

A Descriptive Study: Observing Behavioral Patterns of Preschool Children in Turkey and Belgium

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Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Social problem solving skills of children and their capacity to solve problems are very crucial when they try to cope with various problem situations in classroom.
- Although some of children have enough capacity to achieve this, some children cannot maintain well-adjusted relationships because they are not competent to show prosocial behavior for positive interactions

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Teachers have a key role
 - to let children to deal with problems more competently and create more peaceful classroom atmosphere.
- Teachers have a significant responsibility
 - to make possible to enrich interpersonal relationships of children via several opportunities
 - integrate specific problem solving training into their curriculum
 - provide students to practice those skills and promote cognitively based newly learned behavioral skills in the classroom.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Teaching children

- to think of more different solutions to their problems
- to evaluate which solutions are better than others
- to lead to think about positive consequences of them

would be supportive to improve their alternative problem solving thinking skills.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- When a typical curricula has been evaluated, teachers usually report that they use:
 - songs,
 - stories,
 - role-plays, drama
 - other activities

in order to promote social emotional learning abilities of children in early childhood education.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Organising classroom with various educational materials stimulate children to initiate involvement into those scheduled and planned activities.
- The complexity of those activities also determines the likelihood of children's positive involvement in such activities.
- Children who are fully involved in classroom activities
 - are unlikely to engage in disruptive behavior,
 - tend to solve problems by using more peaceful ways cooperatively.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Those activities and approaches or methods are usually used to keep well being of children in many cultures.
- The main goal is:
 - to promote the prosocial skills of children as well as decreasing aggressive or maladaptive behaviors.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Although teachers prefer to use general methods to succeed promoting prosocial behaviors,

- cultural background,
- social welfare,
- economical conditions,
- educational viewpoint of that nation,
- school policies

would be effective on the behavioral patterns of teachers how to treat children.

- Those all, in turn, may affect different behavioral dimensions of children ranging from negative to positive in classroom settings.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- For this reason it is needed to address and realize differences in behavioral dimensions of children in diverse cultures to construct a well-integrated curriculum to enhance social problem solving skills of children.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- The goal of this study is to evaluate whether there would be differences between Turkish and Flemish preschool children in their behavioral patterns.
- It was hypothesized that while prosocial behaviors of Flemish preschoolers were better than Turkish preschoolers, aggressive behaviors were less than Turkish peers.
- It was not expected any difference between two groups in terms of introversion dimension.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

Method

■ *Participants*

- Five (57 % girls, 43 % boys) and 6 (49% girls, 51% boys) years old 53 Turkish and Flemish preschool children in public schools
- Full-time and part-time schools in
 - Izmir, Turkey (27)
 - Hasselt, Belgium (26)
- There were no significant differences between two groups in terms of gender and age.
- Children who had no physical, cognitive, visual and hearing disabilities were randomly selected from the classroom list considering gender ratio.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

■ *Instruments*

- *Drexel Early Childhood Behavior Rating Scale (Shure, 2005).*
 - Teacher, parent and professional rated,
 - Including 12 items used to specify behavioral dimensions of children's interactions
 - Covers overt and relational aggressive behaviors, prosocial behaviors and also introversive behavior patterns.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- The validity studies in Turkish sample
 - Factor analysis: Items were loaded into three factors
 - The first factor “Aggression”
 - The second one “Prosocial”
 - The third one “Introversion”
- Reliability in Turkish sample
 - Internal reliability cronbach alphas
 - .93 for aggressive subscale,
 - .86 for prosocial subscale,
 - .63 for Introversion subscale.
 - The percentage of inter coder reliability was found around 90 %.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

■ *Process*

- Collected descriptive data by using non-participant observation method.
- Observations in Turkey were conducted by Turkish researchers who were psychologists experienced in preschool education one of whom has PhD degree in clinical psychology and the other one has also PhD degree in developmental psychology.
- In Belgium, children were observed by one of the Turkish researchers (who has PhD degree in clinical psychology) and also experienced Flemish educator in preschool teaching.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Before starting observation process, researchers agreed on what should be defined under the title of aggression, prosocial, withdrawn behaviors considering DECB rating scale.
- Turkish preschool children were observed then Flemish observations were completed.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Observations were conducted in free play time of Turkish preschoolers only for an hour in their daily activities because of more structured curriculum (considering main developmental areas) in Turkish preschools (aims and acquisitions).
- Flemish preschools more extended and flexible, child initiated curriculum was implemented based on Experiential Education Approach.
 - In this approach preschool children were led to select activities supporting innovative learning based on their interests.
- Therefore it could be possible to observe Flemish preschool children because of plenty of time in their free activities.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Observations took 15 minutes for each child, 10 minutes for observing, 5 minutes for coding by using DECB rating scale.
- Every child was observed twice at different times to follow possible alternative changes in their interaction styles.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

■ Findings

- In the direction of main goal of the present study, the independent samples t test was conducted to examine if there was any differences between the two groups in terms of DECB Rating Scale
 - covering three behavioral dimensions; aggression, prosocial, introversion

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

Table 1 The Independent Samples t- Test Comparing Turkish and Flemish Preschooler's DECB Rating Scale- Behavior Subscales

DECB Rating Scale- Behavior Subscales	Country	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	T	p
DECB Aggression	Turkey	27	11.70	5.81	51	1.410	.165
	Belgium	26	9.65	4.74			
DECB Prosocial	Turkey	27	14.77	1.87	51	-3.905	.000*
	Belgium	26	17.15	2.53			
DECB Introversión	Turkey	27	11.29	5.18	51	-0.322	.749
	Belgium	26	11.69	3.67			

*p<0.01

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Why we have found a significant difference between Turkish and Flemish preschoolers in terms of prosocial behaviors?
 - Compared to Flemish preschools, the learning corners have not been divided into effective and small areas based on children's interests in Turkish preschool classrooms.
 - We cannot mention about that sufficient number and variety of materials could be provided for Turkish preschoolers.
 - Limited number of child-initiated activities in Turkey (activities under the control of teachers),
 - Teachers usually have suggestions for activities by using direct instruction instead of supporting children to explore different kinds of learning opportunities.
 - In Belgium, most of the time, child initiated activities considering children's interests and competencies

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- How we can interpret the finding that Flemish preschoolers displayed more prosocial behaviors?
 - It is important to promote prosocial behaviors that could be seen as starting point for decreasing frequency of maladaptive behaviors in keeping well-being of children.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- In order to achieve this goal,
 - classroom settings and conditions
 - educational opportunities provided for children in the class
 - In order to provide these opportunities preschool teachers can arrange
 - classroom,
 - routines,
 - schedules

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- What kind of arrangements preschool teachers can do in order to achieve this?
 - whole classroom could be divided into small and well-defined corners
 - to organize effective and innovative learning areas so that it would be possible to keep children's attention based on their preferences.
 - critical to set clear rules to control chaotic settings
 - simple systems to limit the number of children at one time in any corner
 - pictograms that show daily routines and rules
 - providing sufficient number of toys and educational materials

would most probably prevent conflicts to encourage cooperation by exploring and expressing feelings

These kinds of arrangements would be helpful to foster positive and creative interactions among children.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- How can we prevent the occurrence of misbehaviors of children or decrease the frequency of those behaviours?
 - Planned and scheduled daily routines would be helpful for children to let them to feel comfortable by removing uncertainty.
 - Changing activities before children get bored.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- Like we have observed in Belgium
 - Children should regularly have daily routines;
 - starts with greetings,
 - sharing experiences and emotions
 - continues with discovering various learning areas by focusing on enriched environment
 - By this way, they can effectively utilize their cognitive emotional and behavioral resources to learn and to develop themselves.

Behavioral Patterns in Preschoolers: Turkey - Belgium

- In summary;
 - Although all young children have capacity to benefit from social and emotional resources in classroom (peer interactions, daily activities etc.), there is a need for universal programs or at least a viewpoint not only to decrease aggressive or maladaptive behaviors but also to promote prosocial behaviors.



😊 **Thank you** 😊

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