remembered'. The data of this study was collected by students in secondary schools through their metaphors of school, reflections about ideal school and memories of secondary school. According to the results of the study, most of the metaphors related to school were negative. Nevertheless, it was indicated that making friends is crucial for young students at school.

Another technique that can be used to determine perception of school is children's drawings. Drawings are especially useful for children at younger ages as this technique enables children to reflect what is in their minds and their perceptions. There are a variety of studies in which drawings are used to determine children's perception of environment, violence, war, etc. Apart from these studies, Dockett and Perry (2004) carried out a study on examining children's reflections on their first year at school through their drawings. They implemented the drawings technique both at the beginning of the children's first year at school and at the end of their first

year. The children's drawings and their comments on these drawings showed that they had a quite positive perception of school at the beginning of school, and that they changed a great deal over the year and learnt a lot at school.

Another study that aims to identify primary school children's perceptions of school through their drawings was conducted by Yıldız (2012). Making use of children's drawings, observation and interviews with the children as data collection tools, he found out that generally school buildings, garden, flag, pole and school gate were drawn as the items reflecting their perception of school.

2.6. Summary of the Literature Review

To summarize, the comprehensive review of literature was provided on the meaning of school concept in different educational philosophies and sociological theories, characteristics of children, the meanings of perception and feeling, and children's drawings.

First of all, how school is defined in a variety of sociological theories and educational philosophies was illustrated. For instance, Functionalists underline the role of school as equipping individuals with cognitive and social skills so that they can maintain the order in society whereas Interpretivist theorists explain that role of schools changes depending on the society. On the other hand, Conflict theorists see schools as serving the purposes of elites and reinforcing existing inequalities. There are different explanations of school concept in educational philosophies, as well. For example, according to Perennialism, schools are places of improving human intelligence. More or less similar to Perennialism, essentialism defines schools as places of civilizing individuals and teaching basic skills. Different from these educational philosophies, Progressivists see schools as places where students experiment and express themselves freely. Other than these, according to Social reconstructionism, schools are places to question the culture we live in.

Secondly, physical, social, emotional and cognitive characteristics of children, were revealed within the framework of literature review. Furthermore, how these characteristics are applied to theories of development was explained. On the basis of the students' characteristics, students at those ages are highly active but their bones and ability of eye-hand movement are not developed enough. They are careful while selecting their friends, and they are sensitive to being criticized. The students are also not competent enough to learn efficiently. In terms of Piaget's theory of cognitive development, they are at the transition stage from preoperational to concrete operational stage. They, on the other hand, are at the stage of industry versus inferiority based on Erikson's psychosocial development and their moral development corresponds to morality of constraint based on Piaget's ideas and preconventional morality based on Kohlberg's ideas.

Thirdly, the definitions of perception and feeling are provided. In this sense, while perception is "the way you think about or understand someone or something" in Merriam-Webster dictionary, feeling is a combination of emotions and thoughts. Regarding feelings and perceptions of school, they can be affected by school readiness and school bullying.

Lastly, why children's drawings were used to elicit first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school was illustrated. For the students at those ages, drawings are regarded useful as they can display their feelings and thoughts more easily. In addition, stages of children's artistic development were also provided and it was stated that elementary school first grade students were at the transition stage between preschematic and schematic stage.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This chapter aimed to describe the research method of the study. Firstly, the design of the study was introduced. Then, the research questions were given. Next, the sampling procedure, data collection instruments and procedure were discussed. Finally, trustworthiness and limitations of the study are presented.

3.1. Design of the Study

This study was designed as a qualitative one which aimed to examine first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school by means of their drawings and interviews. The study attempted to find out how first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school changed in three elementary schools in Ankara. It was also investigated whether there was a change in students' feelings and perceptions of school in the fall and spring semesters of 2014-2015 school year.

Qualitative studies are different from quantitative ones in that the former emphasizes words while the latter focus on numbers (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012; Maxwell, 1996). Differently from the quantitative research, the researcher is the instrument in qualitative research. Additionally, surveys and tests are data collection instruments in quantitative studies while interviews, field observations and documents are used as qualitative data collection instruments (Patton, 2002). Also, the meanings of the events, situations and participants' experiences can be understood in detail in qualitative research. While quantitative researchers focus on whether and to what extent variance in x is caused by the variance in y, qualitative researchers focus on how x plays a role in the change of y (Maxwell, 1996). Apart from all these, a

qualitative study aims to present the topic in a detailed way (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

There are five different designs in qualitative research. A researcher can choose among these five designs based on his purpose and focus. For instance, a case study explores a case over time by means of detailed data collection instruments (Maxwell, 1996). Of the qualitative research designs, the focus of phenomenological studies is on describing the individuals' experience of a phenomenon, perception of this phenomenon and feelings about it (Patton, 2002). Moreover, phenomenology aims to describe what all participants have in common while experiencing a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Taking these points into consideration, the study was designed as a qualitative one, more specifically, as a phenomenological one in which the purpose of the researcher was to investigate students' feelings and perceptions of school, which was the phenomenon of the current study, through students' drawings and face to face semi-structured interviews carried out with them. It was aimed to portray how students perceived school in a holistic way by means of a few data sources.

3.2. Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

- 1- What are the first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school?
- 2- How do first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school change according to school they attend?
- 3- How do first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school change in the fall and spring semesters of 2014-2015 school year?

3.3. Participants

To investigate the students' perceptions of school, the main data source of this study was first grade elementary school students. The participants were selected through purposeful sampling as it ensures in-depth understanding (Patton, 2002). To reveal

exactly how students' feelings and perceptions of school change according to school, the participants were selected among the students of three elementary schools in Ankara from different SES neighborhoods which are low, middle and high. This selection of the participants also ensures maximum variation. Maximum variation sampling, which "documents unique or diverse variations that have emerged in adapting to different conditions and identifies important common patterns that cut across variations" (Patton, 2002, p. 243), increases the possibility that findings reflect differences and different point of views (Creswell, 2013). Thus, use of this sampling technique in this study enables the results to represent the differences in feelings and perceptions of school among participants of the study.

The participants of the study, which was conducted in two phases, were comprised of 40 students from the first school, 57 students from the second school and 36 students from the third school for the first phase, and 32 students from the first school, 52 students from the second school and 34 students from the third school for the second phase of the study. In each phase of the study, all the students in two sections of each school drew pictures regarding the school image in their mind and their feelings about school. After they drew pictures, semi-structured interviews were carried out with some of the students. In order to select the students who would be interviewed, the researcher consulted their teachers. With the teachers' contributions, the researcher attempted to select those students who drew notable pictures and could provide rich data. Moreover, the researcher aimed to conduct interviews with students who were at different age levels and with those who drew different settings of school to reveal different perspectives on school. Thus, it was aimed to attain maximum variation. In terms of the number students that were interviewed, for the first phase of the study, 24 students in the first school, 18 students in the second school and 10 students in the third school were interviewed. As for the second phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were performed with 10 students from each school. The students in each school were called as S1, S2, S3, etc. At the beginning of the data collection procedure, it was thought that first grade students would not be

likely to provide enough data in the interviews; therefore, the number of the students interviewed was quite high in the first and second schools for the first phase of the study. Then, the number of the students to be interviewed was reduced in the third school as data saturation was achieved, and 10 students in the third school were interviewed. Since those students gave enough data in the interviews in the first phase of the study, 10 students from each school were interviewed in the second phase of the study.

Regarding the students' demographic information, as it can be seen in Table 2, there were 15 male students and 25 female students in the first school, 20 male students and 27 female students in the second school, and 17 male students and 19 female students in the third school.

Table 2
The Distribution of Participants by School and Gender

Schools	Female	Male
First School	25	15
Second School	27	20
Third School	19	17

In addition, as it is clear in Table 3 that there were only two students at each school who were below 66 months old. Other students were above 66 months old.

Table 3
Age Level of the Students in Three Schools

Schools	60-66 month old students	67-72 month old students	Above 72 month old students
First School	2	10	28
Second School	2	18	27
Third School	2	16	18

The participants of the study were selected from three elementary schools in Ankara. The schools are described below:

The First School

The first school is located in a low SES neighborhood where families from low or lower-middle SES background live. The students living in a squatter settlement which is a little far from the school's location are also registered in the school. Based on the teachers' views, the parents of the students are generally primary school



graduates and some of them are even illiterate. Nevertheless, there are parents who are high school graduates and have bachelor degree.

Regarding the properties of the school, the school has a two story building. There are 28 teachers, three of whom taught first grade students, and nearly 300 students in the school. Of these students, the first grade ones were in three sections and the sections were comprised of 20-25 students.

Furthermore, the school has 24 classrooms as well as a library, a science laboratory and a conference hall. The school provides full day schooling, that is it start at about 9.00 a.m. and ends at about 14.30 p.m. There are preschool and primary grade students in the school building. There is also an *İmam Hatip* Middle School within the same school garden.

The Second School

The second school in which the study was carried out is located in a middle SES neighborhood where mostly families from middle SES background live. Based on the teachers' views, most of the parents are high school graduates and some of them have bachelor degree. The parents generally work as civil servants and there are also workers among the parents.



In terms of the properties of the school, the school is two-storied. There are 16 teachers, three of whom taught first grade students, and nearly 475 students. The first grade students were in three sections and the sections were quite crowded comprised of 30-35 students. The school has also 16 classrooms as well as a

workshop, a science laboratory, a computer laboratory, a sports hall and a conference hall. In the same school building, both the primary grade students and middle school students are educated. The school operates in two shifts with the middle school students in the building early in the day and the elementary school students later in the day. There is a preschool building in the same school garden, too.

The Third School

The third school is a private elementary school which is located in a high SES neighborhood where generally families from high SES background live. Based on the teachers' views, nearly all the parents of the students have bachelor degree and some of them have even masters and PhD degrees. There are academicians, soldiers, solicitors and judges among the parents of the students.



With regard to the properties of the school, the school is five storied. There are 25 teachers, five of whom taught first grade students and nearly 460 students in the school. The first grade students were in five sections and each section was comprised of 20 students. The school has a computer laboratory, a science laboratory, a music classroom, a library, a painting room, and a dining hall. The school provides full day schooling which

starts at about 9.00 a.m. and ends at about 5.00 p.m. The elementary school and the middle school are in different buildings and in separate gardens.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

In this phenomenological research study, there were two types of data collection instruments that are students' drawings and semi-structured interviews. Of these data collection instruments, drawings were considered to be effective to elicit the feelings and perceptions of younger children so that they could express themselves explicitly in the classroom and other settings through their drawings (Walker, Caine-Bish & Wait, 2009). Moreover, though children do not want to verbalize what they feel, they are eager to draw pictures and tell about their feelings concerning what they have drawn (Rae, 2002). Gross and Hayne (1998) stated that when children were given the chance to draw and tell, they revealed two times more information compared to the children who were asked to tell only. In an attempt to gather as many data as possible concerning students' perceptions of school, both students' drawings were used and semi-structured interviews were maintained in the study.

Regarding that interviews are frequently used data collection instruments in phenomenological studies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008), semi-structured interviews, as the second data collection instrument, were carried out with students both in the first and second phase of the study. These interviews lasted about 10-15 minutes depending on students' attention span. For the purpose of conducting the interviews, interview schedules for each phase of the study were developed by the researcher and were revised in line with the opinions of two experts. The interviews schedules are comprised of open-ended questions directed to the students. In the first interview schedule, there are 22 open-ended questions regarding students' demographic information, description of their drawings and their feelings and perceptions of school. The second interview schedule is comprised of 15 open-ended questions covering similar headings together with how their feelings and perceptions of school changed in the spring semester. The interview schedules were provided in the Appendices.

With regard to the procedure, the study had two phases for collection of the data. The data for the first phase of the study was collected towards midst of the fall semester of the 2014-2015 school year corresponding to October and November. In this phase, the students in all the three school drew pictures regarding what came to their mind about school. Following their drawings, they were interviewed by means of the interview schedule prepared by the researcher about their demographic information, the description of their drawings, and their feelings and perceptions of school.

Within the second part of the implementation, the same students who participated in the first phase took part in the second phase of the study. Once again the students were asked to draw pictures concerning the school image in their mind and they were interviewed about the description of their drawings, and their feelings and perceptions of school through the interview schedule prepared by the researcher. The implementation of the second phase of the study was carried out towards the middle of the spring semester corresponding to March and April. In this way, it was aimed

to determine whether there was a change in the students' feelings and perceptions of school in the fall and the spring semesters.

3.5. Data Analysis

Two types of data were gathered for the study. The first one is the students' drawings and the second one is the semi-structured interviews which were carried out with students.

First of all, in order to analyze the students' drawings, a rubric was developed by the researcher (See Appendix A). In fact, in some of the studies using drawings, the participants were asked to explain briefly what they drew or why they drew this picture back side of the paper. By means of those explanations, the drawings were analyzed. However, in this study, the students could not write such an explanation especially in the first phase of the study as they were at the very beginning of learning how to read and write. Therefore, the researcher developed a rubric including lines, figures, body parts, emotions and colors in the drawings to analyze the students' drawings. In an attempt to develop the rubric, several books and studies were used. These sources were provided under the titles below:

- Figures in the drawings (Burns & Kaufman, 1972; Die Leo, 1983; Paktuna-Keskin, 2003;; Yavuzer, 1993; Malchiodi, 1998).
- Lines in the drawings (Klepsch & Logie, 1982; Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1967).
- Individuals' body parts (Koppitz, 1968; Altinköprü, 2003).
- Emotions (Die Leo, 1983; Malchiodi, 1998).
- Colors (Yavuzer, 1993; Burkitt, Barrett, & Davis, 2003; Furth, 2002).

Based on the rubric, colors yield different meanings for instance, red means aggressiveness and orange refers to anxiety. All the same, Yavuzer (1993) states that children use their favorite colors when they want to draw a picture of the people and places they like. The colors children can have meanings changing from child to child. Therefore, it could be difficult to infer exact meanings on the basis of the colors

children use. From this point of view, whether a student used his favorite color was taken into consideration to make sense of the students' drawings (See Appendix A for the rubric)

Based on the rubric, the students' drawings were analyzed by means of content analysis the purpose of which was to describe the data and reveal the hidden facts within the data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). Each of the students' drawings was examined one by one on the basis of the figures, colors, body parts, emotions and lines in the drawings, and codes were identified. In light of the emergent codes, categories and themes were formed. As such, the interviews were analyzed through content analysis. In this sense, first of all the raw data were transcribed. Then, codes were initially determined and in consideration of the emergent codes, categories and themes were formed. To form codes, categories and themes emerging from the results of students' drawings and interviews, research questions were taken into consideration. Furthermore, to analyze the data, NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software 10.0 was used.

