

An Action Research to Cope with the Negative Attitudes of Kindergarteners Toward School

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to find out the ways to cope with kindergarteners' negative attitudes in cooperation with preschool teachers. This qualitative study is based on an action research, the data of which is derived from kindergarteners' perceptions of "school" (Secer & Celikoz, 2017), researcher's own observation of kindergarteners, and constant interviews with preschool teachers and their parents to determine and to improve kindergarteners' negative attitudes toward school. The semi structured interviews are carried out with the kindergarteners' teachers and parents to determine the ways to cope with the negative attitudes. The results of three-phase action research indicate that of five kindergarteners who regard "school" negatively, and have disorientation problem (Secer & Celikoz, 2017), the negative attitudes of two are handled in the first stage, the negative attitude of two are dealt with in the second stage but the last kindergartener's negative attitude is not figured out but remains still within the scope of the study.

Keywords: Action research, Attitude, Students' attitudes toward school

1. Introduction

1.1 Action Research in Educational Research

The term "action research", referring the idea of doing research and reflecting its results back in a natural setting and of the researcher's participating in and interacting with the setting, was coined in the 1940s by Kurt Lewin, a German-American social psychologist, who's described the basic principles of action research, that are still in use in today's educational research (Ferrance, 2000, p. 7). On the basis of action research, the investigation and the action, needed to solve the problem are not separate happenings, but intermingled through a cyclical pattern in educational setting. This non-linear pattern of action research occur in the cycle of "identifying the problem, developing a plan of action, collecting data via natural observation, analyzing the data and forming conclusions from reflecting on the changes, modifying the theory and repeating the cycle in social and educational situations" is also demonstrated in Figure 1 below:



Figure 1. The Cycle of Action Research

(http://www.thecreativeeducator.com/v07/articles/Embracing_Action_Research)

According to Heron and Reason (2001), unlike other forms of traditional research, action research is "an ongoing process with each stage or cycle of research informing the next". They also emphasize the researcher's actively participating in and interacting with the research setting in action research and set action research apart from other scholarly research traditions by stating that action research is about "doing research with others, not doing research on others" (2001).

Beaulieu (2013) makes a common definition of action research as "improving the quality of human life, acquiring knowledge to become better practitioners, and developing strategies to address problems" by differentiating action research from a continuing body of literature in the points stated below:

Action research is not merely about teacher development although some scholars associate action research with teacher research as it provides professional development for teachers (Stringer, 2008; Gordon, 2008; Mertler, 2011).

Action research is not primarily focused on theory building unlike other behavioral or social research approaches, according to which action research can be grounded in theory (White, 2004; Friedman, Rogers,

2009).

Action research does not aim to generalize its findings across other settings because the research is usually conducted at a single, unique setting as a case study (p. 33).

Falk and Blumenreich (2005) demonstrate how to use action research to improve teaching in Figure 2:

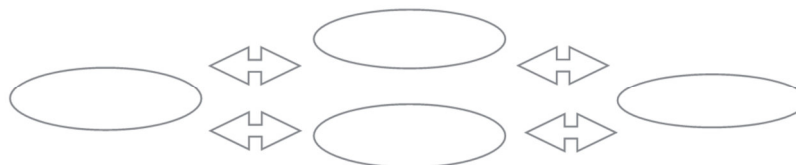


Figure 2. Using Research to Improve Your Teaching

In their work, Falk and Blumenreich (2005) describe how teachers make informed decisions to support students' development by applying systematic research and by teaching through observation, documentation, and reflection. The case given below clearly exemplifies how a systematic study help teachers change their assumptions and biases about their students in order to resolve the problems, arousing in educational situations:

...sometimes we develop images of children based only on memories of a few negative experiences. We may characterize Victor as a troublemaker because we have witnessed him fighting with other children. Yet, if we were to study Victor systematically by regularly observing and documenting this behavior, interviewing him and this family members, or taking photos of him at various times during the school day, we might come to see him in a new light. We might come up with understandings about him that reveal important qualities we have missed. We might find that Victor acts out in ways that produce conflict, but he does this only when he has difficulty expressing his feelings and is so frustrated that he lashes out at anyone in his path. With this additional information we would likely treat him quite differently—not as a troublemaker who has to be continually constrained, but as a child who needs our help to verbalize and act appropriately on what he is thinking. As a result, we might be better able to help change his negative behavior.

