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## PEDAGOGICAL EXPECTANCES FROM THE PLAYGROUNDS IN THE SCHOOL GARDENS IN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Dr. Lecturer Fikret ALINCAK<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Lecturer Mehmet Ali ÖZTÜRK<sup>2</sup>, Tuğba TURAK<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gaziantep University, [alincakfikret27@gmail.com](mailto:alincakfikret27@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Karabük University, [maliozturk2002@yahoo.com](mailto:maliozturk2002@yahoo.com)

### ABSTRACT

Schools should be made environmentally appropriate preparation of students for the future, from the point of view of education and training, should be together with the place where only basic needs of students are given. School gardens are places where academic life occurs. Therefore, school gardens must be more regular in pre-school and primary school in terms of educational attainment of the pupils in order for children to be useful collectors. The purpose of this study is to reveal the opinions of the classroom teachers about their pedagogical

expectations from playgrounds in school gardens. In the study open-ended questions were developed by the researchers as a data collection tool were presented to classroom teachers. The data obtained from 25 classroom teachers who are working in schools affiliated to the Gaziantep

Provincial Directorate of National Education were analyzed by content analysis method using interview method which is one of the qualitative methods in the research.

As a result of the research, the classroom teachers observed that the school gardens inadequate and did not suitable the level of the students. Teachers who participated in the research indicated that the areas of the school gardens were not reliable.

Besides, teachers have come to the conclusion that in terms of children's improvement, the playgrounds that are in the schools must be wide, there must have different game tools, educational playgrounds and the ground in the gardens must be corrected for the safety of the student.

**Key Words:** Classroom teacher, School garden, playground, Pedagogical expectation.

## INTRODUCTION

Education aims to educate people in all aspects within a specific program. The level of development and prosperity of a society is only possible with the training of educated individuals. People spend about 90% of their daily life in buildings (Evans & McCoy, 1998). School gardens are also a good opportunity to positively influence the health of children (PE: Physical Education), which are also implemented in the curriculum (Christodoulos, 2006). The characteristics of the school gardens in Article 153 of the Ministry of National Education primary education regulation; It is stated that 'children should travel around the school, play, do sportive activities, have gymnastics tools and sand pools' (Regulations, 1998-2012-2014). As a result of industrialization and urbanization, social changes have brought some physical changes. In addition to these changes, the multi-storey buildings narrowed the play areas by restricting children to spend time outside (Sivri, 1993). As a result of these changes, the children's open culture has started to change (Moore, 2004). Especially during the primary school period, the school and the garden are the meeting points of children outside of school hours and school hours. In addition to their academic studies, school environments have an important place as well as places where they have a pleasant time, satisfy their curiosity, and act freely (Özdemir, 2011; Kıldan, 2007, Aksoy, 2011, Ayan & Ulaş, 2015). Schools and gardens are also social spaces that children should be able to use in the most efficient way and should be able to respond to the needs of all children (Sanoff, 2002).

According to the size and design of schools, many different games, sports, education and training jobs. are places with the features that will enable academic activities. The time spent by the students in the schoolyard was 1300 hours in the USA and 935 hours in our country. These figures are not included in the timetable of using the school yard for children outside school hours (Karaburun et. al., 2015).

When we look at the studies, there are limited number of researches in the playgrounds in the school gardens. This study was designed to determine the opinions of primary school teachers about their pedagogical expectations from playgrounds in school gardens. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought.

**Classroom teachers;**

1. What is his / her opinion about the pedagogical competence status of the school's garden?
2. What are the views of the playgrounds in the garden of the school where they work?
3. Does the school's playground need pedagogical playgrounds?
4. Does the playground in the school's garden contribute to the educational development of children?
5. What are the expectations of the school they play in the garden and playgrounds?
6. What are the suggestions for the school's playground and playground?

**METHOD**

A case study pattern, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. According to quantitative research, qualitative research is a method that provides flexible mobility to the researcher and provides different approaches in data collection methodology, analysis and design of research (Gay et. al., 2006).

The case study is a research design used in cases where the boundaries between the phenomenon and the environment are not clear and there is more than one evidence or data source (Yin, 1984; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006).

**Research Group**

The open-ended questionnaire, which was prepared in order to determine the opinions of the primary school teachers on the playgrounds in the school gardens for their pedagogical expectations, was applied to 25 classroom teachers who were working in the official primary schools of Gaziantep Provincial Directorate of National Education.