3.6. Trustworthiness

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), establishing credibility is significant to ensure trustworthiness. In this regard, it is necessary for a researcher to use some strategies to make his study credible. Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose some strategies such as prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing and member check to overcome this credibility issue.

Within the scope of this study, the abovementioned strategies were used for this study to be credible.

Prolonged engagement: While carrying out interviews with the students, the researcher observed the setting and spent enough time in the setting. In this way, she built trust with the participants. She spent one month at each school in total.

Triangulation: Collecting data through a number of different instrument helps to enhance validity (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). In this study, both drawings of the students and interviews with them were used as the data collection instruments. Using these two different data collection instruments, the researcher tried to examine the students' perceptions of school and to ensure the study to be credible.

Peer debriefing: Throughout the data analysis procedure, the researcher was in close contact with a researcher from METU, a researcher outside of METU and an expert of Curriculum and Instruction from Department of Educational Sciences at METU. They provided the researcher with useful consultancy for analyzing the data. After shaping the codes and themes, another expert at METU also checked them. Furthermore, the analysis of the students' drawings was checked by two experts one of whom is an expert of art education.

3.7. Limitations of the Study

The study aimed to investigate first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school. The data of this study was collected from three schools in Ankara. Resulting from the nature of qualitative research, the results of the study cannot be generalized to wider populations.

As another limitation, in the beginning, it was planned to collect data for the first phase of the study as soon as the fall semester of 2014-2015 education year started as it was crucial to get to know how students perceived school and what their feelings about school were when they just started school. Hence, the researcher was going to find the chance to examine the students' feelings and perceptions of school at the very beginning of starting school. However, there occurred some problems to receive the consent letter of the Ministry of National Education; thus, the researcher had to start to gather data for the first phase of the study towards the midst of the fall semester. The researcher attempted to have an idea about their feelings and perceptions of school in their first days at school though the interview questions but

it is likely that this does not reflect exactly how students' perceived school in the very first days of school. This can also be acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study, which aimed at examining the first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school. In line with the research questions, results of the students' drawings and the interviews carried out with them in three schools were provided. The results were often supported by sample drawings and direct quotations.

The analysis of data collected through students' drawings and interviews, revealed six themes: School as a playground, school as a nice place, school as a social environment, school as a physical environment, school as a learning environment and school as an unfriendly environment. Therefore the findings were grouped under these six subtitles and presented below within the framework of research questions.

4.1. School as a Playground

On the basis of the analysis of the students' drawings and interviews, it can be concluded that students perceived school more as a playground than as a learning environment. Regarding the drawings, more than half of the students in the first, second and third schools both in the first and second phase of the study drew school as a playground. Balloons, balls, trees, school garden, break time, hopscotch in the school garden and students playing in school garden were found out to be among the indicators of perceiving school as a place of joy and fun. In most of the drawings, the students drew school garden with the school building and students playing there but in several drawings there was only the school garden without school building.

To illustrate some examples from the students' drawings, one of the students in the first school drew herself and her friends playing together at school in Figure 1. As it can be clearly seen in the drawing, the students have happy faces as they play with their friends, and also one of the students plays with a ball. In another drawing (Figure 2), the student drew only the school garden where students skip rope and play with a ball.



Figure 1. The drawing of S26 - the first school, the first phase



Figure 2. The drawing of S21 – the first school, the second phase

To exemplify the drawings of the students in the second school, the student drew both the school building and the school garden with students having balloons in their hands, hopscotch and the bells ringing in Figure 3. Another student drew himself and his friends playing together in the school garden in Figure 4.



Figure 3. The drawing of S48 – the second school, the first phase



Figure 4. The drawing of S40 – the second school, the second phase

Regarding the drawings of the students in the third school, for instance, one of the students drew himself and his friends playing in the school garden in Figure 5 and the other student drew the school building and school garden with his friends playing together in the school garden in Figure 6. The aforementioned indicators in the students' drawings could demonstrate that they saw school as a playground.



Figure 5. The drawing of S16 – the third school, the first phase



Figure 6. The drawing of S9 – the third school, the second phase

Consistent with their drawings, more than half of the students in all the schools in both phases of the study stated that they saw schools as a place to do a variety of activities including dancing, playing with playdough, watching cartoons and playing basketball, and to play with their friends in breaks. The students in the third school especially drew attention to attending clubs. Mentioning their feelings at the same time, the students pointed out that they felt happy at school when they played with their friends in breaks and did various activities like drawing pictures. In this regard, S9 in the first school said: *“I feel happy at school because I play with my friends. We play tag and blind man’s buff. They are very entertaining.”* In particular, several students in the first school expressed that they got bored at home a lot but that they felt happy at school as there was an enjoyable environment there. Similarly, S3 from the second school stated: *“I generally feel happy at school because I can play with my friends in breaks and learn lots of things at school.”* Also, S6 from the third school indicated as follows:

“The thing I like most at this school is to attend student clubs. Thanks to these clubs, I can do what I want at school. For example, at the club for entertainment, I can play with balls. There are also other clubs in which I can learn reading and writing, rules of the school, how to behave at school, etc.”
[S6]

4.2. School as a Nice Place

The analysis of the students’ drawings and interviews showed that school was also perceived as a nice place referring to school having a nice looking in bright and warm colors. In terms of the students’ drawings, more than half of the students in all the schools both in the first and second phase of the study drew happy faces, flowers, butterflies, rainbows, light colored clouds, birds and a smiling sun. They used bright and warm colors, their favorite colors and the colors of their favorite team to color the pictures. In addition, they ornamented the school with hearts and stars. Especially in the drawings of the second phase, the students drew the celebrations of April 23 Children’s Day.

To exemplify the students' drawings in detail, one of the students in the first school both used bright and warm colors to color the whole picture including the school building. She also drew flowers in Figure 7. In another drawing (Figure 8), the student used her favorite colors to color the picture of school and also she ornamented the picture with hearts.



Figure 7. The drawing of S14 – the first school, the first phase



Figure 8. The drawing of S11 – the first school, the second phase

To give an example of the students' drawings in the second school, as it can be seen in Figure 9, the student used the colors of his favorite team to color the school building and drew the students with happy faces. In another drawing (Figure 10), the student drew the celebrations of April 23 Children's Day. These indicators could give clues about seeing school as a nice place.



Figure 9. The drawing of S45 – the second school, the first phase



Figure 10. The drawing of S43 – the second school, the second phase

As for the drawings of the students in the third school, to illustrate, one of the students drew hearts, flowers and nice shapes to ornament the picture of school. She also used warm colors to color the picture in Figure 11. In a different drawing (Figure 12), the student drew a big butterfly having a smiley face in bright and warm colors.



Figure 11. The drawing of S13 – the third school, the first phase



Figure 12. The drawing of S10 – the third school, the second phase

Supporting the students' drawings, students also mentioned in their interviews that the school is a nice place. Nearly half of the students in the first school, less than half of the students in the second school and several students in the third school in both phases of the study indicated that they liked the school itself referring to the appearance and inside of school, the school garden and the classroom. S5 in the first school in the first phase of the study supported this saying: *"I feel happy at school because our school is really beautiful and there are lots of classes in it."* Displaying their feelings in interviews, the students also stated that they liked their school and classroom as it is big and colorful. For instance, S18 in the second school in the first phase of the study indicated: *"Our school and classroom are highly colorful as I expected. Therefore, I like my school a lot."* S9 in the third school in the second phase of the study also supported this by saying: *"I like school and the school garden as it is big and I can play in the school garden with my friends. I like playing in the school garden a lot."*

4.3. School as a Social Environment

Social environment refers to "the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships and cultural milieus within which defined group of people function and interact" (Barnett & Casper, 2001, p. 465). In the study, social environment pertains to the environment in which students can make friends, and have good relations with their teachers and peers. The analysis of the students' drawings and interviews revealed that school was also perceived as a social environment. Concerning the students' drawings, the students from all the schools drew their interaction with their teachers and peers. Several students from each school in both first and second phase of the study drew their teachers bigger with smiley faces. Those indicators can be signs of valuing the teacher as well as having good relations with him/her. Also some of the students drew their teacher with arms spreading in two sides, which can give clues about the fact that the teacher has a close relationship with students. Moreover, a few students in the second and third schools drew their teachers having the role of teaching students particularly in the second phase of the study.

In addition to their teachers, most of the students in all the schools in both phases of the study described their relations with their peers in their drawings. They mostly drew their peers having happy faces with arms spreading in two sides and big eyes. In the drawings, friends were drawn playing in the school garden in general. Those indicators can be signs of students' perception of school as a social environment where they have close relations with their teachers and peers.

To give examples from the students' drawings, one the students in the first school drew her teacher bigger and with a smiley face in Figure 13, which can indicate that the teacher is of value to the student and that there is a good communication between the student and the teacher. Also, the student drew the teacher very similar to her physical characteristics. In another drawing (Figure 14), the student drew the teacher with a smiley face and spreading her arms in two sides. Regarding the drawings exhibiting the students' interaction with their peers, one of the students in the first school drew herself and one of her friends with smiley faces playing in school garden in Figure 15 and another student drew herself and her friends with smiley faces and playing together in the school garden in Figure 16.



Figure 13. The drawing of 17 – the first school, the first phase



Figure 14. The drawing of S10 – the first school, the second phase



Figure 15. The drawing of S15 – the first school, the first phase



Figure 16. The drawing of S7 – the first school, the second phase

Concerning the drawings of the students in the second school, one of the students drew her teacher bigger, as an indication of valuing teacher, and with a smiley face in Figure 17. Similarly, another student drew the teacher having a smiley face and spreading her arms in two sides in Figure 18. With regard to the sample drawings of the interaction between the students and their peers, the student drew herself and her friends having happy faces and playing together in the school garden in Figure 19, and the student drew herself and one of her friends with a smiley face playing with ball in the school garden in Figure 20.

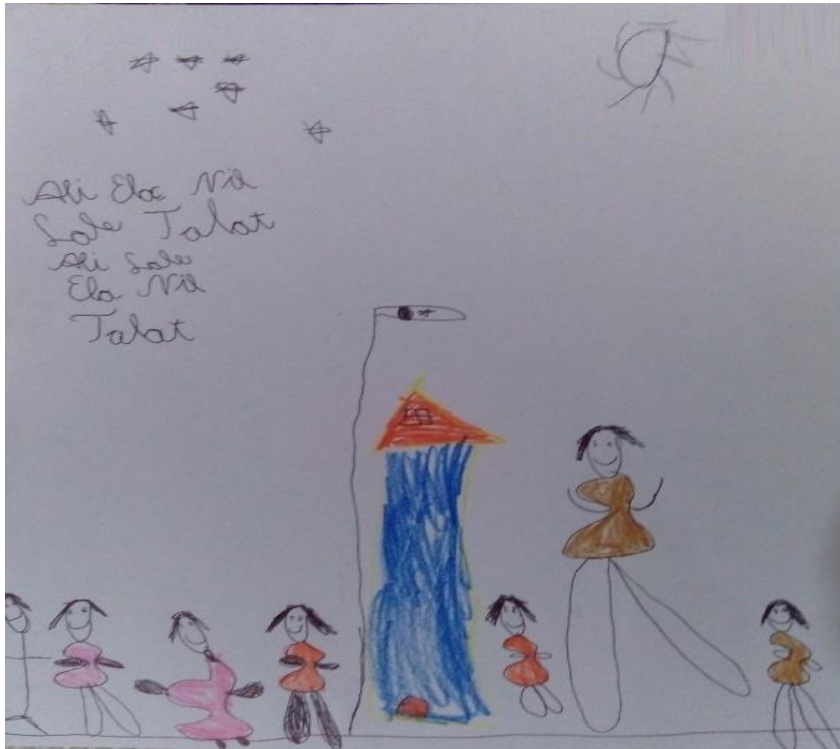


Figure 17. The drawing of S35 – the second school, the first phase



Figure 18. The drawing of S12 – the second school, the second phase

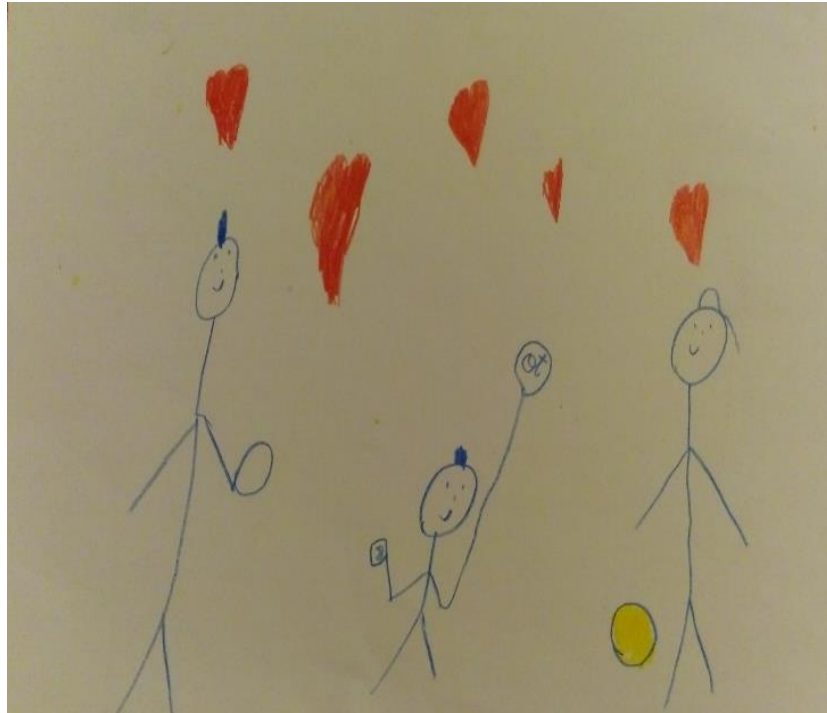


Figure 19. The drawing of S37- the second school, the first phase

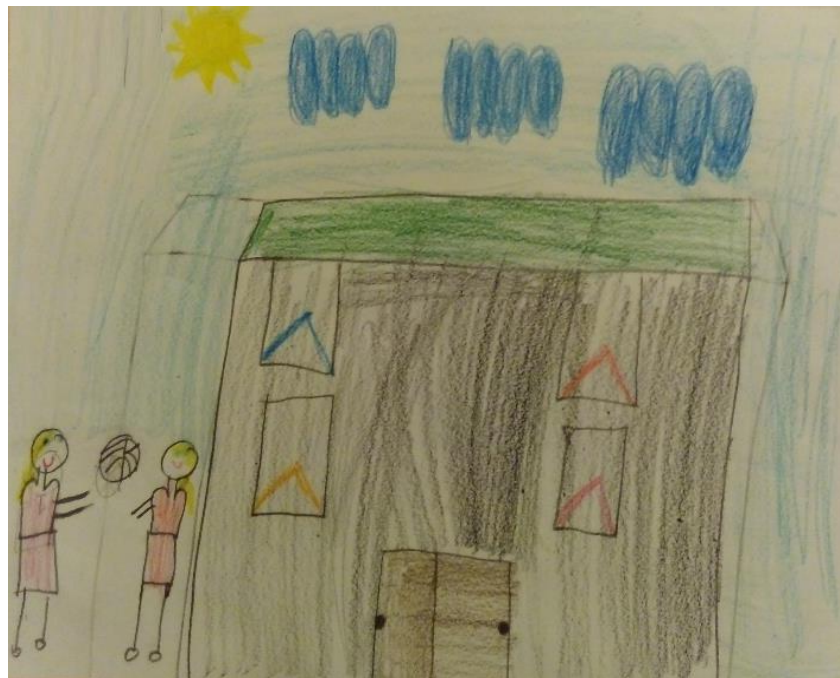


Figure 20. The drawing of S8 – the second school, the second phase

Drawing similar indicators to the students of the first and second schools, one of the students in the third school drew her teacher bigger with a happy face in Figure 21. In another drawing (Figure 22), the student drew his teacher bigger, with a smiley face and spreading her arms in two sides. Regarding the sample drawings displaying the interaction between the students and their peers, one of the students drew himself with some of his friends having happy faces and arms spreading in two sides in Figure 23 and another student drew herself with one of her friends at school in Figure 24. These drawings can illustrate that the students saw school as a place of having close relationship with their teachers and peers.



