

## Involvement of Fathers in The Lives of Children in Preschool Age<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

*This study was carried out in order to examine the involvement of fathers' in the life of their children attending preschool. The sample of the study consisted of 870 fathers who continued their children in independent districts in the central districts of Ankara, Trabzon and Erzurum. The "Father Involvement Scale" were used in this research. Based on the results of the study, Arbitrary Preoccupation subscale showed that there was a significant difference in the cases of Ankara, Trabzon and Erzurum according to the father's age, education status, and type of marriage; a significant difference was found in Trabzon according to the age of the child. In the subscale of attention and closeness, a significant difference was found according to the type of marriage in the provinces of Ankara, Trabzon, and Erzurum; a significant difference was found according to the gender of the child and the age of the father in Trabzon and Erzurum provinces, the education status of the father in Ankara and Trabzon provinces. In the subscale of Primary Care, a significant difference was found according to the type of marriage in the provinces of Ankara, Trabzon, and Erzurum; a significant difference was found according to the education status of the father in Ankara and Trabzon provinces; the age of the child, the gender of the child and the age of the father in the province of Trabzon.*

**Keywords:** Pre-school period, Father involvement, Child development

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## Okul Öncesi Dönemde Çocuęu Olan Babaların Çocuklarının Hayatına Katılımı

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### Öz

*Bu çalıřma çocuęu okul öncesi eęitim kurumuna devam eden babaların çocuęun hayatına katılımını incelemek amacıyla yapılmıřtır. Arařtırmanın örneklemini Ankara, Trabzon ve Erzurum illerinin merkez ilçelerinde çocuęu baęımsız anaokullarına devam eden 870 baba oluřturmuřtur. Arařtırmada "Baba Katılım Ölçeęi" kullanılmıřtır. Arařtırma sonucunda Keyfi Meřguliyet alt boyutunda Ankara, Trabzon ve Erzurum illerinde babanın yařı, öğrenim durumu ve evlenme řekline göre anlamlı bir fark olduęu bulunurken; Trabzon ilinde çocuęun yařı deęiřkeninde istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı bir farklılık olduęu saptanmıřtır. İlgili ve Yakınlık alt boyutunda Ankara, Trabzon ve Erzurum illerinde babanın evlenme řekline göre anlamlı bir fark olduęu bulunurken Trabzon ve Erzurum illerinde çocuęun cinsiyeti ve babanın yařı, Ankara ve Trabzon illerinde babanın öğrenim durumu, deęiřkenlerinde istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı bir farklılık olduęu saptanmıřtır. Temel bakım alt boyutunda Ankara, Trabzon ve Erzurum illerinde babanın evlenme řekline göre anlamlı bir fark olduęu bulunurken, Ankara ve Trabzon illerinde babanın öğrenim durumu, Trabzon ilinde ise çocuęun yařı, cinsiyeti ve babanın yařı deęiřkenlerinde de istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı bir farklılık olduęu saptanmıřtır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Okul öncesi dönem, Baba katılımı, Çocuk geliřimi

## Introduction

Both general and scientific understandings of children, families and parents have changed and are reshaped in many ways in the developing social and historical process. Therefore, it is important to examine family relationships in recent years. From a historical point of view, in the industrialized society of the nineteenth century, the responsibility for raising children has largely been in the mothers while the dads work in various places. This structure, in which fathers were dominant in the work life and mothers were dominant in the lives of the children, continued until the end of the twentieth century (LaRossa citing Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth & Lamb, 2000).

Towards the end of the twentieth century, interactions between father, mother and child have begun to be researched. It can be said that while the focus has been on the various activities between the fathers and their spouses and children, types of father involvement and the relationships between the magnitudes of involvements; on the one hand differences in child characteristics and involvement have also been studied (Day & Lamb, 2004).

When examining the involvement of the father in the child's life, not only how the father spends time with the child or the responsibility for the child, but also the status, role and behavioral characteristics of the father in the family and the society should be taken into consideration (Cabrera, Fitzgerald, Bradley & Roggman, 2007). Considering the role of fathers today, it appears that it is more possible for fathers to participate in child care, and school-related activities compared to the past, to share the care of their children (Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 2002).

The direct and indirect effect of the father in the development of the child is indisputable. The relationship between parent and child is a developing, enriching experience over time (Cummings, Merrilees & Ward-George, 2010, p.157). For this reason, it is important for fathers to take care of their their children, establish relationships, spend time together, such as reading, painting, playing starting from infancy (Tutkun & Tezel Şahin, 2018a).

Paternal involvement entails direct participation in the child's various activities, breakfast with children, having dinner together, doing activi-

ties outside the home, talking privately to the child, playing with the child; and participation in behaviors related to learning, such as reading a book, being in contact with the child's school or helping the child with homework. Behaviors such as how often fathers praise their children or hug them represent the support they give to their children (Amato & Rivera, 1999; McWayne, Downer, Campos & Harris, 2013; Tezel Şahin & Tutkun, 2017).

Paternal involvement consisting of participation activities, such as the presence of the father, parenting satisfaction, parenting of the child, financial support, was found to be positively related to the academic development of children (Downer, Campos, Macwayne & Gartner, 2008; Mwoma, 2009).

Looking at the research done in this direction, the studies that have been carried out refer to the many useful benefits of active participation of fathers in the child's life, as well as the father-child interaction (Tutkun & Tezel Şahin, 2018b). These benefits can be listed as; improvement in academic achievement (Cooksey & Fondell, 1996; Amato & Gilbreth, 1999), less criminal orientation and reduced substance abuse (Carlson, 2006), developing positive peer relationships (Updegraff, McHale, Crouter & Kupanoff, 2001), cognitive development, behavioral and emotional regulation (Cabrera et al., 2000), social development, and language development (Lamb, 2010). It is also known that a healthy male role model in a child's life is extremely important for both boys and girls in later stages of life (Gustason, 2011).

The interaction of the father with the child contributes to the children's self-esteem, academic achievement and stability in peer relations, while the absence of father can have negative consequences for the children. This can lead to social problems, low academic success and problematic behaviors (Harris, 2002). In this respect, it is thought that fathers spending adequate and quality time with their children is very important and will contribute to the development of children (Tutkun & Tezel Şahin, 2016). Because of all these reasons, it is very important and guiding to examine the involvement of the father in the life of the children (Sımsıkı, 2011).

From this point of view, it is important to learn about fathers' level of involvement in the child's life. It is thought that this study will contribute

to the field, since the number of studies on paternal involvement is not enough despite the importance of fathers' place in their children's lives.

Based on the importance of the research, this study was carried out with the aim of "examining the involvement of fathers with children attending preschool in the Ankara, Trabzon, and Erzurum sample". Based on this aim, the sub-objectives of the research are as follows:

Sub-objectives:

- Does the involvement of the father in the child's life in Ankara, Trabzon and Erzurum samples show a significant difference according to the provinces?
- Does the father's involvement in the child's life differ significantly based on the age of the father, educational status, and marriage type?
- Does the father's involvement in the child's life differ significantly based on the age and gender of the child?

