

How Should Multicultural Education Be According to Preschool Teachers?

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History Received: 09.01.2024 Accepted: 15.03.2024 Published: 31.03.2024</p> <p>Keywords: Multicultural Education, Preschool Teacher, Teacher Opinion, Multiculturalism, Teacher Characteristics.</p>	<p>The aim of this study is to reveal preschool teachers' views on how multicultural education should be presented/implemented in preschool education. The study was organized in a multiple case study design from qualitative research methods. Participants were selected through purposive sampling and four preschool teachers with at least one student from different cultures were included in the study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using the descriptive analysis method. The findings are given under the themes of curriculum, teacher characteristics in multicultural environments, family involvement, learning environment and evaluation according to preschool teachers. The findings revealed that children from different cultures have deficiencies in language development and social-emotional development. In addition, it was emphasized that the personality traits of a preschool teacher in a multicultural education environment should be impartial, unprejudiced, and inquisitive. Finally, the study demonstrated the significance of families' active involvement in the process, the requirement for organizing learner centers according to the needs and the value of individualizing student evaluations.</p>

Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerine Göre Çokkültürlü Eğitim Nasıl Olmalıdır?

Makale Bilgileri	ÖZ
<p>Makale Geçmişi Geliş: 09.01.2024 Kabul: 15.03.2024 Yayın: 31.03.2024</p> <p>Anahtar Kelimeler: Çokkültürlü Eğitim, Okul Öncesi Öğretmeni, Öğretmen Görüşü, Çokkültürlülük, Öğretmen Özellikleri.</p>	<p>Bu araştırmanın amacı okul öncesi öğretmenlerine göre çokkültürlü eğitimin nasıl olduğunu ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışma nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden çoklu durum çalışması deseninde düzenlenmiştir. Katılımcılar amaçlı örneklem yoluyla seçilmiş ve en az bir farklı kültüre sahip öğrencisi bulunan dört okul öncesi öğretmeni çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ile toplanmış ve betimsel analiz yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular okul öncesi öğretmenlerine göre eğitim programı, çokkültürlü ortamdaki öğretmen özellikleri, aile katılımı, öğrenme ortamı ve değerlendirme temaları altında verilmiştir. Bulgular farklı kültürlerden gelen çocukların dil gelişiminde ve sosyal duygusal gelişiminde eksikliklerinin olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra çokkültürlü eğitim ortamındaki bir okul öncesi öğretmenin kişilik özelliklerinin tarafsız, önyargısız ve araştırmacı olması gerektiği vurgulanmıştır. Son olarak, araştırma ailelerin sürece aktif katılımı gerektiğini, öğrenme merkezlerinin ihtiyaca göre düzenlenmesi gerektiğini ve öğrenci değerlendirmelerinin bireysel olması gerektiğini ortaya koymuştur.</p>

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INTRODUCTION

Culture refers to the system of beliefs, values, traditions, and language that shape the behavior of individuals and groups. At the core of this structure is the dynamic nature of culture as there is a constant state of interaction and mutual exchange between people and cultures (Gay, 2000). Emphasizing the differentiation of culture, House et al. (2002) argue that culture provides a trait-based categorization that distinguishes society from other social groups and enables it to evolve. This statement points to the existence of different cultural groups in society. The recently emerging concept of multiculturalism refers to the coexistence of various cultures at the same time. Contrary to the relative newness of this concept, multiculturalism has always existed throughout history. In the ongoing history, cultures have manifested themselves not in a disconnected way, but in a way in which people from different groups interact with each other, change each other, and undergo changes within themselves (Çelik, 2008).

Multicultural education is a reform movement designed to make significant changes in the education of students, including equal educational opportunities for all children regardless of their ethnicity, race, social class, gender, or cultural characteristics (Banks, 2001). In a globalizing world, different social groups and diversities should be addressed on the platform of education as the only way forward. One of the prominent aspects of multicultural education is the potential to increase social tolerance by enabling students to get to know different ethnic and cultural groups closely (Rhoads & Solorzano, 1995). Therefore, it can be understood that multicultural education has an inclusive effectiveness in ensuring social well-being, understanding, and respect.

Türkiye has been receiving intensive migration in recent years for various reasons such as the Syrian civil war and the Russia-Ukrainian war etc. According to data from the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning (2021), Department of Migration and Emergency Situations, the number of Syrians of education age with temporary protection status in Turkey alone is over 1.1 million. Approximately 731 thousand of this population are actively enrolled in preschool and elementary education. Once other nations who emigrated to Türkiye considered it can be seen how much multicultural education has become significant. Multicultural education requires a concentrated curriculum and prepared teachers (Banks, 2001). The Ministry of National Education has been trying to develop the system to integrate multicultural children, but still, there is a need for more effort and improvement. In addition to that, teachers should be prepared to teach multicultural children.

The problems and deficiencies encountered in multicultural education in the world and our country manifest themselves in many areas. In a study conducted in Malaysia with 854 preschool teachers, the problems encountered in multicultural education practices were examined. The results/findings demonstrated that teachers had difficulties in these practices in terms of instructional difficulties, insufficient resources, lack of stakeholder support and linguistic problems (Phoon et al., 2013). Another study focused on preschool teachers working in multicultural preschools in Sweden. The findings revealed that cultural and religious differences led to dilemmas and friction between children, preschool teachers, and families, and that the preschool curriculum was insufficient to provide guidance (Stier & Sandström, 2018). Amini (2011) examined the views of preschool teachers, parents, and a school principal on parental involvement in multicultural preschool settings. The findings show that language and communication problems, different understandings of childhood, and cultural differences in perspectives on child-rearing pose barriers to parental involvement. Ateş and Şahin's study (2021) encompassing preschool teachers working in Diyarbakır province demonstrated that the number of teachers who planned to address multiculturalism in the classrooms was quite low and that teachers could not associate some of their practices with multiculturalism and respect for differences. As evident in this study, the main reasons for the problems experienced in multicultural preschool education environments are language problems, cultural differences, deficiencies in educational programs, and inadequacies in teachers' knowledge and practices.

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Özdemir (2009) explains that education policies in a country can be carried to life through the curriculum. Accordingly, policies towards multicultural education in countries should be reflected in their curricula. Although the issue of multicultural education is not directly addressed in the preschool curriculum published by the Ministry of National Education in 2013, the title "Takes Cultural and Universal Values into account" is among the basic features of the program. Under this heading, the sub-headings of 'recognizing the values of the society in which children live', 'adopting cultural and universal values', 'respecting differences', and 'encouraging children to gain experiences to live in harmony with people with different characteristics' are emphasized. The characteristics of respecting differences and explaining different cultural characteristics are emphasized in the achievements and indicators of the program. The program includes a statement about teachers taking socially and culturally disadvantaged children into consideration when planning Turkish language activities. Apart from these, no detailed information that could be related to multicultural education was found. Our country's policies towards multicultural education have recently been on the agenda. For example, Türkiye's inclusive education policy has been on the agenda since 2011 in response to the migration of Syrians to Türkiye (Özcan, 2018). However, the reflection of such policies on curriculum may take time since there are not enough studies on the subject. For instance, under the MoNE (The Ministry of National Education), the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning developed a specific Department of Migration and Emergency Situations for Syrian children. The MoNE issued two circulars titled "Measures for Syrian Citizens Residing Outside Camps in Our Country" and "Education and Training Services for Syrian Citizens Under Temporary Protection in Our Country" between April 20, 2013, and September 26, 2013, after which institutional measures were implemented (Karaoğlu & Özbay, 2022). For this reason, conducting research related to multicultural education in relation to the preschool curriculum can be effective in finding a place in the program for guidelines on multicultural education.