Figure 21. The drawing of S18 – the third school, the first phase



Figure 22. The drawing of S4 - the third school, the second phase



Figure 23. The drawing of S1 – the third school, the first phase



Figure 24. The drawing of S10 – the third school, the second phase

Having consistent results with the students' drawings, the students' interviews indicated that majority of the students the first school and more than half of the students in the second and third schools in both first and second phases of the study saw school as an environment to make friends, become socialized, and to have good relations with their teachers and peers. Mentioning their feelings about school, the students mostly pointed out that they liked school since their teachers taught them new things, rewarded them, liked them and did not angry with them as well as they could make friends, had many friends and played with their friends at school. Some of the students in the first school especially underlined that they liked their teachers' belongings. To exemplify, S10 from the first school stated: *"I like school because I have good friends and teachers at school. I can play with my friends and learn many things thanks to my teacher."* In a similar manner, S9 from the second school indicated: *"I feel happy at school since I have good time with my friends and my teacher. My teacher let us play and we play together with my friends."* Moreover, S6

in the third school said: *“I feel happy at school when I play with my friends. We play the game of ninja and robot with my close friends.”*

4.4. School as a Physical Environment

The analysis of the students’ drawings demonstrated that the students perceived school as a physical environment drawing the school building, the school garden, canteen and the classrooms. Regarding the school as a physical environment, most of the students in the first school and more than half of the students in the first and second schools in both phases of the study drew school buildings regarding the school image in their mind. The students generally attempted to draw the school building similar to their own school building. Nevertheless, nearly half of the school buildings they drew did not resemble to their own school building. While less than half of the students in the first and second schools drew a flag near the school building, there were not any flags drawn by the students of the third school especially in the first phase of the study. Furthermore, several students drew the school that they dreamed of, and one of the students in the second school drew the school building similar to her kindergarten. In addition, nearly all the students drew the school garden together with the school building. Only one of the students in the first school, two of the students in the second school and five students in the third school drew the classroom. Moreover, several students in the second school drew their canteen and gym near the school building similar to their own school environment.

To exemplify the drawings of the students, one of the students in the first school drew a school building to refer to the school image in his mind. He also drew the school with the school garden and a flag in Figure 25. Also another student drew a school building with a flag as well as the school garden where students play in Figure 26. It seems that the students described what they saw in their own school environment.

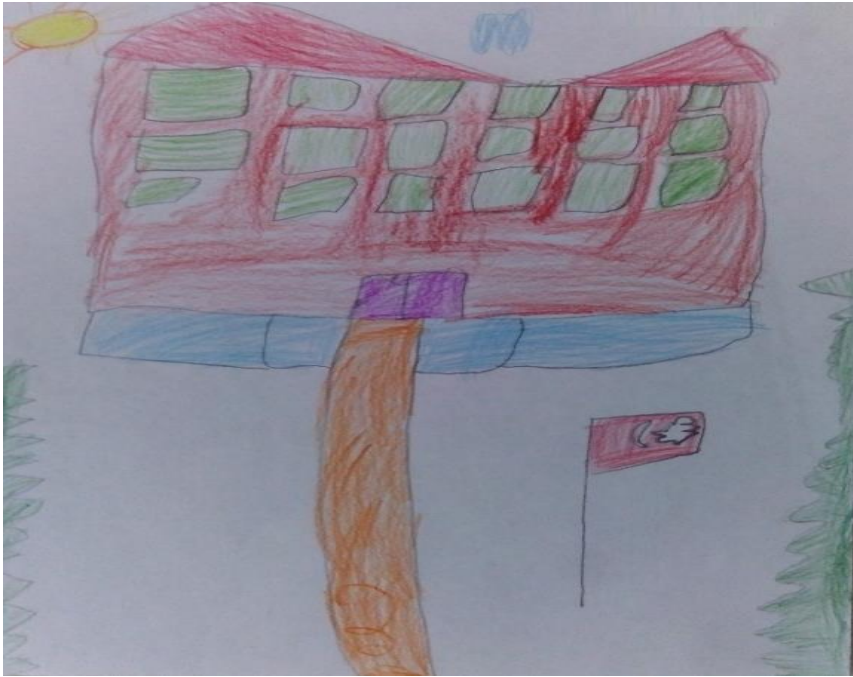


Figure 25. The drawing of S2 – the first school, the first phase



Figure 26. The drawing of S24 –the first school, the second phase

Regarding the drawings of the students in the second school, one of the students drew a school building, school garden with students, a flag and the canteen in Figure 27 and another student drew his classroom environment with a board, cupboards and teacher's table in Figure 28. The students depicted their own classroom and school environment in those drawings because there is a canteen in the school garden and there are cupboards in their classroom.



Figure 27. The drawing of S55 – the second school, the first phase

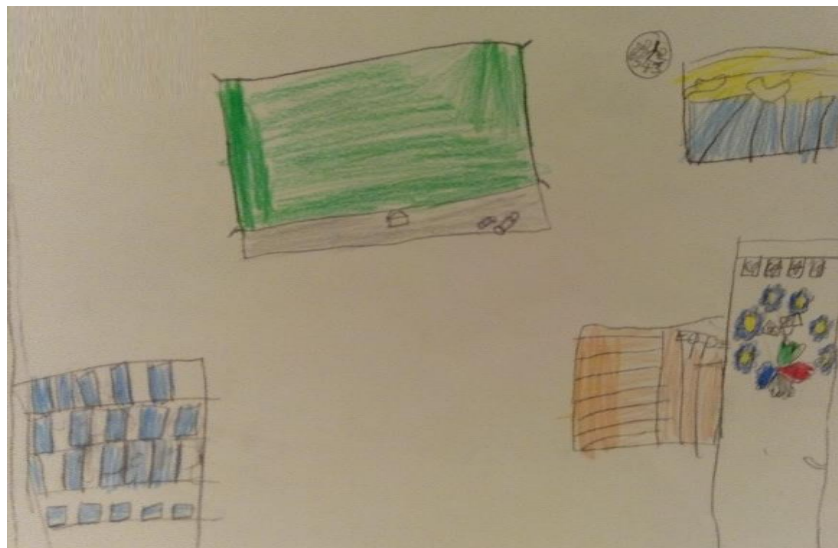


Figure 28. The drawing of S7 –the second school, the second phase

As for the drawings of the students from the third school, as it can be seen in Figure 29, the student drew only a school building, however the other student drew a school building, a school garden and a flag in Figure 30.



Figure 29. The drawing of S4 – the third school, the first phase



Figure 30. The drawing of S5 – the third school, the second phase

Other than the school buildings, schools gardens and classrooms in the drawings, several students drew their home considering that school resembles to their home. In this sense, six students of the first school in the first phase of the study and two students of the third school in the second phase of the study drew home as they stated in the interviews their home came to their mind regarding school. Other than home, one of the students of the third school in the second phase of the study drew a castle since school was like a castle for her.

To illustrate the students' drawings, one of the students in the first school drew his home since he wanted to picture his home regarding the school image in his mind in Figure 36, and one of the students in the third school drew a school with a flag near it and her home associating the school with her home in Figure 37. Apart from the home figures in the drawings, another student in the third school drew a castle regarding that school is like a castle for her in Figure 38.



Figure 31. The drawing of S24 – the first school, the second phase



Figure 32. The drawing of S1 – the third school, the second phase

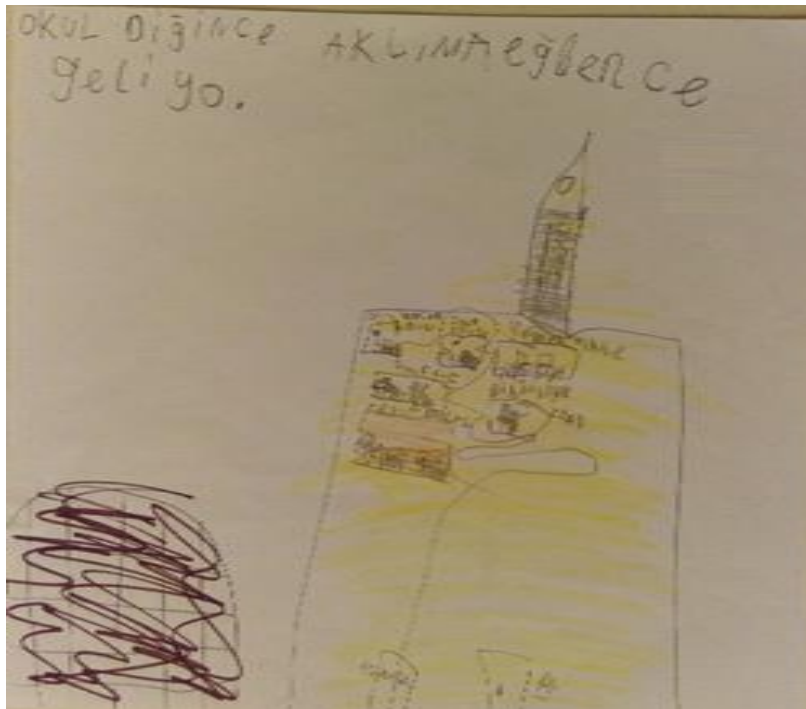


Figure 33. The drawing of S16 – the third school, the second phase

In support of the home figures in the drawings, the students provided some metaphors in their interviews. Metaphors can give clues about how they perceived school considering metaphors as a means to reflect perceptions (Postman, 1996). The students mentioned in interviews that school resembles to their home because of having some characteristics in common like the appearance. In this sense, more than half of the students in the first and second schools, and nearly half of the students in the third school produced the metaphor home. For instance, S3 in the first school in the first phase of the study said: *“School is like our second home. I study and play both at school and at home. They are alike.”* Similarly, S4 in the second school in the first phase of the study indicated that school is like her home saying:

“Our teacher is like both my mother and mother, and the school is like our home. My teacher treats me well like my mother and teaches me good things. School is also a very good place. I feel like I am at my home.”

S3 in the third school in the second phase of the study supported this by saying: *“Our home comes to my mind about school. In my opinion, school resembles to our home.”*

4.5. School as a Learning Environment

The detailed analysis of the students' drawings showed that students drew just a few pictures indicating that they perceived school as a learning environment. Only one of the students in the first school in the first phase of the study drew school as a learning environment while there were not any drawings regarding school as a learning environment in the second phase of the study. As for the second school, there were only three drawings out of 57 in the first phase and four drawings out of 51 about school as a learning environment in the second phase of the study. Similarly, one of the students in the third school drew school as a learning environment in the first phase while three students out of 34 drew school as a learning environment in the second phase of the study. Classroom environment with desks, board, and teacher teaching something to students in the drawings of the students indicated that those students perceived school as a learning environment.

When the drawings of the students were examined carefully, it was observed that students drew some students sitting on desks (Figure 34, Figure 36 and Figure 37), blackboard with some words (Figure 35) and a teacher (Figure 38).



Figure 34. The drawing of S40 - the first school, the first phase



Figure 35. The drawing of S51- the second school, the first phase



Figure 36. The drawing of S34 - the second school, the second phase



Figure 37. The drawing of S6 – the third school, the first phase



Figure 38. The drawing of S3 – the third school, the second phase

As for the results of the students' interviews, it is worth mentioning that the number of the students stating that school is an environment to learn new things was even more than that of the students drawing school as a learning environment. In this sense, majority of the students in all the schools in both phases of the study indicated that school is a place to learn new things including how to read and write, mathematics, and some social values like being respectful, to study and to do homework. Moreover, in expressing their feelings, the students stated that they liked school and felt happy at school since they could learn new things, study and do homework at school.

"I like school as I learn everything at school. I learn reading and writing, the letters a and b." [S4, First school]

"I like school since we not only learn how to read and write but also being respectful towards others." [S2, Second school]

"I like school as I learn new letters and how to read and write there." [S3, Third school]

4.6. School as an Unfriendly Environment

Despite the abovementioned headings having a positive meaning, the results of the study also indicated that school was perceived by some of the students as an unfriendly environment. Feeling insecure, anxious, confined and lonely, and disliking school were identified as indicators of the students' perception of school as an unfriendly environment.

First of all, the indicators which are omission of arms, legs, foot and hands, and grotesque, robot like figures in the students' drawings could point out that students felt insecure at school. The results of the analysis of the students' drawings showed that 10 students from the first school both in the first and second phase of the study drew indicators of feeling insecure at school. For the students of the second school, 11 students in the first phase but three students in the second phase of the study drew those indicators. Of the students in the third school, four students in the first phase but six students in the second phase of the study drew the abovementioned indicators which indicate that those students could feel insecure at school.

To exemplify the students' drawings, one of the students in the first school drew some grotesque figures which are difficult to interpret. The student also used round and unclosed lines in the drawing in Figure 39. In another drawing (Figure 40), one of the students in the second school drew some grotesque and robot like figures. As for the drawing of the student in the third school, he drew some figures without arms in Figure 41.



