

Examining Pre-school Teachers' and Parents' Views on Counseling and Guidance Services in Pre-school Education

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Jun 17, 2017

Revised Aug 15, 2017

Accepted Aug 25, 2017

Keyword:

Counseling

Guidance

Parent

Pre-school education

Teacher

ABSTRACT

Current study aims to reveal the problems that pre-school teachers and parents face, in relation to guidance and counseling services, at schools without psychological counselors. The purpose of including pre-school teachers and parents in the current study was to find out both whether they considered the guidance and counseling services a need and whether their methods of intervention against the problems that they face were functional. The current research was designed with interview technique as a qualitative study method. Research data were collected through a *semi-structured interview form* developed by the researcher. The researcher met the participants individually and asked the questions on the interview form for the current research. The responses that the participants provided were recorded and later transferred onto computer environment. The study group, formed based on voluntary participation, included total 30 participants with 15 pre-school teachers and 15 parents of pre-school children. Pre-school teacher participants 10 females and 5 males, worked for five different pre-schools in Adiyaman. Total 15 parents in the study group included nine females and six males. An examination of pre-school teachers' responses based on the current study findings indicated that majority of the teachers did not prepare an annual counseling and guidance plan. Another finding of the current study was that children of most parents and teachers experience adjustment problems in pre-school. Another finding of the current research is about children's individual problems. Main individual problems that parents experienced with their children included self-care and social development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pre-school education has considerable importance within contemporary education understanding. The quality education provided in various domains via pre-school is functional in preparation for elementary education [1]. In addition, it has been emphasized that family, school, and community together must take responsibility in pre-school education [2]. Contemporary education system has been emphasized to organize education based on individuals' needs in deference to individual differences [3]. Although counseling and guidance services are inseparably basic in contemporary education system, education has been supposed to be organized based on an understanding of guidance services [4]. Guidance services, reportedly, are supposed to help the children in such functions as to: know themselves and develop life skills, learn about the rules of community life, learn to use their bodies and to play games, satisfy one's curiosity, verbalize their dreams, and be autonomous as basic needs [5]. Thus, the pre-school program and counseling and guidance program are thought to be paralleling each other. Hence, it has been emphasized that quality pre-school programs must be constructed based on children's needs. In this context, pre-school education programs must

be developed with capacity to improve the community and risks associated with this period must be defined; planning must be done; and responsibility must be shared by the school and the family [6]. It is thought that this could only be possible through counseling and guidance services. It was agreed within the Ministry of National Education [7] upon a letter, dated 18/08/2012 with no.3206, of General Directorate of Special Education, Guidance and Counseling Services, that pre-school guidance services program would be piloted at schools in cities to be defined by the General Directorate of Special Education, Guidance and Counseling Services and the General Directorate of Basic Education and required arrangements would be made in 2012-2013 academic years [7]. Accordingly, general targets of the pre-school guidance program are about enabling children to: 1. Adjust in the school and environment and prepare for the elementary school, 2. be in a positive approach towards schooling and learning, 3. know and improve themselves, 4. improve their interpersonal relationships, 5. gain awareness of family and community, 6. develop knowledge and skills about health and safe life, 7. know professions and gain awareness of importance and place of professions in life.

A review of studies on pre-school shows that research on pre-schooling rates, behavioral issues, and pre-school teachers' attitudes towards the profession is available. Aktan and Akkutay [8] investigating pre-schooling rates, reported that Turkey was far behind the OECD countries. On the other hand, many studies conducted point out to behavioral problems and adaptation problems in pre-school. Kök, Koçyiğit, Tuğluk, and Bay [9] found that prevailing issues in pre-schools were attention deficit, eating problems, and bullying behaviors. It was revealed that teachers were unable to take care of children with behavioral problems due to over-crowded classrooms and a lack of counseling support and special education experts. Anselmi, Piccinini, Barros, and Lopes [10] stated that pre-school children had behavioral problems such as bullying, hyperactivity, being unable to control impulses and anger and anxiety disorders such as introversion, fear, and depression.