Children's developmental characteristics reveal why multicultural education should be provided at an early age. Ramsey (2004) stated that toddlers can make racial and gender distinctions. Palmer (1990) also asserted that a 3-year-old child can notice changes in skin, eye, and hair colors. This developmental feature shows that children are open to prejudices at an early age. The findings of a study conducted in Korea showed that preschool children have a negative view of their peers from multicultural families (Kyun et al., 2015). The diverse attitudes of the society in which children live may also cause them to show sensitivity to these attitudes. According to Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, it should not be forgotten that children observe the behaviors, reactions, and attitudes of the people around them and imitate them by taking them as models. For this reason, anti-bias teaching, which is one of the basic approaches of multicultural education, should be taken as a basis in preschool education. This approach aims to eliminate children's negative stereotypes about race, language, gender, etc. and to help them recognize differences and values through empathy (Derman-Sparks, 1989).

Bertrand (2012) stated that a preschool curriculum is necessary for the systematic continuation of preschool education and constitutes the child's first learning experiences in the field of cognitive, physical, emotional, self-care, and language skills. Since preschool education should be appropriate to the needs and individual differences of the child (MoNE, 2013), it is necessary to update the curriculum by taking multicultural education environments into consideration. Teachers play a leading role in providing quality education. A teacher is a person who constantly interacts with students, plans, and implements educational content, and evaluates students and the educational process in a multidimensional way (MoNE, 2017). In determining the quality of the multicultural education environment, factors such as teachers' educational practices, attitudes and behaviors towards different cultures, knowledge, teaching methods and techniques, and classroom management skills come to the fore.

The "main carrier" of preschool education potential, the transmitter of behavioral and cultural norms and values is the teacher. Whether a preschool teacher can overcome his/her own prejudices and

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stereotypes, develop tolerance, cope with language diversity, and support the achievements of diverse learners is critical for effective multicultural education (Logvinova, 2016). In this direction, considering the key role of preschool teachers in the education of children, their perspectives, perceptions and attitudes towards multiculturalism and multicultural education are the elements that shape the multicultural education environment.

Taştekin et al.'s seminal paper (2016) investigating preschool teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards multicultural education suggested uncovered that attitudes and perceptions towards multiculturalism were positive, but teachers felt inadequate about multicultural education practices and there were deficiencies in the curriculum regarding multicultural education. In Çapçı's (2020) study, while it was understood that preschool teachers had positive attitudes towards multicultural education, it was stated that they were inadequate in classroom organization and multicultural education implementation. In this direction, while preschool teachers' positive attitudes towards multiculturalism are reflected, and they see themselves inadequate within the scope of multicultural education practices. Polat and Kılıç (2013) argue that there is not enough in-service or pre-service teacher training for multicultural education in Türkiye. For this reason, it is necessary to carry out studies to increase teacher competence in multicultural education.

It is seen that issues such as attitudes, understanding and knowledge levels towards multicultural education are focused on teachers and pre-service teachers (Bekir & Bayraktar, 2018; Çapçı, 2020; Taştekin et al., 2016; Yaşar Ekici, 2017). However, studies in which preschool teachers are in the sample group are limited. Günay and Aydın (2015) conducted research and did a content analysis of studies on multicultural education in Türkiye between 2005 and 2014. It was revealed that the attitude scale was most frequently used as a data collection tool in the studies and the sample selection was mostly made with students (Bulut & Sarıçam, 2016; Onur Sezer & Bağçeli Karaman, 2017; Özdoğru et al., 2021; Peköz, 2018; Taştekin et al., 2016; Yaşar Ekici, 2017). In this direction, it is understood that the studies in the national literature are mostly quantitative studies and the number of studies involving preschool teachers is less. The literature, which includes the studies, should be diversified with the views of preschool teachers on multicultural education, which continues to be uncertain. Therefore, this study aims to determine preschool teachers' views on how multicultural education should be planned in the preschool period. In line with the aim of the study, the following questions will be answered:

According to preschool teachers in preschool period:

- How should the preschool curriculum for multicultural education be?
- How should the preschool teacher be in a multicultural education environment?
- How should family participation be handled in multicultural education?
- How should learning environments be organized in multicultural education?
- How should evaluation be implemented in multicultural education?

METHOD

Research Design

This study was designed as a multiple case study from qualitative research methods. Case studies are descriptive, interpretative, and evaluative studies in which a topic determined in a limited area is described and examined in depth (Merriam, 2018). The current study was descriptive case study design that aims to examine the views on multicultural education in the preschool period in depth. Stake (2005) defines a case study as "representative qualitative research with a strong naturalistic, holistic, cultural and phenomenological interest". Case studies provide researchers with rich descriptions of unique cases. This study was also designed as a case study since it examined the views on how teachers with students from different cultures should be. Yin (2003) stated that case studies can be studied as both single and multiple case studies. She added that multiple case studies are generally considered more robust than single case studies because they allow researchers to analyze the phenomenon in various

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settings. Therefore, this study was designed as a multiple case study since each teacher's classroom, multicultural children and teaching methods are counted as a case.

Study Group

The study group of the research was determined through criterion and convenience sampling, two of the purposive sampling types. Purposive sampling is based on the necessity of selecting a sample that the researcher wants to explore, understand, gain insight, and learn most things (Merriam, 2018). In studies using criterion sampling, observation units can be formed from people, events, objects, or situations with certain qualities (Büyüköztürk et al., 2023). This study aims to examine the views of preschool teachers on how multicultural education should be in the preschool period. In line with this aim 4 preschool teachers who had at least one student with a different culture in their class were included in the study. Stake (2005) emphasized that four to ten cases would be sufficient for multiple case studies. Therefore, four participants were deemed sufficient. The preschool teachers were given codes as (T1, T2...) within the scope of research ethics. Table 1 shows the demographic information of the preschool teachers who participated in the study.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Information	T1	T2	T3	T4
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's degree
Age	27	30 years old	28 years old	34
Year of Service	3 Years	5 Years	4 Years	9 years
Place of Duty	Agri/Taslicay district	Bursa/ Inegol district	Diyarbakir/Bismil district	Bursa/ Inegol district
Independent Kindergarten/Primary School	Independent kindergarten	Independent kindergarten	Kindergarten attached to primary school	Independent kindergarten
Age of preschool children	5 years old	5 years old	5 years old	5 years old

The demographic characteristics of the participants presented in Table 1 illustrated that T4 has a master's degree, the other teachers have bachelor's degrees, and the ages of the teachers vary between 27 and 34. The highest number of years of service was T4 with 9 years and the lowest number of years of service was T1 with 3 years. While T2 and T4 work in the Bursa İnegöl district, T1 works in the Ağrı Taşlıçay district and T3 works in the Diyarbakır Bismil district. Only T3 works in a kindergarten attached to a primary school, while the other 3 teachers work in independent kindergartens. All the children in the teachers' classes were around 5 years old. Nineteen children from different cultures were in T1's class, 8 children were in T2's class, 15 children were in T3's class and 16 children were in T4's class.

