

ULUSLARARASI EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ DERGİSİ

ISSN: 2149-0848

THE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SCIENCE

Reasons of Families' Preference for Early
Childhood Education Institutions and Education
Expenditures

Ailelerin Erken Çocukluk Eğitimi Kurumlarını
Tercih Etme Nedenleri ve Eğitim Harcamaları

Bilge UZUNOĞLU*
Hüseyin YOLCU**



Submitted / Geliş: 09.09.2024

Accepted / Kabul: 25.12.2024

 10.29228/INESJOURNAL.78263

Article Information:

Research Article

Makale Türü:

Araştırma Makalesi

Citation / Atıf

Uzunoglu, B. ve Yolcu, H. (2024). Reasons of families' preference for early childhood education institutions and education expenditures. *Uluslararası Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 11 (41), 14-34.

This article was checked by Intihal.net. Bu makale İntihal.net tarafından taranmıştır.

This article is under the Creative Commons license. Bu makale Creative Commons lisansı altındadır.

*MS, Ministry of National Education, bilge.uzunoglu@hotmail.com 

**Prof. Dr., Kastamonu University, hyolcu@kastmonu.edu.tr 

ULUSLARARASI EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ DERGİSİ

ISSN: 2149-0848

THE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SCIENCE

Abstract: This study aims to reveal the criteria for families' preference for early childhood education (ECE) institutions and their educational expenditures. The research has been conducted on 206 families in Çankırı, Türkiye. The data are obtained using the "Personal Information Form," the "Criteria for Families' Preference for Preschool Education Institutions Survey" (Durmaz, Akdoğan & Demir, 2019), and the "Survey of Families' Educational Expenses during the ECE Period". Descriptive statistics are employed in the analysis of the data. The research findings reveal that parents sending their children to public schools mostly consider the professional competencies of the teachers working in these schools, while those sending their children to private schools consider the qualifications of the families whose children attend those schools. On average, families spend 17358 TL for one child. The ECE expenses for families sending their children to public ECE schools amount to 1596.6 TL per child, whereas for families sending their children to private ECE schools, the amount is 15761.4 TL. The ECE expenses of families sending their children to private schools are nearly 10 times higher than those sending their children to public schools. In comparison to families sending their children to public ECE schools, families sending their children to private ECE schools spend nearly 10 times more on direct educational expenses and about twice as much on indirect educational expenses. It is recommended that studies be conducted to present the ECE expenses of families based on an internationally recognized classification at the macro level.

Keywords: Early childhood education, Education expenditure, educational institution choice.

Öz: Bu çalışmada ailelerin erken çocuklu eğitim (EÇE) kurumlarını tercih etme ölçütleri ve eğitim harcamalarının ortaya konulması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma Çankırı ilindeki 206 aile ile yürütülmüştür. Çalışmanın verileri "Kişisel Bilgi Formu", "Ailelerin Okul Öncesi Eğitim Kurumlarını Tercih Ölçütleri Anketi" ve "Ailelerin EÇE Döneminde Yaptığı Eğitim Harcamaları Anketi" ile elde edilmiştir. Verilerin çözümlenmesinde betimsel istatistiklere başvurulmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda, çocuklarını kamu okullarına gönderen aileler daha çok bu okullarda görev yapan öğretmenlerin mesleki yeterliklerini dikkate alır iken özel okula gönderenler ise bu okullara çocuklarını gönderen ailelerin niteliklerini göz önünde bulundurmaktadır. Aileler, bir çocuk için ortalama 17358 TL harcama yapmaktadır. Çocuklarını kamu EÇE okuluna gönderen ailelerin bir çocuk için yapmış olduğu EÇE harcaması 1596,6 TL iken özel EÇE okuluna gönderen aileler ise 15761,4 TL'dir.

Çocuklarını özel okullara gönderen ailelerin EÇE harcamaları kamu okullarına gönderen ailelerin yaklaşık 10 katıdır. Çocuklarını özel EÇE okullarına gönderen ailelerin yapmış oldukları doğrudan eğitim harcamaları çocuklarını kamu okullarına gönderenlerle karşılaştırıldığında yaklaşık 10 kat, dolaylı eğitim harcamaları da yine yaklaşık iki kat daha fazladır. Ailelerin EÇE harcamalarının uluslararası sınıflandırmaya dayalı olarak makro düzeyde ortaya konulmasını içeren çalışmaların yapılması önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erken çocukluk eğitimi, eğitim harcaması, eğitim kurumu tercihi.

Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) started to emerge in the historical process with the formation of the concept of child and the awareness of childhood. It has been seen that ECE is also a part of childhood with the development of the concepts of child and childhood by societies by drawing certain boundaries and placing them on an appropriate educational basis (Gordon & Browne, 2011). In many studies, human life has been analyzed by categorizing it into periods. As a consequence of these studies, it has been determined that the phase with the fastest growth and development is the ECE period. This period represents an important process that starts with the birth of the child and continues until primary school education, during which physical, psychosocial, cognitive and linguistic development areas that are effective in children's future lives are largely completed, and the foundation of the child's character is formed with the education offered in the family and schools (Diken, 2014; Güven & Azkeskin, 2014; Oğuzkan & Oral, 1997).

The active involvement of women in the labor market since the 1970s has prompted the implementation of policies and initiatives related to ECE and services. These policies have aimed to facilitate women's participation in the labor force (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2006). In this way, ECE gained importance and necessitated the emergence of institutions providing ECE services (Kreyenfeld & Hank, 2000). Furthermore, this situation has led to a change in the traditional duties and responsibilities of individuals within the family (OECD, 2006). There has been a statistical decline in the prevalence of the patriarchal family model. The mobilization of the economy by women entering the labor market has destroyed the perception of women who work at home and take care of children, and with the emergence of dissolution within the family, especially married women with children have demanded their rights from this market and the position of women in business life has differentiated. As a result of these differentiations, the care and education of children have been taken out of the family and paved the way for new regulations (Hazar, 2019). As a result of this social mobility, the inability to meet the care and education undertaken by the family has increased the need for institutional ECE services.

Several studies in the literature reveal that families have been turning to institutional care services instead of home-based care services to support the development and education of their children as they grow older (Bromer & Henly, 2009; Ceylan, 2019; Han, 2004; Li-Grining & Coley, 2006; Tokuç & Tuğrul, 2007; Tokuç 2007; Yesil-Dagli, 2011; Yolcu, 2019). Nevertheless, it is observed that various variables are determinants of the preferences of families for ECE services. These variables include working hours of families, institutional fees, family income, quality, and equipment of institutions providing ECE services, age of the child, educational level of parents, and references from other families in ECE preferences (Chaudry, Henly & Meyers, 2010; Foot et al., 2000; Johnson, Padilla & Votruba-Drzal, 2017; Leslie, Ettenson & Cumsille, 2000; Yesil-Dagli, 2011).

In Türkiye, institutional ECE services are provided in a "fragmented model". This is because ECE and care services operate under different ministries with different methods and regulations. Institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies provide care for children aged three and under, while institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education provide education-based services for children aged three and above (OECD, 2017). Institutions and organizations providing ECE services include public and private kindergartens affiliated with primary and secondary schools, private and public kindergartens, practice kindergartens affiliated with vocational high schools, official institutions opened according to Article 191 of Law No. 657, institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services, nurseries, daycare centers, summer schools, mobile kindergartens and community-based institutions opened in enterprises according to the Labor Law (Kaytaç & Öztürk, 2019). A kindergarten is a place within a primary or secondary school where children aged 57-69 months receive their education, whereas kindergartens are independent and cover the education and care processes of children aged 36-69 months (Ministry of National Education, 2019). The Regulation on the Principles of Establishment and Operation of Private Nurseries and Day Care Centers and Private Children's Clubs (2015) defines nurseries as institutions where children aged 0-36 months are cared for rather than educated, while daycare centers are defined as institutions responsible for the care of children between the ages of 36-66 months.

Education expenditures related to ECE can be divided into two categories: public expenditures and private expenditures. Public expenditures for ECE services in Türkiye consist of expenditures made by the Ministry of Family, Labor, and Social Services, the Ministry of National Education, municipalities, and other public institutions. Private expenditures cover expenditures made by families, non-governmental organizations, private institutions, and organizations. According to Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (Türkiye Statistical Institute [TÜİK], 2023), public expenditures amounted to 13214 million TL and private expenditures amounted to 4285 million TL in 2021. 2337 million TL (54.5%) of

private spending on ECE was made by households. These expenditures increased by 34.4% compared to 2020.

Expenses made by families for ECE services can be grouped into several categories. These are; (1) expenditures related to payments made directly to the school (registration fees, PTA fees, exam fees, fees such as diplomas, certificates, student certificates, photocopying fees and other fees related to registration), (2) expenditures for uniforms, school equipment and consumables (uniforms and compulsory sports equipment, compulsory textbooks, exercise books and other school supplies), (3) other related expenses (bus and minibus boarding fees, canteen and cafeteria fees, shuttle service fees), non-compulsory textbooks/auxiliary resources, non-school books, newspapers, magazines, computer equipment, educational games, pocket money, leisure and extracurricular activities, tutoring and courses, etc. (Karakütük, 2006; Tiyab & Ndabananiye, 2013).