In pre-school, parents constitute an important part of the counseling and guidance services. Many problems experienced during pre-school may require cooperation among parents-teachers and psychological counselors. Thus, collaboration with parents in providing counseling and guidance services is considered important. Zigler and Styfco [11] stated that early childhood education should include family and community components as well as children's physical, psychological, social, and emotional development. According to Fidan [12], behaviors constituting the basics of personalities are gained in the family. Children in early ages identify with parents and loved adults through mimicking. Children learn basic behaviors and values of their families in which they grow up. Thus, family also is considered an important part of the pre-school counseling and guidance services. Karaca, Gündüz, and Aral [13] found that pre-school children's positive social behaviors significantly differed on parents' education levels and their ages. Seyfullahoğullari [14] stated that families mostly focused on informing children and their demands on receiving counseling and guidance services and family education stood out. In many similar studies, environmental factors (family, school, etc.) were found to influence children's development [15],[16].

In pre-school period, counseling and guidance services are highly important for teachers, parents, and the children and it is known that research in this field is limited. In this period, the child is introduced to the school for the first time and the orientation (adjustment) process is started. An unhealthy adjustment process may lead to many problems during this period and these may add in many others brought from family and the environment. On the other hand, along with these problems, behavioral, habitual, and emotional disorders that may arise in pre-school render pre-school counseling and guidance important in terms of parents, teachers, and students. Thus, the current study is considered to address a need in terms of frequency of experiencing the above-mentioned problems and finding out whether the approaching styles that teachers and parents use are functional. In addition, the current research is considered necessary and important as revealing the planning and implementation problems that pre-school teachers encounter in relation to counseling and guidance services will allow better planning for the services.

Current study aims to reveal the problems that pre-school teachers and parents face, in relation to guidance and counseling services, at schools without psychological counselors. The purpose of including pre-school teachers and parents in the current study was to find out both whether they considered the guidance and counseling services a need and whether their methods of intervention against the problems that they face were functional.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Case study, among the qualitative research methods, was used in the current research. Yin (2002) states that case study could be used in many studies within social psychology, sociology, and social sciences. Stake [17] stated that case studies were conducted by researchers to investigate one or more individuals, processes or activities within a program.

Case study basically includes the following steps [18]: 1. Developing the research questions, 2. Developing the sub-problems of the research, 3. Defining the unit of analysis, 4. Defining the case to be researched, 5. Selecting the participants, 6. Collecting the data and connecting the data collected with hypotheses or sub-problems, 7. Analyzing and interpreting the data, and 8. Reporting about the case study. Similarly, Yin [19] lists the steps in a case study as follows: 1. Developing the research questions, 2. Developing the hypotheses, 3. Analysis, 4. Connecting hypotheses with data, and 5. Interpreting the findings. Based on the above recommendations, research questions and sub-problems were developed and, later, the unit of analysis was defined. The case to be studied was determined and participants were selected. Data were collected and analyzed and findings were interpreted in the current study.

Research data were collected through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher. The researcher met the participants individually and asked the questions on the interview form for the current research. The responses that the participants provided were recorded and later transferred onto computer environment. According to Türmüklü [20] the semi-structured interview technique is more flexible and it helps prepare the interview. In addition, it was stated that a researcher may contribute different questions in the interview, thus influence the interviewee to open up responses. On the other hand, semi-structured interview technique, used in qualitative research, was considered to be helpful when collecting individuals' perceptions of and thoughts about incidents and situations [21]. Bailey [18] on the other hand, indicated that the semi-structured interview technique would provide flexibility and additional questions could be asked, with a high rate of responses provided. It was also pointed out that, during an interview, non-verbal behaviors could be observed and the interview setting could be controlled; the order of questions could be modified and insightful information would be obtained.