Figure 39. The drawing of S35 – the first school, the first phase

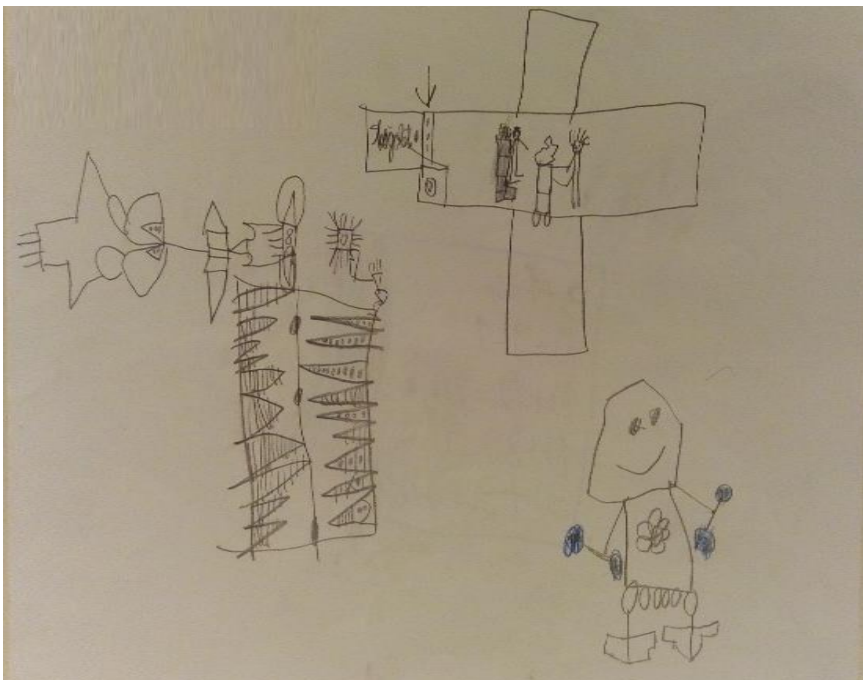


Figure 40. The drawing of S12 – the second school, the second phase



Figure 41. The drawing of S2 – the third school, the second phase

Some indicators of feeling anxious were also found out in the students' drawings. Those indicators were rain, students' anxious and shaded faces in the drawings, and omission of eyes, nose and mouth. In the first phase of the study, five students from the first school, seven students from the second school and two students from the third school drew those indicators while in the second phase of the study, four students from the first school, five students from the second school and two students from the third school drew the indicators of feeling anxious at school. On the basis of those indicators, it can be estimated that those students felt anxious at school.

To illustrate, one of the students in the first school drew raining in Figure 42. As it can be seen in Figure 43, the student in the second school drew the children without nose and mouth. In another drawing, the student in the third school drew ambiguous and shaded faces for the children in the drawing in Figure 44. Through the abovementioned indicators in the drawings, it can be concluded that those students felt anxious at school.



Figure 42. The drawing of S20 – the first school, the second phase



Figure 43. The drawing of S27 – the second school, the second phase



Figure 44. The drawing of S9 – the third school, the first phase

In the drawings of the students, some indicators of disliking school and feeling unhappy at school were identified, as well. Those indicators were unhappy faces in the drawings and using dark colors to color the drawing. In this regard, it was found out that for the first phase of the study, two students in the first school, four students in the second school and one of the students in the third school drew indicators of disliking school and feeling unhappy at school. In the second phase of the study, two students of the first school, five students of the second school and one student of the third school drew indicators of disliking school and feeling unhappy at school were found out in the students' drawings.

In terms of the sample drawings, one of the students in the first school used dark colors. Also the students' faces in the drawings seem to be unhappy in Figure 45. In another drawing (Figure 46), the student in the second school colored an important

part of the school building in black. Moreover, one of the students in the third school drew Hulk, a superhero in Figure 47. In his interview, he said that he drew Hulk to make it destroy the school. Thus, through those indicators in the drawings, it can be estimated that the students disliked school and felt unhappy at school.



Figure 45. The drawing of S7 – the first school, the first phase



Figure 46. The drawing of S47 – the second school, the first phase



Figure 47. The drawing of S7 – the third school, the second phase

Indicators of feeling alone also emerged in students' drawings. Drawing only himself with an unhappy face and very high buildings were the indicators of feeling lonely at school. Those indicators were identified in the drawings of a few students. For the first phase of the study, two students of the first and second school drew those indicators. In the second phase of the study, one student in the first school and two students in the second school drew the indicators of feeling alone at school.

To exemplify the students' drawings, one of the students in the first school drew only himself in the drawing. Also, he does not seem to have a happy face in Figure 48. In another drawing (Figure 49), the student in the second school drew only herself. She used warm colors in the drawing but she did not draw a mouth while drawing herself and she does not seem to be happy. Those indicators could give clues about feeling lonely at school.



Figure 48. The drawing of S36 – the first school, the first phase



Figure 49. The drawing of S50 – the second school, the first phase

Moreover, some indicators of feeling confined were identified in the students' drawings. A few students in the first and second schools drew rails around the school and school security. In this regard, one student in the first school in the second phase of the study and two students in the second school both in the first and second phase of the study drew those indicators. As it can be seen in Figure 50, the student in the first school drew rails around the school. In another drawing (Figure 51), the student in the second school drew the rails and the school security around the school. Those indicators could indicate that those students felt confined at school.



Figure 50. The drawing of S5 – the first school, the second phase



Figure 51. The drawing of S41 – the second school, the second phase

Along with the drawings, in the interviews the students mentioned why they saw school as an unfriendly environment and why they felt unhappy at school. In this sense, less than half of the students of the three schools in both phases of the study indicated that being unsuccessful, being punished and exposed to violence by peers, and teachers getting angry with students made them unhappy at school. In addition, a few students in the first school complained about cold weather and coming to school on foot. S8 in the first school said: *“My home is far away from the school. I do not like this and I do not want to walk to school every day. It is so exhausting.”* Moreover, a student in the second school complained about timing of school. In this sense, S7 in the second school said: *“The school ends in the evening and we have to go home in the dark. Therefore, I feel unhappy. I wish the school would end earlier.”* On the other hand, only one student who is in the third school said explicitly that he did not like school. Other students just mentioned the things that made them unhappy at school. The student in the third school expressed as follows:

“I do not like school actually. Of course there are some courses that I like such as mathematics and computer. However, I do not like the courses except the ones I mention above. The Turkish course is the course that I do not like most because it is so boring.” [S1]

4.7. Summary of the Results

In this part, the results of the analyzed data collected through the data collection instruments which are students’ drawings and interviews were reported. The results regarding first grade elementary students’ perceptions and feelings about school were grouped as school as a learning environment, school as a playground, school as a nice place, school as a social environment, school as a physical environment and school as an unfriendly environment. The results of the study were summarized in Figure 52.

First of all, the results of the study indicated that school was perceived as a playground by more students. The analysis of the students’ drawings showed that more than half of the students in the three schools drew indicators of perceiving school as a playground. They drew balloons, balls, trees, school garden, break time, hopscotch in the school garden and students playing in school garden. Consistent with their drawings, the students also indicated in their interviews that they liked playing with friends in breaks, and doing a variety of activities including dancing, playing with playdough, watching cartoons and playing basketball.

Themes	Indicators
School as a Physical Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School building, school garden, canteen and classrooms
School as a Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom environments with desks, board and teacher teaching something to students
School as an Unfriendly Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators of feeling insecure, anxious, confined and lonely, and disliking school
School as a Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balloons, balls, trees, school garden, break time, hopscotch and students playing in the school garden
School as a Social Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing teachers bigger with smiley faces and arms spreading in two sides • Drawing friends with happy faces, arms spreading in two sides and big eyes
School as a Nice Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy faces, flowers, butterflies, rainbows, light colored clouds, birds, smiling sun, using bright and warm colors, favorite colors and the colors of favorite team, ornamenting school with hearts and stars • Celebrations of April 23 Children's Day as a difference in the spring semester

Figure 52. Summary of the results

School was perceived as a nice place, as well. In this sense, the results of the study revealed that more than half of the students in all the schools both in the first and second phase of the study drew happy faces, flowers, butterflies, rainbows, light colored clouds, birds and a smiling sun. They also colored the roof of the school building in red. They used bright and warm colors, their favorite colors and the colors of their favorite team to color the picture, and they ornamented the school with hearts and stars. Especially in the drawings of the second phase, the students drew the celebrations of April 23 Children's Day. In support of their drawings, the students stated that they liked the school itself referring to the appearance and inside of school, the school garden and the classroom.

The analysis of the students' drawings and interviews indicated that school was also seen as a social environment. In this sense, students drew their interaction with their teachers and peers in their drawings. They generally drew teachers bigger with smiley faces and arms spreading in two sides, which indicates that they had good relations with their teachers. In addition, they mostly drew their peers with smiley faces and playing together. They also pointed out in the interviews that they saw school as an environment to make friends, become socialized, and to have good relations with their teachers and peers.

Next, the analysis of the students' drawings demonstrated that the students perceived school as a physical environment. They drew the school building, the school garden, canteen and the classroom. Concerning the school image in students' mind, students generally drew school buildings. Together with the school building, they drew school garden. However, a limited number of students drew their classrooms.

According to the results of the study, school was perceived as a learning environment by several students. Regarding the students' drawings, there were not many drawings in which school was drawn as a learning environment. Several students drew some indicators such as students sitting on desks, classroom and teachers teaching

something to the students. Though a limited number of the students drew school as a learning environment, majority of them indicated in their interviews that they saw school as a place of learning new things, studying and being successful. Indeed, there was not a critical difference in fall and spring semesters in terms of perceiving school as a learning environment. In both of the semesters, a few students drew school as a learning environment but majority of them mentioned learning things, studying and being successful at school.

Lastly, school was perceived as an unfriendly environment by the students. In this regard, a limited number of students drew indicators of feeling insecure, unhappy, alone, anxious and confined at school, and disliking school. In addition, students mentioned in their interviews that being unsuccessful, being punished and exposed to violence by peers, and teachers getting angry with students made them unhappy at school.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate first grade elementary students' feelings and perceptions of school. Within the context of the study, how first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school changed according to the school they attended and in the fall and spring semesters of 2014-2015 school year was intended to be examined. The study was carried out in two phases at three elementary schools in Ankara each of which is from a different SES neighborhood as low, middle and high. The data was collected from first grade elementary school students through their drawings as well as the interviews carried out with them.

This chapter presented the discussion of the results obtained from qualitative data about first grade students' feelings and perceptions of school in relation to the relevant literature. At the end of the chapter, implications for practice and further research were provided.

5.1. Feelings and Perceptions of School

Elementary education, in particular first grade education, is highly crucial as some basic skills, knowledge and some other competencies required in future life are acquired in this period (Özbaş, 2009). The success in education life and in other fields is built upon that period (Kutluca Canbulat & Tuncel, 2012). In this sense positive perceptions of school might have a significant influence on the future academic success of the students (Ford & Ill, 2008). Therefore development of positive feelings and perceptions of school can be crucial for the students in their first grade of school years. Aiming to investigate first grade elementary school students' feelings and perceptions of school, the results of the study revealed that

majority of the first grade students in all the three schools perceived school positively and had positive feelings about school. In this regard, it might be thought that students would have a successful life of education in future.

Along with positive feelings and perceptions of school, school was perceived more as a playground. It was found out that the students drew themselves in the school garden and playing with their friends in general. Moreover, based on the students' statements it was concluded that students felt happy at school when they played with their friends. Perceiving school as a playground may originate in some developmental characteristics of the first grade students. According to Snowman and Biehler (2000), students at those ages are highly active and attempt to perform highly physical activities. Hence, it could be highly difficult and boring for those students to be in classroom and to perform seatwork rather than playing with their friends in school garden. Furthermore, as they were used to an environment in preschool where there are no rules and they can play with their friends more, they may think of school as a playground.

Apart from a playground, schools were regarded as a social environment for students. Schools can provide an environment to make friends and become socialized especially for the children grown up in a neighborhood which is full of apartments. As those children might not have a chance to make friends and thus they are likely to get bored at home, schools serve as a place to socialize with new friends. In light of this point of view, the study revealed significant results in terms of perceiving school as a social environment. It was found out that students drew themselves together with their friends in majority of the drawings, and a limited number of students drew only themselves in the drawings. Similarly, they mentioned in their interviews that making friends and having many friends made them feel happy at school. Exhibiting consistent results with this finding, the study by Lahelma (2002) revealed that students saw school as a place to meet friends, and that they liked having friends and getting on well with them at school. Moreover, in the study, the students' memories

of school were mostly related to their friends. Consistent with this finding, Booth and Sheehan (2008) emphasized that developing friendships results in being pleased with and feeling comfortable at school. They also indicated that feeling happy at school can be linked to students' good relations with their friends.

A social environment is not limited to only the students' interaction with their peers. Students' relations with their teachers can determine a pleasing school environment, as well (Booth & Sheehan, 2008). It was found out in the study that students drew their teachers having smiley faces with spreading their arms in two sides, which can be indicators of good relations between students and teachers. Consistent with this finding, Valeski and Stipek (2001) indicates that having supportive relationships with teachers promotes positive feelings about school in young aged students. Moreover, the students mentioned that they liked their teachers who taught them new things, rewarded them and did not get angry with them. In the study by Bear et al. (2016), it was found that Chinese students had more favorable relations with their teachers as the teachers used rewards and praises quite frequently. Thus, use of praises and rewards could lead to having good relations as well as building a social environment in schools. On the other hand, according to Erickson's psychosocial development theory, students at this age level are in industry versus inferiority stage. In this stage, decreasing failures and incompetency is significant so that the students do not experience sense of inferiority (Snowman & Biehler, 200). Therefore, using praise and rewards can play a crucial role to prevent students from experiencing sense of inferiority and to strengthen their self-confidence.

It was also found out that school was perceived as a nice place referring to the school itself with its appearance, inside and outside, school garden and classroom. The students drew school with bright and warm colors, happy faces, flowers, birds and a smiling sun. They also indicated they liked the school itself together with the school garden and the class. Students' perception of school as a nice place may originate in their parents' informing the students about what school is like. In this sense, parents

may mention that school is a nice place in which they could feel comfortable and happy. Moreover, liking the school garden could be associated with perceiving school as a playground. Nonetheless, it was interesting that the students of the school in low SES neighborhood also saw school as a nice place although the school had poorer conditions when compared to the other two schools. In particular, that school had problems regarding cleaning. Still, the students regarded school as a beautiful and nice place. Balcı (1999) supported this result indicating that students had positive attitudes towards school despite toilets without water in her study.

