



## Some Variables Predicting the School Readiness of Preschool Children

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**ABSTRACT.** The main purpose of this study is determining the predictive power of the levels of the school readiness in the preschool children by some variables such as social skills, social interaction practices and education status of the parents. The population of the study in the general screening model is composed of 60 to 66-month old children attending to independent preschools registered by the Ministry of National Education in Konya, Turkey. The sample of this study is selected through stratified sampling method among schools, which represent families and their children of three different socio-economic (low, mid and high), in three central districts of Konya. These levels are determined by the Directorate of National Education. Sample group is composed of 42 preschool teachers and 210 children in total, which is sufficient in terms of the number of the participants. Social Skills Test for Preschool-aged Children, Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years (SIPPY) Questionnaire and Metropolitan School Readiness Test were employed in the study. Multiple regression analysis and stepwise regression analysis were used for the analyses of the study. By employing linear multiple regression analysis, it was determined that to what extent the variables social skills, social interaction practices, and education status of the parents predict the school readiness level. At the end of the stepwise regression analysis that was utilized to find out whether aforementioned variables have a significant contribution to predict school readiness level, it was found that 10 % of the school readiness level of 60 to 66-month old children attending pre-school education was explained by environmental strategies about social interaction practices applied by preschool teachers, 4% of it was explained by communication skill that is one of the social skills of the children, and 3 % of it was explained by the education status of the father.

**Keywords:** School readiness, Preschool education, Social interaction practices, Children's social skill

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## INTRODUCTION

It was stated that school readiness level that children acquired during preschool period is a predictive factor while beginning primary school successfully (Pianta, Cox & Snow, 2007; Vernon-Feagans & Blair, 2006), and it has a lasting impact during primary school (Duncan et. al., 2007; Rouse & Fantuzzo, 2009). According to a number of researchers it was named differently as “Preparation to Primary School”, “To Be Ready for the School”, “School readiness” means that child reach a developmental level to achieve school education. Children who start school with more positive approaches to learning and better academic skills have a better chance than others who do not possess the same readiness qualities to succeed in school (Li-Grining et al., 2010). Thus, we know that school readiness is a measure that shows to what extent the preschoolers are prepared to succeed in school.

When the studies about school readiness are examined it was seen that researchers studied elements of school readiness and effects of these elements' combination. Elements of the school readiness are accepted to include cognitive development (Roth, Speece & Cooper, 2002; Lonigan, Burgess & Anthony, 2000; Duncan et.al., 2007;Fergusson & Horwood, 1995), social development (Ladd, Birch & Buhs, 1999; Graziano, Reavis, Keane & Calkins, 2007), physical health/ motor development (Bart, Hajami & Bar-Haim, 2007), and developmental areas that are effective in their primary school performance. In conducted studies it was emphasized that school readiness and these elements (Aboud & Hossain, 2011; Cunha, Heckman, Lochner & Masterov, 2006; Duncan et. al., 2007, Entwisle, Alexander & Olson, 2005; Grissmer, Grimm, Aiyer, Murrell & Steele, 2010; La Paro & Pianta, 2000;) and combination of these elements (Quirk, Furlong, Lilles,Felix, & Chin, 2011) are important indicator of children's further academic success.

As school readiness is composed of various elements' combination, it is accepted as a multidimensional structure (Scott-Little, Kagan, Stebbins & Frelow, 2006). One of these dimensions is child's readiness for school; second dimension is school environment and education practices, practices that support a smooth transition to primary school and readiness of the school that focus on organizing all children's learning. Third dimension is as well as parents' attitude, communication with children, transition to primary school and their development, parents readiness for school that focus on children's interest for first learning (Al Hassan & Lansford 2009; Bruner, Floyd, Copeman, 2003; High, American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Early Childhood Adoption and Dependent Care & Council on School, 2008; Ip,

Rao, Bacon-Shone, Li, Ka-wing Ho, Chow, & Jiang, 2015; Nonoyama-Tarumi & Bredenberg, 2009).

