



## Investigation of Parental Early Literacy Beliefs and Early Literacy Home Environment of the Children with Developmental Disability and Typical Development\*

### Gelişimsel Yetersizliği Olan ve Normal Gelişen Çocukların Ailelerinin Erken Okuryazarlığa İlişkin İnançları ile Erken Okuryazarlık Ev Ortamının İncelenmesi

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• Received: 05.03.2018 • Accepted: 28.01.2019 • Published: 15.04.2019

**Kaynakça Bilgisi:** Karaahmetoğlu, B., & Turan, F. (2019). Gelişimsel yetersizliği olan ve normal gelişen çocukların ailelerinin erken okuryazarlığa ilişkin inançları ile erken okuryazarlık ev ortamının incelenmesi. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.16986/HUJE.2019051687

**Citation Information:** Karaahmetoğlu, B., & Turan, F. (2019). Investigation of parental early literacy beliefs and early literacy home environment of the children with developmental disability and typical development. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.16986/HUJE.2019051687

**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to comparatively investigate early literacy home environments the parents provided for their children with developmental disability and typical development children aged between 4 - 6 in the home environment, and parental early literacy beliefs. To collect data from the parents, Demographic Questionary, Early Literacy Home Environment Scale (ELHES) and Parent Reading Beliefs Inventory Scale (PRBI) were used in this study. 32 parents who have typical development children and 20 parents who have children with developmental disability participated in this research. Kruskal Wallis H and Mann Whitney U tests and descriptive statistics were used for the research analysis. At the end of the study, variations found significant in some sub-dimensions and it is found out that parents of typical development children provide better early literacy opportunities to their children, and they have more positive literacy beliefs.

**Keywords:** Early literacy, early literacy beliefs, early literacy home environment, developmental disability

**ÖZ:** Bu çalışmada 4-6 yaş arasındaki gelişimsel yetersizliği olan ve normal gelişim gösteren çocukların ailelerinin ev ortamında çocuklarına sunmuş oldukları erken okuryazarlık ortamları ve ailelerin erken okuryazarlık inançlarının karşılaştırılması olarak incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada ailelerden bilgi toplamak amacıyla Demografik Bilgi Formu, Erken Okuryazarlık Ev Ortamı Ölçeği (EROY-EV) ve Ebeveyn Okuma İnançları Ölçeği (EOİÖ) kullanılmıştır. Normal gelişim gösteren çocuğu olan 32 aile ve gelişimsel yetersizliği olan çocuğa sahip 20 aile çalışmaya katılmıştır. Araştırmanın analizleri betimsel istatistikler, Kruskal Wallis ve Mann Whitney U testleri kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonunda bazı alt boyutlarda farklılık anlamlı bulunmuş ve genel olarak normal gelişim gösteren çocuğu olan ailelerin, çocuklarına daha iyi erken okuryazarlık fırsatları sundukları ve daha olumlu okuryazarlık inançlarına sahip oldukları görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Erken okuryazarlık, erken okuryazarlığa ilişkin inançlar, erken okuryazarlık ev ortamı, gelişimsel yetersizlik

\* This research has been produced from the first author's master thesis and this study was presented at the 3rd International Eurasian Educational Research Congress, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, May 31- June 1-2-3, 2016, Muğla, Turkey.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the early years of childhood, family is the most important factor in children's development. Children are initially educated in the family environment and their parents are accepted as their first educators. When the child is born, his/her family brings him/her up, and, at this point, childcare does not only mean to meet the physical needs of children just to let them survive. Children learn many things around by observing their surroundings in their preschool period and during this period, parent are deterministic models for them (Çakmak & Yılmaz, 2009). Early literacy skills are accepted among the many other skills children learn from their parents.

There is no general agreement on a definition of the term, early literacy home environment, yet it is described as the environment the family provides the child to gain prerequisite skills and behaviours of linguistic, reading and writing achievement (Niklas & Schneider, 2013). The researches have shown that the links between early literacy in the home environment and language competencies as well as the early language development and academic achievement in the early years of primary school are crucial, and the results mentioned here present the significant reasons for supporting early literacy in the home environment (Hart & Risley, 2003; Robbins & Ehri, 1994). As a result of the many studies conducted on early literacy, it has been deduced that the early literacy opportunities provided for children in the home environment resulted in positive contribution on a child's literacy skills in the years ahead (Aram & Levin, 2001; Boudreau, 2005; Coşkun, 2016; De Jong & Leseman, 2001; Lamme, Sabis-Burns & Gould, 2004; Niklas & Schneider, 2013; Turan & Akođlu, 2014; Van der Schuit et al., 2009; Yumuş, 2018).