Moreover, the students' drawings revealed that they perceived school as a physical environment. It can be clearly seen in the students' drawings that students mostly drew school buildings in association with the school picture in their mind. They attempted to draw similar school buildings to their own school. Thus, it can be concluded that physical environment of the school seems to have an influence of how they perceived school. Consistent with this finding, primary school students in the study of Yıldız (2012) drew school mostly with its physical qualities and it was concluded that school was perceived as a formal structure. Regarding that students are at the schematic stage according to the developmental stages of children's drawings proposed by Lowenfeld and Brittain (1967), the students' drawings indicate consistency with characteristics of the schematic stage. In this stage, students can draw correct shapes that they want to draw, and they draw the objects important for them larger. Moreover, the way of using colors in students' drawings provides consistent results with Artut (2009) who indicates that students in elementary first grade generally use colors instinctively and that the enthusiasm pushes them to use which color they want.

Other than school buildings, school gardens and classrooms, some of the students drew their home in their drawings. It was observed that they attempted to draw their home as representative of the school image in their mind. This may be due to associating school to home. Regarding metaphors as a means to reflect perceptions

(Postman, 1996), students also produced the metaphor 'home' in the interviews carried out with them. It can be deduced that school was perceived as the second home. This may be because teachers informed students about school as their second home. Thus, teachers could have an effect on students in perceiving school as their second home. This finding overlaps with the results of the studies by Balcı (1999) and Engin Demir (2007) who also found out that school was like home for the students. Consistent with the finding in which school was perceived as home, teacher was perceived as mother or father in the study. This finding is supported by Balcı (1999) who indicated that schools are seen as continuity of family. On the other hand, in a variety of studies (Engin Demir, 2007; Saban, 2008), negative metaphors including factory, prison, a boring and chaotic place were produced to describe school; however, there were not such negative metaphors in the study.

Moreover, it was disclosed that school was perceived as a learning environment and, more specifically, as a place to acquire the skills of literacy including reading and writing, and computational skills by some of the students. This role of school could become meaningful when associated with how the school concept is explained in philosophical and sociological theories of education. In parallel with the result of the study, essentialism, as an educational philosophy, sees schools as places where students are provided with literacy skills (reading and writing) and computational skills (Ornstein & Levine, 1993). On the other hand, functionalism, as a sociological theory of education, explain schools as places to equip students with required cognitive skills and norms so that they can become for their later adult roles in society (Feinberg & Soltis, 1992). The notion of school as a place of enlightenment and providing knowledge was underlined by several studies, as well (Balcı, 1999; Cerit, 2006). In fact, the evidences of perceiving school as a learning environment were not reflected in students' drawings that much. However, based on the interviews conducted, it was notable to mention that they saw school as a learning environment and that they felt happy as they could learn new things at school. Concerning that drawings are one of the effective ways for young aged children to express themselves

as well as to know their inner world better (Malchiodi, 1998; Yavuzer, 1993), their drawings could give clues about how they indeed perceived school. In other words, school as a learning environment may not mean to them much, rather playing with friends and enjoying at school may be more important for them as it was the students' first year at school.

Even so, it was found out that school was perceived as an unfriendly environment. Some factors that may lead to feeling unhappy at school were identified in the students' interviews. Those factors were inability to do homework and being unsuccessful, misbehaviors of friends including disturbing and bullying, and teachers who get angry with students. It was found that especially bullying and violence by peers were quite likely to lead to perceiving school as an unfriendly environment. Considering that elementary grade students are not happy with being bullied and victimized, negative feelings and perceptions of school and school environment could be associated with problematic behaviors like bullying victimization (Gottfredson et al., 2005). Other than feelings and perceptions of school, school bullying could affect children's school performance, as well (Hugh-Jones & Smith, 1999).

Within the context of the study, there were a few students who stated that they liked school. Those students were from the third school. Nonetheless, it was considered that there might be other students who did not like school in the other schools but that they may not express directly that they had negative feelings and perceptions of school. This is probable to be associated with low self-efficacy of students from the low SES school (Wiederkehr, Darnon, Chazal, Guimond, & Martinot (2015). In other words, the students who have low self-efficacy might not disclose their negative opinions regarding school.

In the course of time, it is highly probable that there are some changes in students' feelings and perceptions of school. Overall, it was found out that students mostly had

more positive feelings and perceptions of school in the spring semester. Learning how to read and write, making many friends, and adapting to school environment in the fall semester were found to make students perceive school more positively in the spring semester. It may be because students' expectations related school were met in the spring semester. This is supported by the results of the study by Dockett and Perry (2004) who found out that students were happier and had a more positive perception of school in the second semester of school as they made new friends.

5.2. Implications for Practice

First grade education is considered significant in terms of providing the solid foundations for students' future school life (Yamaç, 2014). Therefore, it is important that students in their first grade have positive feelings and perceptions of school. In this sense, the study produced significant results that will be beneficial for different stakeholders including teachers, school administrators, policy makers and curriculum developers to form a positive environment for first grade students.

Presenting how students perceived school and what their feelings about school were, the results of the study also revealed the first grade students' needs and interests in the school environment. In this regard, the results of the study showed that students perceived school more as a playground than as a learning environment. That year was the students' first year at school; therefore, it was quite likely that they were used to playing with their friends before starting school. They may also want to have an enjoyable school environment where they will not get bored. In this sense, school administrators and teachers can form enjoyable and colorful spaces where students can both enjoy and learn. Teachers can also develop enjoyable lessons. This result could also give policy makers and curriculum planners the chance to develop the first grade curriculum in accordance with those students' needs and interests.

The school was also perceived by the students as a social environment where they can develop friendships and have good relations with their friends and teachers.

Booth and Sheehan (2008) indicates that students' good relations with their teachers and friends brings about a positive and comfortable school environment. Thus, students can be provided with more opportunities so that they can become socialized. Also, places can be built to ensure that students spend time together with their friends.

However, being exposed to violence by peers and older students affects students' perceptions of school negatively (Gottfredson et al., 2005). From this point of view, it is better for teachers to form an environment where students will not be subject to violence by their peers and older students. Also, school administrators are suggested to put first grade students in classes which are in different floors from the classes of older students to prevent school violence.

Furthermore, it was found out that students perceived school as a nice place whose inside and outside appeals to them. Thus, in order for students to have a positive perception of school, it is suggested that school buildings that will appeal students are built. Other than school buildings, classrooms are better to be appealing for the students. According to the results of the study, cleaning of schools was also found significant in terms of providing a pleasing school environment, which may result in positive feelings and perceptions of school. Thus, school administrators are strongly suggested to provide a clean school environment to students.

5.3. Implications for Further Research

The aim of the study was to investigate first grade elementary students' feelings and perceptions of school. The students' drawings and interviews were used as data collection instruments to identify how they perceived school and what their feelings about school were. Students' drawings were especially useful in this study in terms of presenting the school image in their mind as drawings are especially useful for the students who cannot express themselves through writing their opinions. Rather, they can reflect their views and feelings by means of their drawings in a more efficient

way. In this sense, drawings can be used to identify younger aged students' feelings and perceptions of school. In fact, drawings were used to reveal students' attitudes towards different matters including war, environment, technology, etc. in a variety of studies but the number of the studies in which drawings are used to examine students' perception of school is limited especially in Turkey. Therefore, further research studies can be carried out using drawing technique to elicit young aged students' feelings and perceptions of school.

In the study, students revealed their feelings and perceptions of school in their first year at school. Also, the change in students' feelings and perceptions of school was investigated through collecting data both in the fall and spring semester of a school year. Other than the change of feelings and perceptions of school in two semesters of a school year, that of feelings and perceptions of school in years can be investigated, as well. To achieve this, a longitudinal study can be carried out with the same first grade students by collecting data during elementary education. Hence, how their feelings and perceptions of school change during the years of elementary education can be examined.

Moreover, the results of the study disclosed that bullying and violence by peers resulted in perceiving school as an unfriendly environment and feeling unhappy at school. Although not in the scope of the study, bullying and violence by peers were found out as one of the main factors affecting how school was perceived and what students felt about school. Thus, further research studies can be conducted to investigate how bullying and violence by peers affect feelings and perceptions of school in detail.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RUBRICS

Rubric for different figures in children's drawings

What is drawn	Meaning
Kite and balloon	Fun and joy, the desire to escape from oppressive family environment
Light colored clouds, birds and flowers	Happiness
Butterflies	Seeking for imaginary love and beauty
Cat	Personal conflict with mother
Tree	Joy and cheerfulness, development and change in people
Black sun	Being upset
Looking towards sun	The need for sincerity
Drawing sb away from sun	Feeling rejected
Red roof	Happy place
Black roof	Unhappy place
Lamb	Love and sincerity
Rain	Indicator of depression
Star	Physical and emotional deprivation
House	The place of seeking compassion and peace (beloved ones are drawn in house)
Chimney	Plume represents the life in house, hot house and sincerity among family members
Ladder	Excitement and insecurity
Rainbow	Happiness

Rubric for the body parts

What is drawn	Meaning
Drawing head bigger than normal	Inconsistency in emotions and social balance, seeing himself having low intelligence level
Drawing head smaller than normal	Difficulty in getting in contact with people
Drawing big and clear eyes	Desire to get in contact with outer world
Drawing small, hollow eyes or dots	Inadequate connection with outer world
Drawing clear and open mouth	The desire to talk to people
Drawing close and narrow mouth	Being shy about connecting with people, using a profane language
Drawing big nose	The development of gender identity
Drawing no ears or drawing ears not as they should be	Problems in social relations (in young children it is normal as the drawing development is not complete)
Drawing ears bigger than normal	Being criticized by others continuously
Drawing angled and wide chin	The need for support of others and relying on others
Drawing no neck or thick and short neck	Problems in controlling anger, difficulty in obeying rules (observed in single-child families)
Drawing thin and tall neck	Suppressing desires and wishes (observed more in the children having strict parents)
Painting hair by pressing on it	Desire to be physically strong and to have a right to say
Drawing shoulders and body that have round and soft lines	Humane characteristics

Drawing rigid and angled body lines	Having aggressive impulse and using physical force to solve problems
Drawing arms spreading in two sides	Having close relationship with people
Drawing arms adjacent to the body	Problems in having relationship with people
Drawing no arm	No relationship with people
Drawing taller arms than normal	Strength and control
Drawing shorter arms than normal	Deprivation of definite desires
Drawing bigger hands than normal	Compensation of a deficiency or weakness
Drawing hands like punches	Aggression
Drawing no hand or hands as hiding	Feeling guilty
Drawing missing fingers	Not being ambitious and setting no target about future
Drawing more than five fingers	Being overambitious
Drawing no legs	The need for support of others to survive
Drawing feet whose edges are towards different directions	Indecision and hesitation
Drawing feet directed towards right	Longing for past
Drawing feet directed towards left	Turning to future and setting target
Drawing very chic and attractive dresses	The desire to be favored by others and receive approval by others

Rubric for lines on drawings

What is drawn	Meaning
Long lines	Aggressive children
Short lines	Shy, timid and introvert children
Missing lines	Body parts children are uneasy about or interested in
Round and unclosed lines	Anxiety
High buildings	Reflection of tension and longing

Rubric for Emotions

What is drawn	Meaning
Disjointed body parts, extreme asymmetry in arms and legs, transparency, big figures, omission of neck	Impulsivity
Slanting figure, tiny head, omission of hands, arms, legs or foot, monster or grotesque figures, or robot	Insecurity-Inadequacy
Shading of face, arms, legs/body, hands or neck, feet pressed together, omission of eyes, clouds, rain and flying birds	Anxiety
Tiny figure, short arms, arms folded around the body- arms pressed together, omission of nose and mouth	Shyness-Timidty
Crossed eyes, teeth, long arms, big hands, naked figure-genitals	Anger-Aggression
Drawing himself isolated from others and putting some figures between himself and others	Feeling rejected
Drawing sb/sth bigger than normal	Valuing someone or something
Drawing people, houses, trees, greens and sun	Satisfying himself
Drawing trees, flowers and sun	The need for a world that light, nature and house/school limits
Drawing only the child himself	Feeling alone

Rubric for Colors

Colors used by children	Meaning
Yellow, red, orange	Adaptive behavior
Blue, green	Maladaptive behavior
Brown, blue	Being oppressed
Black	Negatively characterized figures
Primary colors	Neutral figure
Red	Anger and aggression
Yellow	Dependence on family, excitement and energy and positive feelings
Orange	A worrying state
Blue	Calmness and self-confidence
Green	Self-confidence
Purple	Heavy responsibility, the need for sb's support
Colorful and detailed Picture	The teacher students like
Colorless and simple picture	The teacher students do not like

Note: Children generally use the colors that appeal to them. When they want to draw something or someone, they use the ones they like most. In this regard, the colors used by children have psychological meanings and these meanings can change from children to children. Therefore, it is difficult to deduce meanings from the colors they use (Yavuzer, 1993).

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Öğrenci Görüşme Formu (I. Aşama)

Görüşülen Kişi (takma isim):

Okul:

Tarih/Saat:

Sevgili öğrenciler,

ODTÜ’de araştırma görevlisi olarak çalışmaktayım ve ilkokul 1. sınıf öğrencilerinin okulu nasıl algıladıklarının resimleri aracılığıyla incelenmesine ilişkin bir araştırma yapmak için buradayım. Öncelikle bu araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz için teşekkür ederim. Çalışma iki aşamadan oluşmakta olup bu aşamada ilk olarak okula ilişkin çizmiş olduğunuz resimleri anlatmanızı isteyeceğim ve size okulla ilgili sorular sorarak okul hakkındaki düşüncelerinizi öğrenmeye çalışacağım. Bu bir sınav ya da test değildir. Soruların doğru ya da yanlış cevapları yoktur. İstemediğiniz sorulara cevap vermeyebilirsiniz. Vereceğiniz cevaplar gizli kalacaktır ve hiç kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır. Eğer izin verirsiniz anlatacaklarınızı unutmamak için konuştuklarımızı kaydetmek istiyorum. Başlamadan önce sormak istediğiniz bir soru var mı? Düşüncelerinizi paylaştığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

Arş. Gör. Seher Çevikbaş
Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi
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İletişim: cseher@metu.edu.tr

1. Kaç yaşındasın?
2. Kaç kardeşiniz?
3. Annen ne iş yapıyor?
4. Baban ne iş yapıyor?
5. Çizmiş olduğun resmi anlatır mısın?
6. Niçin okulu bu şekilde çizdin?
7. Okulu seviyor musun? Neden?
8. Kendini okulda mutlu hissediyor musun? Neden?