In the studies that are about child's readiness for school, there is a correlation between social skills which is one of the elements of the school readiness and school readiness and future academic success (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2003, Ziv, 2013; Coolahan, Fantuzzo, Mendez, & McDermott, 2000; NICHD Early Child Care Network, 2004; Pianta & McCoy, 1997; Zill & West, 2001), and there are studies that states more socially skilled children have better academic success (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fernandez, Dominguez & Rouse, 2011; Dobbs, Doctoroff, Fisher & Arnold, 2006; Escalon & Greenfield, 2009; Fantuzzo, Manz, Atkins & Meyers, 2005; McClelland et. al., 2007; Ziv, 2013).

However the number of the studies that examine the readiness of the school for children is limited. In the present studies it was stated that when teachers provided a sensitive interaction among children, children's school readiness skills developed equally (Williford, Maier, Downer, Pianta & Howes, 2013), through interaction between teacher and child, there is a positive correlation between teachers competence in preparing a stimulating and supportive early childhood environment and their acquisition of school readiness (Brophy-Herb, Lee, Nievar & Stollak, 2007; Curby, Rimm-Kaufman & Ponitz, 2009; Mashburn et. al., 2008).

Moreover, in the literature it was underlined that features of the class environment prepared by preschool teachers (both physically and the quality of the processes) have a key effect on children's social skill development and school readiness. Physical features include adult-child ratio, size of the class, physical space, hygiene and security standards, whether there are developmentally appropriate materials or not; and quality of the process includes social and educational interaction that support learning (Lambert, Abbott-Shim, & Sibley, 2005; Mashburn, 2008). The physical characteristics of the preschool classroom are affected by several factors. However, the social-educational environment interaction in the characteristics of the process is under the supervision of pre-school teachers and children's social-educational interaction environment affects both social and academic success. Therefore, it is observed that the researchers have investigated the views of preschool teachers on the school readiness (Perry, Dockett, & Tracey, 1998; Rathbun, Walston, & Hausken, 2000); however, they haven't investigated the effect of classroom environment, prepared by the teachers, on school readiness of the children.

Finally, the third dimension is as well as parents' attitude, communication with children, transition to primary school and their development, parents

readiness for school that focus on children's interest for first learning (Al Hassan & Lansford 2009; Nonoyama-Tarumi & Bredenberg. 2009; Bruner, Floyd, Copeman, 2003; High, American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Early Childhood Adoption and Dependent Care, & Council on School, 2008; Ip, Rao, Bacon-Shone, Li, Ka-wing Ho, Chow, & Jiang, 2015). First learning opportunities at home are considered as a critical period for children to acquire school readiness (Ferguson, Bovaird, & Mueller, 2007). In the conducted studies it is seen that effective parenting and stimulating environments provided at home are shown as the strongest indicator of school readiness (Baker, Cameron, Rimm-Kaufman & Grissmer, 2012; Britto, 2012; Dinç, 2013; Richter, 2004; Hill, Mann & Fitzgerald, 2011). While preparing effective parenting practices and stimulating environments at home, the most important factor that affects parents' decision process is thought to be their education status. Thus, in conducted studies it was stated that when the education status of the parents increases, children's school readiness level also increases (Balat, 2003, Gonca, 2004; Erkan & Kırca, 2010; Martin, Ryan & Brooks- Gunn, 2010). In addition to that Unutkan (2003) asserted that parents' education level and their professions positively affected children's readiness to primary school.

In the light of conducted studies and literature information, it can be claimed that developmental features, classroom environment prepared by teachers in preschool education, and opportunities provided by parents at home are effective in children's acquisition of school readiness. It is thought that as school readiness is a multidimensional structure, examining it with one dimension would affect the accuracy of the results. In the same way, studies that examine these three dimensions that were proved to be effective on children's school readiness together would reveal more accurate results. On the other hand, when the literature is reviewed it is seen that there is no study that presents the mutual effects of developmental features of the children, class and home environments on school readiness. For that reason, in this study it was decided to examine social skills level of children about the first dimension, teachers' social interaction practices about the second dimension, education status of the parents about the third dimension that affect children's school readiness. Mutual effect of these three variables on children's school readiness was examined and aimed to present in this study. In another words the aim of this study is to investigate the predictive power of the levels of the

school readiness in the preschool children by some variables such as social skills, social interaction practices, and educational status.