Zucker and Grant (2007) believe that the idea about the literacy environment of a child should be evaluated in terms of his/her environment is ground on Brofenbrenner's ecological system approach (Turan & Akoglu, 2014). In regard to the ecological system approach, a child development is affected by the closest (micro: i.e. class and home) and the farthest environment (macro: cultural context) that surrounds the child. Literacy home environment is a multidimensional and complex structure both in social and physical context. The routine duties and responsibilities of the family members, and how they provide or not provide early literacy lives for their children together with these responsibilities, and how they become role models, or not for their children are included in the social part. On the other hand, having written materials both for their children and for themselves, and keeping these materials in the places where children can easily see and reach included in the physical part (Gonzales et al., 2011). Parents should their engage children with activities designed to encourage their interest in early literacy and enable them to have a qualified literacy framework. Thus, they should read books together, teach them new words, prepare a shopping list as an activity, teach them rhymed poems or songs, include them in the activities such as drawing, painting, copying and they should have materials at home such as child books, magazines and pastels (Foy & Mann, 2003; Mol, Bus & Long, 2009).

Parents of the preschool children have a high responsibility when their children develop behaviours for reading skills. This responsibility can be explained as introducing the children to the materials that contain their own writing and enable them to develop a sense of commitment to these materials. As mentioned above, children can learn about many behaviours by observing, and they also constantly observe their parents' behaviours, since they see them as role models and as a source of knowledge. At this stage, having materials, such as books and newspapers, and reading these materials at home will awake the children's interests, and when they see this behaviour in their parents, they will show enthusiasm to the activity (Keleş, 2006). When this behaviour is presented by the parents, it will show that as the most significant role model, parents like the activity of reading. The richness of the literacy home environment is a positive

correlation between lexical information, word reading, language comprehension, reading comprehension and problem-solving skills (De Jong & Leseman 2001). Although we do not have many examples of it in our country, it is quite significant to regularly visit the children's libraries to increase their interests in reading.

DeBaryshe and Binder (1994) concluded that parental literacy beliefs are the opinions of parents on the development of literacy skills of young children and parents activities with their children to improve their literacy skills. Parental literacy beliefs have a considerable effect on the literacy activities that parents do with their children in their home and on the regulation of the environment related to literacy. As parental beliefs positively increase about supporting the early literacy, the frequency and quality of the literacy activities that they carry out with their children increase as well (DeBaryshe, 1995). Several studies have indicated that there is a close relation between the parental early literacy beliefs and the early literacy home environment. (Audet, 2013; Curenton & Justice, 2008; DeBaryshe, 1995; Dobbs-Oates et al., 2012; Phillips & Lonigan, 2009; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2006).

Children with literacy-rich environments can learn to read more easily. Parents who give priority for reading have more expectations about their children's writing and reading skills. When someone read to them, children realize that the language in the books differs from the daily language they are accustomed to hearing until now, and they can learn from these books what they are curious about. They can be also aware of the letters and words (Turan & Ege, 2003).

Güney (2012) emphasized that parents can follow the below-given items in order to support their children's development of literacy skills. These are as follows:

- A rich environment should be established through literacy materials,
- They should be models for their children to encourage their reading habits,
- They should regularly read books to their children every day,
- They should visit libraries together with their children (as cited in Morrow, 1997).

Many children begin elementary school before gaining early basic literacy skills which are necessary for learning reading-writing skills (Whitehurst et al., 1994). Many studies have shown that children who begin elementary school without gaining early literacy skills have difficulties learning to read, and they might go through these difficulties throughout their entire learning life. Furthermore, it has been proved that children having difficulties learning to read are not only under the risk for their academic achievement, but also they tend to experience social, emotional, and behavioural problems (Francis, 1996). In accordance with these results, it is getting more crucial to promote children's early literacy skills in the preschool period so that the possible reading problems might be prevented.

One of the factors that can determine the parents' ideas and behaviours towards their children is the child's not having any disabilities. The characteristics of children with disabilities differ from their peers and this difference leads their mothers to act differently comparing to the mothers of typical development children. In addition to their disabilities, a great majority of children with special needs are at a disadvantage in terms of parental support and literacy home environment. Boudreau (2005) conducted a survey on the parents of children with specific language disorder and came to the conclusion that these parents provide fewer literacy activities to their own children than the parents of the typical development children. In another study, it is found that literacy home environment of the children with intellectual disabilities is quite inadequate in all its aspects comparing to the literacy home environments of the typical development children (Van der Schuit et al., 2009).