9. Okula ilk geldiğinde en sevdiğin şey ne oldu?
10. Okula ilk geldiğinde sevmediğin şeyler var mıydı? Varsa neler?
11. Okula ilk kiminle geldin?
12. Erkenden uyanıp okula gelmek sana zor geldi mi? Nasıl?
13. Okula gelirken nasıl hissediyorsun?
14. Okula gelirken neler seni mutlu ya da mutsuz ediyor?
15. Okulda en sevdiğin şeyler neler? Varsa neler?
16. Okulda en sevmediğin şeyler neler? Varsa neler?
17. Sence okul en çok neye benziyor? Bir şeye benzetmen istense neye benzetirsin?
18. Öğretmeninin en sevdiğin yönü ne? Neden?
19. Öğretmeninin sevmediğin yönü var mı? Varsa neden?
20. Öğretmeninle ilk tanışmanızda neler konuştunuz? Size neler dedi?
21. Öğretmenini en çok kime benzetiyorsun? Örneğin, hangi çizgi film karakterine benzetiyorsun?
22. Sence okulda neler öğreneceksiniz? Sen neler öğrenmek istiyorsun?
23. Eklemek istediğin başka bir şey var mı?

Öğrenci Görüşme Formu (II. Aşama)

Görüşülen Kişi (takma isim):

Okul:

Tarih/Saat:

Sevgili öğrenciler,


ODTÜ’de araştırma görevlisi olarak çalışmaktayım ve ilkokul 1. sınıf öğrencilerinin okulu nasıl algıladıklarının resimleri aracılığıyla incelenmesine ilişkin bir araştırma yapmak için buradayım. Öncelikle bu araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz için teşekkür ederim. Araştırma iki aşamadan oluşmakta olup bu aşamada öncelikle okula ilişkin çizmiş olduğunuz resimleri anlatmanızı isteyeceğim ve size okulla ilgili sorular sorarak geçen süre içerisinde okul hakkındaki görüşlerinizin değişip değişmediğini öğrenmeye çalışacağım. Bu bir sınav ya da test değildir. Soruların doğru ya da yanlış cevapları yoktur. İstemediğiniz sorulara cevap vermeyebilirsiniz. Vereceğiniz cevaplar gizli kalacaktır ve hiç kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır. Eğer izin verirsiniz anlatacaklarınızı unutmamak için konuştuklarımızı kaydetmek istiyorum. Başlamadan önce sormak istediğiniz bir soru var mı? Düşüncelerinizi paylaştığımız için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

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1. Çizmiş olduğun resmi anlatır mısın?
2. Niçin okulu bu şekilde çizdin?
3. Okulu seviyor musun? Neden?
4. Kendini okulda mutlu hissediyor musun? Neden?
5. Erkenden uyanıp okula gelmek sana zor geliyor mu? Neden?
6. Okula gelirken nasıl hissediyorsun?
7. Okula gelirken neler seni mutlu ya da mutsuz ediyor?
8. Okulda en sevdiğin şeyler neler? Varsa neler?
9. Okulda en sevmediğin şeyler neler? Varsa neler?
10. Sence okul en çok neye benziyor? Bir şeye benzetmen istense neye benzetirsin?
11. Öğretmeninin en sevdiğin yönü ne?

12. Öğretmeninin hoşuna gitmeyen bir yönü var mı? Varsa ne?
13. Öğretmenini en çok kime benzetiyorsun? Örneğin, hangi çizgi film karakterine benzetiyorsun?
14. Okulda neler öğrenmek istiyorsun?
15. Okul hakkındaki düşüncelerinde değişiklikler oldu mu? Nasıl değişiklikler oldu?
16. Ekleme istediğin bir şey var mı?

**APPENDIX C: THE CONSENT LETTER OF THE MINISTRY OF
NATIONAL EDUCATION**



T.C.
ANKARA VALİLİĞİ
Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü

ÖĞRENCİ İŞLERİ
DAİRESİ BAŞKANLIĞI
Ev. Arg. Md

Sayı : 14588481/605.99/4702320
Konu: Araştırma izni

21/10/2014

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİNE
(Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı)

İlgi: a) MEB Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğünün 2012/13 nolu Genelgesi.
b) 01/10/2014 tarihli ve 11220 sayılı yazımız.

Üniversiteniz Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Programı Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Seher ÇEVİKBAŞ' ın "İlkokul 1. sınıf öğrencilerinin okula ilişkin algılarının çizimleri aracılığıyla incelenmesi" başlıklı tezi kapsamında çalışma yapma talebi Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmüş ve araştırmanın yapılacağı İlçe Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğüne bilgi verilmiştir.

Görüşme formunun (12 sayfa) araştırmacı tarafından uygulama yapılacak sayıda çoğaltılması ve çalışmanın bitiminde iki örneğinin (cd ortamında) Müdürlüğümüz Strateji Geliştirme (1) Şubesine gönderilmesini arz ederim.

Müberra OĞUZ
Müdür a.
Şube Müdürü

Güvenli Elektronik İmza
Aslı ile Aynıdır.
21.10.2014

Yaşar SUBAŞI
Şef

24.10.2014-16066

Konya yolu Başkent Öğretmen Evi arkası Beşevler ANKARA
e-posta: ıstatistik06@meb.gov.tr

Ayrıntılı bilgi için: Emine KONUK
Tel: (0 312) 221 02 17/135

Bu evrak güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır. <http://evraksorgu.meb.gov.tr> adresinden cc96-5259-347c-8a40-8d5e kodu ile teyit edilebilir.

APPENDIX D: VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION FORM

Gönüllü Katılım (Bilgilendirilmiş Onay) Formu

Araştırmacının Adı-Soyadı: Seher Çevikbaş

Araştırmacının Kurumu: Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu çalışmada ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okula ilişkin algılarının çizimler aracılığıyla incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

Çalışma iki aşamadan oluşmakta olup ilk aşama güz döneminde gerçekleştirilecek ve ilkokul 1. sınıf öğrencilerinden okul denilince akıllarına neler geldiğine ilişkin bir resim çizmeleri istenecektir. Sonrasında öğrencilerle çizimleri üzerine bir görüşme yapılacaktır. Çalışmanın ikinci aşaması bahar döneminde gerçekleştirilecek ve bu aşamada da birinci aşamada olduğu gibi öğrencilerden okul denilince akıllarına neler geldiğine dair bir resim çizmeleri istenecek ve sonrasında onlarla çizmiş oldukları resimler üzerine görüşmeler yapılacaktır. Bu çalışmanın 2014-2015 Eğitim-Öğretim yılında iki aşamalı olarak uygulanması öngörülmektedir. Çalışmada elde edilen kişisel bilgiler üçüncü şahıslarla kesinlikle paylaşılmayacaktır. Öğrencilerden elde edilen veriler sadece analiz için kullanılacak ve tez çalışmasında yer alacaktır. Ayrıca analiz sonuçları tez çalışmasının bir parçası olarak, öğrencilerin kişisel bilgileri paylaşılmadan bilimsel kongre ve konferanslarda sunulabilir. Çalışma kapsamında öğrencilerden toplanan çizimler kongre, seminer, vb. etkinliklerde öğrenme ortamlarının gösterilmesi amacıyla kullanılacak ve herhangi bir medya aracılığıyla paylaşılmayacaktır.

Araştırmaya ilişkin sorular için aşağıdaki iletişim adreslerinden iletişime geçilebilir.

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Araştırmanın amacı konusunda bilgilendirildim ve gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Katılımcının Adı-Soyadı:

İmzası:

APPENDIX E: PARENT CONSENT FORM

Veli Onay Mektubu

Tarih:

Sayın Veli,

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü'nde araştırma görevlisi olup yüksek lisans tez çalışmamı yürütmekteyim. Tez çalışmam kapsamında ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okula ilişkin algılarının belirlenmesi hedeflenmektedir. Bu formun gönderilmesinin amacı sizleri çocuklarınızla çalışacağımıza ilişkin bilgilendirmektir.

Çalışma iki aşamadan oluşmaktadır ve bu aşamalar 2014-2015 eğitim-öğretim yılı güz ve bahar dönemlerini kapsamaktadır. Her iki aşamada da öğrencilerden okul denilince akıllarına ne geldiği hakkında birer resim çizmeleri istenecektir. Bu görüşmelerden sonra onlarla çizdikleri resimler üzerine görüşmeler yapılacaktır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin güz ve bahar dönemlerindeki okul algılarında herhangi bir değişikliğin olup olmadığının belirlenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Öğrencilerden toplanan kişisel bilgiler ve ses kayıtları üçüncü şahıslarla paylaşılmayacaktır. Elde edilen veriler sadece çalışma kapsamında kullanılacaktır. Ayrıca analiz sonuçlarının tez çalışmasının bir parçası olarak, öğrencilerin kişisel bilgileri paylaşılmadan bilimsel kongre ve konferanslarda sunulması planlanmaktadır.

Bu çalışmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayalı olup öğrenciler çalışma sırasında arzu edildiği takdirde hiçbir yaptırıma maruz kalmadan katılımdan vazgeçme hakkına sahiptir.

Çalışmaya ya da çocuğunuzun katılımına dair daha fazla bilgi için:

Arş. Gör. Seher Çevikbaş

Prof. Dr. Cennet Engin Demir

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi

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Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri
Bölümü

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Yukarıda açıklamasını okuduğum çalışmaya,
oğlum/kızım _____'nin katılımına izin veriyorum.

Velinin:

Adı, Soyadı: _____ İmzası: _____

Tarih: _____

Çocuğunuzun katılımı ya da haklarının korunmasına yönelik sorularınız varsa ya da çocuğunuzun herhangi bir şekilde risk altında olabileceğine, strese maruz kalacağına inanıyorsanız Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu'na (0312) 210-37-29 telefon numarasından ulaşabilirsiniz.

APPENDIX F: TURKISH SUMMARY

TÜRKÇE ÖZET

İLKOLUL BİRİNCİ SINIF ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN OKUL ALGILARININ VE OKULA İLİŞKİN DUYGULARININ İNCELENMESİ

GİRİŞ

Hayatın her döneminde gerçekleşen eğitim, birtakım becerilerin, bilgilerin ve ahlaki değerlerin edinilmesini ifade etmektedir (Peters, 2010). Bu anlamda, doğumdan ölüme kadar devam eden bir süreç olarak düşünülen eğitimin bireylerin düşünsel ve sosyal gelişimine bir hayli katkısı vardır. Bireylerin toplumdaki değişen şartlara ayak uydurabilmelerini sağlamada da önemli rol oynayan eğitim örgün eğitim, yaygın eğitim ve formel olmayan eğitim olmak üzere üç şekilde gerçekleşmektedir. Bu eğitim çeşitlerinden örgün eğitim yapılandırılmış ve yazılı bir programın takip edildiği eğitime işaret eder (Ngaka, Openjuru, & Mazur, 2012).

Dünyadaki bütün ülkeler bireylere örgün eğitim sağlamak için farklı okul sistemleri uygulamaktadır. Fakat birçok ülkede eğitim sistemlerinin bireylerin taleplerini karşılama noktasında sorunları vardır ve bu yüzden de bu ülkeler eğitim sistemlerini iyileştirme ihtiyacı hissetmektedirler (Morpeth & Creed, 2012). Bireylere daha kaliteli bir eğitim vermek için okul sistemini geliştirme ihtiyacı duyan ülkelere birisi olan Türkiye’de 2012-2013 yılından itibaren 12 Yıllık Zorunlu Eğitim (4+4+4) adı altında yeni bir okul sistemi uygulanmaya başlamıştır. Bu sistem 4 yıl ilköğretim, 4 yıl ortaokul ve 4 yıl lise eğitiminden oluşmaktadır. Okula başlama yaşı, zorunlu eğitim ve İmam Hatip Orta Okulları başta olmak üzere yeni uygulamaları

beraberinde getiren bu sisteme göre 66 ayını dolduran çocukların bir ilkokula kayıt olmaları gerekmektedir. Bunun yanında yaşları 60-66 ay arasında olan çocuklar da ailelerinin izniyle bir ilkokula kayıt yaptırabilmektedirler (MEB, 2012).

Öte yandan örgün eğitim okullarda uygulanmaktadır. Bu uygulama doğrultusunda okulların anlamı, amacı ve fonksiyonları öğrenciler, ebeveynler, eğitimciler, araştırmacılar, karar alıcılar, vb. gibi farklı paydaşlar tarafından yaygın bir biçimde tartışılmaktadır. Okulun ne anlama geldiği, amaçlarının ve fonksiyonlarının ne olduğuna dair eğitim felsefeleri de farklı açıklamalar getirmektedir. Örneğin, Daimiciliğe göre okul gerçeği aramayı amaçlamaktadır. Esasiciliğe göre ise okullar temel becerilerin ve konuların öğretildiği yerdir. Bununla birlikte İlerlemecilik okulların, öğrencilerin kendilerini özgürce ve açıkça ifade ettikleri sosyal merkezler olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Ayrıca Yeniden yapılandırmacılık, okulun rolünün öğrencilerin buldukları kültürü sorgulamalarını sağlamak olduğunu belirtir (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

Çeşitli eğitim felsefeleri tarafından ortaya konan okulun amaçları ve işlevleri yanında, okul sisteminin aşamalarına ilişkin özel amaçlar da vardır. Bu bağlamda, ilkokul eğitiminin amaçları Milli Eğitim Temel Kanunu'nda (1973) şu şekilde açıklanmaktadır:

1. Bütün öğrencilerin iyi bir vatandaş olabilmeleri için gerekli olan bilgileri, becerileri ve davranışları edinmelerini sağlamak,
2. Bütün öğrencileri ilgi, beceri ve yeteneklerine göre gelecekteki hayatlarına ve bir üst eğitim seviyesine hazırlamak,
3. İlkokul eğitiminin son döneminde öğrencileri meslek seçimi konusunda bilgilendirmek

Bu yüzden ilkokul eğitimi farkındalık düzeyi yüksek olan yetkin bireyler yetiştirme konusunda oldukça önemlidir. Bunun yanında özellikle birinci sınıf eğitimi bireylerin gelecek eğitim hayatlarını şekillendirmesi bakımından daha da kritik bir

öneme sahiptir (Yamaç, 2014). Zira bireylerin bütün hayatı boyunca yararlanacağı bilgi ve becerilerin temeli bu dönemde atılmaktadır (Temur, Özyeğit, Divrenge, Özkara & Ayyıldız, 2012). Ayrıca, öğrencilerin birinci sınıftaki deneyimleri onların gelecek eğitim hayatlarındaki başarı ya da başarısızlıklarını yordamaktadır (Stuhlman ve Pianta, 2009).