In the literature on ECE in Türkiye, there are studies aiming to identify the reasons why families prefer ECE institutions (Bal, 2019; Ceylan, 2019; Çemrek & Özeydin, 2019; Durmaz, Akdoğan & Demir, 2019; Topaç, Yaman, Ogurlu, & İlgar, 2013; Polat & Çelmeli, 2015; Tunalı, 2019), as well as studies focusing on families' education expenses (; Türkmen-Kılıç, 2022; Saklan, 2011; Saklan & Erginer, 2016; Sarıışık, 2019; Yolcu & Yeşilyurt-Yalçın, 2020). These studies differentiates itself from other studies by considering both families' preferences for ECE institutions and their education expenditures together. Therefore, it can be said that this research will contribute to the literature by examining the criteria that families consider when selecting ECE institutions and addressing education expenditures. Oseni et al. (2018) draw attention to the importance of expenditure information on the direct cost of education to the household and its impact on the general welfare of the household. It can be stated that the findings of the research will be guiding for those who have a say in determining education policies and making decisions. The findings and results of the research are thought to shed light on new studies to be conducted in the literature on the subject.

The general aim of this study is to reveal families' preferences for institutional education services in early childhood and the educational expenditures they make in this field. The study is limited to the preferences of families, who sent their children to ECE institutions (public and private) in Çankırı in the 2021-2022 academic year, and their educational expenditures for one child. It is assumed that the ECE expenditure amounts of families reflect the annual average values for one child. The following questions were sought to be answered in the study:

1. What criteria do families consider when choosing ECE institutions? Do these criteria differ based on whether the institution is public or private?
2. What is the total educational expenditure that families make during the ECE

period, including direct and indirect expenses? Do these expenditures differ based on whether the ECE institution is public or private?

METHOD

Research Design

This research is a descriptive study based on a survey model. Çepni (2010) states that the basis of survey model research is the systematic review of all current or past data on the situation or people. According to Karasar (2014), survey model research has three distinctive features. Firstly, it involves selecting a sample of suitable size to describe the opinions of a large population regarding an event. Secondly, it includes data collection methods and techniques. In the case of survey model research, this allows for the use of various data collection techniques such as structured interviews and observations, in addition to surveys. Thirdly, the data obtained can be analyzed statistically. Therefore, this research is considered a survey-type study due to the acquisition of data through a specific size of the participant group, the collection of this data through surveys, and the statistical analysis of the collected data.

Participant

The participants of the study are the families sending their children to public and private ECE institutions located in the city center of Çankırı during the 2020-2021 academic year. In Çankırı city center, there are nine public kindergartens, 26 preschool classes affiliated with 12 primary schools, one daycare center, one private nursery, and one preschool affiliated with a private primary school, with a total of 1500 children (Çankırı Provincial Directorate of National Education, 2021). In determining the participants of the study, the convenience sampling method, one of the non-probability-based sampling types, was used. This method is aimed at targeting individuals who are suitable for the research and easily accessible. In addition to their suitability, participants should also be willing and voluntary (Karasar, 2014). Compared to probability-based sampling methods, the convenience sampling method is a cost-effective and time-saving for researchers. Although this method has many advantages, it does not provide representativeness and the results cannot be generalized to the overall population (Armağan, 1983; Karasar, 2014).

The participants of the study consisted of 206 families willing and volunteering to participate in the study among the families of 1500 children in the study population. Along with socio-demographic information about the participating children and families, information regarding the educational institutions they send their children to is provided below in sequence.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the children from the participating families

Tablo 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable		n	%
Mother's age	24-29	36	17.5
	30-35	123	59.7
	36-41	39	18.09
	42-47	8	3.9
	Total	206	100.0
Father's age	24-29	15	7.3
	30-35	19	38.3
	36-41	95	46.1
	42-47	15	7.3
	48-53	2	1.0
	Total	206	100.0
Mother's education	Primary school	19	9.2
	Middle school	16	7.8
	High school	57	27.7
	University	97	47.1
	Postgraduate	17	8.3
	Total	206	100.0
Father's education	Middle school	17	8.3
	High school	46	22.3
	University	124	60.2
	Postgraduate	19	9.2
	Total	206	100.0
Mother's employment status	Private sector	19	9.2
	Public (Permanent Stuff)	88	42.7
	Public (Contracted)	12	5.8
	Not working	83	40.3
	Unemployed	4	1.9
	Total	206	100.0
Father's employment status	Private sector	81	39.3
	Public (Permanent Stuff)	98	47.6
	Public (Contracted)	15	7.3
	Public (Temporary worker)	3	1.5
	Retired	3	1.5
	Unemployed	6	2.9
	Total	206	100.0
Monthly family income /TL	5000 TL or more	63	30.6
	5001-7500	28	13.6
	7501-10000	50	24.3
	10001-12500 T	26	12.6
	12501 or less	39	18.9
	Total	206	100.0