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Participants

The participants of the research are the parents of 20 children with developmental disability between the ages of 4-6 who attend the private special education and rehabilitation centre and the parents of 32 children with typical development between the ages of 4-6 who attend the pre-school education centre located in the city centre of Ankara. Demographic data about the parents who participated in the study is given below Table 1.

**Table 1: The Frequency and Percentage Values for Demographic Data about the Parents**

Parents' ages	Parents	20-30 years		31-35 years		36 years and above		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Typical Development	Mother	5	15,6	13	40,6	14	43,8	32	100
	Father	4	12,5	8	25,0	20	62,5	32	100
Developmental Disability	Mother	10	50,0	4	20,0	6	30,0	20	100
	Father	4	20,0	7	35,0	9	45,0	20	100
Parents' Educational Level		Secondary School or below		High School and Under graduate		Undergraduate and above		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Typical Development	Mother	3	9,4	9	28,1	20	62,5	32	100
	Father	3	9,4	6	18,8	23	71,9	32	100
Developmental Disability	Mother	10	50,0	6	30,0	4	20,0	20	100
	Father	9	45,0	4	20,0	7	35,0	20	100
Parents' Income Status		0-2000		2001-5000		5001 and above		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Typical Development		5	15,6	14	43,8	13	40,6	32	100
Developmental Disability		13	65,0	4	20,0	3	15,0	20	100
Parents' Number of Children		1 child		2 children		3 children and more		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Typical Development		14	43,8	14	43,8	4	12,5	32	100
Developmental Disability		4	20,0	10	50,0	6	30,0	20	100

When we look at the above-given table, it is seen that the majority of the mothers of typical development children is 31 years old, or above, while the half of the mothers of children with developmental disability is between the ages of 20 and 30. The majority of fathers in both groups are 36 years old, or above. When it is analysed in terms of education status, a majority of the mothers and fathers of typical development children have graduate or undergraduate degrees, while the mothers and fathers in the other group have secondary school or below degrees. Considering the parents' income status, it has been conducted that monthly income of the parents with typical development children is 2001 lira and above, while the high majority of the parents in the other group has 2000 lira or below monthly income. Additionally, it is found out that the high majority of parents in both groups have 1 or 2 children.

### 2.2. Instruments

To collect data from the parents, "Demographic Questionary" which is prepared by the researchers, "Early Literacy Home Environment Scale (ELHES)" (Karaahmetoğlu & Turan, 2017) and "Parent Reading Beliefs Inventory (PRBI)" (Çetin, Bay & Alisinanoğlu, 2014; DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994) were used in the study.

#### 2.2.1. Early literacy home environment scale (ELHES)

This scale, which is developed to collect information from families about the early literacy opportunities provided to them in the home environment of children aged 4 to 6 years and who attend preschool education, consists of 11 items and four sub-dimensions. The high

score of this four-point Likert scale means that children have positive early literacy opportunities in the home environment. The lowest point is 11, while the highest point is 44. The tool developed by Karaahmetoğlu & Turan (2017) for the parents who have children aged 4 to 6 years, is filled up by the parents individually. The tool's coverage, structure and criterion validity were formed with 119 participants. It is seen that the scale is composed of 4 subscale and 11 items, after the structure validity. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale are relatively; .86 in the dimension of "Parents Beliefs", .73 in the dimension of "Print Interest", .88 in the dimension of "Frequency of Storybook Reading" and .79 in the dimension of "Literacy Training". When the literature is reviewed, it is considered that the value is sufficient enough, if the Cronbach  $\alpha$  reliability value is over .70 (Büyüköztürk, 2007). The name of the subscales and descriptions are relatively: a) Parent Literacy Beliefs: the positive effects of reading book together with children, b) Writing Interest: A child's curiosity of the writings that s/he observes around and her/his enthusiasm to learn, c) Book Reading Frequency: Parents frequency of reading books with their children, d) Literacy Learning: The transmission process for children and parents to the formal literacy learning.

Approximately half of the parents who responded to ELHES in the course of developing the scale also responded to the Home Early Literacy Environment Questionnaire developed by Sarica et al. (2014). In the criterion validity study, the subscale scores of the ELHES were considerably correlated with the subscale scores of the Home Early Literacy Environment Questionnaire. The received values prove that this scale is a reliable evaluation instrument for determining family opinions about the early literacy in the home environment.