Research Instruments and Processes

Semi-structured interview tools generally consist of questions or problems to be clarified (Merriam, 2018). In this study, a semi-structured interview form consisting of questions about how multicultural education should be in the preschool period with preschool teachers was used as a data collection tool. The interview questions were utilized from the literature and formed under six categories: demographic information, preschool curriculum, preschool teacher, family involvement, learning environment and evaluation. It was determined by making use of the 'Preschool Curriculum' prepared by the Ministry of National Education in 2013. Guidelines on multicultural education in the preschool period have not yet been included in the preschool curriculum. For this reason, there was a need to associate the issue of multicultural education, which remains uncertain in the preschool period.

The interview questions were prepared by the two researchers conducting the research and then the opinions of two different experts working in early childhood education and multicultural research were received. The interview form, which was finalized with the arrangements made after the opinions

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were received, consists of four demographic information questions, six questions related to the program, four questions related to the teacher, four questions related to family participation, four questions related to family involvement, three questions related to the learning environment, three questions related to evaluation, and one question about whether there is any other information they would like to add, with a total of 25 questions. A sample question related to each topic can be given as follows:

- Which features related to multicultural education should be included in the preschool curriculum?
- How should the preschool teacher be in a multicultural education environment in the preschool period?
- How should family participation activities related to multicultural education in the preschool period and what should be considered?
- How should learning centers for multicultural education in the preschool period be organized/created and what should be considered?
- How should the teacher's self-evaluation of multicultural education in the preschool period be and what should the teacher pay attention to?

After contacting the teachers selected by the purposive sampling method, the researchers shared the details of the study and obtained consent forms from the volunteer teachers. The interviews lasted 45 minutes on average. During the interviews, a voice recorder was used. After the data were collected, the interviews were transcribed and sent to the participants and asked if they wanted to add or remove anything, and necessary arrangements were made in line with their requests.

Data Analysis

The descriptive analysis method was used to analyze the data in this study. Saldana (2011) emphasized that the descriptive analysis method is suitable for almost all qualitative studies and can be used for studies with a wide variety of data forms, especially interview transcripts. In this study, the themes were determined according to the main headings of the questions formed according to the literature and the MoNE program, and questions were prepared under these theme headings. After the data were collected through interview forms, they were coded according to these themes. The coding process was carried out separately by the three researchers conducting the research, and when compared afterwards, it was found that there was 99% similarity for all questions based on Miles and Huberman (1994). The different codes were discussed together and compromised under a category.

Validity and Reliability

Yıldırım and Şimşek (2008) suggested taking expert opinion to ensure reliability in qualitative studies. For reliability in this study, the two researchers who conducted the research received two different experts working in early childhood education and on multicultural research opinions, as well as not being involved in the study, after preparing the questions. Creswell (2013) stated that participant confirmation would be useful to increase internal validity. For this reason, after the data were transcribed, they were shared with the teachers, participant confirmation was obtained, and necessary arrangements were made in line with their requests.

To increase external validity, the purposive sampling method was used as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1982), and inclusion/exclusion criteria were included. Inclusion criteria were working in public kindergartens and teaching at least one multicultural child and exclusion criteria were in private kindergartens. Finally, to increase the objectivity of the research, it was requested to make sure that there were no researcher biases (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). The fact that neither of the researchers who conducted this study met any of the participants before the research was conducted.

Ethic

The necessary permissions to conduct this study were obtained from Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University Non-Interventional Clinical Research Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 2023/340 on 07.06.2023. In addition, all ethical rules such as obtaining the necessary permissions before, during and after data collection, adhering to the principle of volunteerism, giving the right to leave the study at any time, not answering any question, keeping private information confidential and not sharing the data with anyone were followed.

FINDINGS

The findings of the research were given under the titles of curriculum, teachers in multicultural environments, family involvement, learning environments, and evaluation in multicultural education according to preschool teachers.

Preschool Curriculum in Multicultural Education

The teachers who participated in the research stated that there were deficiencies in the preschool curriculum in the fields of language development and social-emotional development for children from different cultures. Table 2 shows the teachers’ opinions regarding the outcomes and indicators they think should be included in the program.

Table 2. *Preschool Teachers' Views on Multicultural Education Related to the Preschool Curriculum*

Category	Subcategory	Codes	Participants
Gains	Language development	Acquisitions for expression	T1, T2, T3, T4
	Social and emotional development	Acquisitions related to adaptation	T4
		Acquisitions for recognizing different cultures	T2
		Acquisitions for introducing oneself	T1
Learning Process	Recommendations	Supporting family participation	T1, T2
		Daily life experience	T2
		Emphasizing gathering under a single flag	T1
		Providing experiences not available in own culture	T4
		Identification of unknown words	T3
		Education according to their readiness	T3
		From simple to difficult principle	T4
Concepts	Concepts in the foreground	Concepts related to skin/race/culture difference	T1
		Unknown concepts	T4
	Concept education strategies	Readiness	T2, T3
		Education from the known to the unknown	T3
Specific Days and Weeks	There is a change	Arrangements according to multicultural environment	T1, T2, T4
		Emphasis	T2, T4
		Preliminary preparation	T4
		Characteristics of the city/culture	T1
		Family involvement support	T1
		Embodiment	T1
Field Trips	No change	Attendance in accordance with the program	T3
	Recommendations	Places not visited before	T1, T2, T4
		Places that appeal to every child	T2
		Consideration of previous experiences	T3
		Using visual expression	T4

According to the teachers, the curriculum should include different aspects of developmental features for multicultural children. While some teachers asserted that the processes of physical and social development are the same for all children all teachers agreed that language development should vary for multicultural children. For instance, T3 said:

In the outcome indicators, they are already progressing in almost the same course in terms of physical development or social-emotional development. Only in terms of language development, that is, the main element

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of communication, children can already express themselves by speaking. Therefore, I think language development should be main focal point.

On the other hand, T4 did not agree that language development could be the same for all children and said: "In terms of language, these children need to be taught more simple instructions to teach them Turkish or the instructions need to be simpler." Then, she added "Also, they already have difficulties in adapting to school, but since they do not know Turkish, they adapt to the classroom environment very difficult. New acquisitions can be added to that social and emotional area". Also, about social and emotional development T1 said:

In guidance counseling, there are more comprehensive related to self-knowledge or different cultures, but in the achievement indicators of preschool, I think there are no achievements in which children can introduce and explain themselves. In general, as I said, there is recognition of different individuals, and different cultures. And that always comes especially in April week. It seemed to me that it was a little bit based on April 23rd.