Table 1 shows that 36 (17.5%) of the mothers are between the ages of 24-29, 123 (59.7%) between the ages of 30-35, 39 (18.9%) between the ages of 36-41 and 8 (3.9%) between the ages of 42-47. On the other hand, 15 (7.3%) of the fathers are between the ages of 24-29, 79 (38.3%) between 30-35, 95 (46.1%) between 36-41, 15 (7.3%) between 42-47, and 2 (1%) between 48-53. As for the educational level of the families, 19 (9.2%) of the mothers are primary school graduates, 16 (7.8%) were middle school graduates, 57 (27%) are high school graduates, 97 (47.1%) are university graduates, and 17 (8.3%) are graduate students; while 17 (8.3%) of the fathers are middle school graduates, 46 (22.3%) are high school graduates, 124 (60.2%) are university graduates, and 19 (9.2%) are graduate students. When the employment status of the mothers and fathers is analyzed, 19 (9.2%) of the mothers are employed in the private sector, 88 (42.7%) are permanent staff in the public sector, and 12 (5.8%) are contracted in the public sector. and 4 (1.9%) are unemployed; 81 (39.3%) of the fathers are employed in the private sector, 98 (47.6%) are permanent public sector employees, 15 (7.3%) are public sector contractors, 3 (1.5%) are temporary public sector workers, 3 (1.5%) were retired and 6 (2.9%) are unemployed. Out of 206 families, 63 (30.6%) have a monthly income of 5000TL or less, 28 (13.6%) have a monthly income of 5001-7500TL, 50 (24.3%) have a monthly income of 7501- 10000TL, 26 (12.6%) have a monthly income of 10001-12500TL, and 39 (18.9%) have a monthly income of 12501 TL or more.

Data Collection Tools

Three different data collection instruments were employed in the study. The first one is a personal information collection form for the families participating in the study. This form, created by the researchers, includes questions about the families' socio-demographic information. The second data collection instrument used in the study is the "Families' Preference Criteria for Pre-School Education Institutions Questionnaire". This questionnaire consists of 34 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, aiming to determine the criteria considered by families when choosing preschool education institutions and the level of importance assigned to these criteria. The last of these statements, item 34, was added under the name of "other" to determine whether there were any other criteria that families could add. Finally, the third data collection tool was the "Families' Educational Expenditures During the ECE Period" questionnaire, which was used to determine the educational expenditures made by families for the ECE institutions to which they send their children. Created and developed by Yolcu and Yeşilyurt Yalçın (2020), this questionnaire lists 28 subheadings of expenditure items. Families were asked to write the average amount spent in Turkish Lira (TL) for each expenditure item during the 2020-2021 academic year in the boxes provided next to each item.

Data Collection

Permission for the research was taken from the Social Sciences and Humanities

Ethics Committee (2020- 4-75) of the university where the researcher works and from the provincial Directorate of National Education. Under the obtained permissions, the questionnaires, which served as the data collection instruments, were duplicated in sufficient numbers and administered to the families who send their children to the ECE institutions that constitute the study group, through the teachers and administrators working in these institutions, between June 1 and July 2, 2021. One week was given for the collection of the questionnaires distributed to families through teachers. The filled questionnaires were required to be returned to the teachers within the specified timeframe. Due to the reduced participation of students in face-to-face education during the COVID-19 pandemic, this period was extended by an additional two weeks. After the completion of this extended period, the filled questionnaire forms were collected.

Data Analysis

The data obtained in the research were analyzed using the SPSS software package. In parallel to this, descriptive statistics such as frequencies (percentages, arithmetic mean) were utilized to analyze both sub-objectives of the study.

FINDINGS

Below are the findings related to the criteria used by families in choosing the educational institutions for their children during the ECE period and the expenses they made in this regard are presented in order. Table 2 presents the findings on whether the criteria used by families in choosing ECE institutions vary according to whether the ownership of the institution is public or private.

Tablo 2. Families' criteria for preferring public or private ECE institutions

Item	Public		Private	
	n	X	n	X
The educational program implemented at the school	28	4.1	178	3.2
Working hours	28	4.9	178	3.4
Teacher's communication skills	28	4.2	178	3.9
Proximity of the Early Childhood care and education institution to my workplace or my spouse's workplace	28	1.7	178	4.0
The quality of education provided at school	28	4.1	178	4.1
Availability of transportation services provided by the school	28	1.6	178	4.2
Availability of social activities for children.	28	4.1	178	4.2
Proximity of the ECE institution to the family's residence	28	1.6	178	4.3
Number of teachers in each class	28	4.1	178	4.3
Positive recommendations from other individuals	28	3.9	178	4.3
The quality of other staff in the school other than teachers	28	4.1	178	4.3
School principles and values	28	4.1	178	4.3