Participants from schools with no psychological counselors employed were invited in order to better define the problems encountered in counseling and guidance services. The study group, formed based on voluntary participation, included total 30 participants with 15 pre-school teachers and 15 parents of pre-school children. Pre-school teacher participants (age=34.86; Sd=6.91; range=27-51), 10 females and 5 males, worked for 5 different pre-schools in Adiyaman. Teachers' years in service ranged from 5 to 30. 12 teachers had a BA; 2 had an MA; and 1 teacher had an associate degree. Total 15 parents in the study group included 9 females and 6 males (age=35.33; Sd=3.19; range=30.41). 12 parents had BA and 1 had a PhD degree. 1 was a graduate of elementary school and 1 was a high school graduate. 12 parents were employed and 3 were unemployed.

The instrument was a Semi-Structured Interview Form developed by the researcher to collect data. The questions on the interview form were constructed upon a review of qualitative and quantitative studies in relevant literature. Three qualitative experts were consulted about the interview form being appropriate in terms of current research purposes and the scope and meaning of current research questions. Later, the semi-structured interview form was finalized upon a pilot administration with three pre-school teachers and three parents. The researcher attended the interview and the questions and one-to-one responses were recorded. Each interview lasted approximately 35-45 min.

In the current research, the data were analyzed through content analysis and descriptive analysis, both as qualitative methods. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison [22] define content analysis as outlining the messages associated with basic contents obtained. Similarly, Robson [23] stated that content analysis was a technique facilitating the organization and analysis of data. However, Silverman [24] emphasized that other researchers also needed to obtain similar results when defining basic categories. Yıldırım and Şimşek [18] stated that the content analysis mainly helps to obtain explanatory concepts and relationships. The first step in the content analysis is about coding the data. The researcher, in this step, examines the obtained data and puts them in meaningful categories and finds out what each category conceptually means.

In the current study, all collected data were firstly coded so as to obtain meaningful categories. Later, coded data were looked into to find themes to explain the data in general and the categories in particular. An expert of qualitative research was consulted about conceptualizing the data coding and the themes. Yıldırım and Şimşek [18] pointed out that descriptive analysis could be included in the findings based on a consideration of interview questions. Descriptive analysis often includes direct quotations in order to point to individuals' views. Thus, the aim is to present the reader with organized and interpreted findings. In the current study, descriptive content was included in order to provide the reader with some insight into data coding also. Descriptive content was coded as A1, A2, A3,..., A15 in relation to teachers and as B1, B2, B3,..., B15 in relation to parents [25]. When presenting the findings, the codes were listed from the most to the least frequent to help explain the underlying factors about the case and to make sense of the behavioral patterns in a holistic structure within the research. Thus, it can be said that finding out about the how and why of the case is more important than quantitatively evaluating the frequency of codes in qualitative researches. For instance, the frequency of behaviors associated with problem behaviors in a class is not important. When

developing intervention methods against problem behaviors, even just one different behavior is also important.

3. RESULTS

Pre-school teachers' views about preparing an annual class plan of pre-school counseling and guidance services and perceiving themselves competent. It was seen, upon an examination of the responses provided to the question: "Were you able to prepare a class counseling plan for counseling and guidance services?" by the pre-school teachers, that majority, but two, of the teachers did not prepare an annual plan. Almost all pre-school teachers stated that they did not consider themselves competent in counseling and guidance services upon the question whether teachers perceived themselves as competent in providing counseling and guidance services. Only one teacher stated that s/he felt competent in counseling and guidance services. One of the teachers A14 (age: 40; female with 11 years of service) preparing yearly plan stated the following about the importance of planning and implementation in relation to the significance of preparing yearly plan: I followed the guidance plan partly; had no problems preparing it because I previously worked for a rehabilitation center. However, I had problems putting the plan into practice as the class was over-crowded.

An examination of responses by the parents to the question: "What are the problems (personal, social, sexual, moral development, and etc.) you experienced with the children?" showed that the problems mostly experienced were about self-care skills and social development. It was seen that two parents experienced problems about language development and a parent experienced problems about personal development. A parent B6 (age: 32, female), who had problems about his/her child's social development, stated the following about trying to solve those problems in many different manners and being unable to find a solution: I had experienced problems about his/her social development; I was not able to solve this problem. I want my child to not let himself/herself to be oppressed; I want my child to express himself/herself well among others. I do whatever I can for this.