### **2.2.2. Parent reading belief inventory (PRBI)**

The Parent Reading Beliefs Scale was developed by DeBaryshe and Binder (1994) to determine early literacy goals and processes of young children. The scale is in a 4 point Likert-type. While the highest point presents that the reading belief is positive, the lowest point means negative reading belief. The internal consistency coefficient values (coefficient alpha) of the scale which consists of 7 sub-scales and 43 items are found to be between .50 and .85. Internal consistency of 5 out of 7 subscales is found to be sufficient. According to the applied explanatory factor analysis, 52.5% of the variance of the one-factor solution was found to be explained. The name of the subscales and their descriptions are relative: a) Affect: positive effect in regard to reading; b) Participation: the value is given for the child's verbal participation, c) Resources: opinions about whether the limited resources are influencing the reading or not, d) Efficacy: opinions about the parents being like teachers of their children related to their skills in the schools, e) Knowledge: opinions about whether the children gain moral values and practical knowledge from the books, f) Environment: language development shall be proceeded and shaped, g) Teaching Reading: The suitability of teaching reading directly. In an adaptation study, 7 dimensions were found but the items with low score were excluded from the analysis. The reliability coefficient is found out .79 for the whole scale calculated 7 factors with 40 items. Coefficient alpha value of the seven factors is changing between .45 and .87. These results show similarities with the original scale (Çetin, Bay & Alisinanoğlu, 2014).

### **2.3. Procedure**

Parents are asked to fill the above mentioned scales during the data gathering process of the study, which aims to investigate the parents of children with developmental disability (intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder) in order to understand the relation between parents early literacy beliefs and the early literacy opportunities that they provided for their own children and to compare it with the parents of typical development children. During the implementation phase of the study, the necessary correspondences were made to get the permission from the preschool institutions of three different public institutions in Ankara, and a

primary school that belong to the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and a private special education and rehabilitation centre. The survey tools and materials were sent through classroom teachers to ensure that the parents of typical development children who sent their children to the preschool institutions of three different public institutions and to the nursery class of an elementary school. At the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centre, interviews were made face-to-face with the parents who have children with developmental disability and speak at least 3 vocabulary sentences (12 children with moderate and mild levels of autism and 8 children with intellectual disability) and the data was provided on how to complete these scales.

32 parents of typical development children and 20 parents who have children with developmental disability took part in this survey and 52 data were collected in total. Participants filled the required forms and scales such as Demographic Questionary, Parent Reading Beliefs Inventory Scale and Early Literacy Home Environment Scale.

#### 2.4. Analyses

The SPSS package program was used in the study so as to investigate the parents who have children with developmental disability in order to understand the relation between parental early literacy beliefs and the early literacy opportunities that they provided for their own children and to compare it with the parents of typical development children. The frequency and percentage values of the descriptive statistics were used to examine demographic variables and relationships and the differences between these groups. Additionally, Mann Whitney U test was used as nonparametric statistical methods to compare these groups.

### 3. FINDINGS

**Table 2: The Mann Whitney U Test Results of the Early Literacy Home Environments of the Children with Developmental Disability and Typical Development**

Sub-dimensions	The Developmental Status of the Children	N	Mean rank	U	P
Parent Literacy Beliefs	Typical Development	32	27,75	280	0.441
	Developmental Disability	20	24,50		
Print Interest	Typical Development	32	30,05	206	0.032*
	Developmental Disability	20	20,83		
Frequency of Storybook Reading	Typical Development	32	31,11	172	0,005*
	Developmental Disability	20	19,13		
Literacy Training	Typical Development	32	24,77	264	0.294
	Developmental Disability	20	29,28		
Total	Typical Development	32	29,41	227	0.08
	Developmental Disability	20	21.85		

p<0.05

In Table 2, it is seen that the literacy opportunities provided by the parents for their children in the home environment differ according to whether they have a typical development child or a child with a developmental disability. Therefore, the significant difference was obtained from the "Print Interest" and "Frequency of Storybook Reading". For the subscale of "Print Interest" and "Frequency of Storybook Reading", it is found out that the mean rank of the typical development children is higher. No significant difference is found in the values obtained from the other dimensions of the scale and the grand total according to the developmental status of the children.

**Table 3: The Mann Whitney U Test Results of the Parental Early Literacy Beliefs of the Children with Developmental Disability and Typical Development**

Sub-dimensions	The Developmental Status of the Children	N	Mean rank	U	P
<b>Teaching Efficiency</b>	Typical Development	32	20.53	182	.009*
	Developmental Disability	20	36.05		
<b>Positive Effect</b>	Typical Development	32	28.88	129	.000*
	Developmental Disability	20	22.70		
<b>Verbal Participation</b>	Typical Development	32	30.16	244	0.148
	Developmental Disability	20	20.65		
<b>Teaching Reading</b>	Typical Development	32	27.52	203	0.024*
	Developmental Disability	20	24.88		
<b>Information Resource</b>	Typical Development	32	29.56	287	0.024*
	Developmental Disability	20	21.60		
<b>Resources</b>	Typical Development	32	27.27	295.5	0.599
	Developmental Disability	20	25.28		
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	Typical Development	32	29,56	222	0.058
	Developmental Disability	20	21.60		
<b>Total</b>	Typical Development	32	29.44	226	0.077
	Developmental Disability	20	21.80		