The data related to the research group are given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Personal Characteristics of the Study Group (N = 50)**

Variables	Groups	n	%
Tenure	1 – 5 Years	9	36
	6 – 10 Years	4	16
	11 – 15 Years	2	8
	16 – 20 Years	4	16
	21 – 30 Years	6	24
Gender	Women	17	68
	Men	8	32
Teaching Class	1	10	40
	2	9	36
	3	4	16
	4	2	8
Education	Associate	2	8
	Bachelor's	20	80
	Master's	3	12

Table 1 presents some personal characteristics belonging to the research group. When we look at the tenure of the teachers participating in the study, 9 teachers (36%) between 1-5 years, 4 teachers (16%) between 6 -10 years, 2 teachers (8%) 11-15 years, 4 teachers (16%) 16 - 20 years and 6 teachers (24%) served between 21-30 years. When we look at the gender, 17 teachers (68%) are female and 8 (32%) are male. When we look at the classes they have studied; 10 teachers (40%) 1st grade, 4 teachers (9%) 2nd grade, 4 teachers (16%) 3rd grade, 2 teachers (8%) 4 classes are seen to read. When we look at the educational status, it is seen that 2 teachers (8%) are associate degree students, 20 teachers (80%) are bachelor's degree and 3 teachers (12%) have graduate education.

### **Preparation and Application of Open-ended Questionnaire**

In order to form the interview form to be used in the research, firstly 100 class teachers were interviewed face to face and they were asked to write an essay about their opinions about their pedagogical expectations from the playgrounds in the school gardens. As a result of the information obtained from the collected compositions and related literature, a draft form of the interview form was obtained. One of the logical ways used to test the validity of the measurement tool prepared for the research is to consult expert opinion (Büyüköztürk, 2006). The interview form was submitted to the opinions of the field experts and necessary arrangements were made in line with the opinions received and finalized the interview form consisting of 4 personal characteristics-determining questions and 6 open-ended questions. Prepared questions are as follows;

#### **Classroom teachers;**

1. What is his / her opinion about the pedagogical competence status of the school's garden?
2. What are the views of the playgrounds in the garden of the school where they work?
3. Does the school's playground need pedagogical playgrounds?
4. Does the playground in the school's garden contribute to the educational development of children?
5. What are the expectations of the school they play in the garden and playgrounds?
6. What are the suggestions for the school's playground and playground?

The final form of the interview form was applied to 25 classroom teachers working in Gaziantep. During the application, the aim of the research was explained to the participants and information was given about the importance of their answers. As a

result of the answers of the participants to the measurement tool, multiple expressions were collected under common themes.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interview form used in the research were analyzed with the content analysis method used in qualitative research. In qualitative research, content analysis is used in the creation of theoretical and non-significant themes and, if any, sub-themes are created (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). The data obtained were recorded and grouped and coded separately. These groupings and coding were presented to the field experts and the final cases were prepared according to the evaluations of the experts. With the analysis of the content, themes were determined for each question and tables were created by calculating the frequency and percentage of the given themes. Descriptive analysis was used to evaluate the data. Finally, reports were made and findings were presented.

### FINDINGS AND COMMENT

In this section, the findings of the interviews with the teachers in order to determine their opinions about the pedagogical expectations of the primary school teachers working in the public schools attached to the Ministry of National Education are given.

Table 2. The distribution of the opinions of the research group on the pedagogical competence of the school where they work.

Themes	n	%
Not adequate and appropriate	16	48.4
Adequate and appropriate	8	24.2
Too much students	7	21.2
Partially adequate	2	6.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

In Table 2, the distribution of the views of the school on the pedagogical competence of the school in which the research group works is given. When the views of the participants about the pedagogical competence of the school's garden were discussed, 4 themes emerged. It is seen that participants expressed more than one theme.

According to the percentage of these themes; it was observed that the themes of its not adequate and appropriate (48.4%), adequate and appropriate (24.2%), too much students (21.2%), and partially adequate (6.2%) themes came to the fore.

**Table 3.** The distribution of opinions of the research group on the playgrounds in the garden of the school where they work.

<b>Themes</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Playgrounds are not sufficient	17	42.5
Schoolyard is not safe	8	20
In part as sufficient	8	20
Area not suitable for elementary school	7	17.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3. presents the distribution of opinions of the research group on the playgrounds in the garden of the school where they work. 4 themes emerged in the distribution of the participants' views on the playgrounds in the garden of the school. According to this; 17 teachers (42.5%) stated that the playgrounds were not sufficient, 8 teachers (20%) stated that the schoolyard was not safe, 8 teachers (20%) were partially sufficient, and 7 teachers (17.5%) stated that the area was not suitable for primary school.

**Table 4.** The distribution of the opinions of the research group about the need for pedagogical playgrounds in the gardens of their own schools.

Themes	N	%
Yes, playgrounds are needed	21	84
No, playgrounds are not needed	4	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

In Table 4, the distribution of the opinions of the research group about the thoughts of the garden in the schools about the need for pedagogical playgrounds is given. Two themes have emerged from the participants' views on the need for pedagogical playgrounds in the garden of their school. According to the percentage ranking among these themes, yes, there is a need for playgrounds (84%), no, there is no need for playgrounds (16%).

**Table 5.** The distribution of the opinions of the research group about the contribution of the playgrounds in the school gardens to the educational development of children.