(Falk & Blumenreich, 2005, p.3)

Action research is generally categorized into three main groups according to different educational settings:

- Individual Action Research: The teacher is the researcher himself who work independently on a project and conduct his own in-class research project with his students.
- Collaborative Action Research: A group of teachers or researchers work together to explore a problem arousing beyond a single classroom.
- School-wide Action Research: Teams of staff members work together using school-wide action research.

(Ferrance, 2000, pp. 3-4)

1.2 Students' Attitudes toward School

Thornburg (1985), who defines attitude as “an emotional predisposition for a person to act in some way toward another person, object, or ideas”, indicates that student's attitude, even though playing a significant role in a student's academic achievement, is often neglected and ignored (p.31). On the contrary, Metsämuuronen, Svedlin, and Ilic (2012) declare that there is a myriad of publications concerning “pupil/student attitudes”, “teacher student relationship”, “school attitudes”, and “school climate” in the ERIC database, in more recent research literature (p.135).

School liking, referring to the sense of belonging or connectedness has been perceived to be associated with pupil wellbeing and academic achievement (Abu-Hilala, Abdelfattahb, Abduliabbarb, and Marshbc, 2007, p.1). In parallel Eccles and Wigfield (2000), describe the “expectancy-value model of achievement motivation” as suggesting that students will be more willing to engage in class activities and given tasks when they perceive them to be emotionally rewarding and valuable. They also argue that individuals' willingness in participation, persistence in failure, and performance in carrying out the given tasks can be very much determined by their beliefs about “how well they will do on the activity and the extent to which they value the activity” (p. 68). Holfve-Sabel (2006) who investigate the changes in Swedish student attitudes toward school, teachers and classmates report that interest in school, view of teacher, view of peers, lack of anxiety, view of disturbances, working atmosphere in the classroom, and social relations with classmates are all peer relational factors influencing over students' attitude toward school. Moreover, Schleicher (2013) states that students who have good relationships with their teachers and peers perceive school positive. He also claims that student and school characteristics have only a very weak relationship with students' attitudes toward school, whereas students' social relationships with their teachers and friends which form the school climate have a great influence over their attitudes toward schooling, and their individual learning experiences.

Children's outlook, values and attitudes are very much shaped by parents own expression of values. Parents' positive, can-do attitude can be more helpful rather than a negative, judging attitude in handling with negative

attitudes of children toward school. In addition, parents' getting involved in their child's education, and being in constant collaboration with their children's teachers definitely contribute a lot to their children's attitudes toward school and to their academic achievement. (Jeynes, 2005; Harris & Robinson, 2014).

Hautamäki & Hautamäki (1999) points out gender differences lead to different attitudes toward school. According to them, there is an obscure difference between girls and boys in their attitudes toward school, depending upon their distant qualities: Girls have greater social sensitivity and obedience, which are appropriate qualities to the requirements of school learning whereas boys show tendency to independence, physical strength, activity, and even aggression. Boys, in their study, is reported to have more negative attitudes toward school than girls.

1.3 The Significance and the Purpose of the Study

The significance of early childhood education in the social, emotional, and cognitive growth of young children, in their readiness for a more structured and formal education life, and in the wellbeing and future of all societies is emphasized in a body of international literature (Kendall, 2000; Essa, 2003; Nielsen 2006; Herr, 2002; Healy, 2004; Usakli, 2010; Sahin, Sak & Sahin, 2013). In the light of all the views on behalf of the importance of preschool education, the focus and the scope of the present study on preschool education can be said to be significant and well chosen. Research literature, on the other hand, critically lacks research on preschool students' attitudes toward kindergarten. Focusing on finding the ways to cope with the negative attitudes of kindergarteners toward school, the present study is hoped to fill a significant gap in research literature.