## **Methodology**

In this section, the model of the research, population end sample, data collection tools and the statistical techniques used in the analysis of the data are given.

## **Research Model**

For the purposes indicated, the study is constructed by the descriptive screening model from the general screening models. Relational screening models, also called correlational models, are studies in which the relationship between two or more variables is examined without interfering with these variables in any way (Büyüköztürk, Çokluk & Köklü, 2012).

## **Population and Sample**

The population of the study consists of the fathers of children aged 4-6 attending independent preschools in the central districts of Erzurum, Trabzon, and Ankara, three provinces with the highest population in

three different geographic regions of Turkey with different cultural characteristics (TÜİK, 2014). The total number of children attending the independent preschools located in the central districts of the selected provinces has been determined.

The equation proposed by Büyüköztürk Çokluk and Köklü (2012) was used to determine the sample size.

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0}{N}}$$

Equation 1. Sample size estimation in continuous variables

$n = \frac{384,16}{1 + \frac{384,16}{1100}}$ <p>Ankara ili merkez ilçesi için örneklem büyüklüğü hesaplaması</p>	$n = \frac{384,16}{1 + \frac{384,16}{1200}}$ <p>Trabzon ili merkez ilçesi için örneklem büyüklüğü hesaplaması</p>	$n = \frac{384,16}{1 + \frac{384,16}{400}}$ <p>Erzurum ili merkez ilçesi için örneklem büyüklüğü hesaplaması</p>
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It is calculated by the equation of  $n_0 = (t^2PQ)/d^2$  in equality and when p value is 0.05, pq = 0.25 and the corresponding t value is 1.96 and it is calculated as 0,05 significance level = 384,16 (Büyüköztürk et al., 2012). In the formula, the number of children attending pre-school education institutions, in other words, refers to the universe.

As a result of the calculations carried out with the equality specified by Büyüköztürk et al. (2012), a total of 870 father, 297 from Ankara, 325 from Trabzon and 248 from Erzurum, were included in the study sample.

It was found that 11.3% (n=98) of the fathers included in the study had a child at the age of 4, 52.5% (n=457) had a child at the age of 5, and 36.2% (n=315) had a child at the age of 6. 49.9% (n=434) of the fathers had a girl, and 50.1% (n=426) had a boy. In addition, it was found that 42.6% (n=371) of the fathers included in the study were 35 years old or younger, 36.2% (n=315) were between 36 and 40 years old, and 21.1% (n=181) were 41 years old or older. 13.8% (n=120) had an educational status below high school, 26.9% (n=234) were high school graduates, 51.0% (n=444) were university graduates, and 8.3% (n=72) had a graduate degree. Fur-

thermore, it was found that 12.1% (n=105) of the fathers got married by arranged-family, 29.7 % (n=258) of the fathers got married by arranged-self, 58.3 % (n=507) of the fathers got married free will.

### **Data Collection Tools**

In this study conducted with the aim of investigating the involvement of fathers in the lives of children attending preschool in the Ankara, Trabzon, and Erzurum population, the Personal Information Form developed by the researcher was used to determine the demographic information of children and their fathers, and "Father Involvement Scale" developed by Sımsıkı and Şendil (2014) was used to investigate the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children.

**Father Involvement Scale:** The Father Involvement Scale was developed by Sımsıkı and Şendil (2014) to measure how often the fathers of 3-6 year-olds attended activities with their children and what type of activities they attended. Scale was found that scale items were collected under three factors. These sub-dimensions were arbitrary preoccupation, attention and closeness, and primary care. It was determined that 41.7% of the variance was explained by 37 items in the scale.

The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for arbitrary preoccupation dimension was 0.89; for the dimension of attention and closeness the coefficient was 0.88, for the primary care dimension the coefficient was 0.83. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the entire scale was calculated as 0.92. The test retest reliability coefficient was 0.92 for the arbitrary preoccupation subscale, 0.99 for the attention and closeness subscale, 0.94 for the primary care subscale, and 0.98 for the entire scale (Sımsıkı & Şendil, 2014).

The items in the Father Involvement Scale are in the form of behaviors, and the items are rated as 5-point likert type scale. Separate point scores are obtained for each sub-dimension. The total score of the scale is also used.

Within the scope of this study, opinions of the fathers of 48-66 month old children attending pre-school education institutions were taken. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated for each subscale

and the total scores of the scale in order to determine the reliability of the answers given by the fathers to the scale items. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient calculated for the arbitrary preoccupation sub-dimension in accordance with father's responses was 0.867; the coefficient for the attention and Closeness sub-dimension was 0.786; and the coefficient for the primary care sub-dimension was 0.831. The reliability coefficient calculated for the whole scale was also calculated to be 0.908. It was determined that the Father Involvement Scale was reliable.

### **Data Collection**

"Personal Information Form" and "Father Involvement Scale" were used as data collection tools in the study. After obtaining the required permissions, administrators and classroom teachers were informed about the purpose of the implementation by going to the independent kindergartens and preschools in the central districts of Ankara, Trabzon and Erzurum. With the help of teachers, a parents' meeting for fathers was planned and the scale was distributed to the fathers who attended these meetings. For the parents who could not attend the meeting, short interviews were arranged at the entrance and exit of schools, and fathers were informed about the purpose of the research. In the schools where the meetings could not be held, the forms were distributed to the fathers by the teachers and the data were collected within a certain period of time. Within the scope of the study, the scale was distributed to 2500 fathers, but a total of 870 fathers constituted the study sample due to scales that were not returned or excluded scales with missing information that did not meet the criteria.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to answer the research questions, descriptive statistics related to the data sets obtained from the data collection tools were first calculated. Then, the data were analyzed in the direction of answering the sub-problems of the research. In the analysis process, first the variances were tested with the Levene test to see if they were homogeneous. In cases where the variances were homogeneous, parametric tests were used, and

in cases where the variances were non-homogeneous, nonparametric tests were used. One-way ANOVA and independent samples t-test were used when the variances were homogeneous, and Kruskal Wallis test was used when the variances were non-homogeneous. Mann-Whitney U test was performed to determine which groups the differences were in when there was a significant difference.

## Findings

The findings obtained from the analysis of the data are presented in tables and the results are evaluated.

*Table 1. Difference Test Results of the Father Involvement Scale According to Provinces*

FIS	Provinces	n	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	Test, p
Arbitrary Preoccupation	Ankara	297	58,85±12,02	*F= 0,732
	Trabzon	325	57,78±11,19	p= 0,481
	Erzurum	248	58,00±11,34	
Attention and Closeness	Ankara	297	54,65±6,31	**X <sup>2</sup> = 2,766
	Trabzon	325	55,49±5,29	p= 0,251
	Erzurum	248	54,29±6,60	
Primary Care	Ankara	297	27,00±7,52	F= 0,593
	Trabzon	325	27,58±7,47	p= 0,553
	Erzurum	248	27,61±7,88	
Total	Ankara	297	140,51±21,49	F= 0,144
	Trabzon	325	141,00±20,28	p= 0,866
	Erzurum	248	139,91±21,08	

\* One way variance analysis, \*\* Kruskal Wallis test

When Table 1 was examined, it was found that the arbitrary preoccupation, attention and closeness, primary care sub-scales of the Father Involvement Scale (FIS) did not show any significant difference between the provinces ( $F_{(2,869)}=0,732$ ;  $p>0,05$ ).