## METHOD

### Participants

The population of the study in the general screening model is composed of 60 to 66-month old children attending to independent preschools registered by the Ministry of National Education in Konya, Turkey. The sample of this study is selected through stratified sampling method among schools, which represent families and their children of three different socio-economic levels (low, mid and high), in three central districts of Konya. These levels are determined by the Directorate of National Education. Sample group is composed of 42 preschool teachers and 210 children in total, which is sufficient in terms of the number of the participants. 80 of these participants were in Selçuklu district (Mid socio-economic levels) , while the other 80 of them are from Karatay district (low socio-economic levels) and 50 from Meram district (high socio-economic levels) , which represent 4 % , 4 % and 2 % percent of total preschool students in each region respectively (Neuman, 2007). Besides, while determining the sample group of preschool children, the lower (70), middle (70), and upper (70) socio-economic status were taken into consideration. The sample group is composed of 112 girls (56%) and 88 (44%) boys. Mean age of the children is  $X = 71,08 (\pm 0,83)$  months. 14 teachers are from independent preschools and the remaining 28 are from preschool classes in primary schools. Thirty-seven out of 42 teachers are included in the study are holding a bachelor degree, and the remaining are holding a master degree. 24% (10), 71% (30) and 5% (2) of the teachers have been holding their professions for 5 to 10, 10 to 20 and 20 to 30 years, respectively.

### Data Collection Instruments and Application

General Information Form, Social Skills Test, Metropolitan School Readiness Test and Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years (SIPPY) Questionnaire were employed to collect the data.

**General Information Form:** In this study, a general information form is developed by the researcher, which is used in order to gather personal data about the children. The general information form contains information such as sex, number of siblings, occupations and educational background of the parents and the duration of attendance to preschool. In addition, the data about

the educational background of the teachers and the degrees they hold are also collected.

**Social Skills Test for Preschool-aged Children:** In the study, the 5-point Likert-type Social Skills Test was employed for Preschool-aged Children, which is developed by Kapıkıran, İvrenli & Adak (2006) and whose validity and reliability studies were re-conducted by Durualp & Aral (2010), that is composed of 3 subscales (Communication, Dissonance & Timidity), and 57 items.

The parents or teachers are required to observe the children for a period of at least one to one and a half month in order to fill the test out. The scale is able to be applied within 20 to 30 minutes for each child. The highest and lowest points that can be obtained from the Communication, Dissonance and Timidity sub-tests are 160 and 31, 63 and 13, and 60 and 12, respectively. It was found that item factor loads of the sub-tests of the Social Skills Test varied between 0.271 and 0.706. It was found that communication sub-test correlation is between  $r=0.320$  and  $r=0.761$ ; dissonance sub-test correlation is between  $r=0.464$  and  $r=0.715$ ; and timidity sub-test correlation is between  $r=0.313$  and  $r=0.691$ , which is showing a significance level of  $p<0.01$ . Internal consistency reliabilities of total points ( $\alpha=0.95$ ), and the sub-tests of communication ( $\alpha=0.90$ ), dissonance ( $\alpha=0.80$ ) and timidity ( $\alpha=0.84$ ) of the Social Skills Test were found to be sufficient.