The purpose of the present study is to find out the ways to cope with kindergarteners' negative attitudes in cooperation with preschool teachers. Within this main purpose, the central research question inquired in the scope of the present study is "What could be the possible ways to cope with kindergarteners' negative attitudes toward school and to improve their attitudes toward school?"

2. Research Material and Method

This paper is based on an action research in qualitative design. Observation and semi structured interview are employed as instruments for data collection in order to find the ways to cope with the negative attitudes of kindergarteners toward school. The researcher makes a series of semi structured interviews with the teachers of kindergarteners from two classes, "Butterflies" in which the researcher's four year of son is also a kindergartener, and "Stars", and with their parents, usually in a separate and silent room in the kindergarten where they can easily concentrate on the issue and brainstorm on the solutions, or sometimes in the school garden, as well. The researcher also tries to create a friendly, and democratic atmosphere during the interviews so that the teachers and parents take turns answering the researcher's questions and declaring their ideas about the kindergarteners openly and freely.

According to the cycles of action research, after the problem is identified, the required data is collected, and the collected data is analyzed, the conclusions, drawn from the findings of data analysis are reflected back and applied to teaching cycles within three stages in order to handle with the five kindergarteners having negative attitudes toward school. All through out these cycles of action research, the researcher herself also takes action in teaching by carrying out a continuous cooperative work with teachers. In other words, she has an active and influential role in teaching process, in drawing conclusions from the interviews and her observations, in making decisions to determine the ways to cope with kindergarteners' negative attitudes, and in having the teachers apply them to learning environment.

2.1 Participants

The teachers and the parents of five kindergarteners who are detected to have negative attitude toward school according to the previous study of Secer and Celikoz (2017) are the constant participants of the interviews, carried out by the researcher to find out the ways to cope with the negative attitudes of kindergarteners toward school. The names of the teachers, as the participants of the interviews and the stakeholders in the action research, are not mentioned in the study but coded as T1, the teacher of "Butterfiles", and T2, the teacher of "Stars". At the same time, the researcher also carries out the three-stage action research on these five kindergarteners (three girls, two boys). The names of the kindergarteners, having negative attitude toward school are not mentioned, but coded as G1, G2, G3, B1, B2 (G for girl, B for boy). T1 stands for the teacher of "Butterflies" and also three kindergarteners, G1, B1 and B2 whereas T2 is the teacher of "Stars" and also of G2 and G3. The names of their parents are also not mentioned in the study, but coded as PG1, PG2, PG3, PB1, and PB2 (P for parents of girls and boys).

2.2 Data Collection Procedure

Observation and semi structured interview are used as data collection instruments in order to explore how to cope with the kindergarteners' negative attitudes toward school. With the permission of the kindergarten

principal, the researcher makes observation on five kindergarteners in and out of the classes. She also carries out a cooperative action research through constant cooperation with kindergarteners' teachers and parents as the stakeholders of education. In interviews which can be also said to be brainstorming sessions the researcher together with the teachers and parents try to find proper educational ways to improve kindergarteners' attitudes toward school.

3. Findings and Discussion

After detecting the kindergarteners who have negative attitude toward school, the further interviews are all focused on finding the possible ways to cope with kindergarteners' negative attitudes. The researcher investigates kindergarteners' behaviors, social manners, and relationships with their peers and teachers in class through her own observations and interviews with T1 and T2. In addition, the researcher tries to discover kindergarteners' personalities, preferences, and relations in their families in cooperation with teachers and their parents in order to find appropriate solutions for each case.

To cope with the negative attitudes of five kindergarteners, the action research is carried on within three stages. In accordance with this cyclical pattern, in each stage, the researcher keeps on;

- gathering data related to kindergarteners through constant observation and interviews,
- analyzing the information and finding new ways to improve the kindergarteners' attitudes together with their teachers and parents,
- getting teachers to reflect and apply what they've decided to teach in class,
- observing the outputs of new applications of teaching in class environment,
- following this cycle over and over again till to the solution of the very last case.