Number of children in each class	28	4.9	178	4.4
Fees paid to the school for education	28	2.1	178	4.4
Materials used in the classroom	28	4.0	178	4.4
Experience of the teacher	28	4.5	178	4.4
Provision of adequate childcare services	28	4.1	178	4.4
Professional competence of teachers	28	4.9	178	4.4
The education level of the teacher	28	4.8	178	4.5
The degree of sincerity of the staff working at the school	28	4.1	178	4.5
Informing families about the education process	28	4.1	178	4.5
Advertisements about the school	28	3.1	178	4.5
Provision of family training at school	28	4.1	178	4.6
Focus on supporting children's development in various areas.	28	4.2	178	4.6
Informing families about the child's development	28	4.3	178	4.6
Hygiene standards maintained within the school premises	28	4.9	178	4.6
Availability of detailed information about school activities on the school's website.	28	3.1	178	4.6
Establishment of a positive and nurturing atmosphere within the ECE institution.	28	4.2	178	4.7
Physical characteristics of the Early Childhood care and education institution	28	4.2	178	4.7
Home-school cooperation (family involvement activities etc.)	28	4.2	178	4.7
Provision of a safe environment in the Early Childhood care and education institution	28	4.2	178	4.8
Provision of breakfast, lunch, and snacks by the school	28	4.1	178	4.8
The quality of other parents choosing the school	28	4.9	178	4.8

Table 2 reveals that the variables that the parents who send their children to public ECE institutions take into consideration the most are the professional competence of teachers ($\bar{X}=4.9$), the quality of other parents choosing the school ($\bar{X}=4.9$) and the working hours of the school ($\bar{X}=4.9$), while the variables they take into consideration the least are the school's provision of transportation service ($\bar{X}=1.6$), the school's proximity to the family's residence ($\bar{X}=1.6$), and the school's proximity to families' workplaces ($\bar{X}=1.7$). The variables that families sending their children to private ECE institutions pay the most attention to are the quality of other parents choosing the school ($\bar{X}=4.8$), the provision of a safe environment at the school ($\bar{X}=4.8$), and the school's provision of breakfast/lunch/snacks ($\bar{X}=4.8$), while the variables they pay the least attention to are the education program ($\bar{X}=3.2$), the school's working hours ($\bar{X}=3.4$), and the teacher's communication skills ($\bar{X}=3.9$). When these findings are considered together, it is understood that the teacher's professional competence is the most important factor for families sending their children to public ECE institutions, whereas for families sending their children to

private schools, the most important factor is the quality of other parents choosing the institution. It can be said that while the working hours of the institution are an indicator of importance for families to send their children to public institutions, it is not significant for families sending their children to private institutions.

Findings on total ECE expenditures made by families are given in Table 4.

Table 3. Total ECE Expenditures of the Families (TL in Current Prices in 2021)

Ownership of the school	n	Expenditure Type				Total
		Direct	(1)/(3)	Indirect	(2)/(3)	
		(1)	%	(2)	%	(3)
Public	178	1596.6	81.5	361.9	14.5	1958.4
Private	28	15761.4	75.2	1443.2	24.8	17204.6
Total	206	17358	90.6	1805.1	9.4	19163.1

According to the findings in Table 3, the total education expenditures made by the participating families for ECE amount to 19163.1 TL. Out of this total, 17358 TL (90.6%) corresponds to direct expenditures, while 1805.1 TL (9.4%) corresponds to indirect expenditures. When considering the ownership of ECE institutions, it is observed that families sending their children to public ECE institutions have an average direct education expenditure of 1596.6 TL (81.5%), whereas their indirect education expenditure is 361.9 TL (14.5%). On the other hand families who opt for private ECE institutions have a direct education expenditure of 15761.4 TL (75.2%) and an indirect education expenditure of 1443.2 TL (24.8%). Taking these figures into account, it can be concluded that families sending their children to private ECE institutions have higher total education expenses compared to those sending their children to public institutions.

Table 4 presents the distribution of families' direct expenditures for ECE depending on the expenditure items.

Table 4. Direct Expenditures of Families on ECE

Item of expenditure	Direct Expenditure / TL					
	Public		Private		Total	
	X	%	X	%	X	%
School-parent association fee	32.2	100.0	0.0	0.0	32.2	0.2
School tuition fee	783.8	5.8	12857.1	94.3	13641.0	78.6
Voluntary donations	11.8	76.8	3.6	23.2	15.4	0.1
Classroom fee raised for any deficiencies or problems within the class (materials, etc.)	18.0	9.1	180.4	90.9	198.4	1.1

Expenditures for other official ceremonies, shows, specific days, and weeks organized by the school	7.4	5.8	121.4	94.2	128.8	0.7
Funds raised for coloring books to be used at school and home	39.4	14.7	228.9	85.3	268.4	1.6
Funds raised for activity books to be used at school and home	88.3	31.2	195.0	68.8	283.3	1.6
Funds raised for other books to be used at school and home	19.7	25.0	58.9	75.0	78.6	0.5
Expenditures for stationery and educational supplies (lunchbox, crayons, craft paper, etc.)	458.6	26.5	1273.2	73.5	1731.8	10.0
Expenditures for school uniforms in schools that have a uniform policy	1.1	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0
Other expenditures related to transportation to school	128.1	13.2	842.9	86.8	971.0	5.6
Expenditures for school meals	8.2	100.0	0.0	0.0	8.2	0.1
Total	1596.6	9.2	15761.4	90.8	17358.0	100.0