**Metropolitan School Readiness:** Metropolitan Maturity Test was developed by Hildreth, Griffiths & McGauvran (1965) in order to measure the features that will enable the children, who will begin primary school, to be prepared to understand the instructions given in the first grade, and their success level. The main form of the test was prepared in English and its R form was adapted to Turkish by Oktay (1980). The test can not anticipate an oral answer from the child. Almost all of shapes that constitute test items consist of the pictures of objects which are not a strange situation for Turkish children (Yazıcı, 1999). The test that makes up 16 page booklet has six separate sub-tests, which covers 100 items in total. Each sub-test is composed of pictures that child may mark according to the instructions given orally by the instructor. The test was applied on an individual basis and took 25 minutes for each child. In the study of the reliability of the test, the correlations between parallel forms of the test that apply to 195 first grade children with several days interval and the resulting reliability coefficients ranged from .53 to .83. Also, standard error scores, which are calculated for each sub-test separately, ranged from 1.35 to 2.02. In the study of the test's validity, American norms and İstanbul norms were compared and some similarities are observed between mean and standard deviations of these two norms (Öner,

1997). There was only one correct answer for each question and the test consists of six sub-tests. There are six sub-tests in the test in total. The sum of the scores of these six sub-tests is determined as the general readiness. The scores obtained from the sub-tests of word comprehension (19 items), sentences (14 items), general information (14 items) and matching (19 items) refer to reading readiness; while the sub-test of the numbers (24 items) refers to numerical readiness; and the total scores of the word comprehension, sentences, general information, matching, numbers and tracing (10 items) determine the general readiness level (Yazıcı, 1999).

#### **Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years (SIPPY)**

**Questionnaire:** The Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years (SIPPY) Questionnaire, which was developed by Kemple et. al. (2008) was translated into Turkish by Öztürk Samur & Soydan (2013). The 5-point Likert scale is composed of 3 parts (environment-related strategies, natural strategies and intensive strategies) and 30 items. One of the items included in the environment-related strategies was removed due to expert opinion; and then 3 other items were removed from the environment-related strategies and the intensive strategies after statistical analyses. The results of factor analysis performed in accordance with the scale's validity indicated that three factors explain 45.41% of variances in all scaled scores. Item-factor correlation analysis suggested that correlation values between each item of the scale are in the range of 0.30 to 0.65, which indicates that there is a positive and significant correlation between the items and factors in general. Confirmatory factor analysis stated that the values of CFI, GFI, AGFI, and S-RMR of the scale are acceptable and the values of  $\chi^2/df$  and RMSEA are consistent. Regarding the reliability of the test, Sperman Brown reliability coefficient, Guttman Split-Half value and Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient were found to be 0.84, 0.83 and 0.90, respectively.

#### **Process**

During the data collection period of the research; firstly, the interviews are carried out with the schools and the aim of the study was explained to them. Social interaction practices scale was filled out by the teachers. Social skill scale for each child was also filled out by the preschool teachers. Then, the researcher decided to include the children in the study, which brought study to a suitable venue. After giving the instructions regarding the research to the children, Metropolitan School Readiness test scale was applied individually to each child. Parents' education status variable is turned into dummy variable and parents who have bachelor's degree and master's degree were used as reference category. Mothers with primary school, high school, and associate degree were coded as 0 and mothers with bachelor's degree and

master's degree were coded as 1. In the classification of the data obtained from the study, they were saved in a computer. All statistical analyses were performed by a computer program called SPSS 16.00 Multiple regression analysis was performed in order to detect to what extent the points getting from the Metropolitan School Readiness scale by the students are predicted by the independent variables. Stepwise regression analysis was also performed to determine which of the independent factors make a significant contribution towards predicting the school readiness. While performing the stepwise regression analysis, it was determined that the variables making significant contributions to predict the level of the school readiness and the contribution of each of these factors to the total variance are explaining the prediction of school readiness.

## FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics about the independent variables that were examined in the study about school readiness level of 60-66 month old children attending preschool education is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics about Variables

	Sub-Dimension of the Scale	N		Ss
Social Skills Scale	Communication	210	114.70	17.60
	Inconsistency	210	35.62	4.10
	Timidity	210	39.21	4.00
	Total	210	189.54	18.52
Social Interaction Practices Scale	Environmental Strategies	210	29.17	3.30
	Natural Strategies	210	39.25	3.32
	Intense Strategies	210	41.55	4.41
	Total	210	110.16	9.78
School Readiness		210	74.96	12.34

When Table 1 is examined it is seen that average score of the 60-66 month old children's school readiness level is 74.96 (sd=12.34) and average score of their social skills level is 189.54 (sd=18.52), teachers social interaction practices average scores is 110.16 (sd=9.78). In Table 2 correlation analysis



results between children's school readiness level and independent variables examined in the study is presented.