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that no significant difference was found in the Arbitrary Preoccupation sub-scale of the FIS for fathers living in Ankara ( $X^2=3.953$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) and Erzurum ( $X^2=1.914$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) according to the age of the child. However, a significant difference was found in the Arbitrary Preoccupation sub-scale for the fathers living in Trabzon in favor of the fathers with a child of 4 years old ( $\bar{X}=60.66\pm11.77$ ) ( $X^2=10.949$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

*Table 2. Difference Test Results of Father Involvement Scale According to the Age of the Child*

FIS	Provinces	Age of Child	N	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	Test, p	
Arbitrary Preoccupation	Ankara	4	32	61,78±15,21	** $X^2=3,953$	
		5	164	59,53±11,99	$p=0,139$	
		6	101	56,82±10,67		
	Trabzon	4	41	60,66±11,77	$X^2=10,949$	
		5	164	58,73±11,79	$p=0,004$	
		6	120	55,49±9,72		
	Erzurum	4	25	61,96±14,62	$X^2=1,914$	
		5	129	57,71±9,56	$p=0,384$	
		6	94	57,35±12,49		
	Attention and Closeness	Ankara	4	32	56,09±4,05	* $F=1,108$
			5	164	54,30±6,77	$p=0,332$
			6	101	54,76±6,11	
Trabzon		4	41	56,29±3,48	$F=0,567$	
		5	164	55,31±6,33	$p=0,568$	
		6	120	55,46±4,11		
Erzurum		4	25	54,36±5,01	$F=2,029$	
		5	129	55,04±5,95	$p=0,134$	
		6	94	53,24±7,64		
Primary Care		Ankara	4	32	27,19±6,62	$F=0,423$
			5	164	27,31±7,67	$p=0,656$
			6	101	26,45±7,59	
	Trabzon	4	41	25,29±6,06	$F=4,502$	
		5	164	28,71±7,95	$p=0,012$	
		6	120	26,83±6,99		
	Erzurum	4	25	27,56±7,73	$F=0,015$	
		5	129	27,54±7,56	$p=0,985$	
		6	94	27,72±8,42		
	Total	Ankara	4	32	145,06±23,37	$F=1,466$
			5	164	141,14±22,00	$p=0,233$
			6	101	138,03±19,88	
Trabzon		4	41	142,24±17,31	$F=2,297$	
		5	164	142,74±22,52	$p=0,102$	
		6	120	137,78±16,33		
Erzurum		4	25	143,88±24,00	$F=0,731$	
		5	129	140,29±18,08	$p=0,483$	
		6	94	138,32±23,97		

\* One way variance analysis, \*\* Kruskal Wallis test

When the attention and closeness sub-scale scores were investigated according to the age of the child, no significant difference was found in the attention and closeness sub-scale scores of fathers living in Ankara

( $F_{(2,296)}=1,108$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), Trabzon ( $F_{(2,324)}=0,567$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), and Erzurum ( $F_{(2,247)}=2,029$ ;  $p>0,05$ ).

When primary care sub-scale scores were investigated, no significant difference was found in the scores of fathers living in Ankara ( $F_{(2,296)}=0,423$ ;  $p>0,05$ ) and Erzurum ( $F_{(2,247)}=0,015$ ;  $p>0,05$ ) according to the age of the child. However, a significant difference was found in the Arbitrary Preoccupation sub-scale for the fathers living in Trabzon in favor of the fathers with a child of 5 years old ( $\bar{X}=28,71\pm7,95$ ) ( $F_{(2,324)}=4,502$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). When the total FIS scores were investigated, it can be seen that the involvement levels of fathers in the lives of their children do not show a significant difference in Ankara ( $F_{(2,296)}=1,466$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), Trabzon ( $F_{(2,247)}=2,297$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), and Erzurum ( $F_{(2,324)}=0,731$ ;  $p>0,05$ ) according to the age of the child.

*Table 3. Independent Samples t-test Results of Father Involvements Scale According to the Gender of the Child*

FIS	Provinces	Gender of Child	N	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	t	p
Arbitrary Preoccupation	Ankara	Girl	144	57,56±12,30	1,810	0,071
		Boy	153	60,07±11,65		
	Trabzon	Girl	175	56,69±12,75	1,894	0,059
		Boy	150	59,04±8,91		
	Erzurum	Girl	115	57,90±10,98	0,128	0,898
		Boy	133	58,09±11,69		
Attention and Closeness	Ankara	Girl	144	54,36±6,67	0,764	0,445
		Boy	153	54,92±5,96		
	Trabzon	Girl	175	54,82±6,37	2,495	0,013
		Boy	150	56,27±3,50		
	Erzurum	Girl	115	55,44±6,00	2,589	0,010
		Boy	133	53,29±6,94		
Primary Care	Ankara	Girl	144	26,31±7,67	1,539	0,125
		Boy	153	27,65±7,34		
	Trabzon	Girl	175	26,17±7,78	3,767	0,000
		Boy	150	29,23±6,74		
	Erzurum	Girl	115	26,69±7,15	1,728	0,085
		Boy	133	28,41±8,41		
Total	Ankara	Girl	144	138,23±22,68	1,777	0,077
		Boy	153	142,65±20,14		
	Trabzon	Girl	175	137,67±22,31	3,148	0,002
		Boy	150	144,55±15,91		
	Erzurum	Girl	115	140,03±19,50	0,088	0,930
		Boy	133	139,80±22,43		

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that no significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale scores of fathers living in Ankara ( $t_{(295)}=1,180$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), Trabzon ( $t_{(323)}=1,894$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), and Erzurum ( $t_{(246)}=0,128$ ;  $p>0,05$ ) according to the gender of the child.

When attention and closeness subscale scores were examined, it was found that there was no significant difference in the attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers living in Ankara according to the gender of the child ( $t_{(295)}=0,764$ ;  $p>0,05$ ). However, a significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers living in Trabzon in favor of the fathers having boys ( $\bar{X}=56,27\pm 3,50$ ) ( $t_{(323)}=2,495$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). Contrary to this finding, a significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers living in Trabzon in favor of the fathers having girls ( $\bar{X}=55,44\pm 6,00$ ) ( $t_{(246)}=2,589$   $p<0,05$ ).

When primary care subscale scores were examined, it was found that there was no significant difference in the attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers living in Ankara ( $t_{(295)}=1,539$ ;  $p>0,05$ ) and Erzurum ( $t_{(246)}=2,589$   $p<0,05$ ) according to the gender of the child. However, a significant difference was found in the primary care subscale scores of fathers living in Trabzon in favor of the fathers having boys ( $\bar{X}=29,23\pm 6,74$ ) ( $t_{(323)}=3,767$ ;  $p<0,05$ ).

When FIS total scores were examined, it can be seen that the involvement levels of fathers in the lives of their children did not show a significant difference in Ankara ( $t_{(295)}=1,777$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), Trabzon ( $F_{(2,247)}=2,297$ ;  $p>0,05$ ), and Erzurum ( $t_{(246)}=0,088$ ;  $p>0,05$ ) according to the gender of the child. However, it was found that the involvement levels of fathers in the lives of their children were higher for fathers of boys ( $\bar{X}=144,55\pm 15,91$ ) than fathers of girls ( $\bar{X}=137,67\pm 22,31$ ).

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that a significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale of FIS according to the age of the father, in favor of fathers living in Ankara who were  $\geq 41$  years old ( $\bar{X}=55,10\pm 11,81$ ) ( $F_{(2,296)}=4,403$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). A significant difference was also found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale in favor of fathers living in Trabzon who were  $\leq 35$  years old ( $\bar{X}=61,28\pm 12,17$ ) ( $F_{(2,324)}=15,296$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). Moreover, it was found that the arbitrary preoccupation subscale scores of fathers at the age of 36-40 were found to be higher than that of fathers aged  $\geq 41$ . In addition, it was found that as the age of fathers living in

Trabzon increased, the scores obtained from the arbitrary preoccupation subscale decreased. A significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale for fathers living in Erzurum in favor of fathers who were  $\geq 41$  years old ( $\bar{X}=50,77\pm 8,16$ ) ( $F_{(2,247)}=16,564$ ;  $p<0,05$ ).

*Table 4. Results of Difference Test for Father Involvement Scale According to the Age of Father*

FIS	Provinces	Age of Father	N	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	Test, p	
Arbitrary Preoccupation	Ankara	$\leq 35$	111	59,84 $\pm$ 13,20	*F= 4,403	
		36-40	118	60,08 $\pm$ 10,54	p= 0,013	
		$\geq 41$	68	55,10 $\pm$ 11,81		
	Trabzon	$\leq 35$	140	61,28 $\pm$ 12,17	F= 15,296	
		36-40	121	56,32 $\pm$ 9,35	p= 0,000	
		$\geq 41$	64	52,86 $\pm$ 9,73		
	Erzurum	$\leq 35$	120	58,88 $\pm$ 11,30	F= 16,564	
		36-40	76	61,58 $\pm$ 11,19	p= 0,000	
		$\geq 41$	52	50,77 $\pm$ 8,16		
	Attention and Closeness	Ankara	$\leq 35$	111	54,95 $\pm$ 6,06	**X <sup>2</sup> = 0,582
			36-40	118	55,42 $\pm$ 4,32	p= 0,747
			$\geq 41$	68	52,84 $\pm$ 8,87	
Trabzon		$\leq 35$	140	56,69 $\pm$ 5,73	X <sup>2</sup> = 51,847	
		36-40	121	55,27 $\pm$ 3,56	p= 0,000	
		$\geq 41$	64	53,27 $\pm$ 6,23		
Erzurum		$\leq 35$	120	54,74 $\pm$ 6,51	X <sup>2</sup> = 10,465	
		36-40	76	55,04 $\pm$ 5,77	p= 0,005	
		$\geq 41$	52	52,15 $\pm$ 7,55		
Primary Care		Ankara	$\leq 35$	111	26,76 $\pm$ 7,90	F= 1,050
			36-40	118	27,73 $\pm$ 7,52	p= 0,351
			$\geq 41$	68	26,15 $\pm$ 6,85	
	Trabzon	$\leq 35$	140	29,82 $\pm$ 7,15	F= 12,904	
		36-40	121	26,44 $\pm$ 7,16	p= 0,000	
		$\geq 41$	64	24,84 $\pm$ 7,42		
	Erzurum	$\leq 35$	120	27,11 $\pm$ 8,52	F= 3,003	
		36-40	76	29,37 $\pm$ 6,95	p= 0,051	
		$\geq 41$	52	26,21 $\pm$ 7,29		
	Total	Ankara	$\leq 35$	111	141,54 $\pm$ 23,17	F=4,197
			36-40	118	143,23 $\pm$ 17,47	p= 0,016
			$\geq 41$	68	134,09 $\pm$ 23,86	
Trabzon		$\leq 35$	140	147,79 $\pm$ 21,67	F=19,678	
		36-40	121	138,03 $\pm$ 15,75	p= 0,000	
		$\geq 41$	64	130,97 $\pm$ 17,43		
Erzurum		$\leq 35$	120	140,73 $\pm$ 20,84	F=10,842	
		36-40	76	145,99 $\pm$ 20,05	p= 0,000	
		$\geq 41$	52	129,13 $\pm$ 19,30		

When attention and closeness subscale scores were examined, no significant difference was found in the subscale scores of fathers living in Ankara according to the age of the father ( $X^2_{(2)}=0,582$ ;  $p>0,05$ ). A significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers living in Trabzon according to the age of the father, in favor of fathers  $\leq 35$  years old ( $\bar{X}=56,69\pm 5,73$ ) ( $X^2_{(2)}=51,847$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). The attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers  $\leq 35$  years old were found to be higher than fathers at the age of 36-40. In other words, as the age of the fathers increase, the scores obtained from attention and closeness subscale decrease. A significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers living in Erzurum according to the age of the father, in favor of fathers  $\geq 41$  years old ( $\bar{X}=52,15\pm 7,55$ ) ( $X^2_{(2)}=10,465$ ;  $p<0,05$ ).

When primary care subscale scores were examined, no significant difference was found in the subscale scores of fathers living in Ankara according to the age of the father ( $F_{(2,296)}=1,050$ ;  $p>0,05$ ). A significant difference was found in the primary care subscale scores of fathers living in Trabzon according to the age of the father, in favor of fathers  $\leq 35$  years old ( $\bar{X}=29,82\pm 7,15$ ) ( $F_{(2,324)}=12,904$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). No significant difference was found in the primary care subscale scores of fathers living in Erzurum according to the age of the father ( $F_{(2,247)}=3,003$ ;  $p>0,05$ ).

When total FIS scores were examined, a significant difference was found in the scores of fathers living in Ankara according to the age of the father ( $F_{(2,296)}=4,197$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers  $\geq 41$  years old ( $\bar{X}=134,09\pm 23,86$ ). A significant difference was also found in the total scores of fathers living in Trabzon according to the age of the father ( $F_{(2,324)}=19,678$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers  $\leq 35$  years old ( $\bar{X}=147,79\pm 21,67$ ). A significant difference was found in the total scores of fathers living in Erzurum according to the age of the father ( $F_{(2,247)}=2,008$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers  $\geq 41$  years old ( $\bar{X}=129,13\pm 19,30$ ).

When Table 5 was examined, a significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers living in Ankara according to the educational status of the father ( $F_{(3,296)}=4,403$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=60,52\pm 12,11$ ). A significant difference was also found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers living in Trabzon according to the educational status of the father

( $F_{(3,324)}=15,296$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=60,50\pm 11,90$ ). A significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers living in Erzurum according to the educational status of the father ( $F_{(3,247)}=16,564$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers with a graduate degree ( $\bar{X}=64,12\pm 14,16$ ).

*Table 5. Results of Difference Test for Father Involvement Scale According to the Educational Status of the Father*

FIS	Provinces	Fathers' Educational Status	N	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	Test, p
Arbitrary Preoccupation	Ankara	Below High School	23	49,39±13,22	*F= 7,066 p= 0,000
		High School	50	56,46±10,61	
		University	188	60,52±12,11	
		Graduate	36	59,50±9,39	
	Trabzon	Below High School	59	53,83±11,81	F= 5,843 p= 0,001
		High School	116	57,21±9,35	
		University	131	60,50±11,90	
		Graduate	19	54,74±10,33	
	Erzurum	Below High School	38	52,24±9,02	F= 5,385 p= 0,001
		High School	68	58,81±12,54	
		University	125	58,49±10,25	
		Graduate	17	64,12±14,16	
Attention and Closeness	Ankara	Below High School	23	51,83±11,29	**X <sup>2</sup> = 13,346 p= 0,004
		High School	50	53,06±7,28	
		University	188	55,43±5,57	
		Graduate	36	54,58±2,16	
	Trabzon	Below High School	59	53,86±7,33	X <sup>2</sup> = 18,185 p= 0,000
		High School	116	56,13±3,75	
		University	131	56,16±3,75	
		Graduate	19	52,05±8,50	
	Erzurum	Below High School	38	52,29±7,05	X <sup>2</sup> = 7,056 p= 0,070
		High School	68	53,54±8,73	
		University	125	55,07±5,18	
		Graduate	17	56,00±3,20	
	Ankara	Below High School	23	21,52±7,26	F=5,161 p= 0,002
		High School	50	26,72±6,73	
		University	188	27,85±7,59	
		Graduate	36	26,47±7,10	

Primary Care	Trabzon	Below High School	59	24,15±6,95	F=8,716 p= 0,000
		High School	116	27,39±8,01	
		University	131	29,64±6,80	
		Graduate	19	25,21±5,42	
	Erzurum	Below High School	38	29,55±7,51	F= 1,898 p= 0,131
		High School	68	27,54±8,50	
		University	125	26,72±7,40	
		Graduate	17	30,12±8,92	
Total	Ankara	Below High School	23	147,79±21,67	F=7,886 p= 0,000
		High School	50	147,79±21,67	
		University	188	147,79±21,67	
		Graduate	36	147,79±21,67	
	Trabzon	Below High School	59	131,85±23,41	F=9,202 p= 0,000
		High School	116	140,72±17,48	
		University	131	146,29±18,23	
		Graduate	19	132,00±20,96	
	Erzurum	Below High School	38	134,08±19,70	F=2,381 p= 0,070
		High School	68	139,90±25,17	
		University	125	140,28±18,29	
		Graduate	17	150,24±22,88	

\* One way variance analysis, \*\* Kruskal Wallis test

A significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale score of fathers living in Ankara according to the educational status of the father ( $X^2_{(3)}=13,346$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=55,43\pm5,57$ ). A significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale score of fathers living in Trabzon according to the educational status of the father ( $X^2_{(3)}=18,185$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of high school ( $\bar{X}=56,13\pm3,75$ ) and university graduates ( $\bar{X}=56,16\pm3,75$ ). No significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale of fathers living in Erzurum according to the educational status of the father ( $X^2_{(2)}=7,056$ ;  $p>0,05$ ).

A significant difference was found in the primary care subscale score of fathers living in Ankara according to the educational status of the father ( $X^2_{(3)}=13,346$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=27,85\pm7,59$ ). A significant difference was also found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers living in Trabzon according to the educational

status of the father ( $F_{(3,324)}=8,716$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=29,64\pm 6,80$ ). However, no significant difference was found in the primary care subscale of fathers living in Erzurum according to the educational status of the father ( $F_{(3,247)}=1,898$ ;  $p>0,05$ ).

When total FIS scores were examined, a significant difference was found in the scores of fathers living in Ankara according to the educational status of the father ( $F_{(3,296)}=7,886$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=147,79\pm 21,67$ ). Similarly, a significant difference was also found in the total scores of fathers living in Trabzon according to the educational status of the father ( $F_{(3,324)}=9,202$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of university graduates ( $\bar{X}=146,29\pm 18,23$ ). However, no significant difference was found in the total scale scores of fathers living in Erzurum according to the educational status of the father ( $F_{(3,247)}=2,381$ ;  $p>0,05$ ).

As seen in Table 6, a significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers living in Ankara according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,296)}=14,218$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). The arbitrary preoccupation subscale scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $\bar{X}=48,35\pm 10,87$ ) were lower than the scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request ( $\bar{X}=57,67\pm 10,56$ ), or married by free will ( $\bar{X}=60,91\pm 12,03$ ). Moreover, the arbitrary preoccupation subscale scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request were lower than the scores of fathers who got married by free will. Similarly, a significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers living in Trabzon according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,324)}=35,425$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). Based on the LSD test results, it was found that the arbitrary preoccupation subscale scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $\bar{X}=40,00\pm 7,22$ ) were lower than the scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request ( $\bar{X}=54,35\pm 9,21$ ), or married by free will ( $\bar{X}=60,19\pm 10,63$ ). In Erzurum, a significant difference was found in the arbitrary preoccupation subscale score of fathers according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,247)}=10,282$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers who got married by free will ( $\bar{X}=62,03\pm 11,00$ ).

Table 6. Results of Difference Test for Father Involvement Scale According to Father's Marriage Type

FIS	Provinces	Type of Marriage	N	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	Test, p
Arbitrary preoccupation	Ankara	AF	26	48,35±10,87	*F= 14,218
		AS	88	57,67±10,56	p= 0,000
		FW	183	60,91±12,03	
	Trabzon	AF	16	40,00±7,22	F= 35,425
		AS	79	54,35±9,21	p= 0,000
		FW	230	60,19±10,63	
	Erzurum	AF	63	55,68±10,61	F= 10,282
		AS	91	55,35±11,31	p= 0,000
		FW	94	62,03±11,00	
Attention and Closeness	Ankara	AF	26	48,69±9,75	**X <sup>2</sup> = 15,087
		AS	88	54,90±5,61	p= 0,001
		FW	183	55,38±5,47	
	Trabzon	AF	16	47,63±11,54	X <sup>2</sup> = 28,601
		AS	79	54,14±4,57	p= 0,000
		FW	230	56,50±4,21	
	Erzurum	AF	63	51,30±7,12	X <sup>2</sup> = 27,134
		AS	91	56,59±3,72	p= 0,000
		FW	94	54,06±7,56	
Primary Care	Ankara	AF	26	21,35±6,50	F= 8,562
		AS	88	27,27±6,66	p= 0,000
		FW	183	27,68±7,74	
	Trabzon	AF	16	18,69±7,85	F= 12,923
		AS	79	27,72±7,71	p= 0,000
		FW	230	28,15±6,98	
	Erzurum	AF	63	26,35±9,11	F= 3,669
		AS	91	27,72±7,12	p= 0,027
		FW	94	29,32±7,30	
Total	Ankara	AF	26	118,38±39	F=18,056
		AS	88	139,84±19,00	p= 0,000
		FW	183	143,97±21,12	
	Trabzon	AF	16	106,31±25,12	F=37,943
		AS	79	136,22±15,79	p= 0,000
		FW	230	144,84±18,07	
	Erzurum	AF	63	133,00±22,54	F=6,999
		AS	91	139,00±17,48	p= 0,001
		FW	94	145,42±21,95	

\* One way variance analysis, \*\* Kruskal Wallis test / AF: Arranged – Family, AS: Arranged – Self, FW: Free Will

When attention and closeness subscale scores were examined, a significant difference was found in the subscale score of fathers living in

Ankara according to the type of marriage ( $X^2_{(2)}=15,087$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). The attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $\bar{X}=48,69\pm9,75$ ) were found to be lower than the scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request, or married by free will. A significant difference was found in the attention and closeness subscale score of fathers living in Ankara according to the type of marriage ( $X^2_{(2)}=28,601$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers who got married by free will ( $\bar{X}=56,50\pm4,21$ ). A significant difference was also found in the subscale score of fathers living in Erzurum according to the type of marriage ( $X^2_{(2)}=27,134$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). The attention and closeness subscale scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $X^2_{(2)}=27,134$ ;  $p<0,05$ ) were significantly lower. In addition, it was found that the attention and closeness subscale score of fathers in Erzurum who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request were higher than that of fathers who got married by free will.

When primary care subscale scores were examined, a significant difference was found in the subscale score of fathers living in Ankara according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,296)}=8,562$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). Based on the analysis, the primary care subscale scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $\bar{X}=21,35\pm6,50$ ) were found to be lower than the scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request ( $\bar{X}=27,27\pm6,66$ ), or married by free will ( $\bar{X}=27,68\pm7,74$ ). A significant difference was found in the primary care subscale score of fathers living in Trabzon according to the type of marriage ( $\bar{X}=18,69\pm7,85$ ). The scores of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request were significantly lower ( $\bar{X}=18,69\pm7,85$ ). A significant difference was found in the primary care subscale score of fathers living in Erzurum according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,247)}=3,669$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers who got married by free will ( $\bar{X}=29,32\pm7,30$ ).

When total FIS scores were examined, a significant difference was found in the total scores of fathers living in Ankara according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,296)}=18,056$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). The involvement levels of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $\bar{X}=118,38\pm39$ ) were significantly lower than that of fathers who got mar-

ried by arranged marriage based on their own request ( $\bar{X}=139,84\pm 19,00$ ), or married by free will ( $\bar{X}=143,97\pm 21,12$ ).

Similarly, a significant difference was also found in the total scores of fathers living in Trabzon according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,324)}=37,943$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). Based on the LSD test results, the involvement levels of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on family request ( $\bar{X}=106,31\pm 25,12$ ) were significantly lower than that of fathers who got married by arranged marriage based on their own request ( $\bar{X}=136,22\pm 15,79$ ), or married by free will ( $\bar{X}=144,84\pm 18,07$ ). In Erzurum, a significant difference was found in the total FIS scores of fathers according to the type of marriage ( $F_{(2,247)}=6,999$ ;  $p<0,05$ ), in favor of fathers who got married by free will ( $\bar{X}=145,42\pm 21,95$ ).

## **Discussion, Conclusion, Suggestions**

In this study, it was aimed to examine the involvement of fathers in the life of their children who are attending a preschool education institution in Ankara, Trabzon and Erzurum provinces. The research also examined whether the father's involvement in the child's life was significantly different according to some demographic characteristics of the fathers (age, educational status and type of marriage) and the children (age, gender). In this section of the study, the findings of the statistical analyses performed on the scores of the father's involvement scale were discussed and evaluations were presented.

As a result of this study, it has been determined that the involvement of the father in the life of the child in Ankara, Trabzon and Erzurum provinces were similar to each other. It can be said that the involvement of the father in the child's life contributes to all of the development areas of the child as well as his/her academic skills when we consider that children also take fathers as their role models as well as their mothers in the early childhood period.

According to the research findings, the fathers are involved in the life of their children at similar levels in three major cities of Central Anatolia, Black Sea and Eastern Anatolia regions. This can be explained as the effect of the rapid change in industry and technology, an increase in women's participation in business life, and the changing role of paternity

as a result. Although some differences can be seen in the involvement level of fathers in the life of their children based on various demographic characteristics in the provincial level, it can be said that the perspective of fathers towards their children, and their participation to their children's care and education are at similar levels in the capitol of Turkey and the provinces in the eastern regions. Similar to the research findings, In his study on the attitudes of young people towards the role of fatherhood and their father's behavior in relation to socio-demographic factors, Karadayı (2001) found that the view of the paternity role of university students from Eastern Anatolia was as contemporary as the students from the Mediterranean, Aegean-Marmara regions.

Another finding of the research is that the involvement of the father in the child's life shows a statistically significant difference according to the age of the child. From this point of view, it can be said that fathers are more involved and interested in the children who start to grow out of infancy and start pre-school education. While more mothers are more engaged in children's self-care during infancy, fathers generally begin to participate in the child's life at the end of the second year. In particular, the time spent by the father with the child is increasing as the child comes to the age of play (Haşıl-Korkmaz & Taner-Derman, 2014; Özgün, Aydılek-Çiftçi & Erden, 2013; Türkoğlu, Çeliköz & Uslu, 2013). Similar to our study, in their study investigating the consensus among the spouse statements in terms of paternal involvement, Coley and Morris (2002) found that characteristics of the child, such as the age and gender of the child, did not affect the level of paternal involvement.

However, in the research findings, it is seen that the fathers of 6 years old children in Trabzon province got lower points in the arbitrary preoccupation and primary care subscale scores compared to fathers of 5 and 4 years old children. It can be said that as the child grows older, the time spent by the father with the child and father's involvement in the primary care activities of the child decrease. Studies have also indicated that as the child's age increases, the involvement of fathers in the child's care activities decreases (Coverman & Sheley 1986; Levy-Shiff, Sharir & Mogilner 1989; O'Connell 1993). Stevenson and Baker (1987), in their study investigating family school relations and school performance of children,

points out that the importance and effects of parents' family involvement diminish as children grow (Cited by Mwoma, 2009). In his study on the effects of gender ideologies in parental involvement in children, Bulanda (2004) points out that the involvement of father decreases as children grow older. In their study on the relationship between father and infant. When all these results are compared with the research findings, it can be said that the same situation still continues today. The fact that there is no difference in the sub-dimension of attention and closeness shows that the child's age does not affect his or her warm and close relationship with the father. As a matter of fact, Türkoğlu and Gültekin Akduman (2016) determined that the role of fatherhood perceived by fathers did not show any significant difference according to the age of children.

However, contrary to the research findings, in their study investigating the functions of fathers during the first six weeks after birth, McVeigh, John and Cameron (2005) reported that as the baby's age increased, the participation of the fathers increased. Similarly, in their study investigating the effects of paternal involvement on fathers and mothers, Lamb, Pleck and Levine (1986) reported that the father's involvement increased in a directly proportional manner to the age of the child. Tiedje and Darling-Fisher (1996) investigated fatherhood in an in-depth and critical manner and found that as the child's age increased, the involvement of fathers in child care increased.

One of the important findings of the research is that there is no significant difference in the arbitrary preoccupation sub-dimension according to the gender of the child in all three provinces. It can be said that fathers spend time together with both girls and boys playing games, watching TV, going to the cinema, picnic and parks. In terms of provinces, the fact that the gender of the child in Ankara province had no effect on paternal involvement can be explained by the heterogeneous population structure and the socio-cultural characteristics of the parents being different than other provinces. This finding is consistent with the findings of Evans (1997), reporting that the gender of the child does not affect the attitude and behavior of the father towards the child. Similarly, Easterbrooks and Goldberg (1984) noted that for all three sub-dimensions of father involvement, there was no difference in the mean scores according to child's gender, but a difference was observed only

when an assessment was made with the total scores of the father involvement measures. According to this, it was found that fathers were more likely to spend time with boys than girls. At the same time, fathers were found to be more strongly associated with the development of boys than girls. As in this study, some studies on the involvement of the father in the child's life indicated that the father participated more effectively in the lives of boys, and in some studies no difference was found between the genders. Studies indicate that fathers show interest in their children regardless of gender especially in the preschool period. Looking at the past and present studies, Marsiglio (1991), Evans (1997), Coley and Morris (2002) and Paulson, Dauber and Leiferman (2010), Sımsıkı (2011) have also found that child gender has no effect on father involvement. Thus, the lack of difference in fathers' involvement according to gender suggests that it may be linked to changing societal roles and increased knowledge gains about the importance of father in the child's life.

However, when we look at Trabzon province, it is thought provoking that despite the time spent by fathers with their children is similar for boys and girls, there is a difference in favor of boys in the participation of the father in primary care activities and the close relationship established with the child. This result can be attributed to fathers in Trabzon province being less involved in the primary care activities of girls such as body cleaning and toilet training compared to boys, the traditional life style being dominant in this province, and the effect of gender roles. According to some researchers, gender is in fact one of the determinants of father involvement (Aldous, Mulligan & Bjarnason, 1998; Bird, Bird & Scruggs, 1984). Gender indicates the roles that individuals identify as appropriate for men and women, as well as shaping their own behavior (Duran, 2010).

Fathers who have a traditional father role have less time for their children and participate less in child care. However, because they support their families economically, they perceive themselves as active and responsible in the child's life (Feldman, Nash & Aschenbrenner, 1983). It can be said that this is caused by the traditional and social role attributed to the father. In another study, Ögüt (1998) found that fathers were taking more responsibility in primary care for boys. According to this study, fathers spend more time in the context of verbal interaction with their

daughters, while playing mostly educationally and cognitively oriented games with their boys. Hence, it is mentioned that fathers of boys and girls tend to interact with their children in different ways.

Tiedje and Darling-Fisher (1996) found that fathers of boys spend more time with their children. In a study by Hudson, Elek and Fleck (2001), the status of parents at the time of first transition into parenting were examined according to the variables of self-efficacy, parenting satisfaction and child's gender in infant care, and it was found that fathers felt more comfortable in caring for boys than girls.

Turkish society is generally a male dominated society known for its traditional family structure. Despite various socio-economic changes, it maintains its basic structure. However, with the increase of post-republican urbanization, the relations within the family have also changed. However, in rural areas, role distributions that remain unchanged within the family still continue today. One of these is that the boy is the only assurance of the family, and brings social adoration and respect to the family (Ozankaya, 1999, p 551; Telli, 2014). It can be said that the reason why the emotional proximity of father to boys in Trabzon is higher than that of girls is that the cultural structure of the Black Sea Region is influential on fathers living in Trabzon. Similarly, Öksüz (2004) investigated the sociological structure of the province of Trabzon and found that families wished to have children of both genders with a preference of more boys, and if families had several boys, they did not wish to make more children to have girls, but when the opposite was the case, the wish to have boys increased.

When we look at the findings, no difference was found in arbitrary preoccupation, primary care sub-dimensions and total involvement in Erzurum province, whereas a significant difference was found in the attention and closeness sub-dimension in favor of girls. Research findings that are consistent to this result have also been reported. McBride, Schoppe, and Rane (2002) examined the relationship between perceived temperament of children by the mothers and fathers, the amount of stress experienced in their parenting roles, and their participation in childrearing activities. As a result of the research, it was determined that fathers with girls had more interaction and involvement compared to fathers with boys.

Based on the research findings, it was determined that fathers in Ankara, Erzurum and Trabzon provinces aged 35 or younger showed more involvement in the life of the child compared to fathers aged 36-40 and 41 or older based on the total FIS scores obtained. In other words, it can be said that as fathers' ages increase, their involvement in the child's life decrease. Based on this result, it can be said that older fathers do not have much interest in their paternal duties compared to younger fathers. In addition, taking into account the fact that all fathers participating in the study were working and their children were attending preschool, and considering the conditions in our country, we can say that a male adult can achieve success in his career around the age of 36 or more, and this may cause a decrease in the interest towards fatherhood. As a matter of fact, in their study, Seer, eliköz and Yaşa (2007) found that fathers under 35 years of age had higher levels of interest in fatherhood than fathers over 36 years of age and their participation in care of babies decreased as the age of father increased.

However, when we look at the data in terms of sub-dimensions, despite the results in favor of younger fathers for the arbitrary preoccupation in all three provinces, it was also observed that father's involvement increased as the age of the father increased for primary care and attention and closeness sub-dimensions only in Trabzon province. In other words, it was determined that father involvement according to the age of the father was similar in Ankara and Erzurum provinces. The lack of a significant difference in these provinces according to the age of the father may be due to the unchanging interest and close relationship that the father has for his children, regardless of age. In the same way, it can be explained by the fact that their age does not have an effect in fulfilling their responsibility for the care of their children. Parallel to this finding of the research, Sevil and Özkan (2009), and Kuruçırak (2010) found that the increase in the father's age is not effective on the involvement of the father in the infant and child care, and that the fathers have similar socio-cultural fatherhood perception, knowledge and skills, regardless of age.

Contrary to research findings, Castillo, Welch and Sarver. (2011) investigated the relationship between fathers' residence status, age, race and ethnicity, education level, financial status and father involvement, and found that fathers of older age showed more care for the care and

education of the child. Marsiglio (1991) found that as fathers' age increased, they were more willing to participate in the child's education and care. Similarly, Şahin (2012) found that family involvement of fathers aged 40 years and over was significantly higher than that of fathers below 40 years of age. According to these results, it is stated that older fathers give more importance to the education of children and that their involvement in this process is higher than that of younger fathers.

When we looked at the findings of FIS total score averages according to educational status, we found that the involvement scores increased as the educational status of the father increased, and the difference was statistically significant. In this study, the involvement of university graduate fathers in the life of the child was found to be higher than high school graduates and below high school graduates. Indeed, as the father's educational status increases, he has a more modern, more democratic and flexible gender role, thus taking on more parental responsibility. In addition, the educated father participates more actively in the care of the child as he sees himself as more capable in child development (Hood, 1986; Coltrane, 1995; Kuzucu, 2011). According to Brich, education level, social class, race, rural and urban origin and gender influence an individual's self-sufficiency (Cited by Jones & Jolly, 2003). The high level of self-sufficiency of fathers is important for the ability to cope with paternity and also affects the satisfaction regarding the role of fatherhood (Reece & Harkless, 1998). On the other hand, it is expected that the father who has a higher education status is more satisfied with his job. As a matter of fact, Grossman, Pollack and Golding (1988) concluded in their studies that fathers better satisfied with their work had a better relationship with their children. Based on this explanation, as the educational status of the fathers' increases, the positive attitudes towards fatherhood and paternal involvement can be expected to increase. In parallel with the findings of the research, Blair, Wenk and Hardesty (1994) investigated marriage quality and paternal involvement and found that paternal involvement increased as the education level and income of the father increased. Similarly, Paquette, Bolte, Turcotte, Dubeau and Bouchard (2000) concluded that the level of education was positively correlated with father involvement in primary care, physical play and discipline. In Maridaki-Kassotaki's (2000) study of Greek fathers' in-

involvement in infant care, it was found that fathers with a low educational background and low status jobs living in rural areas were less likely to be involved than fathers with a high educational level and a high status job living in urban areas. Tezel Şahin and Özbey (2009) stated that fathers with a high education level were more easily adapted to participate in the activities of their children's school. In his study, Mwoma (2009) investigated the relationship between the level of involvement of fathers in their children's education and the performance of their children in kindergarten and the factors affecting their involvement, and found that father involvement varied according to the educational level and professions of fathers, and fathers with a higher educational status were involved more with the education of their children. Kuruçırak (2010) and Poyraz (2007) stated that fathers, who were university graduates, regarded themselves as more interested and capable in their children's care than other fathers. In addition, Sımsıkı (2011) found that fathers with university or graduate degrees had higher father involvement scores.

When we make a general evaluation based on the results of this study, it was determined that the fathers with university and higher education status had higher arbitrary preoccupation and total father involvement scores. However, no difference was found in Erzurum in primary care and attention and closeness sub-dimensions with respect to educational status of the father. This finding can be explained by educational status not affecting paternal responsibilities and the interest and closeness of the father for his child, whereas as the educational status increases, the father will be more conscious in terms of spending quality time with this child, thereby increasing the activities conducted with the child. In parallel with this finding of the study, Paulson et al. (2010) indicates that the level of education of the father does not have a significant effect on paternal involvement.

Based on the research findings, it is seen that paternal involvement significantly differs according to the type of marriage in all three provinces in favor of fathers who get married by their own free will. This can be explained by the fact that marriage with their partners based on free will affects the marital relationship as well as paternal responsibility for the care and education of their children. The support between spouses by establishing harmonious relationships with each other in married life

is also effective in fulfilling their responsibilities in the family in a healthier way. When we consider that fathers who get married based on the request of their families do not get enough satisfaction from the marriage, it can be said that their attitudes towards fatherhood and their interests towards children are affected negatively in relation to this. As a matter of fact, when the related literature was examined, no studies examining father involvement according to the marriage type of fathers were found.

However, given the fact that marriage relationship is directly influenced by the parents' marriage type, it would be useful to conduct studies that investigate the marriage relationship and harmony of the fathers. Paulson et al. (2010) reported that the quality of parental relationship is positively correlated with all areas of father involvement. As a matter of fact, Jacobs and Kelley (2006) found that men's marital satisfaction was significantly and positively related to direct contact in paternity. Likewise, Türkoğlu and Gültekin Akduman (2015) found that there was a significant relationship between father's perceptions of fatherhood role and support they received from their spouses, and as the support they receive from their spouses increased, fathers' perceptions of fatherhood role increased. Rosenberg and Wilcox (2006) reported that the positive relationship between parents and marital harmony directly increased the time spent by fathers with their children and care activities. Juhari, Yacob and Talib (2013) also stated that marriage quality was an important factor determining paternal involvement in the child's life. They stated that fathers who are satisfied with the marriage relationship tend to have positive relations with their children. Coley and Morris (2002) found that couples with low-level conflict reported higher levels of father involvement than those with higher levels of conflict. In the study of Williams (2009) investigating the paternal responsibility and involvement of African American fathers, it was found that the relationship between couples affected father's involvement and responsibility.

However, in contrast to the above findings, there are also studies reporting that marital relationship is not related to the dimensions of paternal involvement. Meteyer and Perry-Jenkins (2010) found that marital characteristics such as love and conflict did not predict levels of father involvement and changes in father involvement over time.

This research was carried out in Ankara-Trabzon-Erzurum sample. The study can be extended to other regions of Turkey by including more provinces across Turkey, and father involvement throughout Turkey can be studied. By doing so, regional and international differences may also be elucidated. In addition to regional differences, the involvement status of fathers in urban and rural areas can also be examined. In this study, the opinions of fathers were obtained through scales within the scope of quantitative research. Father involvement may also be studied by face-to-face interviews with fathers in various qualitative studies, or through father training programs conducted as part of experimental studies. Different researches can be applied by obtaining the views of not only the fathers but also the mothers, teachers, and also children according to their age group. In this way, it can be checked whether participants' opinions are consistent or not. Various comparisons can be made in this respect by examining the father involvement with fathers in different socio-economic and cultural levels. The results obtained in this study draw attention to the place and importance of the father in the life of the child. In this context, it can be ensured that the target group is defined as fathers as well as mothers' participation in pre-school education in the preschool education by developing and implementing father participation studies. In addition, different studies related to the subject can be planned in a long-term process and paternal involvement can be examined from a longitudinal perspective.

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