p&lt;0.05

In Table 3, it is seen that parents show differences in their early literacy beliefs according to whether they have a typical development child or a child with a developmental disability. Therefore, the significant difference was obtained from the "Teaching Efficiency", "Teaching Reading", and "Information Resource" subscale. Additionally, the "Environmental Impact" subscale is also found significant at the limit value. Regarding the "Teaching Efficiency" mean ranks the rank of the parents who have children with developmental disability has higher degrees. On the other hand, the mean rank of the parents with typical development children is higher in dimensions of "Positive Effect", "Teaching Reading" and "Information Resource". No significant difference is found in the values obtained from the other dimensions of the scale and the grand total according to the developmental status of the children.

#### 4. DISCUSSION and RESULTS

This study is conducted to research the relation between the early literacy beliefs of the parents of children with developmental disability and early literacy opportunities in the home environment provided by them and aims to compare it with the parents who have typical development children. The study consists of parents who have 4-6 years-old 8 children with mild and moderate intellectual disability and 12 children with moderate and mild levels of autism spectrum disorder who can make 3 vocabulary sentences and 32 parents with typical development children. When demographic findings are analysed, parents of children with developmental disability have low income compared to the parents in the other groups. It is seen in the literature that socio-economic status of families is significant in terms of developing early literacy skills and insufficient socio economic status cause risks. (Altıparmak, 2010; Çakmak and Yılmaz, 2009; Dickinson and McCabe, 2001; Lonigan and Whitehurst, 1998; Marjanovic-Umek, Fekonja-Peklaj, Socan and Tasner, 2015; Niklas and Schneider, 2013; Stevenson and Fredman, 1990). Depending on the different socio-economic status of families, it is observed that written materials are abundant and accessible in such environments, and there are several literacy experiences for both children and the families. (Gonzales et al., 2011; Payne,

Whitehurst and Angell, 1994). It is seen that the opportunities in the early literacy home environments provided by the families with low socio-economic status are not sufficient and qualified compared to the families with high socio-economic status. Accordingly, it is also identified that the early literacy skills of these children (Bradley, Corwyn, McAdoo and Garcia Coll, 2001; Payne et al., 1994) and their school success (Justice, Invernizzi, Geller, Sullivan and Welsch, 2005) are not sufficient. In this regard, this study aims to support the literature.

In the study, the significant difference is found according to the views of the parents in each group under the subscale of the Early Literacy Home Environment (ELHES) scale such as "Print Interest" and "Frequency of Storybook Reading". The mean rank of the parents with typical development children for the "Print Interest" and "Frequency of Storybook Reading" is found higher. No significant difference is found in the values obtained from the other dimensions of the scale and the grand total according to the developmental status of the children. Thus, it might be said that typical development children are more interested in writing and their parents have read books to their own children much more. To support this idea, Dynia et al. (2014) conducted a study with typical development children and autistic children and their parents and they came to the conclusion that the parents of children with autism have a fewer score in terms of "Print Interest" when they compared to other parents. Furthermore, they also emphasized that this result is quite surprising, as the results of the other studies had already proved the opposite of it. In the same survey, it is seen that the scores received by the parents of autistic children are quite less in the "Frequency of Storybook Reading" dimension when it is compared to the typical development children. No significant difference is found between the "Literacy Training" and "Parents Literacy Beliefs" in both groups. A significant difference may not be found due to the fact that the parents who have children with developmental disability also have typical development children at the same time. Turan (2012) conducted a study with the parents of typical development children and the parents who have children with special needs, she came to the conclusion that mothers in both groups believe that their children could learn as they are playing. However, the mothers who have children with special needs think that an adult-centred education is the best way to teach their children and it is necessary to repeat each newly learned words. At the same study, one of the most intriguing results is that mothers in each group are quite limited in presenting book reading and story-telling activities for their children. Arman (2014) carried out a study with the mothers of typical development children and the mothers of children with intellectual disability. In accordance with the study, she found that the mothers of children with intellectual disability tend to rarely read books to their children and start reading quite late. In the same study, it is also seen that individuals who have intellectual disability in terms of writing interest are painting less and they ask their mothers to write things for them more often. Van der Schuit et al. (2009) studied with 48 children with intellectual disability, 107 typical development children with the same age group and 36 typical development children with the same mental age in terms of the characteristics of their home environment and their verbal and non-verbal intelligence, early literacy skills and their ability to use the language. It has been deduced that the literacy environments of the children with intellectual disability are different and insufficient in all areas from the literacy environments of children at the same mental and chronological age. When it is compared to the typical development children, it is seen that children with intellectual disability are less likely to be involved in book reading activities and have less experience in literacy and painting materials. In the same study, it is observed that children with intellectual disability are less likely to involve in book reading, so they ask more limited questions about the book and not usually point out a picture, a text or a written material. Moreover, children with intellectual disability are less successful in terms of asking someone to read for themselves, asking questions to the person who reads to them, pretending like reading a book, creating an improvisational story, reading the texts around them, rhyming, and recognizing letters etc. Turan and Akoğlu (2014) included 20 mothers of typical development children and the mothers of children with language