In the first stage, the teachers try to handle all the kindergarteners' negative attitudes but only achieve to cope with the attitudes of G1 and G2:

The first case is G1 from "Butterflies" who does not construct any metaphor and talk much during the metaphor study (Secer & Celikoz, 2017). She is such a shy and introvert character that she hardly participates in class activities, gives answer to her teacher's questions. She acts rather comfortable in free play but feels threatened and draws back again when her teacher shows up. Being an only child, she has a very intimate relation especially with her mother. That can be said to be the basic reason for her separation anxiety. Being a housewife, PG1 states "Before she starts kindergarten, we do everything together, even the household chores, but I and his father never spoil her." Since she has no siblings, friends or cousins in the family, and it is her first year at school, she develops her separation anxiety, she has hard time being apart from her parents, interacting with her teacher who is a complete stranger, and developing her first friendships. In light of this investigation and findings, researcher and T1 think that her relationship with her mother can be a starting point. In the Kindergarten, parents' collaboration and participation in education is maintained via "Parents Day" on Fridays as a part of the educational program. In "Parents Day", the parents come to school and attend the classes to present the breakfast, they prepare for the kids and to present their own lesson, presentation, storytelling or activity in class. Researcher and T1 decide to arrange PG1 as the first parent to come and participate in the "Parents Day". The idea of seeing her mother all day long at school obviously makes her feel less anxious, but safer and happier. During the breakfast G1 eagerly helps her mother serve the breakfast for her classmates with a great comfort and enthusiasm. She also participates in the science experiment that her mother presents, cheerfully helps her with the equipment and explains the principles of gravity with a confident manner. Parents' involvement in their children's education is said to be a great contribution to students' social and educational development (Jeynes, 2005; Harris & Robinson, 2014; Sahin, Sak & Sahin, 2013). In parallel to this view, the parents' participation project can be said to ease the critical period that G1 for the first time tries to build social relations with her teacher and her friends apart from her family. Two weeks after her mother's participation, P1 reports that G1 no longer cries and resists going to school in the morning. In addition, T1 points that although she still keeps her introvert attitude, she is away more social, talkative, eager, and active in class activities.

The second case is G2 from "Stars" who constructs the metaphor "bad boy". When the ground in which she constructs the metaphor is analyzed, it is obvious that she likens school to a friend of her at kindergarten who usually teases her by his annoying jokes and always makes fun of her. Through her metaphor, she obviously points out the reason why she dislikes her school, in a way, presents the problem within its solution (Secer & Celikoz, 2017). T2 also states that the case is actually about the boy, not about G2. G2 thinks that the only reason for her present unwillingness in participating the class activities, and even in coming to school is him. Researcher together with teachers decides to start coping with her negative attitude toward school with the boy. He is actually the kindergartener, who constructs the metaphor of "jeep" and says he enjoys his uncle driving fast. As far as the researcher observed, and T2 tells, he is a very active and eager boy in every kind of activity in contrast to G2. PG2 who is an instructor in a private college comes to school several times to talk with the teacher about the issue. As PG2 tells that she was very exciting, and enthusiastic about her school and her new classmates in the beginning of the term but she takes an instant dislike to the boy who makes a joke with a bottle