Another category is the learning process. The preschool teachers participating in the study made suggestions regarding the "learning process" category in the multicultural education environment. It is seen that the participants most frequently refer to family participation while organizing the learning process. Apart from this, teachers made suggestions on planning activities that provide daily life experience in multicultural education environments, enabling children to acquire experiences that are not from their own culture, emphasizing that they are gathered under a single flag, identifying words that children do not know, providing education according to their readiness, and managing the process with an approach from simple to difficult. Excerpts related to these suggestions are given below. For family participation and daily life experience, while T1 said "When I start with myself in the learning process and involve the parents in the process and use the map, children learn that each place is a different place, the concept of the province, the concept of the district..." T2 stated that:

For example, we have a project like I know my region this year. In our projects, we can continue by including the activities of that day in the learning process and ensuring parent participation. For example, while explaining the Black Sea region, we can ask for help from the families of our students who are from the Black Sea region, and we can include activities that students can learn and gain daily life experience in the learning process.

In addition to that, for readiness and identification of unknown words, T3 said:

I will use something that is not grown in the culture where that child was born and raised, for example, I will use a fruit or something else. First, for example, before starting the learning process, it is necessary to test the readiness of children. Do they know this, do they know what I am going to teach? The main objects can be introduced. If there are words that they cannot understand I can convey in the learning process, and they can be identified. After they are identified, they can be transferred after the children are able to understand them comfortably.

Preschool teachers made suggestions about the concepts in the preschool curriculum related to multicultural education. Teachers emphasized the points that should be taken into consideration in concept teaching and expressed opinions that education should be given according to children's readiness. For instance, T3 said "Attention should be paid to their readiness, does this child have such a concept in his/her mind? This should be tested. Accordingly, concepts can be transferred to the child by starting from what he/she knows and proceeding from known to unknown." Further, T1 claimed that:

I heard a word like 'black man' from one of my students, and I think he watched it on YouTube on the internet and made fun of students who had darker skin. There was a mocking situation in the classroom like 'you are black'. Maybe s/he has different skin colors, this time when you give too much detailed information to children, sometimes they use it. 'You are white', 'you are black' etc. It is necessary to provide that education very accurately.

For the "specific days and weeks" section in the preschool curriculum, three of the preschool teachers who participated in the research (T1, T2, T4) stated that arrangements should be made according to the

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multicultural education environment, but T3 said she did not make any arrangements, thinking that children from different cultures should adapt to the existing culture. About that, T1 stated:

They, Azerbaijanis, celebrate Nevruz. One of my parents did this as family participation. She came and told the children what Nevruz was and who the Azeris were. They painted eggs, they boiled eggs with onion skins, and she had the children do an egg painting activity. At that time, the children, especially the students from the East, perceived it as closer to the Azeri culture and understood it better.

In addition, T4 said, "For example, in the week of the elderly, we asked them to wear clothes similar to their grandfathers and grandmothers in the week of the elderly, because Meskhetian Turks especially respect the elderly, we dressed them up, we made food close to their culture, or we made food close to their culture in the week of domestic goods." However, T3 stressed that:

Honestly, there was a Syrian student in my class. I'm talking based on that. I didn't wonder about the culture of Syrians. Therefore, I honestly don't know whether there is such a value or not. Maybe this is my deficiency, but I focused more on the child's adaptation to our culture because this is where he/she will live from now on.

Regarding the field trips in the preschool curriculum, preschool teachers frequently said they prefer places that children from different cultures have not visited before. In addition, teachers stated that there should be places that appeal to every child, and children's previous experiences should be considered, and if field trips cannot be made in disadvantaged regions, visual expression can be used. For instance, T2 said, "It is necessary to give importance to the types of excursions that every child can be happy. For that, trips can be organized to museums that they do not know, that are different for them". Also, T1 claimed:

For example, two students in our class had never been to the movies. After talking to the principal, children went to the cinema with a shuttle service in the center of Ağrı. We need to determine what is missing in the geography we are in, or what situations and areas where children may feel inadequate and make field trips as much as possible.

T4 said that she did not organize a field trip this year because of the disadvantage of the region where they live.

Preschool Teacher in Multicultural Education

The preschool teachers participating in the study were asked questions related to a preschool teacher in a multicultural education environment. The participants stated that the personality traits of a preschool teacher in a multicultural education environment should mostly be impartial, unprejudiced, and inquisitive. Table 3 shows the teachers' statements on this subject.

Table 3. *Preschool Teachers' Views on the Preschool Teacher on Multicultural Education*

Category	Subcategory	Codes	Participants
Preschool teacher qualifications	Personality traits	Without prejudice	T1, T2
		Neutral	T1, T2
		Researcher	T4
		Loving	T3
		Patient	T3
	Attitudes	Non-marginalizing attitude	T3, T4
		Democratic attitude	T1, T2
		Attitude that can turn a crisis into an opportunity	T1
		Patient attitude	T1
Teaching methods and techniques		Drama	T1, T3, T4
		Question-answer	T1
		Demonstration	T1, T4
		Rhythm activities	T2

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Classroom management	Controlling	T2, T4
	Opportunity for children to get to know each other	T1
	Classroom management according to culture	T1
	Emphasizing classroom rules	T3

About how a preschool teacher should be while teaching multicultural children, T1 said "When a teacher enters the classroom, he/she should leave his/her political identity behind. No matter what his/her mindset and political identity are, he/she should enter the classroom knowing that the other person is just a child and a human being.". T4 stated "He should research different subjects and he should improve himself a little because he will hear things he has never heard of". In addition to that, T2 stressed that:

We need to accept this. Everyone has their own culture, and we should not put a person who was raised according to this culture and a person who was raised according to Turkish culture in the same category. Therefore, we need to be tolerant. In other words, we need to accept each student as he/she is and realize that he/she is a child, just a student, a little child.

Another finding of the study is that a preschool teacher in a multicultural education environment should have an attitude that does not marginalize, is democratic, can turn a crisis into an opportunity, and is patient. About this finding, T1 stated that:

In a place where there are different cultures, extra patience is needed. As I said, you don't understand the language of the child. You don't understand what they want. For example, when the child needs to go to the toilet, he/she cannot explain what he/she wants, and until he/she explains what he/she wants, he/she is pooing his/her pants [soiling]. This time, before solving one problem, another problem arises. Should I understand the emotion the child is feeling at that moment, or should I understand the problem he/she is experiencing because he/she cannot tell me his/her problem? It is a situation that requires a lot of patience.

Then, she added:

There is not a single student there. There are 22 students. While taking care of one child, this time 21 students are left idle. It needs to be in such a situation that it really needs to turn the crisis into an opportunity and hold on to the moment.

Furthermore, T3 claimed that:

First, children should not fit into a certain mold. The family structure and culture in which each child lives and how they grow up are different, first, it is necessary to accept this. And it is necessary to reach children without prejudice, as much as possible, that is, it is necessary not to try to put children into a category.