An analysis of responses by teachers to the question: "What type of difficulties do you experience in planning and providing individual guidance services (self-care skills, language development, and cognitive, sexual, personal, social, and moral development) in your classroom?" indicated the following: large pre-school class sizes, adjustment problems, difficulties providing individual guidance, and lack of planning. In addition, the following were mentioned among the problems encountered in planning and providing individual guidance: different expectations of the teachers due to various life styles, individual differences, families sending their children to school just to let them spend time, and lack of knowledge. However, some teachers thought that they did not encounter any difficulties. A parent A12 (age: 32; male with 10 years of service), who thought that they did not have enough time to plan and implement individualized guidance due to his/her child's adjustment problems in school, stated the following: I have difficulties with planning and providing individual guidance services. Adjustment process just inhibits these services; once the adjustment process is over, these services are provided in a more organized style, in collaboration with parents and as we get to know children better.

An examination of responses provided to the questions, Do you think that your child has information about careers (know about professions, their content, etc.)? What career would your child like to choose in the future? showed that all parents think that their children have information about professions. A parent B6 (age: 32, female), who was informed about his/her children's interests, stated the following: s/he wants to become a farmer because s/he is very much interested in farm machinery and animals.

An analysis of responses provided by the pre-school teachers to the question, What problems do you experience during career guidance services (such as introducing professions, planning and doing activities, organizing trips to professional locations) in your classroom? indicated the following problems: transportation problems in trips to professional locations, tiresome procedures, and difficulty organizing trips for the 3-4 years age group. These were followed by: difficulties reaching out to professional experts, being unable to do planning, lack of knowledge, lack of funds, and reluctance towards trips by the school administration and the parents. Two of the teachers stated no problems. A teacher A13 (age: 38; female with 16 years of service), who thought that s/he had problems with bureaucratic obstacles in relation to professional trips within vocational guidance, stated the following: I experience only bureaucracy problems organizing trips to professional locations, such as obtaining permission, etc.

An examination of responses provided by parents to the question: "What is your child's attitude towards learning?" showed that majority of the parents thought that their children had positive attitudes towards learning but one parent's child did not have positive attitude towards learning. B9 (age: 40, male), who thought that his/her child had a positive attitude towards learning stated the following: although s/he is in pre-school, s/he feels ready to start school and always asks about letters and math operations.

B1 (age: 34, female), who had a child with negative attitude towards learning said the following: gets bored soon and easily distracted; does not want to do homework and follow. An examination of responses provided by pre-school teachers to the question: "What type of problems do you experience when planning and implementing educational guidance services (developing positive attitude towards learning, awareness of studying skills for learning and achieving) in your classroom?" indicated the following problems: over-crowded classrooms, individual differences, and short span of attention in children. Difficulties teaching concepts, parents actually doing children's homework, being unable to get parents to participate, children getting bored, and attendance problems interfering disciplining followed the above-mentioned problems. In addition, it was revealed that children understanding more slowly, inclusion students making it difficult for others to learn, lack of knowledge, lack of expertise, and lack of planning also created problems in planning and implementing educational guidance. It was also seen that two teachers had no problems planning and implementing educational guidance and one teacher did not do anything about educational guidance. A15 (age: 35, female with 15 years of service), who thought that homework was done by the parents and the classrooms were over-crowded, stated the following: to reinforce the topics learned at school, we send out homework but sometimes parents actually do the homework. In addition, in over-crowded classrooms, we do not have the opportunity to provide one-on-one care to students.

An examination of parents' responses to the question: "What emotional problems did you experience with your child?" revealed the following emotional problems: fear, obstinacy, and jealousy. Anxiety, fear of school, bullying, and anger followed those. However, some parents thought that their children had no emotional problems. A parent B1 (age: 34, female), who had an emotional problem associated with his/her child, stated his/her view of punishing the child by occasionally depriving him/her of something liked, in order to overcome the problem: my child is very stubborn; I try to be calm. I do not push him/her much. If s/he is excessively stubborn, I do not let him/her get something liked such as watching a cartoon for a brief time.