Birinci sınıf eğitiminin önemi dikkate alındığında, birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul hakkındaki duygularının ne olduğu ve okulu nasıl algıladıkları anlam kazanmaktadır. Çünkü öğrencilerin birinci sınıfta okulu nasıl anlamlandırdıkları okul ortamından ve, öğretmenleri ve arkadaşlarıyla olan ilişkilerinden memnun olup olmadıkları konusunda ipuçları verebilmektedir. Dolayısıyla öğrencilerin okul ortamında memnun olup olmaması okul algısını olumlu ya da olumsuz yönde şekillendirebilmekte ve okula ilişkin sahip olunan duygular bu doğrultuda değişikliğe uğrayabilmektedir. Ayrıca olumlu bir okul ortamında akademik gelişim ve öğrenmenin ne kadar kritik olduğu düşünüldüğünde (Özdemir, Sezgin, Şirin, Karip, & Erkan, 2010), akademik başarının okul algısı ve okula ilişkin sahip olunan duygulardan etkileneceği göz ardı edilmemelidir (Ford ve Ill, 2008).

Öğrencilerin okul algılarının ve okula ilişkin duygularının incelenmesiyle, onların okul hakkındaki düşünceleri, inançları ve duygularına ilişkin fikir sahibi olunabilir. Öğrencilerin okul algısı anketler (Gray & McLellan, 2006; Holfve-Sabel & Gustaffsson, 2005), öğrenci metaforları (Engin Demir, 2007; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Saban, 2008) ve çizimleri (Yıldız, 2012; Dockett & Perry, 2004) gibi pek çok değişik yöntem ile belirlenebilir. Bu teknikler arasında çizimler küçük yaştaki öğrencilerin herhangi bir olguya ilişkin sahip oldukları algıların belirlenmesinde önemli bir avantaj sağlamaktadır. Malchiodi (1998) çocukların iç dünyaları hakkında bilgi sahibi olmak için çizimlerin en etkili yollardan birisi olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışmada öğrencilerin okul algılarının ve okul hakkındaki duygularının belirlenmesi amacıyla öğrenci çizimlerinin kullanılması uygun bulunmuştur.

Çalışmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın amacı ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algılarının ve okul hakkındaki duygularının belirlenmesidir. Çalışma sosyoekonomik statü olarak farklı çevrelerde bulunan üç ilkokuldaki birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okulu nasıl algıladığını ve okul hakkındaki duygularının neler olduğunun belirlenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca çalışmada birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algılarında ve okula ilişkin sahip oldukları duygularda 2014-2015 eğitim öğretim yılının güz ve bahar dönemleri arasında bir değişikliğin gerçekleşip gerçekleşmediğinin ortaya çıkarılması hedeflenmiştir. Belirlenen bu amaç doğrultusunda aşağıdaki sorulara cevap aranmıştır:

- 1) İlkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algıları ve okula ilişkin duyguları nelerdir?
- 2) İlkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algıları ve okula ilişkin duyguları okullara göre nasıl bir değişiklik göstermektedir?
- 3) İlkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algıları ve okul hakkındaki duyguları 2014-2015 eğitim öğretim yılının güz ve bahar dönemlerinde nasıl bir değişiklik göstermektedir?

Çalışmanın Önemi

Okulların öğrencilere öğrenme ve sosyal ortam sunma gibi çeşitli işlevleri vardır. Aynı zamanda okullar bir kişinin hayatının önemli bir bölümünün geçtiği yerlerdir. Bu anlamda okullar, aileden sonra bireylerin hayatını şekillendiren en önemli ikinci kurumdur (Yıldız, 2012). Bunun yanı sıra, ilkokul eğitimi özellikle de birinci sınıf eğitimi bireylerin birtakım temel becerileri, bilgileri ve yeterlikleri edindikleri bir dönem olması yönüyle ön plana çıkmaktadır (Özbaş, 2009). Bu sebeple, öğrencilerin birinci sınıftayken okulu nasıl algıladıklarının ve okula ilişkin duygularının neler olduğunun incelenmesinin anlamlı olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Bu çalışmada, birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algılarını ve okula ilişkin duygularının duygularını belirlenmesi amaçlanırken aynı zamanda birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin

İlgilerinin ve okulun onlar için neden önemli olduğunun da ortaya çıkarılması üzerinde çalışılmıştır. Eğitim öğretim sürecinin en önemli paydaşlarından birinin öğrenciler olduğu düşünüldüğünde, onların okulu nasıl algıladıklarının ve okula ilişkin duygularının neler olduğunu bilmesinin program geliştirme sürecinde de oldukça yararlı olacağı söylenebilir. Diğer bir deyişle, birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin ilgilerini çeken unsurların neler olduğunun bilinmesi birinci sınıf öğretim programını geliştirme ve gözden geçirme konusunda program geliştirme uzmanlarına oldukça katkı sağlayacaktır. Dolayısıyla yapılan bu çalışmanın eğitim programları ve öğretim alanına katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Ayrıca, çalışmada öğrencilerin okul algılarının ve okula ilişkin duygularının çizimler ve görüşmeler aracılığıyla ortaya çıkarılması düşünülmüştür. Çizimler özellikle küçük yaşta öğrencilerin bir konuyu nasıl algıladıklarını ve o konu hakkındaki duygularının ne olduğunu belirleme açısından en etkili yollardan birisidir. Çocukların zihinlerindeki yansımaların çizimlerinde belirdiği düşünülürse, yapılan çizimlerin ilköğretim birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algılarının ve okula ilişkin duygularının tespitinde oldukça kullanışlı veriler ortaya çıkarması söz konusudur. Bununla birlikte literatür, az sayıda çalışmada öğrencilerin okul algılarını belirlemek için öğrenci çizimlerinin kullanıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu sebeple, bu çalışmanın literatüre önemli ölçüde katkı sunacağı beklenmektedir.

Çalışmanın literatür taraması bölümünde okulun farklı sosyolojik teoriler ve eğitim felsefelerinde nasıl açıklandığına, öğrencilerin bilişsel, duygusal, sosyal ve fiziksel gelişimleri açısından özelliklerine, algı ve duygunun ne anlama geldiğine ve öğrenci çizimleri başlığı altında çizimlerin neden önemli olduğu, tarihçesi ve çizimlerin gelişim aşamalarına yer verilmiştir.

ARAŞTIRMANIN YÖNTEMİ

İlkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algıları ve okula ilişkin duygularını belirlemeyi amaçlayan bu çalışma nitel bir çalışmadır. Üzerinde çalışılan olgu, durum ve olayları derinlemesine inceleme fırsatı tanıyan nitel araştırmalara ilişkin (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002) beş farklı desenden söz edilmektedir. Bu desenler durum çalışması, fenomenoloji, kültür analizi, eylem araştırması ve kuram oluşturma olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın desenini fenomenoloji oluşturmaktadır. Fenomenoloji, bireylerin bir olguya ilişkin yaşantıları, algıları ve duygularını betimlemeyi hedefler (Patton, 2002). Bu çalışmada öğrencilerin okulu nasıl algıladıklarına ve okula ilişkin duygularının neler olduğuna odaklandığı için fenomenoloji deseninin çalışma için uygun olduğuna karar verilmiştir.

Araştırmanın Katılımcıları

Araştırmanın katılımcılarını ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcılar düşük, orta ve yüksek sosyoekonomik çevrede bulunan üç ilkokulda öğrenim gören ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencileri arasından amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak seçilmiştir. İki aşamadan oluşan çalışmanın birinci aşamasına birinci okuldan 40 öğrenci, ikinci okuldan 57 öğrenci ve üçüncü okuldan 36 öğrenci dahil edilmiştir ve araştırmanın katılımcıları olarak belirlenen bu öğrencilerden okul denilince akıllarına neler geldiğine dair resimler çizmeleri istenmiştir. İkinci aşamasında ise birinci okuldan 32 öğrenci, ikinci okuldan 52 öğrenci ve üçüncü okuldan ise 34 öğrenci yine okula ilişkin resimler çizmiştir. Ayrıca öğrencilerle çizimleri üzerine yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmanın birinci aşamasında birinci okuldan 24 öğrenci ile, ikinci okuldan 18 öğrenci ile, üçüncü okuldan ise 10 öğrenci ile görüşmeler yapılmıştır. İkinci aşamada ise her bir okuldan 10 öğrenci ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. İlkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin görüşmelerde yeterince veri vermeyeceği düşünülerek başlangıçta sayı yüksek tutulmuştur fakat yapılan görüşmelerde öğrencilerden yeterince veri alındığı görülünce görüşme yapılacak öğrenci sayısı düşürülmüştür.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Bu fenomenolojik çalışmada iki farklı veri toplama aracı kullanılmıştır. Birincisi öğrencilerin çizimleridir ki küçük yaştaki çocukların çizimleri aracılığıyla kendilerini daha rahat ifade ettiği düşünüldüğünden (Walker, Caine-Bish & Wait, 2009) ilkököl birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okul algılarını ve okul hakkındaki duygularını belirlemek amacıyla öğrenci çizimleri tercih edilmiştir. Öğrenci çizimlerinin yanında araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan görüşme formları doğrultusunda öğrencilerle yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bu görüşme formu öğrencilere ilişkin demografik bilgi, resimlerini tasvir etmeleri ve okulu nasıl algıladıkları ve okula ilişkin duygularının neler olduğuna dair sorulardan oluşmaktadır. Çalışma iki aşamadan oluştuğu için öğrenciler güz ve bahar döneminde okul denilince akıllarına neler geldiğine ilişkin resimler çizmişler ve sonrasında her iki dönemde de öğrencilerle görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Veri Analizi

Çalışmada öğrenci çizimleri ve onlarla yapılan görüşmelerden elde edilenler olmak üzere iki farklı veri çeşidi bulunmaktadır. Öncelikle öğrenci çizimlerini analiz etmek amacıyla araştırmacı tarafından bir yönerge geliştirilmiştir. Bu yönerge çizimlerdeki renkler, figürler, vücudun bölümleri, duygular ve çizgiler olmak üzere beş başlıktan oluşmaktadır. Öğrenci çizimleri bu yönergeye göre yorumlanmış ve içerik analizi yöntemiyle kodlar, kategoriler ve temalar oluşturulmuştur. Aynı şekilde öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmeler de içerik analizi yöntemiyle analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırmanın Geçerliliği ve Güvenirliği

Araştırmanın geçerlik ve güvenirliliği için birtakım çalışmalar gerçekleştirilmiştir. İlk olarak araştırmacı alanda uzun süreli vakit geçirmiştir. Bu anlamda araştırmacı her bir okulda toplamda bir ay geçirmiştir ve böylece katılımcıların güvenini kazanmıştır. İkinci olarak veri çeşitlenmesine başvurulmuştur. Çalışmada hem öğrenci çizimler hem de öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmeler aracılığıyla öğrencilerin okul algıları ve okul hakkındaki duyguları belirlenmeye çalışılmış ve toplanan iki farklı

veri yoluyla çalışmanın güvenilir olması yönünde çalışmalar yapılmıştır. Ayrıca verilerin analizi sırasında araştırmacı uzman görüşünden yararlanmıştır. Verilerin analizi sonucunda oluşturulan kod, kategori ve temalar iki uzman tarafından kontrol edilmiştir.

Araştırmanın Sınırlılıkları

Öğrencilerin okul algısı ve okul hakkındaki duygularını belirlemeyi amaçlayan bu nitel çalışmanın verileri Ankara’da bulunan üç ilkokuldan toplanmıştır. Dolayısıyla çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar söz konusu okullarda öğrenim gören katılımcılarla sınırlıdır. Nitel çalışmanın doğası gereği zaten araştırma sonuçları daha geniş kitlelere genellenemez fakat benzer durumlara transfer edilebilir olma özelliği vardır. Bunun yanında başlangıçta çalışmanın birinci aşama verilerinin 2014-2015 eğitim-öğretim yılı başlar başlamaz toplanması planlanmış fakat İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü’ne yapılan izin başvuru sonucunun gecikmesinden dolayı bu mümkün olmamıştır. Bunun yerine çalışmanın ilk aşaması güz döneminin ortalarına doğru gerçekleşmiştir. Dolayısıyla araştırmacı katılımcıların daha okulun ilk günlerindeki okula ilişkin duygu, düşünce ve algılarını belirleyememiştir.

BULGULAR

Araştırma kapsamında toplanan verilerin analizi sonucunda altı tema elde edilmiştir: Oyun alanı olarak okul, sosyal bir ortam olarak okul, güzel bir yer olarak okul, fiziksel bir ortam olarak okul, öğrenme ortamı olarak okul ve kötü bir ortam olarak okul. Çalışmanın bulguları bu başlıklar altında gruplanmış ve sunulmuştur.

Analiz sonuçları öğrencilerin hem birinci aşamada hem de ikinci aşamada okulu öğrenme ortamından ziyade oyun alanı olarak algıladıklarını göstermiştir. Öğrencilerin çizdikleri balonlar, toplar, ağaçlar, okul bahçesi, teneffüs arası, okul bahçesindeki seksek oyunu ve okul bahçesinde oynayan çocuklar öğrencilerin okulu

bir oyun ortamı olarak gördüklerine işaret etmiştir. Ayrıca öğrenciler kendileri ile yapılan görüşmelerde de arkadaşlarıyla oynadıkları ve çeşitli aktiviteler yaptıkları zamanlarda okulda mutlu olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

Öğrencilerin aynı zamanda okulu güzel bir yer olarak da algıladıkları belirlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin çizimlerinde mutlu yüzler, çiçekler, kelebekler, gökkuşağı, kuşlar, gülümseyen güneş çizimleri, resimleri boyarken parlak, sıcak renkler ile en sevdikleri ve tuttıkları takımın renklerini kullanmaları okulu güzel bir yer olarak algıladıklarını ve bununla birlikte okulu sevdiklerini göstermiştir. Ayrıca öğrenciler okulu yıldızlar ve kalplerle süslemişler bunun yanında özellikle bahar döneminde 23 Nisan kutlamalarını resmetmişlerdir. Öğrenciler görüşmelerinde de okulun güzel bir yer olduğuna değinmişler ve okulun iç yapısı ve dış yapısına özellikle de okul bahçesi ve sınıflarına odaklanmışlardır.