of water, makes her wet, and makes everyone laugh at her in the first week of academic year. From that embarrassing movement on, he becomes her mere dislike about school which eventually turns out to be a hatred from school. The researcher clearly detects the difference in between the boy who is physical very active and aggressive at times, and G2 who has a higher social sensitivity and obedience in parallel with the views of Hautamäki and Hautamäki (1999) in gender differences in educational environment. PG2 suggests to put him in other class but as T2 thinks it will be offensive for him and his parents, they decide to handle the case in another way. After the first time T2 talks with him about his behaviors' being too much offensive for G2 and inappropriate in class, she cannot have him abandon this behavior as he very much enjoys making his friends laugh at her. T2 thinks that he achieves social acceptance and satisfaction through these jokes. Additionally, the researcher makes contact with the boy's mother, inform her about the situation, and gets her talk and convince him not to make any more jokes to anyone at school. In parallel to the views of Schleicher (2013) and Holfye and Sabel (2006), the researcher thinks if G2 builds closer relationship with her troublemaker as peers, it can eventually result in a more positive attitude toward school. For the following week, researcher and T2 decide to try another educational measure which is to make them study, work, and play in peer work in order to make them break the ices and build closer friendship. Although G2 resists at first, T2 manages to motivate and get her in play in a couple of days. In accordance with the interviews with the researcher, she chooses common games or activities such as finger paint or paper folding that they enjoy together. In that way, T2 helps them to build a better friendship by making them cooperate, work, succeed, learn, play, and enjoy together in a team. Peer work also provides them with the chance of building a closer relationship with each other. In addition to these peer work activities, in parallel to Froebel' idea of spontaneous play and leisure time activity as a basis in kindergarten education (1837), T2 also guides them play together in spontaneous play in leisure time sessions every morning to improve their friendship. Only one week later, the boy is observed to stop making bad jokes to her in order not to offend his friend G2. PG2 also reports that G2 quits crying in the morning and starts coming to school with her initial enthusiasm as she no longer feels herself embarrassed or annoyed in class.

At the end of the first stage, the attitudes of G1 and G2 toward school are improved but the other cases still remain unsolved. In the second stage, the researcher and the teachers focus on the cases of B1, B2 from "Butterflies" and G3 from "Stars".

The third case is B1 who constructs the metaphor of "broccoli" and likens school to a food that he dislikes eating. He also explains the reason for his metaphor as his mother always gets him to eat but he hates broccoli. According to B1, just as she faces him to eat broccoli, his mother forces him to go to school although he resists and cries (Secer & Celikoz, 2017). PB1 informs T1 and the researcher about his attending a private music and dance academy at weekends. PB1 declares that he has no problem in attendance or participation in the lessons there, in contrast, he enjoys going there, making music and dancing. Since the researcher and T1 find out B1's interest and talent in music and dance, they try to focus on his individual learning style and musical intelligence. According Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences people with musical/rhythmic intelligence, prefer to demonstrate intellectual abilities in rhythmic patterns, learn best via music and show sensitivity to rhythm, melody, and sound. They also study with music in the background, play an instrument, notice non-verbal sounds in the environment, learn more easily if sung or tapped out (Gardner, 2006). T1 starts using Turkish and English songs and let the kindergarteners sing and dance together every day after breakfast as an ice breaker or a warm-up activity. B1 is observed and reported by T1 as to look forward to having singing song and dancing sessions every day after breakfast, and to be very eager and vigorous when he participates in musical activities and sings songs. Only a couple of days later, PB1 states that he wakes up early and gets prepared and takes his bus willingly.

The fourth case is B2 who likens school to "returning home" as he says he hates school, but likes returning home (Secer & Celikoz, 2017). B2 is known to be a very shy, introvert and problematic kindergartener who even cries loud and vomits when he feels excitement, anxiety or pressure. In accordance with the decisions, made in the interviews, T1 makes him sit near her table in order to be always in touch with him, to gain his trust and build a closer relationship with him. She also tries to get him in class activities and spontaneous play, praises and rewarded him in every possible situation in order to motivate him. After constant interviews and different educational trials, the researcher and T1 are not able to make any change in his negative attitude toward school at the end of second stage. PB2 also starts not sending him to school some days of the week, in order not to force him too much and break his complete motivation before primary education.

The fifth case is G3 from "Stars" who is the last pupil of T2. G3 explains the logical reason for her choice of metaphor as "School is like my stomachache because my stomach aches at school." (Secer & Celikoz, 2017). In his interviews with T2, and PG3, the researcher learns that G3 always claims that her stomach aches whenever she feels threatened or forced to do something she doesn't want to do just like going to school. PG3 tells what her doctor says about her stomachache as her stomachache does not indicate a health problem but can be an excuse she creates in order to avoid the unwanted situation. The researcher and T1 also discover that she likes being outdoors, being in nature, and being occupied with garden work, but easily gets bored indoors as she is