An examination of pre-school teachers' responses to the question: "How do you approach the problems associated with students with emotional problems (such as obstinacy, anxiety, fear, fear of school, jealousy, anger, and bullying)?" revealed the following intervention methods: interviewing the student, trying to understand the problem, conferencing with the family, collaborating with the family, referring to the expert, trying to understand the child, and appreciating the positive behavior. Making the child feel valued, showing unconditional love, making behavior boards, preparing an action plan, trying to overcome the issue with the child, explaining that his/her anxieties are baseless, explaining how to behave, and hugging and petting on the head followed those. In addition, exhibiting love, sending to the thinking chair, and treating the child with the same behavior were also available. A teacher A10 (age: 38, female with 17 years of service), who said that s/he talked to the student about emotional problems, tried to understand the situation, used award when the situation improved, and also wanted to get informed about this, stated the following: I first of all try to find the reason of the problem. Then, I talk to the child about how s/he is supposed to behave. When the behavior is corrected, I reward. One day, one of the students was very aggressive and s/he was yelling at others. The reason was that his/her father was yelling at his/her mother.

An examination of parents' responses to the question: "What habitual problems did you experience with your child?" revealed mainly the following habitual problems: nail biting and stuttering. Thumb sucking, wetting pants, and soiling one's clothes followed those. Some parents thought that their children did not have any habitual problems. A parent B2 (age: 34, female), whose student bed-wetted and thumb-sucked said that they were patient in dealing with this issue and stated the following in relation to addiction problems: because of bed wetting, we try to stop him/her from consuming much liquid and we try to instill the habit of going to the bathroom before going to bed. S/he sucks thumbs only when s/he is angry or reacting; we show patience.

An examination of pre-school teachers' responses to the question: "How do you approach the students with habitual problems (nail biting, thumb sucking, biting, soiling clothes, wetting clothes, stuttering, etc.)?" revealed the following coping methods: conferencing with parents, getting expert help, meeting with the student, and trying to understand the problem. In addition, it was seen that they directed student's attention to something else, organized activities associated with the issue, just ignored it, researched about how to behave, and collaborated with the family. Other techniques included: collaborating with the class, absorbing the behavior, and exhibiting love. For instance, A11 (age:36, male with 10 years of service) stated the following: I collaborate with the family and research what can be done about this.

An examination of responses provided by the parents to the question: "What behavioral problems did you experience with your child?" showed that majority of the parents believed that their children did not experience behavioral problems; however, two parents thought that their children told lies. B6 (age: 32, female), who thought that her child told lies stated the following: we have a problem of telling lies; I tell my child that telling lies is not good but this is not enough.

An examination of responses provided by the pre-school teachers to the question: “How do you cope with the students with behavioral problems (stealing, theft, telling lies, etc.)?” indicated the following coping methods: talking with the student, conferencing with the parents, telling stories, explaining the problem behavior to the student, and collaborating with the parents. In addition, these techniques included: getting student to empathize, providing detailed explanation of how to behave in certain situations, rewarding students’ positive behaviors, organized drama, ignored the problem behavior, warning the student, and getting the family to reward the positive behavior. It was also seen that teachers: organized visual and audio activities about the issue, informed the parents, tried to find out about the underlying reason, consulted with the children about problem behaviors, read articles, read books, and collaborated with the family in punishment. For instance, A5 (age: 30, male with 6 years of service) stated the following: I try to talk to him/her and help him/her to notice the mistake. I collaborate with the family. I observe and reward positive attitudes.