Bunların yanında öğrenciler okulu yeni arkadaşlar edindikleri, öğretmenleriyle ve arkadaşlarıyla iyi ilişkiler kurdukları sosyal bir ortam olarak algılamışlardır. Öğrenciler çizimlerinde öğretmenleri ve arkadaşları ile olan ilişkilerini resmetmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerini mutlu bir yüz ifadesi, kollarını iki yana açmış bir şekilde ve daha büyük çizmişlerdir. Bu onların öğretmenlerini sevdiklerini ve onlarla iyi ilişkiler kurduklarını göstermiştir. Arkadaşlarını da mutlu bir yüz ifadesi ve kolları iki yana açık olarak çizmişlerdir. Bu da arkadaşları ile iyi ilişkiler içinde olduklarına işaret etmektedir. Öğrenciler görüşmelerinde de öğretmenleri ve arkadaşlarıyla vakit geçirmekten mutlu olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

Okulun öğrenciler tarafından fiziksel bir ortam olduğu da tespit edilmiştir. Öğrenciler okul denilince akıllarına neler geldiğine dair daha çok okul binalarını çizmişlerdir. Okul binaları ile birlikte bayrak ve okul bahçesi de resmedilmiştir. Ayrıca öğrenciler sınıflarını ve kantini de çizmişlerdir.

Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre bazı öğrencilerin okulu bir öğrenme ortamı olarak algıladıkları gözlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin çizmiş olduğu sınıf ortamı, sıralar, tahta, sıralarında oturan öğrenciler öğrencilerin okulu bir öğrenme ortamı olarak gördüklerini göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte az sayıda öğrenci çizimlerinde onların okulu öğrenme ortamı olarak algıladıklarına dair göstergeler bulunsa da öğrenci görüşmelerinde daha fazla sayıda öğrenci okulu yeni şeyler öğrenecekleri bir yer olarak gördüklerini ifade etmişlerdir.

Bütün bunlara ek olarak öğrencilerin çizimlerinde okulu kötü bir ortam gördüklerine dair göstergeler de bulunmuştur. Okulu kötü bir ortam olarak görmeleri ile ilişkili olarak çizimlerde öğrencilerin okulda güvensiz, sınırlanmış ve yalnız hissettiklerine ve okulu sevmediklerine dair birtakım göstergeler tespit edilmiştir. Çizimlerin detaylı analizi az sayıda öğrencinin okulu kötü bir ortam olarak algıladığını göstermiştir.

TARTIŞMA

Bireylerin gelecekteki hayatları için gerekli olacak birtakım temel bilgi, beceri ve yeterlikler ilkökul eğitimi döneminde özellikle de birinci sınıf eğitimi döneminde edinilir (Özbaş, 2009). Eğitim hayatındaki ve diğer alanlardaki başarılar da bu dönem üzerine inşa edilir (Kutluca Canbulat & Tuncel, 2012). Okulu olumlu algılamanın akademik başarı üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğu düşünülürse (Ford & Ill, 2008), öğrencilerin ilkökul birinci sınıfta okul hakkında olumlu düşüncelere sahip olmaları oldukça önemlidir. İlkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okulu nasıl algıladıklarını ve okula ilişkin ne gibi duygulara sahip olduklarını belirlemeye çalışan bu araştırmanın sonuçları, ilkökul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin olumlu okul algısına sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu sonuca göre öğrencilerin okullarını sevdikleri ve ileride başarılı bir eğitim hayatına sahip olabilecekleri öngörülebilir.

Okulun olumlu algılanmasının yanında, öğrencilerin okulu daha çok bir oyun alanı olarak algıladıkları belirlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin okulun bir oyun alanı olarak algılaması gelişimsel özelliklerinden kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Snowman ve Biehler'e (2000) göre bu yaştaki öğrenciler oldukça aktiflerdir ve hareketli etkinlikler yapma eğilimindedirler. Bu sebeple öğrenciler için arkadaşlarıyla okul bahçesinde oynamak yerine sınıfta oturup ödev yapmak sıkıcı gelebilir. Aynı zamanda, öğrenciler daha esnek kuralların olduğu anasınıfında arkadaşlarıyla daha çok oynayabildikleri ve dolayısıyla böyle bir ortama alışık oldukları için okulu daha çok bir oyun alanı olarak algılamış olabilirler.

Oyun alanının yanında okullar aynı zamanda sosyal bir ortam olarak görülebilir. Okullar öğrenciler için yeni arkadaşlıklar kurabilecekleri ve sosyalleşebilecekleri ortamlar sunabilirler. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları da öğrencilerin okulu sosyal bir ortam olarak algıladıklarına işaret etmiştir. Bu sonucu destekler şekilde Lahelma (2002) öğrencilerin okulu yeni arkadaşlar edinecekleri bir yer olarak gördüklerini ifade etmiştir. Ayrıca, yeni arkadaşlar edinmenin ve çok sayıda arkadaşına sahip olmanın öğrencileri mutlu ettiği sonucuna ulaşmıştır. Benzer şekilde Booth ve Sheehan (2008) okulda yeni arkadaşlıklar kurmanın okul ortamına ilişkin memnuniyeti beraberinde getirdiğini belirtmiştir.

Sosyal ortam sadece öğrencilerin arkadaşlarıyla olan ilişkileri ile sınırlı değildir. Öğrencilerin öğretmenleri ile olan ilişkileri de okulun hoşnut olunan bir ortam olmasında belirleyici olabilir (Booth & Sheehan, 2008). Öğrenciler çizimlerinde öğretmenlerini mutlu bir yüz ifadesi ile birlikte kollarını iki yana açmış bir şekilde çizmişlerdir. Aynı zamanda öğretmenlerini, onlara yeni şeyler öğrettiği, onları ödüllendirdiği ve onlara kızmadığı için sevdiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Bear vd. (2016) tarafından yapılan çalışmada da öğrencilerin kendilerini ödüllendiren ve öven öğretmenlerle daha iyi ilişkiler kurdukları ifade edilmiştir.

Ayrıca çalışmada okulun dış yapısı olarak okul bahçesine ve içyapısı olarak da sınıflarına işaret edilen çizimlerden yola çıkılarak okulun öğrenciler tarafından güzel bir ortam olarak algılandığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Öğrenciler resimlerinde parlak ve sıcak renkler kullanmışlar, mutlu yüzler, çiçekler, kuşlar ve gülümseyen bir güneş çizmişlerdir. Görüşmelerinde de okulu, okul bahçesini ve sınıflarını sevdiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Öğrencilerin okulu güzel bir yer olarak algılamaları anne babalarının onları okulun nasıl bir yer olduğuna dair bilgilendirmeleriyle de ilişkili olabilir. Bu anlamda anne babalar çocuklarına okulun, kendilerini mutlu ve rahat hissedebilecekleri güzel bir yer olduğunu anlatmış olabilirler. Ayrıca okul bahçesini sevme okulun oyun alanı olarak algılanması ile ilgili olabilir. Diğer bir ilgi çekici sonuç diğer okullarla karşılaştırıldığında düşük sosyoekonomik çevrede bulunan okulun öğrencilerin okulu güzel bir yer olarak algılamasıdır. Temizlik problemlerinin göze çarptığı bu okuldaki öğrencilerin ağırlıklı olarak olumlu okul algısına ve olumlu düşüncelere sahip olması dikkat çekmiştir. Bu sonuca paralel bir şekilde Balcı (1999) da çalışmasında okulun tuvaletlerinde su bile olmamasına rağmen okulu güzel bir yer olarak algıladıkları sonucuna ulaşmıştır.

Okul aynı zamanda fiziksel bir ortam olarak algılanmıştır. Çizimlerde açıkça görülmektedir ki öğrenciler zihinlerindeki okul imajının (görüntüsünün) yansıması olarak okul binalarını çizmişlerdir ve çizdikleri okul binalarını kendi okul binalarına benzetmeye çalışmışlardır. Bu anlamda okulun fiziksel çevresinin/ortamının öğrencilerin okulu nasıl algıladıkları üzerinde etkisi olduğu söylenebilir. Bu sonuç ile tutarlı olarak Yıldız (2012) çalışmasında öğrencilerin okulu fiziksel özellikleriyle birlikte çizdiklerini ve bunun onların okulu formal bir yapı olarak algıladıkları sonucuna ulaşılabilirliğini ifade etmiştir. Bununla birlikte Lowenfeld ve Brittain (1967) tarafından ortaya atılan çocuk resimlerinin gelişim dönemlerine göre, çocukların bu dönemde şematik dönemde olduğu göz önünde bulundurulursa, öğrencilerin çizimleri şematik dönemin özellikleri ile tutarlılık göstermektedir. Bu dönemde öğrenciler çizmek istedikleri nesnelere doğru bir şekilde çizebilmekte ve onlar için önemli olan kişi ya da nesnelere daha büyük çizmektedirler.

Okul binaları, bahçeleri ve sınıfların yanında bazı öğrenciler evlerini de çizmişlerdir. Öğrencilerin okula ilişkin zihinlerinde ne canlandığına ilişkin kendi evlerini çizmelerinin okul ile evlerini bağdaştırmalarından kaynaklandığı söylenebilir. Metaforların algıyı yansıttığı düşünülürse (Postman, 1996), öğrenciler onlarla yapılan görüşmelerde de ev metaforunu üretmişlerdir. Buradan okulun ikinci ev olarak algılandığı çıkarımı yapılabilir. Bu aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin öğrencileri okulun onlar için ikinci bir ev olduğu konusunda bilgilendirmesinden kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Bu sonuç Balcı (1999) ve Engin Demir (2007) tarafından gerçekleştirilen çalışmaların sonuçları ile de desteklenmektedir. Bununla birlikte öğretmenlerin bir baba ya da anne olarak algılandığı belirlenmiş. Bu sonuca göre okulun ailenin devamı olarak görüldüğü söylenebilir (Balcı, 1999).

Buna ek olarak bazı öğrenciler tarafından okul bir öğrenme ortamı olarak özellikle de okuma yazma ve birtakım sayısal becerilerin edinildiği yer olarak algılanmıştır. Birtakım sosyolojik teoriler ve eğitim felsefeleri tarafından okulun nasıl açıklandığı düşünüldüğünde okulun bu rolü daha da anlamlı hale gelmektedir. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına paralel bir şekilde Esasicilik okulu okuma yazma ve sayısal becerilerin edinildiği bir yer olarak görmektedir (Ornstein & Levine, 1993). Bununla birlikte sosyolojik bir teori olan İşlevselci yaklaşım okulu öğrencilerin ilerdeki yetişkin rollerine hazır hale gelmeleri için birtakım bilişsel becerileri ile donatıldıkları yer olarak açıklamaktadır (Feinberg & Soltis, 1992). Aslında çizimlere bakıldığında öğrencilerin okulu bir öğrenme ortamı olarak algıladıkları çok fazla yansıtılmamaktadır. Fakat onlarla gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerde okulu yeni şeyler öğrendikleri bir yer olarak algıladıkları ve bu nedenle okulda kendilerini mutlu hissettikleri belirlenmiştir. Çizimlerin çocukların iç dünyaları hakkında bilgi sahibi olmak için kullanılan etkili yollardan biri olduğu düşünüldüğünde (Yavuzer, 1993; Malchiodi, 1998) çizimlerin gerçekte öğrencilerin okulu nasıl algıladıkları hakkında güçlü ipuçları verdiği ve dolayısıyla öğrencilerin aslında okulu bir öğrenme ortamı

olarak algılamadıkları sonucuna varılabilir. Aynı zamanda bu öğrencilerin okuldaki ilk yılı olduğu için oyun oynamak ve eğlenmek onlar için daha önemli olabilir.

Bütün bunların yanında, bazı öğrenciler tarafından okulun olumsuz özelliklere sahip olan bir ortam olarak algılandığı da tespit edilmiştir. Öğrenciler çizimlerinde kendilerini okulda yalnız, endişeli hissettikleri ve güvende hissetmedikleri ile okulu sevmediklerine dair göstergeler çizmişlerdir. Ayrıca görüşmelerde de öğrencilerin okulda kendilerini mutsuz hissetmelerine neden olan birtakım unsurlar belirlenmiştir. Bu unsurlar başarısız olmak, arkadaşların olumsuz davranışları, arkadaşları tarafından şiddete maruz kalma ve öğretmenlerin sinirlenmesi olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu bağlamda özellikle de arkadaşları tarafından şiddete maruz kalan öğrencilerin okulu kötü bir ortam olarak algılayabileceği belirlenmiştir. İlkokul öğrencilerinin maruz kaldıkları şiddet sonrası mutlu olmadıkları düşünülürse okul hakkında olumsuz duygu ve düşüncelerle şiddet gibi olumsuz davranışlar arasında bir bağ olduğu söylenebilir (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, & Gottfredson, 2005).

Öneriler

Çalışmanın sonuçları ilkokul birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin okulu nasıl algıladıklarını gösterirken aynı zamanda ne gibi ilgi ve ihtiyaçları olduğunu da göstermiştir. Bu anlamda öğrencilerin okulu daha çok bir oyun alanı olarak algıladıkları sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bu sonuçtan yola çıkarak öğrencilerin sıkılmayacakları eğlenceli bir okul ortamı istedikleri düşünülebilir. Bu anlamda öğretmenlerin ve okul yöneticilerinin okulu daha eğlenceli bir yer haline getirmeleri önerilebilir. Örneğin, okulda öğrencilerin hem öğrenip hem de eğlenebilecekleri mekânlar tasarlanabilir. Karar vericiler ve program geliştirenler de ilkokul birinci sınıf programını öğrencilerin bu ilgi ve ihtiyaçlarına göre düzenleyebilirler.

Okulun aynı zamanda öğrencilerin yeni arkadaşlar edinecekleri sosyal bir ortam olarak algılandığı da belirlenmiştir. Bu anlamda okulda öğrencilerin sosyalleşebilecekleri mekânlar yapılabilir. Bununla birlikte, arkadaşları tarafından

şiddete maruz kalma durumu öğrencilerin okul algısını olumsuz etkilemektedir (Gottfredson et al., 2005). Bu sebeple öğretmenlerin, öğrencilerin şiddete maruz kalmasına fırsat vermemeleri önerilir. Ayrıca okul yöneticilerinin birinci sınıf öğrencilerini daha büyük sınıflardan farklı katlara yerleştirmeleri gerekmektedir.

Buna ek olarak, okulun güzel bir yer olarak algılandığı bulunmuştur. Okulun iç ve dış yapısının öğrencilerin ilgisini çekmesi okulun güzel bir yer olarak algılanmasında önemli olduğu söylenebilir. Bu sebeple, okullar güzel bir görünüme sahip olmalı özellikle birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin dikkatini çekmelidir. Ayrıca okulun temiz olmasının da okul algısı ve okula ilişkin duygular üzerinde etkisi olduğu tespiti üzerine okul yöneticilerinin öğrencilere temiz bir okul ortamı sunmaları önerilmektedir.

APPENDIX G: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : ÇEVİKBAŞ

Adı : SEHER

Bölümü : Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : First Grade Elementary School Students' Feelings and Perceptions of School

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

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

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: