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Preschool Teachers' Opinions Towards to Multicultural Education*

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Abstract

It is almost impossible to talk about a monocultural society in the world that exist diversity and differences. Cultural diversity also makes its presence felt in schools, as in every atmosphere. Pre-school institutions, where children leave their home environment and are involved in the educational environment for the first time, are the places in which each child brings the cultural diversity of himself and his family, and in which peer interaction first occurs and develops. For these reasons, it is important to determine the views and practices of pre-school teachers about multiculturalism and its applications. In this study, a phenomenological research model, one of the qualitative research methods, was used by interviewing 23 preschool teachers working in official independent kindergartens in the city center of Diyarbakır. Data were collected through interviews with teachers, and content analysis was used in the analysis of the data. So far as the results of the research; it has been determined that the number of teachers who make arrangements in terms of multiculturalism in their classrooms is quite low, and the teachers who do not make arrangements for this, justify that the children in their classes are from Diyarbakır province or its surroundings, and ignore the cultural diversity of the province they work in. It was designated that all of the participants included the issues of respect for differences in their plans, and due to the pandemic, the diversity of teachers' activities for multiculturalism and respect for differences decreased. It has been determined that teachers focus on different themes and subjects due to the limited education period during the pandemic process. All the teachers participating in the study emphasized that it is more effective to address cultural issues in face-to-face education, however it was determined that they could not associate some of their practices with multiculturalism and respect for differences.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Respect for Differences, Cultural Diversity, Distance Education, Early Childhood Education

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1. Introduction

Our world, where cultures interact and affect each other, subcultures are formed within the same culture and we live together with different cultures, has become a living area where diversity and differences coexist (Erden, Ömeroğlu, Kandır, Yenice, Ayhan, Uzun, Eren, Demircan & Akçar, 2006) . Multiculturalism emerges as an important concept with the interaction of individuals coming together with different characteristics (Cırık, 2008).

Multiculturalism; language, religion, ethnicity, race, gender, age, disability, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, etc. Classrooms, which are an area for preparation for the natural world, teachers need to reflect a multicultural environment consisting of different cultural characteristics in order to organize their classrooms according to cultural diversity, taking into account the cultural structures of individuals, and to make multicultural education visible in classroom environments (Gayle Evans, 1992; Ramsey, 2013). So then it is recommended that the images of different cultural groups be posted on the boards in schools and that materials suitable for multiculturalism should be kept in the classrooms (Bartelo, 2014). For this purpose, regulations regarding multiculturalism can be made in learning centers where children learn in accordance with their own interests and needs including written works and visuals of different cultures can be kept in the book center, musical instruments of different cultures can be placed in the music center, paints and artistic materials belonging to different skin colors can be placed in the art center, clothes and dolls from different cultures can be placed in the dramatic play center.

Erden, Ömeroğlu, Kandır, Yenice, Ayhan, Uzun, Eren, Demircan & Akçar (2006) determined in their observations that the materials in most preschool institutions comply with traditional and stereotyped structures. All the dolls in the classrooms are white and their gender is female, they do not have any physical disabilities, they represent the traditional family structure with pictures of the nuclear family consisting of parents and children, mothers usually do housework, and fathers sit on the sofa while reading the newspaper, have determined that they are depicted. The inclusion of such materials in the classroom causes children to generalize them, and to find individuals outside of their generalizations strange.

Children who grow up in a world full of contradictions between diversity in real life and the education offered in the classroom also hear many words about the equality of cultural differences, but they observe and experience inequality in daily life (Ramsey, 2013). Children's being in environments where inequality, discrimination and prejudice do not take place in the preschool period, where all individuals are considered valuable with their differences, and having positive experiences about cultural diversity and equality, will be tangible steps taken from the early years in order to live together and create a multicultural understanding will contribute to the upbringing of tolerant individuals (Carson, 1998). Knowing, researching and putting into practice multiculturalism at an early age is very important in this sense. For this reason, there is a need to carry out studies on perceptions and practices for multicultural education.

When the literature on the subject in Turkey is analyzed, it is possible to come across studies on teachers' perceptions and practices of multiculturalism and its components. These studies generally examine preschool teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards multiculturalism (Akkaya, Sahin & Gezer Sen, 2021; Alabay & Ersal, 2020; Mazi, 2018; Özözen Danacı, Eran, Çetin, Pınarcık, & Bahtiyar, 2016; Mazi, 2018; Pekdoğan, 2018; Taştekin, Bozkurt Yukcu, Izoglu, Gungor) . Işık Uslu & Demircioğlu, 2016) Alabay & Ersal (2020), as a result of their interviews with the teachers of preschool children from different cultural backgrounds, revealed that the teachers did not make any arrangements for these children in their plans, classroom environments and family participation. In the study conducted by Mazi (2018), teachers' perceptions of multiculturalism were examined and it was determined that teachers' perceptions of multiculturalism were substantial according to the branch variable and the type of school they worked at. Pekdoğan (2018), in his study in which he examined the views of preschool teachers on respect for differences education; it has been stated that preschool teachers mostly aim to bring empathy to children within the scope of respect for differences, activities and achievement-indicator examples should be given more place in the preschool education program regarding respect for differences education. In addition, it was found that teachers mostly use drama and game methods as methods and that they should be good

models for children in the education process. Along with these studies, compilation studies on multicultural education (Başbay & Bektaş, 2009; Polat & Kılıç, 2013) and pre-school teacher candidates' perceptions of multiculturalism (Şahin & Ateş, 2019) are also included.

In abroad, multiculturalism studies are mostly carried out in countries with different ethnic cultural diversity. For example, Ng, Chai, Chan & Chung (2021) investigated teacher competencies in utilizing the culture-sensitive teaching method in teaching Chinese to ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. As a result of the research, it was concluded that preschool teachers working in kindergartens where ethnic minority children are concentrated are more sensitive to the learning styles and learning needs of ethnic minority children and are more competent in applying culturally appropriate educational methods. They found that pre-school teachers working in schools where there are fewer children from ethnic minorities have a more monocultural understanding when teaching Chinese. Zain, Basir & Mustafa (2020), in their study on 754 six-year-old preschool children in Malaysia, to demonstrate skills related to multiculturalism and respect for differences; it has been reached that the average scores of the children from the sub-dimensions of the questionnaire are mostly related to the skill of mutual respect for other individuals. In his study conducted in New Zealand, Guo (2017) revealed that this multicultural physical learning environment created supports the development of young children when the home environment, social and cultural aspects of children from minority families are represented in the classroom environment in early childhood education environments. Hong (2017), in his study, which aims to investigate the difficulties or current successes of early childhood teachers in their classrooms towards cultural diversity in their classrooms, Hong (2017) stated that teachers mostly experience problems such as lack of information, lack of support services and temporal regulation regarding cultural diversity. reached the relevant results.

Besides studies with teachers and children, parent-child relationships of children from multicultural family structures were scrutinized (Mamat, 2014); how preschool children understand racial and ethnic diversity and how they recognize speech and action about diversity in their school life (Park, 2010); There have been studies on a wide variety of subjects, including the level of evaluation of families from different cultural backgrounds in preschool institutions without prejudice and in terms of cultural socialization (Davidson, 2016).

Among the studies conducted in the literature, no studies have been found that revealing how preschool teachers are involved in multiculturalism and all of its components during the pandemic process. In the cartoons that children watch on digital platforms, some cartoon characters are treated as genderless. The toys that adults buy for their children are chosen as gender neutral (Özer & Akgül, 2021). In addition, in educational environments, education for the cognitive areas of children is preferred rather than cultural values, and practices are carried out in accordance with the values of the culture that represents the majority, instead of the characteristics of different cultures. These practices prevent children from seeing the differences.

As a result of the Corona virus epidemic that occurred in China in 2019; social life and physical intimacy were avoided (UNDP, 2020, cited in Külekçi Akyavuz & Çakın, 2020). In this process of social distancing, a need arises to reveal the impact of the pandemic on practices related to multiculturalism and respect for differences. Although there are studies that include gender, disability and age / agedness elements (Esin & Yeniceri, 2020; Kalaç, Telli & Erönel, 2020; Varışlı & Gültekin, 2020), which are the components of multiculturalism together with the pandemic process, studies focusing on all the components of the concept of multiculturalism have not been found during the pandemic process. . In this respect, it is necessary to reveal what preschool teachers do in their classroom practices and activities regarding multiculturalism, their possession of multicultural education in their plans, the elements of multiculturalism in their classrooms and their practices regarding multiculturalism and its components, as well as the pandemic process.

When the related literature on multiculturalism and respect for diversity is searched, no studies have been found that examining the views of teachers on the arrangement of physical environments in terms of multiculturalism and respect for diversity, their inclusion in plans, and the practices related to cultural diversity in distance education carried out during the pandemic process. For these reasons, the following questions were investigated in this study.

1. How do preschool teachers define multiculturalism?
2. What arrangements do preschool teachers make regarding multiculturalism in their classrooms?

3. How do preschool teachers plan and implement multicultural education?
4. What are the multiculturalism and its components in the classrooms of preschool teachers?
5. What are the views of pre-school teachers regarding education and multicultural practices during the pandemic process?

2. Method

In the research designed in the phenomenological research design, which is one of the qualitative research methods, the phenomenon is multiculturalism and sub-components of multiculturalism.

2.1. Participants

In the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year, it was paid attention to the participant group of the research, that 19 independent kindergartens were selected from each district out of 33 independent kindergartens in the central districts of Diyarbakir (Sur, Yenişehir, Kayapınar, Bağlar) using the maximum diversity sampling method. 23 of the teachers who volunteered to participate in the study and gave their consent were female and three male preschool teachers. The descriptive characteristics of the teachers who constitute the participant group of the research are given in Table 1. TF1, TF2... for female participant teachers; for male participant teachers, codes were given as TM1, TM2....

Table 1: General Information on Teachers

Code	Age	The place born and raised	The place participants' born and raised	Graduated Program	Educational status	Professional Seniority Year	Working Time at School
TM1	32	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	8 years	2 years
TM2	30	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	6 years	7 months
TM3	28	Village Malatya	Village Malatya	Preschool	Bachelor	5 years	1 year
TF1	36	District Center Diyarbakir	District Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	6 years	6 months
TF2	32	City Center Istanbul	City Center Istanbul	Preschool	Bachelor	11 years	5 years
TF3	34	District Center Mersin	District Center Mersin	Preschool	Bachelor	12 years	4 years
TF4	40	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	15 years	2 years
TF5	30	City Center Siirt	City Center Siirt	Preschool	Bachelor	7 years	3 years
TF6	36	City Center	City Center	Preschool	Bachelor	12 years	10 years
TF7	27			Preschool		5 years	7 months
TF8	42	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	18 years	6 months
TF9	43	Diyarbakir	Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	18 years	6 months
TF10	44	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	12 years	7 years
TF11	37	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Child development department	Bachelor	11 years	3 years

TF12	41	City Center Istanbul	City Center Istanbul	Preschool	Bachelor	10 years	7 years
TF13	30	City Center Batman	City Center Batman	Preschool	Bachelor	7 years	3 years
TF14	38	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	6 years	2 years
TF15	31	District Center Mardin	District Center Mardin	Preschool	Bachelor	7 years	2 years
TF16	31	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	13 years	3 years
TF17	28	City Center Karaman	City Center Karaman	Preschool	Bachelor	7 years	2 years
TF18	34	District Center Mardin	District Center Mardin	Preschool	Bachelor	11 years	2,5 years
TF19	30	City Center Eskisehir	City Center Eskisehir	Preschool	Bachelor	9 years	2 years
TF20	35	City Center Diyarbakir	City Center Diyarbakir	Preschool	Bachelor	13 years	7 years
TF21	27	City Center Batman	City Center Batman	Preschool	Bachelor	2 years	1 year
TF22	34	City Center Adana	City Center Adana	Preschool	Master	10 years	5 years
TF23	35	District Center Adana	District Center Adana	Preschool	Master	9 years	5 years

When Table 1 is analyzed, it is seen that the ages of the teachers are between 27-44, the majority of them were born and raised in the city center (20 people), half of the participants (13 people) were born and raised in Diyarbakır, where the study was conducted, it appears that 25 of the teachers have graduated from pre-school education and one teacher has a child development graduate. While 24 of the teachers are undergraduate degree, two teachers have master degree. Professional seniority of teachers varies between at least two and at most 18 years and it is understood from Table 1 that the working period in the school they are attending is between at least six months and at most ten years.

2.2. Data Collection Tools and Methods

Semi-structured interview questions were harnessed as data collection tool in the research. After the literature review on multiculturalism and respect for differences, the scales used in the literature on the subject were examined and interview questions were prepared accordingly. The content validity was provided by submitting the interview questions to the expert opinion of three lecturers who completed their doctorate education. After the necessary arrangements and changes, the interview questions were used in the pilot interview with five teachers, and the question statements were ended up with making adjustments. The interview questions consist of 10 semi-structured interview questions that aim to reveal the definitions and naming of the concept of multiculturalism, the environment arrangements, the activities created in the context of multiculturalism in the classroom environment and the experiences they express.