4. DISCUSSION

In this section, the findings were discussed about and interpreted within the relevant literature. An examination of pre-school teachers’ responses based on the current study findings indicated that majority of the teachers did not prepare an annual counseling and guidance plan. In addition, it was seen that almost all the pre-school teachers did not consider themselves competent in counseling and guidance services. In a similar study, Onur [26] found that administrators and teachers employed in high schools did not have a shared understanding of guidance and they were not competent in conducting guidance services. Similarly, Karataş and Şahin-Baltacı [27] showed that administrators, teachers, students, and psychological counselors defined the counseling and guidance services differently. It was reported that administrators, teachers, and students described the counseling and guidance services as problem-solving, advising, and offering a sympathetic ear. Based on the findings of the current study and the above-mentioned research findings, it may be said that pre-school teachers did not have adequate education and knowledge associated with counseling and guidance services and they needed consultation with a psychological counselor in this sphere.

Another finding of the current research is about children’s individual problems. Main individual problems that parents experienced with their children included self-care and social development. It was seen that two parents experienced problems with language development and one had a problem of personal development. On the other hand, the difficulties that the pre-school teachers had in planning and implementing individual guidance services included large class sizes, adjustment problems, problems implementing individual guidance, and lack of planning. In a similar study, Arslan-Kılıçoğlu [28] showed that pre-school teachers were partially incompetent in guidance (individual, educational, and career). In a similar study, Aral, Kandir, and Can-Yaşar [29] showed that children of college-graduate mothers, compared to the children of mothers at other education levels, were more skilled in collaboration and social relationships. Thus, it can be said that both parents and teachers have many problems in planning and implementing individual guidance and counseling is a need in pre-school education.

Another finding in the current study was to do with career guidance. All the parents stated that their children were informed about careers. On the other hand, the problems that the pre-school teachers experienced planning and implementing career counseling and guidance services mainly included: transportation problems in career trip organizations, unnecessary bureaucracy in trip organizations, difficulties organizing trips for 3-4 age group, difficulties reaching professional experts, lack of planning, lack of knowledge, and financial difficulties. The current study was conducted with pre-school teachers in five different pre-school settings, all with no single contingency for pre-school psychological counselors; thus, the problems mentioned may be expectable. That is because lack of psychological counselors at schools would be negatively reflected in the quality of education and problems would be expected particularly in planning and implementation. In a similar study, Arslan-Kılıçoğlu [28] stated that pre-school teachers’ mistakes in career guidance affected the pre-school education and development negatively.

Yet another finding in the current research is about parents’ thought about children’s attitudes towards learning. Majority of parents, but one, thought that their children had positive attitudes towards learning. Problems encountered by pre-school teachers in the classroom when planning and implementing educational guidance services mainly included: large class sizes, individual differences, and short span of attention in children. Problems such as difficulties teaching concepts, parents completing homework, and lack of family participation followed those. Burchinal, Peisner - Feinberg, Pianta, and Howes [30] stated that it was important for families and teachers to prepare an appropriate setting relevant to children’s gain of school skills and to provide interaction with stimulants. In a similar study, Uyanık and Kandir (2010) reported that pre-school education in early childhood prepared children for school and this was reflected positively in their academic skills. Thus, it is considered that developing positive attitudes towards learning

could be preparation for elementary school for pre-school children. The current findings indicated that parents' and pre-school teachers' need for educational guidance was highlighted. In this sense, the importance of employing psychological counselors in pre-school in relation to planning and implementing educational guidance was revealed.

Parents' experiences of emotional problems in pre-school children constitute another finding in the current study. These problems mainly included: fear, obstinacy, and jealousy. Anxiety, fear of school, bullying, and anger followed these. On the other hand, it was seen that pre-school teachers' coping methods in relation to students with emotional problems included: interviewing students, trying to understand the problem, collaboration with families, referring to expert, and trying to understand the child. In addition, teachers sent the child over to thinking chair and showed the same behavior to the child. Mayer and Salovey [31] described emotional skill as perceiving correctly, approving, and expressing. Pre-school children are expected to develop skills for adjusting emotions, expressing feelings to others, and understanding others. Kök et al. [9] showed that mostly bullying behavior constituted the problem within the category of emotional disorders. Denham, Blair, Demlilder, Levitas, Sawyer, Auerbach, and Queenan [32] stated that children's social development in pre-school was impacted by their emotional development. Thus, it can be said that parents encounter many emotional problems in their children. Considering pre-school teachers' approaching techniques towards these problems, it may be stated that they used some techniques yielding solutions; however, they were not knowledgeable enough and some of their techniques were dysfunctional.