very much used to working with her grandparents and playing with her cousins in their olive gardens in Gemlik. They commonly share the idea that she can be a “naturalist” who enjoys working with plants and observing nature according to Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences (2016). The researcher thinks it will be a good idea to invite one of the kindergarteners’ parents who works as an agricultural engineer in a seed factory in Bursa to the kindergarten, to help them provide seeds, and other equipment to plant some vegetables in the backyard. They organize a gardening session in which G3 fancies working on the garden and demonstrating her gardening skills and knowledge to her friends. G3 also has the opportunity to take care of her own plants in the small garden behind the kindergarten after and between lessons. Though not putting an end to her stomachaches, taking the responsibility of this small garden and being busy with some garden work can be said to become her greatest motivation in coming to kindergarten every day. It also enables the researcher and T2 cope with G3’s negative attitude toward school.

At the end of second stage, as the negative attitudes of the kindergarteners G1, G2, G3, and B1 are handled, the only kindergartener who keeps his negative attitude toward school is B2 from “Butterflies”. In the third stage, the researcher and T1 focus on solving the disorientation problem of B2. The researcher discovers through her observation that B2 has rather close relation with a kindergartener from “Stars”. The researcher learns from PB2 that B2 and his close friend who also constructs the metaphor “playing with toys” and has a positive attitude toward school, are also good friend in their neighborhood and come to school and returning home together on foot. Understanding why B2 actually likens school to returning home, the researcher suggests T1 and T2 to change his class and put B2 in “Stars”. With the allowance of the kindergarten principal, B2 goes on his education in “Stars”. His new teacher T2 tries to create opportunities that he can enjoy being together with his close friend. Although he seems to be less anxious and more relaxed in spontaneous play, he shows no motivation in class activities, especially in drawing, writing and basic maths. He goes on crying and even vomits for the second time in class. They advise PB2 to consult a doctor to find out if this vomiting problem indicates a health problem or not. After learning B2’s vomiting is a psychosomatic reaction, the researcher and T2 decide to lead him to an expert for psychological counseling and guidance, as there is no psychological counselor in the kindergarten in spite there should be one in every kindergarten staff. The lack of psychological counselor in the kindergarten which can be considered as a deficiency definitely addresses the problem that our country is unfortunately under the average of OECD’s countries in the rate of budget, expenditure, personnel qualifications and staff in preschool education as reported by Aktan, and Akkutay (2014). After so many cycles of interviews, brainstorming, and educational applications in class, the negative attitude of B2 cannot be handled in the scope of the study.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

In the scope of the present study, the researcher carries out an action research on kindergarteners in which he collects data through observation, and semi structured interviews with teachers and parents. In order to find new educational ways to cope with the kindergarteners’ negative attitudes, the researcher also employs the cycles of action research (Ferrance, 2000) in which he repeatedly and cyclically collects current data, makes analysis, draws conclusions via collaboration with teachers and parents and reflects these conclusions to teaching in class as new educational applications and methods. In accordance with the principles of collaborative action research (Ferrance, 2000), the researcher who is also the mother of a kindergartener in “Butterflies” takes an active role in educational process via continuous collaboration with the teacher, not only as a researcher but also a stakeholder, as well. Through this collaboration with teachers and parents, he aims to detect the distinct personalities of kindergarteners, their relationship with their peers, teachers, and families, their different learning styles, and individual preferences in order to avoid prejudices about them and to contribute to their education, in parallel with the advice Falk and Blumenreich (2005) advice on the systematic study of students.