Based on the data in Table 4, the total amount of direct education expenditures made by families during the ECE period is 17358 TL. Of these education expenditures, 1596.6 TL (9.20%) is made by families sending their children to public ECE institutions, and 15761.4 TL (90.80%) is made by families sending their children to private ECE institutions. When the distribution of direct education expenditures made by families is analyzed in terms of the expenditure item, it is seen that the education expenditure with the largest share is school fees. Of this expenditure item, 783.8 TL (5.75%) is made by families sending their children to public institutions, and 12857.1 TL (94.25%) is made by families sending their children to private institutions. Apart from school fees, the items that families spend the most directly on education are expenditures for stationery and transportation to school. It is seen that families spend 1273.2 TL (73.52%) on stationery and 842.7 TL (86.81%) on transportation to school. It should be noted that the families do not spend any money on school bus transportation. The next lowest expenditure item after the school bus is the expenditure for the uniforms. Regarding this expenditure item, families sending their children to ECE institutions spend 1.1 TL (100%), while families sending their children to private ECE institutions do not spend any money.

Table 5 shows the distribution of families' indirect expenditures on ECE in terms of expenditure items.

Table 5. Families' Indirect Expenditures on ECE

Item of expenditure	Indirect Expenditure / TL					
	Public		Private		Total	
	X	%	X	%	X	%
Expenditures for theater events organized by the school	1.4	1.2	116.8	98.8	118.2	6.6
Expenditures for cinema events organized by the school	2.3	2.2	99.3	97.8	101.5	5.6
Expenditures for other social and cultural activities organized by the school	24.0	15.6	129.3	84.4	153.3	8.5
Expenditures for activities organized by the school to develop the child's mental and psychomotor skills (drills, child of the week or month, pizza event, etc.)	12.8	6.5	183.9	93.5	196.7	10.9
Expenditures for the performances organized by the school for April 23rd National Sovereignty and Children's Day	36.7	16.1	191.1	83.9	227.8	12.6
Expenditures for the programs organized by the school for November 24 Teachers' Day	11.4	9.7	106.1	90.3	117.4	6.5
Expenditures made for the fee of teachers working in club classes (Foreign Language, Gymnastics, Swimming, Drama, Instrument Education, Dance, Chess, Mind and intelligence games, etc.) opened upon the request of parents	5.6	100.0	-	0.0	5.6	0.3
Expenditures for materials and supplies required for club lessons	2.8	100.0	-	0.0	2.8	0.2
Expenditures for photo shoots	2.8	100.0	-	0.0	2.8	0.2
Expenditures for graduation celebrations	35.0	21.7	126.4	78.3	161.4	8.9
Expenditures on clothes purchased for school in schools with free dress code	219.3	30.9	490.4	69.1	709.7	39.3
Expenditures for tablecloths	0.3	100.0	-	0.0	0.3	0.0
Other expenditures, if any	7.6	100.0	-	0.0	7.6	0.4
Total	361.9	20.1	1443.2	80.0	1805.1	100.0

As presented in Table 5, the total amount of indirect education expenditures made by families for ECE is 1805.1 TL. Of these indirect expenditures, 361.9 TL (20%) are made by families sending their children to public ECE institutions and 1443.2 TL (80%) are made by families sending their children to private ECE institutions. When the indirect education expenditures made by families for ECE are analyzed in terms of expenditure items, it was observed that the highest indirect education expenditure is made on

the free dress code. Accordingly, families sending their children to public institutions spend 219.3 TL (30.9%) on free dress codes, while families sending their children to private ECE institutions spend 490.4 TL (69.1%). In addition, families allocated the smallest share of indirect education expenditures to the tablecloth expenditure item. Families sending their children to public ECE institutions spend 0.3 TL on this expenditure item, while families sending their children to private ECE institutions do not spend at all.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to reveal families' preferences for institutional education services in early childhood and the educational expenditures they make in this field. As a result the reasons why the families sending their children to ECE institutions prefer these institutions vary concerning the ownership of the school. The families sending their children to ECE schools primarily consider the quality of teachers, while those sending their children to private schools consider the quality of other families. The ECE expenditures made by the families vary in terms of whether the school they send their children to is public or private. The education expenditures of families sending their children to private ECE schools are significantly higher than families sending their children to public schools.