Another finding of the current research was about the habitual problems that parents found in their children. Nail biting and stuttering were the leading problems. Thumb sucking, wetting and soiling clothes followed these. Approximately one third of parents stated that their children had no habitual problems. On the other hand, an examination of pre-school teachers' approaching methods towards these problems showed that they conferenced with the parents, requested expert help, interviewed the student, and tried to understand the problem. In addition, it was seen that they ignored the problem and, also, researched about how to react to the problem. In a similar study, Kök et al. [9] found habitual problems such as wetting clothes, twitches, stuttering, and nail biting, respectively based on frequency of experiencing, in children. 90% of these problems were reported to have occurred prior to going to school. Thus, it can be said that habitual problems can often be encountered in pre-school and pre-school teachers approach to these problems mostly involved being informed about the problem and collaboration.

Behavioral problems constituted another finding in the current study. Majority of the parents thought that their children did not have any behavioral problems; however, two parents stated that their children told lies. On the other hand, an examination of pre-school teachers' approaching methods towards these problems showed that they mainly interviewed the student, conferenced with the parents, told stories, explained the erroneous behavior to the student, and collaborated with the parents. Baran [33], in a similar research, showed that behavioral problems increased when mother's education levels were lower. Uysal, Akbaba-Altun, and Akgün [34] found that the approaching techniques that pre-school teachers used in relation to undesired behaviors included verbal warning, non-verbal warning, and 1st-type punishment. Upon an examination of pre-school teachers' approaches to the behavioral problems, it can be said that they collaborated with parents and students; some teachers used story-telling and drama based on appropriate age levels, and some dysfunctional approaches (shared punishment with families) were also used.

5. CONCLUSION

An examination of pre-school teachers' responses based on the current study findings indicated that majority of the teachers did not prepare an annual counseling and guidance plan. In addition, it was seen that almost all the pre-school teachers did not consider themselves competent in counseling and guidance services. It was reported that administrators, teachers, and students described the counseling and guidance services as problem-solving, advising, and offering a sympathetic ear. Based on the findings of the current study and the above-mentioned research findings, it may be said that pre-school teachers did not have adequate education and knowledge associated with counseling and guidance services and they needed consultation with a psychological counselor in this sphere. Another finding of the current research is about children's individual problems. Main individual problems that parents experienced with their children included self-care and social development. Another finding in the current study was to do with career guidance. All the parents stated that their children were informed about careers. Majority of parents, but one, thought that their children had positive attitudes towards learning. Parents' experiences of emotional problems in pre-school children constitute another finding in the current study. These problems mainly included: fear, obstinacy, and jealousy. Anxiety, fear of school, bullying, and anger followed these. On the other hand, it was seen that pre-school teachers' coping methods in relation to students with emotional

problems included: interviewing students, trying to understand the problem, collaboration with families, referring to expert, and trying to understand the child.

First and foremost, appointing psychological counselors to the needy schools is recommendable, as pre-school teachers do not consider themselves competent in planning counseling and guidance services. It is thought that including a course associated with planning counseling and guidance services in the Counseling and Guidance Programs in universities may support the education of better psychological counselors. Small class sizes are recommendable when conducting classroom guidance activities in relation to individual, educational, and career counseling and guidance services. The current research found emotional, behavioral, and habitual problems in students. Based on this, drama, group guidance activities, and in-service trainings with games are recommended in order for pre-school teachers to effectively approach the mentioned problems. A book for pre-school teachers and psychological counselors for reference purposes is needed in relation to pre-school counseling and guidance services. It was observed that such a book in Turkish is not available and issues needed are included in chapters of counseling and guidance services books. A preventive, developmental, interventional, etc. program, based on a review of relevant literature, must be developed in order to provide more planned and healthier counseling and guidance services in pre-school education.

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