When the teaching methods and techniques used by preschool teachers in multicultural education environments are examined, it is seen that the drama method is used the most. While T1, T3, and T4 mentioned that using drama to teach multicultural children T2 did not point out drama in her methods. In addition to this method, it is understood that demonstration and rhythm teaching methods are also used. While, T1 said "I usually use drama because children cannot concretize the event, they cannot understand it". Also, T3 stated that:

The child has grown up in an environment where he/she cannot express himself/herself very comfortably, where boundaries are set, or where he/she is not allowed to speak in the presence of adults. If a child has been raised in this way, when you are going to have a drama activity, that is the place where he can express himself best.

Also, T4 claimed:

It was the Red Crescent Week. Since there is no institution like the Red Crescent in the culture where the child lives, I first made him/her watch a Red Crescent promotional video (video) because he/she does not understand what the Red Crescent does where he/she comes from. We staged a reenactment, a drama. Nurses, war wounded when the child experiences it, it stays in his/her mind more.

Preschool teachers were asked how the teacher in a multicultural education environment should

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manage the classroom or what they should pay attention to. In the responses received, the participants made various suggestions and frequently emphasized the need to dominate the classroom. In addition, giving children the opportunity to get to know each other, diversifying classroom management according to culture, and emphasizing classroom rules were also mentioned. For instance, T1 said:

I am a very game-centered teacher. I can't play those kinds of games with children wearing dresses because I think that they should learn with games rather than at the desk. They jump, they do somersaults, they do cartwheels. I can't include them, and the most important thing is that the clothes the children are wearing suddenly become the talk of the class. They are doing activities, and the dress is in front of the eyes, and I'm talking about girls. I say that wearing dresses is strictly forbidden.

T2 claimed she is open to improvement and should learn from every incident he/she experiences, should control his/her class with strict rules and should be a classroom teacher who can cover all his/her students and who can be seen by all his/her students. Also, T3 stated different cultures make it very difficult for children to adapt to each other. Therefore, visualizing the classroom rules, giving them in a way that will remain in their memories, or giving them by turning them into songs, maybe would make classroom management much easier.

Family Involvement in Multicultural Education

The opinions of the preschool teachers participating in the study on family involvement in multicultural education were taken. It was found that preschool teachers organized a parent meeting at the planning stage of family involvement, organized family involvement according to parent profiles, communicated with the family and filled out a family involvement form.

Table 4. *Preschool Teachers' Views on Family Involvement in Multicultural Education*

Category	Subcategory	Codes	Participants	
Family participation	Planning	Parent meeting	T1, T2, T3	
		Organizing parent-specific family participation	T1, T2, T3, T4	
		Communication with family	T2, T3, T4	
		Family participation form	T3	
	Work/Activities		Studies to transfer different cultures	T1, T2
			Studies that appeal to all children	T2
			Studies according to the materials that can be found in the family's home	T3
			Studies that families can understand	T3
			Culture characteristics	T1, T2, T3
			Home Visits	
	Attitude without prejudice	T3		
	Priority for children with difficulties in the adaptation process	T4		
	Going with 1 extra person	T2		
			The importance of home visits	T1, T2, T3, T4

According to the participants, about family involvement in multicultural education T2 mentioned that she had not even heard of Meskhetian Turks, and it's culture, so she did not know what she had to pay attention. Therefore, she met with all my parents one by one and learned from them what importance they attach to family involvement and what kind of family involvement they want them to take part in. Then, she made plans accordingly. Also, T3 stated that:

Since the cultures of children are different, the cultures of families are also different. Therefore, these parent-teacher meetings at the beginning are very important to get to know the families. You know, more or less a form is formed about the family structure. For family involvement, I fill out a family involvement form in my classroom, and I ask families to fill out some information forms about what they can do in the classroom. For example, what kind of structure do you have, what is your characteristic structure, do you have any skills, do you have any talents that you can exhibit in the classroom, is there anything you can teach to children, I send information forms.

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In the answers received for the question of how family participation activities should be in a multicultural education environment, there are findings such as activities aimed at transferring different cultures, activities that appeal to all children, activities according to the materials that can be found in the family's home and activities that families can understand. For instance, T1 stressed that:

We want the parents to make food belonging to that region, especially when there are different cultures during the week of domestic goods. The child brings it and explains that it is made from this, for example, 'my parent from Rize made kuymak'. The children have photos of it and they all ate kuymak from the pot. The woman said 'we make this a lot there'. This is our cheese, our cheddar cheese, this is our butter, they all grow in our province.

Regarding home visits in the multicultural education environment, findings were obtained about paying attention to the cultural characteristics of the family, not disturbing the family, having an attitude without prejudice, prioritizing children with difficulties in the adaptation process, conducting home visits with one extra person and the importance of home visits. About that, T said that:

I think communication with the child is very effective in family participation. The child changes in an instant when you go to his/her home. The temperament of the child changes a lot, especially the children who go to the child's home. I think the emotional bond between them increases more.

On the other hand, T3 pointed out the challenge of family involvement by saying that:

Obviously, it is necessary to solve the structure of the family. There are some families, for example the Syrian family, their home environment was not suitable. They didn't want to accept me either. Because 10 people live together in a room at home. They just didn't want me to see that environment, that's probably why they didn't want to invite me.

Preschool Learning Environment in Multicultural Education

When the answers to the question of how learning centers should be or what should be considered in a multicultural education environment were examined, it was found that preschool teachers organize learning centers according to needs, change learning centers only on special days, refer children to different centers, think that there should be a comfortable environment and do not need any regulation.

Table 5. *Preschool Teachers' Views on the Learning Environment in Multicultural Education*

Category	Subcategory	Codes	Participants
Learning environment	Learning center	Learning center according to need	T4
		Change of learning center on special days	T2
		Referring the child to different centers	T1
		A comfortable environment	T2
		There is no regulation	T3
	Materials	Materials according to culture	T1, T2, T4
		Materials for the needs of the child	T1, T4
		Natural and real materials	T1, T2
		Materials that appeal to every child	T2
		Materials she/he has not seen before	T1
		Non-uniform materials	T1

For learning environment in multicultural education, T1 stated:

When a child has had enough of one type of toy, the teacher should put the toys away and say, "Come on, let's see what you can do with these toys today, let's try them". Because after a while, the child wants to play that game or toy in that center where they feel safe because they only know it. After a while, it would be beneficial for the teacher, at least for the child, if he/she put them away and directs the child by saying, let's see, your job is to find this week's toys and what you can do with them.

In addition, T2 claimed that teachers can make changes or additions in the form of family participation or in the subjects, teachers deal with on certain days or weeks on more special days by addressing topics in different cultures. It does not have to be continuous, but they can add or subtract certain periods culturally. T4 said "There is something very important for them, for their own needs, for their deficiencies, or there is

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something they want to explain a lot in their own culture. This center can be planned accordingly."