The study also revealed that the variables that the families sending their children to public or private ECE institutions consider when choosing these institutions vary. Accordingly, the primary reason for the preference for families sending their children to public ECE institutions is the professional competence of the teacher, whereas for families sending their children to private ECE institutions, it is the qualifications of other parents who chose the school. It is seen that families who prefer private ECE institutions direct their preferences according to the prestige of the institution and the sociodemographic and socio-economic status of other families (Çelmeli, 2012; Nartgün & Kaya, 2016; Nohutçu, 1999). Similarly, Altun (2020) stated that families prefer institutions based on their social status and that they prefer educational institutions with families from similar socio-cultural backgrounds and with the same average income level within the class.

The families who prefer public ECE institutions consider the provision of transportation services by the school as the least important variable. On the other hand, it was observed that families who prefer private ECE institutions care the least about the school's education program. This situation can be attributed to the fact that schools in Çankırı are located within walking distance from residential areas, allowing families to either use their private vehicles or walk to drop off their children at ECE institutions. In addition, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Regulation on School Service Vehicles was amended within the scope of the "My School is Clean" Project. The implementation of

an alternating empty and full seating plan in school buses resulted in buses operating at half capacity, leading school bus drivers to increase their fees. As a result of this fee increase, families either choose schools closer to their homes or transport their children using private vehicles. The finding obtained indicates that the variable of providing transportation service differs from the study conducted by Durmaz, Akdoğan, and Demir (2019) as it is considered the least important in this study.

In the direct ECE expenditures of the families participating in the study, it was observed that the expenditures of families sending their children to private ECE institutions are 9.8 times higher on average than those of families sending their children to public ECE institutions. However, considering that only 13.6% of the families participating in the study are families sending their children to private schools, it can be said that this expenditure is quite high. One of the reasons for this could be explained by the high administrative costs of private schools and the reflection of these costs on families. The second reason is related to the affluence of families sending their children to private ECE schools. The findings obtained in the study coincide with the findings of studies in the literature (TÜİK, 2006; Türkmen-Kılıç, 2022; Yolcu & Yeşilyurt-Yalçın, 2020). In a macro-level study conducted by TÜİK (2006), it was revealed that the education expenditure of those sending their children to private schools is approximately twice that of those sending their children to public schools. In the study carried out by Yolcu and Yeşilyurt-Yalçın (2020) in Kastamonu, it was determined that this ratio is also twice as high. In the study carried out by Türkmen-Kılıç (2022) on public schools, it is noted that the ECE expenditures of families vary in terms of their settlements. Consequently, it is observed that families' ECE expenditures are lower in the village settlement, while expenditures in the district center are relatively higher and the highest expenditure is made by families residing in the provincial center.

Education expenditures are divided into two groups: Direct and indirect expenditures. Direct education expenditures are expenditures related to school attendance. These expenditures include school fees (registration fees, PTA fees, examination fees, fees such as diplomas, certificates, student certificates, photocopying fees, and other fees related to registration); uniforms school equipment and consumables (uniforms and compulsory sports equipment, compulsory textbooks, exercise books and other school supplies) and other related expenditures (bus and minibus boarding fees, canteen and cafeteria fees, shuttle service fees) (Tiyab & Ndabananiye, 2013). In the study, it is found that the direct education expenditures of families sending their children to private schools are nearly 10 times higher than those sending their children to public schools. In Yolcu and Yeşilyurt-Yalçın's (2020) study, this ratio is found to be slightly over two times higher.

In the study, it is seen that school fees are the largest expenditure item for both

families sending their children to public and private ECE institutions. When private schools are omitted, one of the reasons for this for public schools is that preschool education is not compulsory and is left to the will and voluntariness of families. Another reason is that families and school administrations have the opinion that the fee is too high to increase the quality of education (Bilgiç, 2018). The fees that public schools charge families are determined by a commission formed directly by the Provincial Directorates of National Education to which the school is affiliated. Families sending their children to public ECE schools regularly pay the fees monthly by the payment plan made by the school administration. With such payments, classroom or in-school needs are met Sarıışık (2019) found that both families living in urban and rural areas spend the most on school fees among direct expenditure items. Similarly, Yolcu and Yeşilyurt-Yalçın (2020) revealed that families spend the most on school fees. School bus service, which is a direct education expenditure item, is not spent at all by families sending their children to public and private ECE institutions. This can be said to be since Çankırı is small and schools are within walking distance.

Indirect education expenditures cover education expenditures that are not directly related to school attendance. These expenditures include the costs of non-compulsory textbooks/supplementary resources, out-of-school books, newspapers, magazines, computer equipment, educational games, allowance, leisure and extracurricular activities, private lessons and courses, etc. (Tiyab & Ndabananiye, 2013). The indirect education expenditures of families sending their children to private ECE schools are approximately four times (3.9) higher than those of families sending their children to public schools. The reason for the high rates in this result is that private schools offer different and more alternatives than public schools do. Furthermore, families' utilization of these alternatives is also related to purchasing power. This finding coincides with the findings of TÜİK (2002; Yolcu and Yeşilyurt-Yalçın, 2020). In both studies, the indirect education expenditures of families sending their children to private ECE schools are higher than those sending their children to public schools. In Yolcu and Yeşilyurt-Yalçın's (2020) study, the expenditure ratio between public and private ECE institutions is twice as high.