disorders aged 4 to 6 years in their study. Participants are asked questions about the early literacy behaviours of their children and implementation frequency. As a result of the study, it is found that phonological awareness skills of children with language disorders are insufficient compared to the typical development peers. When the activities carried out by the parents who have children with language disorders and the parents of typical development children are compared, it is deduced that parents who have children with language disorders are less likely to read books and play rhyming games with their children. In the same study, considering the literacy life provided by the parents, the difference between these two groups occurs, when children ask from their mothers and fathers to read something, if they point out the pictures in the book and ask to speak on it while reading, and if children improvise stories by themselves, and tell them to others. In accordance with these results, mothers with typical development children have higher scores. As it can be deduced from the result of this study, environments rich in early literacy skills, or in experiences are very effective in the development of language skills of children. Akoğlu, Ergül and Duman (2014) carried out “interactive book reading programmes” on the receptive and expressive language skills of children aged 4 to 5 years who are under the risk of developmental delay. In consequence of this study, it is observed that there is an increase in the vocabulary, the number of dissimilar words, utterance, and the total number of words used by these children. Furthermore, it is identified that scores for the receptive language skills of children in the final test are considerably increased compared to pre-test.

In this study, the significant difference is received from the sub-dimension of the Parent Reading Beliefs Inventory Scale (PRBI), including “Teaching Efficiency”, “Positive Effect”, “Verbal Participation”, “Teaching Reading” and “Information Resource”. Considering the mean ranks of the “Teaching Efficiency”, it is seen that the parents who have children with developmental disability have higher averages. It is considered that the parents who have children with developmental disability receive higher scores in “Teaching Efficiency”, as they support the idea that adult-centred education is more effective for their own children’s learning. It is seen that the parents with typical development children have higher scores in “Positive Effect”, “Verbal Participation”, “Teaching Reading” and “Information Resource” subscales. As a consequence of the studies carried out by Martini and Sénéchal (2012), parents who frequently try to teach their children writing and reading have more expectations about their own children’s early literacy skills (Audet, 2013). In another study, it is found out that there is a strong relation between the parental early literacy beliefs and how often they read their children, how many books they have, how they determine their reading style according to their children’s age, the frequency of questions and feedbacks given to the children (DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994). In another study again conducted by DeBaryshe (1995), it is deduced that there is a positive relation between the income status, educational levels and reading habits of the mothers and their tendency to read books to their children frequently. Additionally, mothers who provide their children with current literacy experiences and appropriate developmental educational activities have had more often reading activities with their children and have more discussions about the book during their oral reading phase. Meagher et al. (2008) investigated the relation between parental literacy beliefs and behaviours in their research carried out with the children aged between 5-6 and their mothers. As a consequence of the study, it is seen that parents who think that the literacy activities should be didactical, ask more questions and give more information to their children, while the parents who think the literacy activities should be entertaining, give more praises to their children and use soft voice while they are speaking. The research findings of the children with disabilities have not been found much in the literature, because mostly the studies about typical development children have been included in the literature. Regarding this, Skibbe et al. (2008) conducted a study with the mothers who have children with language disorder and the mothers who have typical development children between the ages of 4-5. As a consequence of the study, it is concluded that the early literacy beliefs of mothers who have children with language disorders are more negative than the early

literacy beliefs of mothers with typical development children and they carry out fewer literacy activities with their children. In another study, which is carried out to determine the ideas of parents about preparation for reading, mother and fathers are asked about their ideas concerning the preparation for writing and reading and how often they do these activities. As a result, it is deducted that preparation for literacy activities in the home environment is considered to be quite significant and specifically, parents' believe that it is quite beneficial to carry out activities similar the ones in the school. It is seen that parents do not give more time to lullabies and rhymes to increase phonologic awareness of their children and the preparation process for the early literacy in home environments differs among parents (Altıparmak, 2010).