**Table 2.** Correlation Level Between 60-66 Month Children's School Readiness Level and Independent Variables

	Sub-Dimension of the Scale	School Readiness
<b>Social Skills Scale</b>	Communication	.20**
	Inconsistency	-.01
	Timidity	.06
	Total	.20**
<b>Social Interaction Practices Scale</b>	Environmental Strategies	.17*
	Natural Strategies	.06
	Intense Strategies	.14*
	Total	.15*
<b>Mother Education Status</b>		.22**
<b>Father Education Status</b>		.18*

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

As seen in Table 2 there is a positive correlation between school readiness and children's social skills, social interaction practices applied by teachers and parents' educational status. 1.00 correlation coefficient means a perfect positive correlation, -1.00 means a perfect negative correlation and .00 means there is no correlation. As an absolute value, if correlation coefficient is between .70-1.00 it is high, if it is between .30-.70 it is average and if it is between .30-.00 it means low correlation (Büyüköztürk, 2000). Accordingly there is a low level correlation between children's school readiness level and independent variables examined in the study. Stepwise regression analysis was utilized to find out whether aforementioned variables separately predict children's school readiness and results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** B and Beta Correlation and Significance Level of Variables

<b>Predictors</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std Error</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Constant</b>	5.10	13.47		.37	.70
<b>Social Skills Scale Communication</b>	.09	.05	.13	1.89	<b>.05</b>
<b>Social Interaction Practices Scale Environmental Strategies</b>	1.39	.40	.37	3.39	.00
<b>Social Interaction Practices Scale Intense Strategies</b>	.07	.26	.02	.30	.76
<b>Mother Education Status</b>	.14	1.89	.01	.07	.96
<b>Father Education Status</b>	4.90	2.27	.39	2.15	<b>.03</b>

p<0.5

When the values presented in Table 3 are examined it is seen that communication skill which is one of the social skills of the children, environmental strategies that is one of teachers' social interaction practices and fathers' education status each separately predicts 60-66 month old children's school readiness level, mothers' education status, intense strategies which is one of teachers' social interaction practices do not separately predict children's school readiness level.

Stepwise regression analysis was utilized to find out whether aforementioned variables have a significant contribution to predict school readiness level of 60-66 month old children attending preschool education. At the end of the stepwise regression it was identified that each variable examined in the study has a contribution to total variance in predicting school readiness. Results of stepwise regression analysis that was utilized to determine predictive variables of school readiness are presented in Table 4. And Table 5.

**Table 4.** Results of stepwise regression analysis about predictive variables of school readiness

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	R2 ch	Std Error of the Estimate
1	.20	.040	.035	.04	12.13
2	.26	.072	.061	.03	11.96
3	.41	.172	.157	.10	11.33

**Table 5.** B and Beta Correlation and Significance Level of Variables

Model	Predictors	B	Std Error	$\beta$	t	P
1	Constant	58.88	6.01		9.79	.00
	Communication	.14	.05	.20	2.70	.00
2	Constant	52.61	6.45		8.15	.00
	Communication	.13	.05	.19	2.67	.00
	Father Education Status	2.21	.90	.17	2.44	.01
3	Constant	5.88	11.90		.49	.62
	Communication	.09	.04	.13	1.91	.04
	Father Education Status	5.07	1.06	.40	4.78	.00
	Environmental Strategies	1.47	.32	.39	4.57	.00

In the first step of the formed model, communication skill which is one of the social skills of the children has a significant contribution to the model ( $R=.20$ ) and 4% percent of school readiness of 60-66 month old children is explained by their communication skills.

In the second step of the model, educational status of the father had a significant contribution to the model ( $R=.26$ ) and with the previous variable it explains 7% of the variance. That is, fathers' educational status had 3% contribution to the explained variance.