The three-stage action research is focused on five kindergarteners (three girls, two boys), having negative attitudes toward school. At the end of the first stage in which several educational techniques are used to cope with the negative attitudes of five kindergarteners, two kindergarteners change their negative attitude toward their school. In the second stage, the researcher focuses on three kindergarteners having negative attitudes within a cooperative work with their teacher, trying new exercises and learning situations in class to change their attitude. At the end of second stage, two kindergarteners, one girl, one boy, develop rather positive attitudes toward school. At the end of the term, after the last stage of the action research is applied, unfortunately no change or improvement observed in the attitude of the last kindergartener toward school. The ways through which the teachers in cooperation with the researcher try to improve kindergarteners’ attitudes toward school are listed as follows:

- Promoting Parental Involvement: In the first stage of the action research, parents’ participation in class on a chosen day of the week is proven to be a way to cope with the negative attitudes of kindergarteners in the case of G1 who cannot get oriented to school and build proper social relations with her teacher and her peers. Kindergarten is a transition period in between the warm and intimate family atmosphere

to a more social, formal and structured learning environment. Parents' participation in educational activities obviously helps kindergarteners get adapted to and build trust and close relations in the entirely new social environment of strangers. The conclusion, drawn from the practice of parents' participation in this study also supports the views of Jeynes (2005), Harris and Robinson (2014), and Sahin, Sak and Sahin (2013) in favor of parental involvement in education.

- Providing Situations for Kindergarteners to Build Close Relations with Their Peers: In the first stage of the action research, in parallel to the views of Schleicher (2013) and Holfye and Sabel (2006), G2 manages to build closer relationship with her peer because of whom she dislikes and avoids school and to develop more positive attitude toward school. Providing the kindergarteners with appropriate situations to break the social barriers and to foster their social relations with their peers eventually results in more positive attitudes toward school and better orientation to learning environment.
- Teaching in Accordance with Different Learning Styles of Kindergarteners: Being aware of learners' different learning styles and adjusting the learning environment according to their distinct ways of perceiving and learning help the teachers maintain students' adaptation to school and motivation in learning practices (Gardner, 2006). Accordingly, in the second stage of the action research, discovering B2's musical intelligence and G3's naturalistic intelligence help the researcher and the teachers improve their attitudes toward school. Turkish Preschool Education Curriculum has also adopted Gardner's multiple intelligence a long with educational leisure time activities, games, music, drama, field trips, and art activities (Ahi & Kildan, 2013; MEB, 2006).

In the lights of all the conclusions, derived from the action research, following recommendations about kindergarten education can be given as follows:

- Kindergarten teachers should perceive every kindergartener as a unique entity to be discovered. They should focus on detecting their personal differences, distinct characteristics, and different family relations in order to handle their attitudinal and disorientation problems, accordingly.
- Kindergarten teachers should discover kindergarteners' different learning styles and maintain an appropriate learning environment according to their distinct ways of learning in order to foster kindergarteners' adaptation and motivation in learning practices.
- Kindergarten teachers should also be aware of the gender differences between girls and boys in social contact, school obedience, physical strength and emotional reactions and treat the kindergarteners accordingly.
- Kindergarten teachers should employ action research in all phases too kindergarten education when they face a disorientation or an attitudinal problem or when they need to improve teaching. In accordance with the principles of cooperative action research, they should maintain parental involvement in education and be in a continuous collaboration with parents.
- Kindergarten teachers should always keep the fact in mind that it is kindergarteners' first time to contact with someone for this much long apart from their parents into consideration and try to build close social and emotional relationship with their pupils based on trust.
- Kindergarten teachers should promote peer and group work activities during lessons as to help kindergarteners build close relationships with their peers which can lead them to develop better attitudes toward school, as well.
- In their educational practices, kindergarten teachers should arrange parents' participation practices in order to motivate kindergarteners and make them better adapt to learning environment by letting them share the same atmosphere with their parents.
- As kindergarten is the first period that a child usually starts a formal and structured education after the initial and natural education in family life, kindergarten teachers should often encourage spontaneous play and leisure time activities in daily education program.
- In such critical and fragile ages of 4-6, kindergarteners' psychological problems should be handled, or psychosomatic reactions should be treated carefully by an expert who can provide professional psychological counseling and guidance in every kindergarten.
- Kindergarten environment is very significant as it provides our children with basic educational and social, needs that cannot be maintained at home. Thus, kindergarten education is vitally important in the social and cognitive development of our young children. Given the importance of the youth of every nation for its future, educational policies that promote investment in preschool education programs can go a long way to support the development of qualified citizens for the future of the societies.

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