Themes	N	%
Yes, there is contribution	21	84
No, no contribution	2	8
Partly contributed	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 presents the distribution of the opinions of the research group about the contribution of the playgrounds in the school gardens to the educational development of children. 3 themes emerged from the participants' views on the contribution of the playgrounds in the school gardens to the educational development of children. According to the percentage ranking among these themes, yes, there is contribution



(84%), no, no contribution (8%), partially contributed (8%) themes have come to the fore.

**Table 6.** Distribution of data on the expectations of the research group from the garden and play areas in their schools.

<b>Themes</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
There must be educational playgrounds	13	26.5
Must be safe	12	24.4
Must be wide	10	20.5
Should be intended for the student	10	20.5
Must have indoor gyms	4	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 7.** The distribution of data about the research group's suggestions on playgrounds in schools.

<b>Themes</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Educational playgrounds must be made	13	21.4
Playgrounds must be safe	12	19.7
Games and gyms must be built	8	13.1
Playgrounds must be expanded	7	11.4
Playgrounds must be drawn	6	9.8
Playgrounds must be clean	5	8.2
The grounds of the playground must be regular	5	8.2
The playground must be appropriate for the student level	5	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 presents the distribution of the opinions of the research group about their expectations from the gardens and playgrounds in their schools. 5 themes emerged

from the participants' views on their expectations from the gardens and playgrounds in their schools. It's seen that the participants express more than one theme. Among these themes It was observed that, there must be educational playgrounds (26.5%), must be safe (24.4%), must be wide (20.5%), must be intended for the students (20.5%), must have indoor sports gyms (8.1%).

Table 7 presents the distribution of the opinions of the research group on their suggestions about play areas in their schools. 8 themes emerged from the participants' views on the playground recommendations in their schools. It's seen that the participants express more than one theme. According to the percentage of these themes; Educational playgrounds must be made (21.4%), playgrounds must be safe (19.7%), games and gyms must be built (13.1%), playgrounds must be expanded (11.4%), playgrounds must be drawn (9.8%), playgrounds must be clean (8.2%), the grounds of the playground must be regular (8.2%), the playground must be appropriate for the student level (8.2%).

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this part of the research, the results obtained as a result of the interviews about the pedagogical expectations of the classroom teachers who work in the official schools of the Ministry of National Education in the playgrounds in the school gardens are included.

When the opinions of the research group on the pedagogical sufficiency of the school's garden are examined, the majority of the schools in the schools are not sufficient. Some teachers stated that they were adequate and appropriate. Based on the opinions of the teachers participating in the research, we can say that the playgrounds of the school gardens in general are insufficient. In many studies, it has been determined that school gardens are not adequate and appropriate for students to spend time (Ekinçi et. al., 2012, Karatekin & Çetinkaya, 2013, Karaburun et. al., 2015, Aksoy, 2011).

They stated that the majority of the areas of playgrounds in the garden of the school where teachers work were not sufficient and that they were not safe. However, some teachers have observed that the playgrounds in their schools perform partially, even if they are sufficient. According to this result, the inadequate and unsafe playgrounds can be said to have a negative impact on children.

There are also studies showing similarities with the results obtained in our study (Ekinçi et. al., 2012). In addition to the inadequacy of the school gardens they have stated that they are not safe.

When we look at the opinions of the research group about the need for pedagogical playgrounds of their own school gardens, the majority of them stated that there is a need for playgrounds in schools. From these points of view, we can say that playgrounds are needed in order for children to spend time in a full time at school.

When the opinions of the research group about the contribution of the playgrounds in the school gardens to the educational development of children, almost all of the teachers stated that the playgrounds contributed to the development of children in educational terms. According to this result, we can say that the school gardens should be planned and arranged as the interior of the school, like a training program in their gardens, as they are important for the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and pedagogical development of primary school children.

When we look at the expectations of the research group from the gardens and playgrounds of the schools where they work, the participants are; They stated that they should have educational playgrounds, be safe and playgrounds should be oriented towards students.

When the suggestions of the research group regarding the play areas in the schools were examined, it was stated that educational playgrounds and safe playgrounds should be made. In addition, it was determined that the teachers who participated in the research stated that the playgrounds must be spread over a wide area, the grounds were regular and they should be suitable for the student level. According to this result; old school gardens and playgrounds need to be revisited qualitatively and qualitatively and

reconstructed with pedagogical equipment and new schools should be designed with as many garden and play areas as possible. In addition to schools, school gardens should be included in the process of urban transformation. For students, we can say that there is a need for multi-area, sports, arts and playgrounds, activity areas that will appeal to different age groups, safety learning areas, aesthetics and academic learning.

As a result, it was observed that class teachers stated that they found the school gardens inadequate and that they were not suitable for the students' level. The participating teachers stated that the school gardens were not reliable. In addition, it was concluded that in terms of the development of the children, there should be a wide range of play areas in the schools, different play tools, educational play areas and the grounds in the gardens should be corrected in terms of student safety.

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