In the third step of the model, contribution of environmental strategies that is one of teachers' social interaction practices to the model is significant

( $R=.41$ ) with child's communication skill and educational status of the father this independent variable explains 17% of the variance. In other words, an environmental strategy that is one of teachers' social interaction practices has a 10 % contribution to explained variance.

## DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study is determining factors affecting school readiness of 60-66 month old children attending preschool education. In accordance with this purpose, in this study the predictive power of following variables; 60-66 month old preschool children's social skills, teachers' social interaction practices and educational status of the parents on school readiness was examined.

At the end of the conducted analyses, a correlation was identified between school readiness of 60-66 month old children and their social skills, their teachers' social interaction practices and educational status of their parents. At the end of the stepwise regression analysis that was utilized to find out whether aforementioned variables have a significant contribution to predict school readiness level it was found that 10 % of the school readiness level of 60 to 66-month old children attending pre-school education was explained by environmental strategies about social interaction practices applied by preschool teachers. Environmental strategies about social interaction practices applied by preschool teachers include; preparing a corner that is equipped with toys and materials encouraging social interaction and children can spend time in small groups and in order to broaden children's social play opportunities reorganizing this corner in certain times with different materials, preparing at least a special and comfortable area where a child prefers to play, rest etc. on his own, and allowing children to have conversation during collective activities like meal times. These strategies that are applied in class by preschool teachers are the strongest variables that predict children's school readiness.

Saracho (2001) identified a development in children's reading and writing skills where teachers made reorganization with playgrounds and corners in his study. Leseman, Rollenberg & Rispen (2001) stated that children's speaking and interaction is higher during free play time in preschool classes' playgrounds than time spent with other activities and time spent during free time activities contributes development of children's receptive and expressive language skills positively. According to Hanley, Tiger and Ingvarsson (2009) free plays provide children opportunities to develop their academic and social skills. Tal, Fares, Azmi & Waab (2008) conducted a study in order to find how teachers increase socialization in the class and

develop effective learning methods, teachers were informed about free time game activity and by this way they aimed to increase the quality of practices in learning corners. While activities they participated in accordance with their interests and with joy developed children, this situation also gives teachers responsibility to enrich these environments. During free game when group activities those focus on learning in educators' guidance, behaviors like putting forward an idea, giving decision were frequently observed and it was emphasized that they had an experience of learning by doing and experiencing. It was stated that at the end of the education children in these teachers' classes were able to achieve meaningful learning, cope with difficulties and make progress in socialization with reciprocal communication. Moreover there are studies that identified a positive correlation between teachers' competency to prepare stimulating and supportive early childhood environment (Brophy-Herb, Lee, Nievar & Stollak, 2007; Curby, Rimm-Kaufman & Ponitz, 2009; Mashburn et.al., 2008).

In Preschool Program in Turkey importance of the learning centers including environmental strategies applied by teachers concerning teachers' social interaction practices were taken into consideration and these centers were designed as environments that are child centered, unstructured, stimulus rich and game based (MEB, 2013). Learning centers provide some opportunities to children such as focusing attention, supporting small group interactions, making children to make a choice and having an experience at the end of these choices (Bredenkamp, 2014). It is seen that environmental strategies that preschool teachers applied in order to increase social interaction provide opportunities to the children to develop social skills through interaction in small groups as well as experiencing supporting cognitive development like focusing attention, making choices, experiencing results. In another words it can be claimed that environmental strategies that teachers applied support two sub-dimensions of children's school readiness namely cognitive and social development. In the light of the given information, it can be said that physical areas that meet children's interests and needs for games, learning centers designed with sufficient and appropriate materials and teachers who prepares these centers ideally and enable children to use these centers actively support children's school readiness maximally.