2.3. Data Collection

Prior to the data collection process of the research, an application was made to the İnönü University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee, and approval was obtained that it is ethically appropriate in accordance with the report of the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee dated 27.02.2020 and numbered 2020/5-5. The

schools where the research will be conducted were determined in December 2020, and the data were collected in December and January of the 2020-2021 academic year. Before starting the study, the participants were informed about the content of the study and their consent for participation was acquired by signing the Informed Consent Form. Before the interview, an appointment was made with the teachers, and interviews were held when the teacher and the researcher were convenient. Due to the collection of data during the pandemic process, phone interviews were made with nine of the teachers and face-to-face interviews were conducted with 17 of them. Face-to-face interviews were carried out in a quiet place in the school designated during the visits to the schools where the teachers work. Voice recordings were taken during the interviews with 21 of the teachers, and since five teachers did not want the voice recording to be recorded, the continuous writing method was utilized while interviewing these teachers.

2.4. Analysis of Data

Content analysis method was used in the analysis of the data gained from the interviews with the teachers. According to Büyüköztürk et al. (2018), content analysis is defined as a systemic and repeatable technique in which some words of a text are summarized by dividing them into smaller categories with coding based on certain rules. The interview records obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the teachers were first converted into written documents. In the content analysis, first of all, the statements of the participants were read in line with the research questions and codes were created from the statements. In the creation of the codes, the expressions of the participants were sometimes taken directly, and sometimes the meaning of the participant's expression was used. Then, the semantically related codes were brought together to reach the themes and the findings were acquired. The reliability formula [$\text{Reliability} = \text{Consensus} / (\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement})$] proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used to calculate reliability in the coding that two researchers independently made (Miles & Huberman, 1994). While making the reliability calculations, calculating the intercoder reliability as at least 70% ensures that the research is accepted as reliable, while the reliability was calculated as 91% in this study and the research was found reliable.

3. Findings

The presentation of the findings was grounded on the research questions, but the findings related to the research questions in terms of phenomenology were explained with the components of multiculturalism.

3.1. Preschool Teachers' Definitions of Multiculturalism

In order to learn how preschool teachers define the concept of multiculturalism, the teachers were asked whether they had heard of the concept of multiculturalism before. Twenty-one of the participating teachers stated that they had heard of the concept of multiculturalism, and five of them had not heard of this concept. The teachers who stated that they had heard of the concept of multiculturalism were asked what they understood from this concept and how they would define it if they wanted to define it. According to the analysis of the answers from the teachers, it was determined that the definition made by only 16 of 21 teachers who stated that they had heard of the concept of multiculturalism before was suitable for the concept of multiculturalism and the components included in this concept. The concept of multiculturalism defined by teachers and their perceptions of its components are grouped under two themes: multiculturalism in terms of social cohesion and multiculturalism in terms of differences within the dominant majority.

Evaluating multiculturalism in terms of social cohesion, 11 teachers come from different cultures, lifestyles/experiences/upbringing styles/customs, ethnic origins (Kurdish, Turkish, Zaza, Syrian etc.), religious origins (Alevism, Sunnism, etc.), languages, countries/ They stated that people/children from countries/geographical segments/environments, age groups, genders are formed, and that such differences are a social richness and contribute to cultural diversity. One of the teachers explained this situation as "I know, according to our definition in Turkey; different, religiously, culture, country, way of life and their coexistence. I have only one Greek student. I can only give an example. There is no one from any other culture other than him. All of them are from here...(TF3)".

The five teachers who regard multiculturalism as the differences within the dominant majority in the society are based on culture, countries (regional, districts), ethnic origins (Kurdish, Turkish, Zaza, Black, etc.), different religious origins (Alevisism, Sunnism, etc.), languages/accents. defined as people who differ in society in terms of traditions/customs, eating-drinking/dressing. It was observed that teachers focused on differences/being different and bein a minority while defining multiculturalism.

When the five teachers who stated that they had not heard of the concept of multiculturalism before, were asked their opinions on what the concept could be, the comments of two of the five teachers could not be related to multiculturalism, and it was determined that the comments of the other three teachers included the lexical meanings of the words that make up the concept of multiculturalism. The definition made by five of the teachers who stated that they had heard of the concept of multiculturalism did not coincide with the concept. It was noteworthy that they made statements about a high level of reading, having knowledge on many subjects, having knowledge in different fields, traveling and seeing, meeting people at all levels, and being in a rich environment.

3.2 Regulations and Practices Regarding Multicultural Education in Educational Environments

When asked whether they made arrangements regarding multiculturalism in the classrooms, 18 teachers stated that they made arrangements regarding multiculturalism in their classrooms, while eight teachers said that they did not. Two of the 18 teachers who stated that they made arrangements for multiculturalism could not be associated with multiculturalism. It has been determined that a teacher has misconceptions because he tries to explain contemporary approaches and different teaching methods as multiculturalism, and a teacher says that he/she applies it even though he/she does not know the concept. The themes regarding the regulations and practices of 14 teachers who correctly understand and apply multicultural education practices are shown in Table 2. One participant gave more than one opinion.

Table 2: Teachers' Inclusion of Multiculturalism in Classroom Arrangements and Practices

Theme	Sub-theme	<i>f</i>
Preferred activities and practices as subjects	Game/Drama/Turkish/Art events	7
	Family involvement	1
	Making field trips	1
Arrangements in learning centers	Using visual materials,	3
	Introducing the products of geographical regions,	2
	Putting costume/outfit	1
	Houses of different countries	1
Seating arrangement	Creating a mixed seating arrangement	1

Teachers who stated that they included multicultural education in activities said that they mostly covered the issue by including children's families in education through games, drama, Turkish, art activities, field trips, and family participation studies. A teacher said about this situation, "... I mostly include Turkish language activities. First of all, on World Children's Day, I will explain that there are different children, different clothing styles, different colors, different lives, both with visuals, videos and stories, with a conversation first... He stated that it is important that the weeks coincide. Another teacher said, "Because I worked with students from different cultures for a while. In the region where I work... We had a student who came from Syria, and he made something belonging to the Syrian culture, he brought something to eat...(TF11), he explained the multicultural education practice in a specific day and week event to introduce the culture of refugee children in the classroom in classroom activities.

Only four of the 14 teachers who participated in the study stated that they made arrangements regarding multiculturalism in learning centers in their classrooms. It has been determined that the teachers use visual materials that will attract attention for children in the learning centers, they introduce products that represent different geographical regions of our country, they include clothes and costumes from different cultures in our country or around the world, and they include products that show geographical settlements. A teacher (TF22) who stated that although he included multiculturalism as a subject in the activities, did not make arrangements in the

learning centers, stated that there was a lack of information about organizing the learning center and that it was not suitable for creating a center due to its small class.

Only one teacher (TF5), who stated that he arranged the seating arrangement for multiculturalism in the classroom, stated that he placed the children in a mixed order without making any gender, culture or ethnic origin discrimination. In this thought, this teacher emphasized that the child would be deprived of learning experiences from each other's cultures in the distinction to be made regarding the sub-culture to which the child belongs, and mentioned the richness that cultural diversity will add to the lives of children.

Eight teachers, who stated that they did not make arrangements regarding multiculturalism in their classrooms, were asked about the reasons for their opinions that were effective in not making arrangements regarding multiculturalism. The teachers did not prefer to encompass different cultures because they thought that all of the children in their classrooms came from the same culture and did not encounter different cultures, subcultures do not make a difference and that dealing with cultural differences would cause marginalization, they did not address this issue because the education period shortened due to the pandemic was not enough, and the lack of knowledge about the concept of multiculturalism.

3.3. Planning and Implementation of Multicultural Education

Preschool teachers were also asked whether they included multicultural education in the plans they prepared. While 18 of the teachers stated that they included multicultural education in their plans, eight of the teachers stated that they did not include such activities in their plans.

The teachers who stated that they included multicultural education in their plans were asked how they included it. According to the content analysis made for the answers received from the teachers, 15 of the teachers conducted activities to promote the cultures of different countries, cities or regions related to multiculturalism, they carried out activities explaining the concepts of children's rights and equality, they introduced the unique characteristics and differences of cultures, they especially introduced children from different parts of the world. It was learned that they carried out activities in the activities for April 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day, World Children's Day and Children's Rights days, where they talked about children from different parts of the world. Teachers were asked in which activities they used these practices for multicultural education the most. Six of the teachers stated that they preferred art, drama, game, music and Turkish activities for multicultural education practices. One of the teachers (TF6) explained that they used Native American feathers as accessories in the art activity and they animated them through drama. This teacher stated that she also benefited from costumes specific to different cultures.

The educational materials that teachers use most when dealing with multiculturalism are Digital Tools (video), Written and Visual Materials (pictures and cards, books, boards and different country flags), Role Playing Materials (clothes, puppets, accessories and costumes), and sometimes It was determined that they benefited from Visual Art Materials (residual materials and cutting, painting, sticking materials). Two of the teachers participating in the research (TF5 and TF21) stated that they did not use materials related to this subject and preferred the method of expression. It was determined that they benefited from videos and visual materials in concretizing the subject, and they preferred clothes and costumes to facilitate children's role in drama studies. It was determined that they used visual art materials to create materials for cultures.

Eight teachers, who stated that they did not prefer multicultural education practices in their classrooms, were asked about their thoughts that caused this situation. Teachers use ready-made plans and even if they make arrangements in these plans, it is not about changing the subject and they do not go beyond the plan, there is a culturally homogeneous structure among the children who attend their classes, they have misconceptions about this concept and they do not have enough information about the subject. They stated that they did not want to deal with it. Teachers were inquired whether they included the issue of respect for differences in their plans. All of the 26 teachers who participated in the study stated that they included the issue of respect for differences in their plans. According to the content analysis, the opinions of the teachers were gathered under the themes of introducing

feelings and behaviors towards differences, Informing Studies on Differences and Developmental Support Studies and presented in Table 3. One participant gave more than one opinion.

Table 3: Contents of Teachers Discussing Respect for Diversity Education in Their Plans

Theme	Sub-theme	f
Introducing the right feelings and behaviors towards differences	Proper behaviors towards people with disabilities/different cultures/different physical characteristics	12
	Respect for the elderly	3
	Respect for different opinions	2
	Priority for pregnant women	1
Informative work on differences	Introduction of different cultures/countries/skin color/age level/physical differences/abilities/languages/accents	11
	Introduction of people with disabilities	8
	Introduce regional products	2
Developmental Support Studies	Developing your empathy skills	8
	Developing verbal language skills	3

It was determined that the teachers mostly included the content of displaying correct behaviors towards individuals with disability / different cultures / different physical characteristics, which are the components of multiculturalism, in the activities they carried out to introduce the right emotions and behaviors towards differences. In addition, teachers stated that they are working towards respecting the elderly and different opinions and giving priority to pregnant women on certain issues.

Within the scope of information activities about differences, it has been determined that teachers carry out activities such as the promotion of different cultures / countries / skin color / age level / physical differences / abilities / languages / accents, the lives of people with disabilities and their types of disabilities, and the promotion of products from different geographical regions. A teacher related to this situation stated that the content of the differences was very wide-ranging, that he included a video about the life of a disabled painter in the classroom, that everyone introduced products specific to their region during the domestic goods week, and that he also worked to introduce disabled people. Another teacher stated that she works to break down gender-specific stereotypes.

Teachers who stated that they do developmental support activities stated that they use drama activities to develop empathy skills with different cultures and disabled individuals. It has been determined that the teachers, who stated that they work to improve children's verbal language skills, do articulation and speaking activities for children with expression problems while speaking Turkish due to their ethnic origins and cultural speaking styles.

It has been determined that the materials used by the teachers while covering the issues of respect for differences are the same materials as multicultural education. Accordingly, mostly written and visual materials such as books and pictures to read stories to children, role-playing materials, especially costumes and various accessories, to facilitate acting in drama/animation studies, and digital tools such as video and television to facilitate presenting concrete experiences on the subject, At the end of the activity, it was determined that children used visual art materials such as painting materials and painting tools to paint their feelings about differences. Three of the teachers stated that they do not have a special material preference regarding respect for differences.

3.4. Elements of Multiculturalism in the Classroom Environment

Various questions were asked to the teachers about which multicultural components they include in their classrooms. In this phenomenologically structured study, the components of multiculturalism used by teachers were discussed as culture, disability, gender and old age.

3.4.1. Culture

Teachers were asked whether there were children from different cultural backgrounds in their classes. While 11 of the teachers stated that there were children from a different culture than the majority in their classes this year, 15 teachers said that there were no children from different cultures in their classrooms this year. It has been determined that teachers consider children from different cultural backgrounds to be members of families from different cities/professional groups/countries/socioeconomic levels and to use different accent/dialects.

It was asked what the teachers do in getting information about the culture of children from different cultural backgrounds. It has been determined that the teachers have gained knowledge through information gathering/research and in-class impressions. The teachers, who stated that they carry out activities to collect information/research about the culture of children from different cultural backgrounds, acquired the information from the information given to the school administration during school registration, by the guidance service about the children, the family participation studies conducted with the child's family, and the experiences of other teachers in the school. Moreover, they stated that they obtained information about the culture of children by scanning parent introduction forms, resources on the region and culture, and reading the information about refugees reflected on the agenda in social media. The teachers, who stated that they learned about the cultural backgrounds of children through in-class impressions, also stated that they had an idea thanks to the family participation studies conducted with the parents they invited to the class, and they obtained information about the children's culture by observing the children in the classroom.

Teachers were asked what they do about the adaptation of children from different cultural backgrounds in their classrooms to school and their peers. Teachers indicated that these children needed developmental support. They stated that these children interact with their peers and enable them to socialize with their peers. They try to develop teacher-child interaction and give responsibility to these children in the class. Teachers also stated that children need support in terms of language development. Therefore, the teachers stated that by using the correct ways of speaking to support children in language development, they are a model for children, do articulation and pronunciation exercises with them, and support children by giving them the opportunity to speak in the classroom.

Three of the 11 teachers who stated that there were children from different cultural backgrounds in their classrooms stated that they made educational arrangements in their plans for children from different cultural backgrounds, and eight of them stated that they did not make any arrangements for these children in their plans. Teachers, who stated that they made educational arrangements, mentioned that they preferred to simplify the activities with concretization and to use economic materials in the changes they made for these children. Teachers who stated that they did not make educational arrangements in their plans, mentioned they use ready-made plans and they do not need to make changes in these plans, the parents come from the same socioeconomic level, making changes while implementing the activities even though they do not make arrangements in the plan, and thus they do not believe that it is right to make changes in the plan.

3.4.2. Disability

When teachers were asked whether there were children with special needs in their classes, it was determined that only four teachers had special needs children in their class this year. Teachers who have children with special needs in their class were asked to evaluate their classroom environment in terms of suitability for children with special needs. Only one of the four teachers (TF23) stated that his class was a class with a suitable educational environment for children with special needs, since there was a material or toy in his class that would cause harm to the child due to his/her disability group. The other three teachers (TM2, TF16, TF22) stated that the physical environment of their classrooms is not suitable for individuals with special needs who are constantly in their classrooms.

A teacher who has a child with autism in her class stated that the child hits his head against the walls in moments of sudden crisis, but the walls are not covered with a soft material such as a sponge. A teacher who has a physically disabled child in her class (TF22) stated that the chairs in the classroom are not suitable for the child and therefore

there is no space for the child to rest when he is tired. Teachers who stated that their classrooms are not disabled-friendly classrooms said that they made the arrangements and transformations themselves, such as fixing the cabinets, expanding the playgrounds, taking out the toys that may be harmful or broken for children, in order to turn their classroom into a disabled-friendly classroom. However, they also stated that certain items (cabinet, desk, etc.) in the classroom environment are not completely suitable for disabled individuals.

In addition to the special education support received by children with special needs, preschool teachers were also asked about what preschool teachers do in terms of education for these children. Teachers provide developmental support for these children's social language and cognitive areas. They have stated that doing activities to inform and integrate other children in the classroom to increase interaction with other children, they also get information by meeting with the family. Other teachers at school and the child's special education teacher to support the development of the child, and they make adaptations in the activities.

3.4.3. Gender

When the participants were asked what kind of work they did in the context of gender differences, the teachers' opinions were divided into themes as activities, seating arrangement, use of materials, use of the environment and gaining behavior in line with the answers given by the teachers.

Teachers who stated that they practiced within the scope of the activities, emphasized gender equality in the content, professions/colors do not have gender, paid attention to the balanced distribution of gender while forming small groups in the activities, talked about physical differences and different clothing styles, went beyond gender stereotypes and working on privacy education. Regarding this situation, a teacher said that from the beginning of the term, girls or boys focused on the concept of equality rather than gender roles, and tried to fulfill this understanding of equality in all of their activities. She stated that she carried out this situation by first explaining it to the parents at the beginning of the year.

In the use of materials, the teachers stated that they preferred gender toys and that they prepared coloring pages with visuals that discover gender differences. The teachers, who stated that they made arrangements for the seating arrangement and preferred the mixed sitting arrangement. A teacher on this subject stated that the balanced distribution of boys and girls in the classrooms is important, that girls and boys tend to sit with children of their own gender in the sitting arrangement, but they direct children to mixed sitting themselves. Emphasizing the use of the environment in the context of gender differences, the teachers said that they made guidance as for the use of toilets based on gender. A teacher who stated that she was working towards gaining behavior observed that girls and women were not valued much in the environment she worked in, and stated that she directed especially boys in her class to give priority to their girlfriends in the classroom. Another teacher stated that he was trying to correct his masculine speaking style.

3.4.4. Elderliness

When the teachers were asked whether they made plans and practices regarding the relations between the 'elderly' and the children in the pre-pandemic period, all teachers stated that they included activities for the relations of children with the elderly in their plans and educational activities. The practices made by the teachers were grouped under the themes of informative activities and practices for interaction. These themes are given in Table 4. One participant expressed more than one opinion.

Table 4: Including Child-Elderly Relationship in Plans

Theme	Sub-theme	f
Information studies	Communication skills with the elders	13
	The importance of the elders	8
	Love for the elders,	6
	Respect for the elders	5

	Knowledge/cultural transfer characteristics	4
	Spending time with the elders	2
Interactive apps	Providing the participation of the elders in educational activities	2
	Making nursing home visits	1
	Observing the physical differences of the elders	1

A teacher (TF5), who stated that he was doing informative activities, said that the elderly have a very serious knowledge, they are a cultural value, and they are a plane tree extending from the past to the present. The teacher stated that he gave priority to the children to adopt that their health status was not good due to their old age. Another teacher (TF19) said that he considered the activities for the elderly as respect for the elderly within the scope of values education, and that he worked on respecting the elders, valuing the elderly, and empathizing with the elderly. Regarding the theme of teachers' practices for interaction, it has been determined that they do activities such as spending time with the elderly, participation of the elderly in educational activities, visiting nursing homes, and observing the physical differences of the elder people.

3. 5. *Pandemic Process and Multicultural Practices*

It was asked how preschool teachers carry out educational practices for multiculturalism and its components in the pandemic process and the distance education process that came with the pandemic. Content analysis findings for the answers given by the teachers were classified according to the phenomenon of multiculturalism and its components.

3.5.1. Multiculturalism

The teachers were asked to address the issues of multiculturalism and respect for diversity, and whether there were any changes in the arrangements they made for these issues with the pandemic process. Eleven of the teachers stated that the pandemic had an impact on their handling of these issues and making arrangements. When asked how these changes were, nine of the teachers cited restrictions such as reduced contact and shortening the face-to-face education period in pre-school. Five of the teachers stated that they had difficulty in creating a variety of activities, and three teachers stated that it was effective not to address these issues in the plans because they used ready-made plans. Three teachers stated that they did not include these subjects due to the difficulty of interacting with children in digital areas during the distance education process, while two teachers stated that they gave priority to other subjects.

When the teachers were asked what work they did on cultural diversity during the pandemic process, the teachers included the explanation of individual differences on certain days and weeks related to the subject, such as World Children's Day, that they made models of people living in different houses in different parts of the world (like an igloo) through an art activity, and that they made a model of each child's different skills through drama. They stated that they preferred the way of resuscitation. Teachers also stated that by choosing activities that can be done at home from the activity books, they included cultural diversity and differences through family participation.

3.5.2. Distance Education Support for Children from Different Cultural Infrastructures

11 teachers, who stated that there were students from different cultural backgrounds in their classes, were asked whether they had family involvement activities with the families of these children. While five of the teachers stated that they participated in family participation, six of them stated that they did not include family participation studies. Five teachers who stated that they participated in the family said that they sent stories, poems and lyrics so that the work done at school could be repeated at home; He stated that parents want their children to introduce a country that the teacher told them to and to do experiments at home. In addition, they stated that they directed the parents and the child to carry out their daily routines at home, such as preparing the table, making fruit salad, and preparing cakes/cookies together. It was determined that the teachers carried out these family involvement studies once a week, twice a week and in an unsystematic time period.

3. 5. 3. Child-Elder Relationships in the Pandemic

Teachers were asked whether they observed a change in children's relations with the elderly during the pandemic process. While 10 of the teachers stated that they observed a change in the child-elderly relations that emerged with the pandemic process, 14 teachers stated that they did not observe any change. While a teacher (TF9) said that he had no opinion on this subject, another teacher (TF19) did not express an opinion on this issue. Teachers' observations were grouped under the themes of negative changes and positive changes. It has been determined that the positive change observed by three of the teachers in the relations of children with the elderly is the increase in the time that children spend together because they live in the same house with their grandparents. In the theme of the negative changes observed by the teachers, they stated that the contact between grandparents and children decreased due to social distance, accordingly the children's longing for their grandparents, the elderly being in the risk group in terms of health due to the pandemic and the children witnessing their health problems.

3.5.4. Gender Element in Classrooms in the Pandemic

Teachers were asked whether the genders of the children who continue to be educated in their classrooms during the pandemic process are equally distributed. 13 teachers, who stated that the genders of the children enrolled in their classes were not balanced, were asked whether this had an effect on the children playing games, forming groups and choosing activities, and if so, how. Four of the teachers said that there was a gender-based difference in playing games and choosing activities in the classroom. Especially the teachers of the classes where boys are concentrated stated that they prefer running, jumping, competition-style games for boys, and they do gender-appropriate coloring page studies. The teacher of one of these classes (TF3) stated that boys like competition-style games more, that's why he chooses games for boys more when choosing games, he is aware that female students suffer as a result of these choices, but the distribution of children into classes according to their gender is not balanced (8 girls, 20 boys) said that she had to choose activities for boys who represent the majority. She stated that she had difficulty in classroom management when she chose an activity that did not attract the attention of boys, and therefore she carried out activities that would keep boys' interest alive. As a result, she stated that the girls had to adapt. Another teacher (TF17) said that all of her students were girls this year, so she used coloring pages for girls with girl characters. In addition, the teachers stated that they experienced problems such as the uneven distribution of gender and the inability to match in games, activities and paired shows.

3.5.5. Pandemic Precautions in Multicultural Classrooms

12 of the 14 teachers who stated that there are children from different cultural backgrounds in their classrooms, including individuals from different cultures, socioeconomic levels or special needs, stated that the children did not have a problem in complying with the mask, distance and cleaning; Two teachers (TF2, TF16) stated that the children did not comply with the measures. One of the teachers of the children who did not comply with these measures (TF16) added that the child had a diagnosis of autism and that he refused to wear a mask despite all the directions. Another child keeps his mask under his chin despite being constantly warned by the teacher (TF2). This teacher also stated that he organized the educational environments for the children in his class to comply with these rules, that he had a board in the classroom, that there were warnings about pandemic measures on these boards, and that he constantly talked to the children about social distance in the classroom environment.

Stating that they are working for children from different cultural diversity and other children in the class to adapt to pandemic measures, teachers stated that they ensure that children comply with the measures by creating a social distance-based seating arrangement and placing visual stimuli in various parts of the classroom by arranging educational environments. Three of the teachers carry out activities based on making children realize the importance of complying with the precautions through drama activities and giving practice through play activities. Two of the teachers stated that they were trying to teach children behavior by being a model by showing behaviors to comply with pandemic measures. Two teachers, on the other hand, stated that by providing that children use disinfectants in the classroom at regular intervals, they ensure that children comply with the precautions by creating a routine.

3.5.6. Multiculturalism Planning in the Distance Education Process

When pre-school teachers were asked how they planned multiculturalism in the distance education process, the teachers stated that they found it more appropriate to do the activities related to this subject in face-to-face education. When asked about the reasons for this, the teachers preferred that face-to-face education contributes more to learning because it offers the opportunity to observe, drama activities and learning by doing. They reasoned that social-emotional interaction should be provided more easily in face-to-face education, since there is interaction between peers-teacher and children, so that children get to know different cultures in the social environment and have more opportunities to empathize with them. Teachers stated that they found face-to-face education more effective than distance education because it offers the opportunity to make activities in the classroom and in other areas of the school and to benefit from different environments.

Teachers were asked which themes and subjects they gave more weight to instead of multiculturalism during the pandemic process. Teachers stated that they do activities based on improving children's cognitive skills through concept teaching, basic skills related to literacy preparation, mind games and science activities. Social skills based on improving children's relationships with their peers, increasing family communication and spending quality time at home during the pandemic process; They stated that they gave more space to their self-care skills and language skills development activities when they encountered problems in their expressive language, based on their implementation of the cleaning rules and thus the pandemic measures in order to protect them from the epidemic.

Teachers were also asked how they determined the training time in the distance education process. Content analysis findings for the answers given by the teachers are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Interaction Hours of Teachers on Digital Platforms and Reasons for Preference

Theme	Sub-theme	f
Suitability for child	Waking up from sleep	8
	Having breakfast	7
	Completion of courses of other education levels	5
	Having a productive time	1
	Energetic/ Being mindful	1
Suitability for parent	Suitable for working parents	7
	Having a suitable time frame	3
	Housewives' finishing their housework	1
Suitability for teacher	High participation,	4
	Parenting role	2
	Planning to the care of the baby,	1
Suitability for training program	Using the time slot in face-to-face training	3
Suitability for digital resource	Not occurring EBA intensity	2
	Only one computer at home	1

Table 5 shows that teachers take into consideration the cultural diversity opportunities that children and their families have while planning their education time. Besides, teachers prefer times when digital resources are not used intensively, they both increase the effectiveness of the education they will offer and make it easier for children to access education without having connection problems.