Within the extent of this study, early literacy opportunities provided by the parents who have both children with disability and the typical development children in the home environment and the parental early literacy beliefs were analysed. According to the results, it is observed that parents with typical development children generally offer better early literacy opportunities to their children and have more positive literacy beliefs but the difference between the other groups is not statistically significant. In general terms, parental literacy beliefs are positive and the early literacy opportunities provided for children is not sufficient enough. It is highly crucial that the educators and the media should give information parents about the significance of the early literacy in the phase of improving this situation and for the academic success of children in their later ages. Moreover, in order to generalise the findings of this study to preschool children and their parents, it is necessary to use a larger sample and carry out wider studies including both typical development children and children with different disabilities. The result of this study revealed the status of early literacy home environments in which parents provided for their own children. Additionally, various researches can be planned and realized in order to define the improvements in the early literacy home environments with different interventions.

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## Uzun Özet

Pek çok çocuk okuma-yazmanın öğrenilmesi için gerekli olduđu düşünölen erken okuryazarlık becerilerini kazanmadan ilkokula başlamaktađırlar. Yapılan pek çok çalışmada ise erken okuryazarlık becerilerini kazanmadan ilkokula başlayan çocukların kötü bir başlangıç yaptıkları, okumayı öğrenirken güçlük yaşadıkları ve bütün öğrenim hayatları boyunca da yaşadıkları bu güçlüklerin devam ettiđi sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca okumayı öğrenirken zorluk çeken çocukların yalnızca akademik başarı açısından risk altında olmadığı, bununla birlikte sosyal, duygusal ve davranışsal sorunlar yaşama ihtimallerinin de oldukça yüksek olduđu ortaya konulmuştur. Bu sonuçlardan yola çıkarak, oluşması muhtemel okuma sorunlarının önüne geçilebilmesi açısından çocukların erken okuryazarlık becerilerinin okul öncesi dönemde desteklenmesi gittikçe daha çok önem kazanmaktadır. Okul öncesi dönemde bu becerilerin okul ortamında geliştirilebildiđi gibi, ev ortamında ailelerin çocuklarına sundukları imkânlar aracılığıyla da geliştirilebildiđi çalışma sonuçlarıyla ortaya konmaktadır.

Erken okuryazarlık ev ortamı, tanımında kesin bir görüş birliğine varılamamakla birlikte "ailenin, okuma, yazma ve dil gelişimi için önemli olan önkoşul davranış ve becerilerin desteklenmesi için çocuklarına sundukları ortam" şeklinde açıklanmaktadır. Okuryazarlık ev ortamı, hem fiziksel hem de sosyal anlamda çok boyutlu ve karmaşık bir ortam olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Aile bireyleri, çocuđun en yakın sosyal çevresini çođunlukla oluşturan kişilerdir ve bu sosyal yapı genellikle ev ortamında devam etmektedir. Buna göre çocuk, erken okuryazarlık deneyimlerinin önemli bir kısmını evde ve kendisinden hem yaş ve hem de tecrübe olarak önde olan kişilerle yaşamaktadır. Bu süreçte çocuk, erken okuryazarlık becerilerini hem kendisinden tecrübeli kişileri gözleyerek, hem de birlikte yapılan etkinliklere katılarak öğrenmektedir. Aile üyelerinin rutin görev ve sorumlulukları, bu sorumluluklarla beraber çocuk için ayırdıkları zamanda çocuđa nasıl erken okuryazarlık yaşantıları sağladıkları ya da sağlamadıkları,

çocuğun bireysel okuryazarlık faaliyetlerine dâhil olarak dolaylı şekilde çocuğa nasıl model oldukları ya da olmadıkları ev ortamının sosyal yönünü içerirken, aile üyelerinin evde hem kendileri hem de çocuk için yazılı materyal bulundurmaları ve bu materyalleri çocuğun istediği zaman görüp ulaşabileceği yerlerde bulundurmaları ise ortamın fiziksel yönünü içermektedir. Yapılan araştırmalarda, ev ortamında gerçekleşen erken okuryazarlık yaşantılarıyla dil gelişimi arasındaki ve bununla birlikte erken dil gelişimi ile ilkokulun ilk yıllarındaki akademik beceriler arasındaki bağlantılar dikkat çekmekte, sözü edilen sonuçlar erken okuryazarlığın ev ortamında desteklenmesine yönelik önemli nedenleri göz önüne koymaktadır. Ancak, ebeveynlerin çocuklarına karşı düşünce ve davranışlarını belirleyen faktörlerden birisi de çocuğun herhangi bir engele sahip olmasıdır. Engelli çocuğun özellikleri akranlarına göre değişiklik göstermekte ve bu farklılık engelli çocuğa sahip ailelerin, normal gelişen çocuk ailelerine göre çocuklarına daha farklı davranmalarına yol açabilmektedir. Özel gereksinimli çocukların büyük çoğunluğu sahip oldukları yetersizliğin yanında okuryazarlık ev ortamı ve ebeveyn desteği açısından da dezavantajlıdırlar.