Preschool teachers were asked what kind of materials should be used or what should be considered in a multicultural education environment. The responses included materials according to culture, materials for the needs of the child, natural and real materials, various materials, materials that appeal to every child, materials that have not been seen before, and materials that are not uniform. For instance, T1 said "There is a child who are from the Black Sea region called 'Laz' in my class. If there is a toy in the classroom where they collect tea leaves, maybe he can show the children how to do this." Also, T3 stated "In terms of materials, children actually recognize most things. The materials are a little more universal. For example, if the child has not seen it at home, maybe such a thing can be introduced."

In addition, T2 said that:

There should be materials that every child can participate in. I mean, every child plays with cars. Every girl child, but over time, so many components should be common, over time, according to the class dynamics, we can add according to the cultural structure of the student potential in the class.

Lastly, T4 stressed that:

A simple puzzle is very boring for a child who grew up in our culture, while a simple puzzle is very complicated for a child who has never seen it and tries to improve himself/herself. In fact, a different environment can be created by diversifying, grading, making it harder, making it easier.

Assessment in Multicultural Education

The element emphasized by the participant teachers in the evaluation of the child in the multicultural education environment is individual evaluation. Then, findings emerged in the form of evaluating the child's adaptation and language development. The teacher coded as T1 did not express any opinion on evaluation. The prominent factor in the self-evaluation of the teacher is the inclusion of the child in the learning process. Teachers coded as T1 and T3 did not comment on the teacher's self-evaluation section.

Table 6. *Preschool Teachers' Views on Evaluation in Multicultural Education*

Category	Subcategory	Codes	Participants
Assessments	Assessment of the child	Individual assessment	T2, T3, T4
		Evaluating adaptation	T4
		Evaluating language development	T4
	Teacher self-assessment	Including in the process	T2, T4

The last but not least, about assessment in multicultural education, T3 said "If the child's readiness is very weak, it is necessary to make an evaluation accordingly. In other words, every child may not get the same achievement at the same rate. This can be taken into consideration in the evaluation". T2 gave an example about that:

My student from a different culture was very emotionally worn out in the activity that day. Let me say that this issue caused a negative behavior for my student. It is necessary not to address this program in the next month or to take another concept to improve it.

T2 stated that:

I think the teacher should ask this. Did I reach all my students during the learning process? Did I involve all my children in the subject? Did I ensure the participation of my children, did I attract their attention? Did my student from a different culture sit still or did I include him/her in the learning process? Was I able to inform that student about this issue? Was he/she able to participate in the training? I think teachers should ask themselves these questions.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a result of semi-structured interviews with four preschool teachers, it was concluded that the achievements and indicators in the preschool curriculum should focus on language, social and emotional development. Children's communication with their teachers and peers is important in the education process.

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However, preschool teachers with children from different cultures stated that the language differences between themselves and the children caused some problems. In the preschool curriculum, it is stated that the aim is to ensure that children speak Turkish correctly and beautifully (MoNE, 2013). It is understood that teachers who have language difference problems have difficulty in fulfilling this principle, which is the main purpose of the program. Çiçek (2019) found that the most important problem with immigrant children in preschool education institutions is the inability to meet in a common language. It is seen that the problems encountered in multicultural education environment are generally language differences. At this point, for preschool children with language problems to adapt, second language acquisition, which is called the sequential acquisition of languages, should be focused on. On the other hand, language problems also bring along problems in social and emotional development. Children who have difficulty expressing themselves may experience adjustment problems (Mercan Uzun & Bütün, 2016; Yohani, 2010). It is also seen in the study of Kardeş and Akman (2018) that language and adaptation problems are experienced together. In this study, teachers stated that the most common problems were in the field of language and social development and emphasized that the achievements and indicators in the field of language, social and emotional development in the preschool curriculum should be organized according to multicultural classes.

Two of the teachers participating in the study stated that the learning environment in multicultural education should be supported by family participation. Research (Jeynes, 2005; Jung & Zhang, 2016) indicates that when parental involvement in the activities of preschool children from different cultures is high, children's academic achievement also increases. On the other hand, one teacher stated that a learning process should be designed to emphasize that they live in the same country. This view suggests that children with different cultures should not be segregated and should be seen as a whole. Growing up in a monoethnic environment is one of the main reasons for the emergence of a strong tendency towards differentiation and polarization when children from different backgrounds are gathered under the same roof (Yusof et al., 2014). In preschool education institutions, which are the first step of basic education, it is the duty of preschool teachers to provide all the skills and knowledge that new generations will need to live together with different cultures.

Teachers suggested that concepts related to skin/race/culture differences should be at the forefront in concept selection. Many scholars state that multicultural education should aim to accept, understand, and teach different cultures, races, religions, genders, social classes, and geographies (Gay, 2000; Gorski, 2010; Salili & Hoosain, 2001). From this point of view, concepts specific to multiculturalism should be comprehensively included in the preschool curriculum. Teachers also stated that unknown concepts should be taught primarily in a multicultural classroom. An analysis of 76 studies on vocabulary teaching in early childhood education (Hadley & Mendez, 2021) revealed that unknown words are primarily selected in vocabulary teaching. In the multicultural education environment, language problems have been reported in previous studies (Abdullah, 2009; Adair, 2011; Yılmaz & Şekerci, 2016). Therefore, teaching unknown concepts first seems to be an important point in multicultural preschool education. On the other hand, participant teachers stated that children's readiness should be paid attention to in concept teaching and that there should be a concept teaching from known to unknown. Geoffrey (2021) argues that children can make sense of new information based on their previous knowledge. Concept teaching should be planned in multicultural preschool classrooms by considering the mental dictionary (Güneş, 2013) where the words used by individuals in daily life are stored.

Three of the preschool teachers stated that adjustments should be made when dealing with specific days and weeks in the multicultural education environment, and one of them stated that there was no need to make changes. In a study examining the practices of teachers in multicultural early childhood education in Australia (Buchori & Dobinson, 2015), it was revealed that children from culturally diverse backgrounds were marginalized, cultural diversity was celebrated in a sloppy way despite the good intentions of teachers, and this situation was caused by teachers' lack of confidence and knowledge. At this point, it is important for preschool teachers to improve their knowledge about the activities of different cultures. Special days and

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holidays provide a great opportunity for teachers to expose children to cultural differences. Teachers should ensure that children understand the significance and meaning of each holiday (Derman Sparks, 2000; Neubert & Jones, 1998) and integrate them into the existing curriculum. This is because when children interact with the content of holidays, it is easier for them to remember the holiday and its meaning (Neubert & Jones, 1998). Therefore, celebrating special days and holidays of children from different cultural backgrounds can help children maximize their acceptance and respect for each other. Gay (2015) defines culturally responsive education as the behavioral expressions of knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognize the importance of racial and cultural diversity and are intrinsic to educational effectiveness in all areas of learning for students from diverse ethnic groups. This view reveals the necessity of providing a culturally responsive education in the classroom environment where various cultures coexist.