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

The research, which was conducted to determine the views and practices of preschool teachers on multicultural education. It has been seen that in the multiculturalism, teachers divide them into very broad components such as race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, being with special needs, social class, education, religious choices, different culture (APA, 2002); coming from different geographical regions (countries, countries, provinces, counties) (Berry, 2013), eating and drinking habits, experiences and coming from their upbringing (Wise & Velayutham, 2009; Colombo, 2014). However, it was concluded that teachers do not address without mentioning factors such as family structures (single-parent, extended family, nuclear family, etc.) and sexual orientation (Berger, 2004; APA, 2002) and not considering to define with multiculturalism, especially religion, language, ethnicity (Gay, 1994), customs and traditions that constitute the concept of culture. It has been determined that the teachers emphasize the coexistence of individuals with various characteristics in the society or the differences within the dominant majority while defining multiculturalism.

While the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB) Pre-School Education Program (2013) emphasizes the importance of recognizing the values of the societies in which children live and taking responsibility for cultural and universal values; NAEYC (2009) states that one of the duties of teachers is to plan the efficient use of learning environments in the classroom. However, in this study, it was thought that the lack of knowledge of teachers both about multiculturalism and how to make arrangements in learning centers was effective in the low number of teachers who made arrangements for multiculturalism in learning centers.

Aktin et al. (2015) used drama and play activities in their research on teaching different cultures with activities, and they helped children to understand different cultures and develop positive behaviors towards these cultures. The results of the research are similar to each other, since the teachers in this study preferred to deal with multiculturalism with play and drama activities mostly. In this research, teachers also cover the topics of multiculturalism through Turkish, art, family involvement and field trips. In drama and game activities, it becomes easier to understand others and to adopt different cultures by playing a role, pretending to be someone else. For this reason, teachers prefer these activities in order to provide more permanent learning than demonstration and expression methods. According to Durden, Escalante & Blich (2015), teachers' presentation of cultural diversity to children through activities creates awareness in children about cultural diversity that is not represented in the classroom in culturally homogeneous classrooms; In culturally heterogeneous classrooms, it reduces prejudices towards children in the classroom. It was concluded that teachers especially use Turkish activity to support the language development of children who speak a language other than Turkish (Kurdish, Arabic, English, Zazaki, etc.) in their classrooms. However, teachers forbid children from different linguistic backgrounds to speak in their mother tongue with their peers in the classroom in order to learn Turkish. This situation may cause children to develop a negative perception of their own culture, therefore it is thought that it would be more appropriate for teachers to use other language teaching methods such as concretization and exposure to language that will facilitate language learning instead of prohibitions.

Although the teachers stated that the majority of the children in the classroom are from Diyarbakır and there is no different culture in the classroom, there are ethnic origins such as Turkmen, Kurdish, Zaza, Armenian, Arab and various communities speaking different languages in Diyarbakır (Wikipedia, 2021). With the migration from the village to the city (Ekmekçiler, 2014), ethnic origins, different religious groups (Alevis, Sunnis, Assyrians, Christians, etc.), families who learned Turkish later or continue to learn (Yanmış & Kahraman, 2013), multicultural creates a structure, and this structure contributes to the formation of a heterogeneous structure in classroom environments. In addition, teachers stated that they may need multicultural arrangements if there are individuals who are foreign nationals (Syrian, other countries, etc.) or who speak different languages. According to Say (2017), even communities speaking the same language, having the same religious belief, and coming from the same ethnic origin in the same society can define each other with their differences and express that they are different in terms of certain characteristics.

Moreover, it was determined that the teachers gave the priority to other education subjects as the reason for not making arrangements for multicultural education, because the time allocated to the activities they prepared and

implemented in distance education was limited to time. The teachers' lack of knowledge about multicultural education and their lack of knowledge of the concept of multicultural education and its components make us think that they cannot apply cultural arrangements and multicultural education activities in the classroom consciously and within a certain plan. So much so that Abdullah & Abdullah (2018) in their study in which they investigated teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education; They concluded that two-thirds of the teachers misunderstood the concept of multiculturalism, and therefore there were differences in their attitudes towards multicultural education.

4.1. Discussion on Planning and Implementation of Multicultural Education

It was determined that the teachers included activities such as introducing the cultures and cultural differences of different countries/cities/regions in their plans, and included them within the scope of games, drama, art, music and Turkish activities. The fact that the children come from families from different linguistic backgrounds and that they do not know or speak Turkish is effective in the teachers' inclusion of Turkish activities. It was revealed that the most common educational materials used by teachers when they included multicultural education were videos, visuals/cards and clothes/costumes. When children work with different materials on different cultures, they are willing to learn more about different cultures through videos and photographs (Alves, 2016).

The teachers, who stated that they did not include multiculturalism in their education plans, mentioned that they did not include this subject because the subject of multiculturalism was not involved in the ready-made plans they used. Göle & Temel (2015) state that since teachers use inappropriate ready-made plans, the plans do not comply with the child-centered education approach. In this research on multiculturalism and respect for differences, although it is not aimed to investigate the way the plans are created and used, the findings regarding the ready use of the plans by the teachers were also reached. The fact that teachers do not make plans and use children and the education offered to them. According to the MEB (2013) Pre-School Education Program, teachers should create activity pools from activity plans, store the plans here, update the plans according to the student group every year and make them suitable for group dynamics. It is thought that the unwillingness of teachers to plan leads them to use ready-made plans. So much so that teachers are reluctant to update the plans for their classrooms, which will not be homogeneous even if it is due to individual differences. For this reason, it was concluded that they did not include multiculturalism in their plans, arguing that they have culturally homogeneous classes.

It was thought that all participants included the issue of respect for differences, and this contributed to the achievement indicators of respecting the differences in the MEB Preschool Education Program (2013) and living together in harmony with individuals with different characteristics. Üner (2011) researched the views of teachers on respect for differences, in which teachers dealt with the subject with different types of activities (Turkish, drama, etc.) stated that they included individuals from different cultures. The results of the study and the results of the research are similar in this respect.

4.2. Discussion on the Elements of Multiculturalism in the Classroom Environment

Teachers stated that they support the social-emotional development of children from different cultures in order to adapt to the school and their peers. Furthermore, it has been concluded that teachers are a model for children in language development so that children can communicate well, and they do articulation and pronunciation exercises with them. In the study of Kardeş & Akman (2018), teachers stated that they work on language and social-emotional development to solve the adaptation problems of (Syrian) children from different linguistic backgrounds to school and their peers. This result in both studies showed that teachers needed to provide an interaction between children in the classroom. Teachers' work to ensure that children belong to the classroom culture will enable children to develop a sense of belonging to the school and to develop peer interaction positively (Kotluk & Kocakaya, 2019).

It was concluded that the teachers did not make arrangements in their plans for children from different cultural backgrounds. Alabay & Ersal (2020) state that this may be due to the fact that teachers' knowledge and skills about children from different cultural backgrounds are not adequate in the classroom. Sağlam & Kanbur (2017) stated

in their study that they analyzed teacher attitudes towards refugee children, that they found it more appropriate not to make any changes in the plan. In this direction, it can be said that the teachers' failure to make educational arrangements for children from different cultures in this study may be due to their insufficient knowledge and skills on multiculturalism and planning multicultural education.

Teachers described their classrooms as an unsuitable environment for children with special needs. Ekmişoğlu (2007) emphasizes that classrooms and physical environments should be arranged considering the needs of individuals with special needs. Arrangements made in line with the needs of individuals with special needs facilitate access to educational needs together with normal individuals and provide equality of opportunity in education (Erden et al., 2006). Teachers said that they made arrangements such as positioning the desks in a way that would not pose a danger, and removing broken toys and materials from the classroom in order to transform their classrooms into a barrier-free environment. Nevertheless, these environment arrangements made by the teachers are not arrangements for the special needs group of the individual with special needs and are not sufficient for the adaptation of the environment. For this reason, these arrangements should be made by the school administration or the experts of the business.

Teachers who stated that they made practices in the context of gender differences, in the dimension of activities; emphasizing gender equality, gender neutrality of occupations/colors, balanced distribution of gender in activities, talking about physical differences/dressing styles, talking about staying out of gender stereotypes; teachers stated that they mentioned gender differences with privacy education, and they preferred mixed seating arrangement in seating arrangement. The research findings of Temiz & Cin (2017) in which teachers sit in the form of a girl and a boy in the classroom and make directions such as acting together in order to prevent gender-based grouping in the classroom support this research. It was determined that teachers carried out activities and practices to prevent the formation of gender stereotypes in children.

4.3. The Pandemic Process and Discussion on Multicultural Practices

All the teachers who participated in the study stated that they included activities for the elderly in their plans. Newman, Morris & Streetman (1999) emphasized in the study that examined the interactions of 60 children and 12 elderly people, children and the elderly create positive interactions with each other and that there are positive changes in children's attitudes towards the elderly.

Teachers taking part in the study stated that the pandemic limited the variety of activities. Başaran, Doğan, Koraloğlu & Şahin (2020) revealed that many educational activities were suspended due to the necessity of social distance included in our lives with the Covid-19 epidemic process and educational arrangements were made in accordance with the pandemic process. In the interviews, the teachers mentioned that they have difficulties in terms of time management, and stated that the time in the live lesson interactions, which was declined from 300 minutes to 180 minutes a day due to the pandemic, and limited to 60 minutes a week in distance education, does not allow the topics of multiculturalism and respect for differences to be addressed. They justified the necessity of addressing themes and issues that cover the basic skills that children need to acquire in life and in preparation for primary school. Teachers could not include multiculturalism issues because they had difficulty in transitioning to digital platforms with distance education and could not carry out activities such as drama and game activities in distance education. The studies expressed by the teachers on multiculturalism and differences in the pre-pandemic period are insufficient in terms of quantity and diversity when compared to the issues of multiculturalism and respect for differences that they expressed during the pandemic process. This situation suggests that teachers focus on different themes and issues during the pandemic process and leave the issues related to cultural diversity in the background.

It has been concluded that the teachers do activities for children from different cultural backgrounds as family participation, repetition of activities at home, preparation for the studies to be done in the classroom, activities for exploring, and activities for spending quality time between parents and children. In the content of the OBADER (2013) program prepared by the Ministry of National Education, various activities that parents and children can do at home are included, and it has been determined that teachers do not benefit from such studies, and that the

family participation activities that they mention are activities that can be done with any family. It is thought that this situation is due to the fact that they do not know the families adequately during the pandemic process. In the distance education process, every activity which is sent for children to do at home can actually be considered as a family participation study suitable for home education activities specified in the OBADER (2013) program. Also, it has been determined that teachers perceive family participation only as activities done in the classroom, and they do not see the work they do at home as family participation.

Along with the pandemic process, teachers mentioned that the child-elder relationship decreased and emphasized the development of excessive longing between children and their relatives because the elderly are in the risk group in terms of health. Teachers also mentioned that the elderly are exposed to age discrimination with the pandemic process. It is thought that this situation is caused by the fact that many people have wrong attitudes and beliefs such as the spread of disease and irresponsible behavior of elderly individuals. Varışlı & Gültekin (2020) elderly individuals; they stated that they were subjected to age discrimination, although there should be individuals who are in the risk group with the Covid-19 epidemic and need to be protected in terms of health.

13 of the teachers stated that gender is not evenly distributed in their classes. It can be thought that teachers who state that they organize activities convenient for the dominant gender in classes where gender is not evenly distributed reinforce their gender roles, while causing the other gender to have to adapt, causing some of their wishes to be ignored.

Stating that there is a multicultural structure in their classrooms, the teachers stated that the children comply with the pandemic measures, one of the two children who do not comply has a diagnosis of autism, and the other child does not wear a mask despite all warnings. It is thought that the families of the children and the mass media also support the children to adopt the rules by stimulating activities and being a model for the harmony of other children. All of the teachers emphasized that face-to-face education is more effective in teaching cultural subjects. Foti (2020) the teachers stated that the distance education process can never be as effective as the face-to-face education process and cannot prevent the face-to-face education process. They emphasized the importance of face-to-face education because it offers the opportunity to make observations, use drama activities and learn by doing and experiencing. Teachers also stated that face-to-face education is more effective in learning cultural subjects due to peers, teacher-child interaction and the ability to use different environments. Cordovil, Ribeiro, Moreira, Pombo, Rodrigues, Luz, Veiga & Lopes (2021) in their study; They found that children were deprived of social processes such as staying away from peer interaction with the effect of the pandemic, applying material restrictions, playing games together and sharing.

With the pandemic process, the teachers included social-emotional skills, cognitive skills, self-care skills and language skills, but they did not include motor skills. It was found that the teachers mainly included science/experiment studies, concepts, cleaning, and pandemic measures. Yıldırım (2021), in his study with teachers, found that teachers wanted to deal with concepts such as cleanliness, healthy life, hygiene, numbers, and shapes.

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