Sözü edilen durum ele alındığında, bu çalışmada 4-6 yaş arasındaki gelişimsel yetersizliği olan ve normal gelişim gösteren çocukların ailelerinin ev ortamında çocuklarına sunmuş oldukları erken okuryazarlık ortamları ve ailelerin erken okuryazarlık inançlarının karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada ailelerden bilgi toplamak amacıyla bu çalışma için hazırlanan Demografik Bilgi Formu, Erken Okuryazarlık Ev Ortamı Ölçeği (EROY-EV) ve Ebeveyn Okuma İnançları Ölçeği (EOİÖ) kullanılmıştır. Normal gelişim gösteren çocuğu olan 32 aile ve gelişimsel yetersizliği olan çocuğa sahip 20 aile çalışmaya katılmıştır. Araştırmanın analizleri betimsel istatistikler, Kruskal Wallis H ve Mann Whitney U testleri kullanılarak yapılmıştır.

Çalışmanın sonunda her iki gruptaki ailelerin görüşlerine göre anlamlı farklılık Erken Okuryazarlık Ev Ortamı Ölçeği'nin "Yazı İlgisi" ve "Kitap Okuma Sıklığı" alt boyutlarından elde edilmiştir. "Yazı İlgisi" ve "Kitap Okuma Sıklığı" alt boyutları için çocukları normal gelişim gösteren ailelerin sıra ortalamaları daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Ölçeğin diğer alt boyutlarından ve genelinden elde edilen puanlarda ailelerin sahip oldukları çocukların gelişim durumuna göre anlamlı bir farklılık elde edilmemiştir. Buna göre normal gelişim gösteren çocukların yazıya daha fazla ilgi duydukları ve ailelerinin de çocuklarına daha fazla kitap okudukları söylenebilir.

Başka bir anlamlı farklılık Ebeveyn Okuma İnançları Ölçeği'nin "Öğretimin Etkililiği", "Olumlu Etki", "Sözel Katılım", "Okuma Yönergesi" ve "Bilgi Kaynağı" alt boyutlarından elde edilmiştir. "Öğretimin Etkililiği" boyutuna ilişkin sıra ortalamaları dikkate alındığında gelişimsel yetersizliği olan çocukların ailelerinin sıra ortalamalarının daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. "Olumlu Etki", "Sözel Katılım", "Okuma Yönergesi" ve "Bilgi Kaynağı" alt boyutlarında ise çocukları normal gelişim gösteren ailelerin sıra ortalamalarının daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalarda ifade edildiği gibi gelişimsel yetersizliği olan çocukların ailelerinin yetişkin merkezli bir eğitimin çocukları için daha etkili olacağını düşünüyor olmaları, onların öğretimin etkililiği boyutundan daha yüksek puan almalarına katkıda bulunduğunu düşündürmektedir. Gelişimsel yetersizliği olan çocuğa sahip ailelerin aksine normal gelişim gösteren çocuğu olan ailelerin okumanın çocuklar üzerinde olumlu etkilerinin olduğuna inandıkları, kitabı bilgi kaynağı olarak gördükleri ve çocukların kitap okunurken soru sorarak ve fikir belirterek okuma sürecine katılmalarını önemli gördükleri sonucu çıkarılabilir.

Sonuç olarak okul yıllarındaki akademik becerilerin belirleyicilerinden olan erken okuryazarlık becerilerinin gelişimi için okul ortamının hem sosyal hem de fiziki açıdan geliştirilmesinin yanı sıra, ev ortamı da sosyal ve fiziki anlamda zenginleştirilmelidir. Aileler evlerini erken okuryazarlık materyalleri açısından zenginleştirmeli, bu materyalleri çocukların ulaşabilecekleri yerlerde buldurmalı ve çocuklarıyla birlikte bu materyalleri de kullanarak etkinlikler planlamalı ve gerçekleştirmelidirler. Bu bilincin ailelerde geliştirilmesi için, eğitimciler de ailelere yönelik erken okuryazarlık eğitim programları planlamalı, bunları yürütmeli, uygun şekilde örneklendirmeli ve evlerinde bu etkinlikleri yapmaları için hem normal gelişim gösteren çocukların ailelerini hem de farklı yetersizlik gösteren çocukların ailelerini teşvik etmelidirler.