Field trips organized in early childhood have many important contributions to children's physical, intellectual and socio-emotional development (Handler & Epstein, 2010). Field trips, which allow children to make observations and raise awareness, support the acquisition of first-hand experience (Leback, 2007). In the qualitative findings of a study examining preschool teachers' attitudes and practices towards using picture books to teach cultural diversity (Zhang, 2022), it was reported that picture books alone are not enough to explain cultural diversity, and that they should be planned together with field trips that will enable children to gain first-hand experience. Learning through experience can help children learn about cultural diversity and help them lose prejudices by interacting with individuals from different cultures. Most of the teachers in this study suggested planning field trips in multicultural early childhood education by identifying places that children have not seen before. Ramsey (2004) suggested that teachers should organize field trips to compensate for children who have encountered limitations in the past. Ramsey also emphasizes the importance of parent meetings in organizing field trips. In these meetings, children's previous experiences and parents' memories of field trips with their children can be revealed and plans can be made for field trips that will benefit the child in cooperation with the teacher and the family. The participant teachers in this study stated that in organizing field trips, it is important to consider children's previous experiences and to pay attention to places that appeal to every child. In this direction, as Ramsey suggests, field trips can be planned by evaluating children's readiness and experiences through parent meetings.

The participants in the study stated that a preschool teacher in a multicultural education environment should have personality traits that are unprejudiced, impartial, inquisitive, loving and patient, and an attitude that does not marginalize, democratic, able to turn crisis into opportunity and patient. Van der Zee et al. (2012) defined multicultural personality traits in five items. Cultural empathy, which refers to empathizing with the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of culturally different individuals, open-mindedness, which describes an open and unprejudiced attitude towards cultural diversity, emotional stability, which reflects the ability to remain calm under new and stressful conditions, social initiative, which explains the ability to actively approach social situations and take initiative in such situations, and flexibility, which includes the ability to see new situations as positive challenges and the ability to adapt behaviors to fit cultural contexts. It is seen that the preschool teacher qualities revealed in this study overlap with the concept of multicultural personality stated by Van der Zee et al. (2012). The participants' personality traits of "without prejudice", "impartiality" and "non-otherizing" attitude traits are similar to the item "open-mindedness"; "patient" personality and attitude traits are similar to the item "emotional stability"; and "able to turn crisis into opportunity" attitude trait is similar to the item "flexibility". It is understood that personality and attitude traits have similar meanings in preschool teacher qualifications. In a study conducted with preschool teachers and pre-service teachers (Bulut & Sariçam, 2016), it was found that as the multicultural personality level increased, multicultural education attitude scores also increased. In this direction, it can be stated that multicultural personality and attitude characteristics have a similar structure.

Most of the preschool teachers participating in the study recommended the use of drama method in multicultural education environment. Using the drama method in the classroom supports children's interpersonal relationships, self-empowerment, cooperation, and respect for other ideas and needs (Kuranchie

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& Addo, 2015). Taştekin et al. (2016) state that drama activities in preschool education, especially related to different cultures, can offer children the opportunity to empathize and gain insight. Therefore, the use of drama methods in preschool education can help to achieve multicultural education goals. On the other hand, participant teachers stated that teaching methods should be diversified through question-answer, projection, video, and rhythm activities in multicultural education. Aslan (2017) found that teachers used methods such as drama, question-answer, games, and discussion in multicultural education practices. In another study (Kozikoğlu & Dilek Cavak, 2023), it was concluded that teachers used practices such as diversifying examples from different cultures, using different methods and techniques, enriching the course content, and functioning in different ways such as videos, pictures, games, and drama to diversify the process of multicultural education. Accordingly, the results of these studies are like the suggestions of preschool teachers obtained from this study.

Another finding of the study is teacher suggestions regarding classroom management in multicultural education. Teachers especially emphasized the issue of controlling classroom management. Since the cultural structure of each child is different, the behaviors, skills, and competencies of the child in the classroom may also vary. For this reason, while assessing children's skills and competencies, teachers should observe what children do during daily activities, what they are mostly busy with, and relate their actions to theoretical knowledge. The child's interaction with the people around him/her should be examined and competence should be assessed according to social and cultural functions (Sommer, 2005; as cited in Sheridan et al., 2009). Teachers' individual and culturally sensitive assessments of the child can be seen as a prerequisite for classroom mastery. One of the participant teachers stated that rules should be emphasized for classroom management to be effective in a multicultural education environment. The complex structure of the classroom environment necessitates the establishment and implementation of rules (Sarıtaş, 2003). In multicultural classrooms that contain diversity, rules need to be clearly defined, emphasized, and understood. Otherwise, classroom management may be negatively affected, and educational activities may not be carried out in a healthy way. Another teacher made statements that require classroom management according to culture. He stated that the culture and family structure characteristics of the students affect classroom management. Culturally responsive classroom management is an approach to managing children in the classroom in a culturally sensitive way that includes all children, not just racial/ethnic minorities. This approach considers students' backgrounds, social experiences, prior knowledge, and learning styles and aims to provide equal learning opportunities for all students (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). In addition, teachers should be open and willing to demonstrate their cultural knowledge to students and their families (Weinstein et al., 2003). Implementing practices in this direction can reveal the effectiveness of culturally responsive classroom management.

In the other findings of the study, there are suggestions from preschool teachers regarding family involvement in multicultural education. Teachers stated that while planning family involvement, they organize family involvement specific to parents and that they carry out these arrangements by holding parent meetings and communicating with the family. Coleman (1991) points out that when planning family involvement in early childhood education, it is important to learn about family structures, family work schedules, parents' areas of expertise, family interests and needs, and to prevent situations that may create feelings of prejudice, fear, etc. about the school. For this reason, when planning family involvement, having preliminary information about the family can be useful in shaping and facilitating the multicultural education process. According to a study conducted in a multicultural preschool (Amini, 2011), it is seen that cultural differences create obstacles in language and communication problems in the parent-school context, different understandings of childhood, and perspectives on child-rearing. It is important for preschool education, which is the first step of formal education, to take these factors into consideration when planning family involvement and to take steps to resolve these barriers.

Teachers reported that while determining family involvement activities in multicultural education, activities aimed at transferring different cultures should be included. Achieving the goals of global education

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in early childhood requires integrating the concept into the existing curriculum and supporting it with family involvement. For children to learn more about the world around them requires preschools, teachers, and families to work together in various global and community activities (Bell et al., 2015). In this regard, it is important to invite families into the classroom to share their cultures through books, pictures, foods, and traditions-specific activities. One teacher in the study stated that family involvement activities should be selected according to the materials available in the family's home. Low socioeconomic status is seen as one of the factors that negatively affect family engagement (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018; Murray et al., 2015). Therefore, planning family involvement activities by considering the socioeconomic structure of each family can prevent the family's sense of inadequacy in terms of their stake in the child's education. One teacher stated that family involvement activities should be in a way that parents can understand. The language difference between school and parents often prevents parents from taking an active role in activities organized in the school environment (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Therefore, it is considered necessary to organize family involvement activities in line with communicative problems. On the other hand, another teacher stated that family involvement activities should appeal to all children. Culturally responsive teaching uses a pedagogy that incorporates a dynamic mix of race, ethnicity, gender, class, religion, region, and family that contributes to each student's cultural identity (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Family involvement activities in multicultural preschool classrooms should be planned to include the cultural identity of each child.