In the study, moreover, it was identified that 4% of the 60-66 month old preschool children's school readiness was explained by communication skills of the children that is one of the social skills. A different set of studies have found that children's social skills are related to their readiness for school and later to their actual academic achievement in school (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fernandez, Dominguez, & Rouse, 2011; NICHD Early Child Care Network,

2004; Pianta & McCoy, 1997; Zill & West, 2001). Findings from this research have contributed to the notion that the emergence of the ability to establish effective and positive peer relationships in preschools is an important indicator of school readiness. For example, preschoolers' ability to establish and maintain positive peer relationships has been found to be associated with a more positive transition to formal school settings as well as continued school achievement throughout the school years (Fantuzzo & McWayne, 2002; Hampton & Fantuzzo, 2003). Bulotsky-Shearer, Bell, Romero, & Carter, (2012) suggested that classroom relationships, especially those experienced between peers, can help children develop the social skills necessary for school adjustment and long-term academic achievements. According to Skibbe et al. (2011), school readiness refers to characteristics of children's development, including social skills, as well as general knowledge, cognitive ability, and language, which are associated with children's readiness for the school. According to Bulotsky-Shearer, Fernandez, Dominguez & Rouse (2011), classroom relationships, especially those experienced between peers, can help children develop the social skills necessary for school adjustment and long-term academic success. Raver et al. (2011) reported that children with more developed self-regulation skills show higher levels of achievement in math and language skills than their more impulsive and inattentive peers. Similarly, McWayne & Cheung (2009) have found a relationship between the problematic behaviors of the children and their first-grade social and academic adjustments in their study, which is carried out with a sample of 168 urban preschool children.

In the literature, there are some researches showing that children exhibiting more socially competent behaviors generally being in a better position academically in school than children exhibiting less competent social behaviors (Bulotsky-Shearer et al., 2011; Escalon & Greenfield, 2009; Dobbs, Doctoroff, Fisher, & Arnold, 2006; McClelland et al., 2007). The results of the above-mentioned study show that the relationship between the children's social skills and their academic successes emphasizes the interconnection between the social skills attained in childhood and academic success. This study concentrated on the relationship between the children's social skill developments and their academic successes support the results of this study.

It was found that 3 % of the 60-66 month old preschool children's school readiness was explained by the variable, education status of the father. This result indicates whatever area they had an education, as fathers' education level increases, it supports children's school readiness level. Study results conducted by Balat (2003), Çıkrıkçı (1999) Gonca (2004) Erkan & Kırca (2010) Unutkan (2003), Alakoç Pirpir, Büyüктаşkapu Soydan, Angın (2016), Martin, Ryan & Brooks- Gunn (2010) , Yazıcı (2002) have stated that when

parents' education level increases children's school readiness level also increases. These findings support the results of the current study. It is thought that when education level of the fathers increases they tend to involve in children's care and education processes and as a result of this fathers can form stronger parenting ties. It was identified that fathers who stated that they formed a strong parenting tie with their children do more activities with their children at home and fathers' child care and participation to educational activities were effective on emotional regulation skills of the children (Downer & Mendez (2015). In addition to that Yazıcı (2002) have stated that parents with higher education level had behaviors that positively affect children's development such as acquiring information about child education, accessing new resources, providing different and informative education environments and strengthening communication ways with children. According to Çıkrıkçı (1999), increase in parents' education level also enables them to provide financially better education environments. In the light of this information it can be asserted that when fathers' education level increases their tendency to form stronger parental ties with their children and behave in a way to affect their children's development positively, as a result their children's school readiness level increases.

As a result, in this study it was identified that following variables; environmental strategies about preschool teachers' social interaction practices has 10 % , children's communication skills which is one of their social skills has 4% , fathers' education status has 3% effect on children's school readiness levels. It is seen that these variables were effective on children's school readiness but their effect size was quite low. This result indicates that there are other variables which are more effective on supporting children's school readiness. Consequently, it is thought that further studies that examine other variables which are more effective on school readiness should be conducted.

Preschool teachers' competencies about arranging classroom environment in order to provide opportunities for children to have social interaction is the most important variable that effects children's school readiness so increasing teachers' awareness about this competency is thought to be very important.

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