Three of the participant teachers in the study stated to take into account the cultural characteristics of the family while conducting home visits and to adopt a non-judgmental attitude that does not disturb the family. Cultural humility is defined as the ability to maintain an openness and interpersonal stance regarding aspects of one's cultural identity (Hook et al., 2013). Educators' openness to the realities of the larger context of society, the use of culturally competent strategies, and the ability to reflect on how ethnocentrism shapes perspective are important elements in the development of cultural humility (Weinstein et al., 2004). When organizing home visits in multicultural preschool education, teachers should have cultural humility that includes respect, empathy and openness to the lives, perspectives and worldviews of families and children with different cultural identities.

All teachers expressed the importance of home visits from various perspectives. Wright et al. (2007) explain the purpose of home visits as developing a positive relationship between home and school. It is important for teachers to make home visits to ensure that families and children with different cultural identities feel that they belong to the school. Through home visits, teachers can understand the lives of children and families and the academic, emotional, and social needs of children (Lin et al., 2008). Therefore, home visits help to understand all aspects of parents and preschool children with different cultural identities, to make inferences, and to develop them. Research shows that strong connections between home and school in early childhood are associated with high scores in language and cognitive development (Farver, et al., 2006; Lopez et al., 2006), literacy skills (Durand, 2011; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999), socio-emotional and behavioral domains (Lin, 2003; McWayne et al., 2004). In this direction, it can be understood that making home visits in the preschool period supports children's development in various skills and abilities.

When the findings related to the learning environment were examined, the participants suggested that learning centers and materials should be organized according to children's needs. Ramazan et al. (2018) state that learning centers in preschool education classrooms should be organized according to children's needs and interests. The presence of different cultural identities in multicultural preschool education classes considers the possibility that individual interests and needs may also diversify. The unique needs of each student may be related to their learning styles, developmental levels, socioeconomic status, learning experiences, religion, social class, and ethnicity. Therefore, with a culturally appropriate and sustainable pedagogical approach, teachers should consider student diversity and individual differences (Paris, 2012). In multicultural preschool classrooms, the learning center and materials should be organized by considering children's interests, needs and individual differences.

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Another teacher who participated in the study suggested changing the learning center on special days, and three teachers suggested choosing materials specific to different cultures. Special days should not only include learning center arrangements that include the introduction of different cultures. Nieto and Bode (2008) emphasize that multicultural education is not an education that takes place in certain periods and states that it is an education that spreads throughout the process. This is because multicultural education manifests itself at all levels of the educational process such as curriculum, teacher-child interaction, parental involvement, and school management. Gayle Evans (2004) evaluated the level of multicultural education materials and activities in preschool classrooms in Florida. It was found that less than half of the teachers used multicultural materials and culturally sensitive activities in science, math, book, and music centers. The findings of the study show that preschool teachers are deficient in organizing multicultural learning environments. In this study, most of the preschool teachers suggested that materials that reflect different cultures should be selected.

When the findings related to assessment were analyzed, the participant preschool teachers stated that individual assessment is important in the evaluation of the child. In a study conducted by LaFreniere et al. (2010), social competence and behaviors in preschool children were evaluated by the teachers of a total of 4,640 children from 8 different countries. The results showed that there are some differences that can be attributed to culture and that the age factor in the incidence of behavioral problems is culture specific. Therefore, individual assessment should be prioritized, especially in a culturally diverse preschool environment. Culturally responsive assessment encompasses different cultural perspectives, ways of knowing and ways of participating in multicultural classrooms. It also focuses attention on assessing students' well-being and requires a thorough understanding of how this intersects with academic achievement (Kirova & Hennig, 2013). One of the teachers placed a special emphasis on the assessment of adjustment and language development in the assessment of the child. It has been mentioned in previous studies that the main problems experienced in multicultural education environment are united in the themes of language deficiency and difficulty in adaptation. In this direction, it is necessary to evaluate the main problems experienced in multicultural education primarily from the child's perspective.

In the second dimension of evaluation, the teacher's self-evaluation, the participants stated that preschool teachers should question whether they include all children in the education process. Teachers commented that self-evaluation should be done in the best interest of the child. Self-evaluation is a process in which educators' distance themselves from their thoughts and actions, understand how and why certain practices work or do not work, and adapt new understandings about them to be more effective in the future (McFarland et al., 2009). In this direction, preschool teachers' self-evaluation, and planning in their educational practices according to their conclusions can benefit the effectiveness of multicultural education. However, the results of a study (Reinking, 2015) showed that preschool teachers lacked knowledge about how and what to do in understanding and implementing multicultural curriculum. Therefore, it is necessary to provide teacher training on multicultural education first. Another question under the evaluation dimension of this research is how the program should be evaluated in multicultural education. However, the lack of responses from the participant teachers on this question may be related to the results of Reinking's (2015) study. It is understood that preschool teachers are not able to make program evaluation about multicultural education, which is rarely mentioned in the program. In a world where cultures are increasingly intertwined, both teacher training on multicultural education and revision of the preschool curriculum are seen as necessary. It is understood that preschool teachers could not make a program evaluation on multicultural education, which is rarely mentioned in the MoNE 2013 preschool program. Therefore, the fact that teachers do not have a view on multiculturalism in program evaluation may be related to the lack of multiculturalism in the MoNE 2013 preschool curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study attempted to portray the views and suggestions of preschool teachers in terms of multicultural education within the framework of the basic elements of the preschool curriculum. Teachers

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stated that the achievements and indicators related to these areas are insufficient due to the problems experienced especially in the fields of language, social and emotional development. In addition, most of the teachers offer culturally sensitive curriculum suggestions for other categories created in the research based on their experiences.

This study had developed a suggestion that the current preschool education program could be helpful in reconsidering the preschool education program in the context of multiculturalism, as it contains the basic elements of the 2013 preschool education program. However, in February 2024, the current version of the preschool education program was published. In this program, issues related to multicultural education are included in sections such as learning centers, activity types, evaluation, outcomes, and developmentally appropriate practices (MoNE, 2024). The recommendations regarding the program in our current study were developed for the 2013 preschool education program of the Ministry of National Education. Future research can examine multiculturalism in the 2024 preschool education program from various perspectives and compare it with the previous 2013 preschool education program. In addition, for in-service preschool teachers MoNE can give seminars to increase their readiness to teach multicultural children around the country. For pre-service teachers, universities can open courses related to multiculturalism and multicultural education to prepare more qualified preschool teachers.

Finally, the participants of this study were limited to preschool teachers. Future studies can comprehensively examine multicultural education by considering families, children, teachers, school administration and society together in systems within the framework of ecological theory. Also, researchers can conduct research about multicultural education with different participants. New research can include children from different countries since each culture is unique and may require different teaching method to achieve. Also, multicultural children's opinions can be received in another research to figure out what they need and develop their education.

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