It was found that the highest expenditure item among the indirect ECE expenditures of both families sending their children to public ECE institutions and families sending their children to private ECE institutions is the expenditure item for the free dress code. The families sending their children to private and private ECE institutions spend the most on free dress code, one of the indirect education expenditure items. The least expenditure item among indirect education expenditure items is school uniforms. This is since the majority of schools in Türkiye have adopted the free dress code. The Regulation on the Dress and Attire of School Students Affiliated to the Ministry of National Education published in the Official Gazette (2012) was amended and the obligation to

wear uniform uniforms in pre-schools. primary schools. middle schools and high schools were abolished. In the related study by Türkmen-Kılıç (2022), it is determined that families buy clothes so that their children can be more comfortable in school and that these expenditures vary between 100-2.000 TL.

It is thought that macro-level studies should be conducted to reveal the ECE expenditures of families in Turkey in a way to covers direct and indirect expenditures.

The following statements are made in the framework of "COPE-Code of Conduct and Best Practices Guidelines for Journal Editors":

Ethics Committee Approval:	Kastamonu Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırma ve Yayın Etik Kurulu, Tarih: 25.12.2020 Sayı: 4/75
Declaration of Conflicting Interests:	No conflicts of interest were reported for this article.
Financial Support:	It has been reported that this study did not receive financial support from any person/institution or organization during the research and writing phase.
Author Contributions:	%50-%50
Statement of Support and Acknowledgment:	It has been reported that this study did not receive financial support from any person/institution or organization during the research and writing phase.
Corresponding Author:	Hüseyin YOLCU
Double-Blind Peer Review:	External-independent
"COPE-Dergi Editörleri İçin Davranış Kuralları ve En İyi Uygulama İlkeleri" beyanları:	
Etik Kurul Belgesi:	Kastamonu University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee, Date: 25.12.2020 Number: 4/75
Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı:	Bu makalenin araştırması, yazarlığı veya yayınlanmasıyla ilgili olarak yazar/ların potansiyel bir çıkar çatışması yoktur.
Finansal Destek:	Bu çalışmanın araştırma ve yazım aşamasında herhangi kişi/kurum veya kuruluşlar tarafından finansal destek almadığı bildirilmiştir.
Katkı Oranı Beyanı:	%50-%50
Destek ve Teşekkür Beyanı:	Bu çalışmanın araştırma ve yazım aşamasında herhangi kişi/kurum veya kuruluştan finansal destek alınmamıştır.
Sorumlu Yazar:	Hüseyin YOLCU
Çifte Kör Hakem Değerlendirmesi:	Dış-bağımsız

References

- Altun, A. E. (2020). Toplumsal statü ve okul seçimleri: kültürel sermaye yatırımı olarak özel okullar. *Alternatif Politika*, 12(2), 382-423.
- Armağan, İ. (1983). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri*. Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Bal, E. (2019). *Ebeveynlerin okul öncesi eğitim kurumları ile ilgili görüşleri: Seçme nedenleri ve kurumdaki beklentileri* [Yayınlanmamış doktora tezi]. Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Bilgiç, A. (2018). *Anaokulu aidatlarına ilişkin görüşler* [Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Bromer, J., & Henly, J. R. (2009). The work-family support roles of child care providers across settings. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 24(3), 271-288.
- Çankırı İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü (2020). Eğitim istatistikleri. <https://cankiri.meb.gov.tr/>
- Çelmeli, Ö. (2012). Tüketicilerin okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarını tercih etme nedenleri [Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. Niğde Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Çemrek, F. ve Özeydin, Ö. (2019). Okul öncesi eğitimde ailelerin kreş tercihleri ve kreşlerden beklentileri: Eskişehir Örneği. *Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 20(Özel Sayı), 559-575.
- Çepni, S. (2010). *Araştırma ve proje çalışmalarına giriş* (5. Baskı). Ekin Yayınevi.
- Ceylan, R. (2019). Ebeveynlerin okul öncesi kurumu hakkındaki görüşleri: Tercih sebepleri, beklentileri ve memnuniyetleri. *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 18(70), 497-517
- Chaudry A., Henly J., & Meyers M. (2010). Conceptual Frameworks For Child Care Decision making (ACF-OPRE White Paper) Washington: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Administration For Children And Families. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Diken, H. İ. (2014). *Erken çocukluk kitabı*. Pegem.
- Durmaz, E., Akdoğan, K.K. ve Demir, E. (2019). Ebeveynlerin okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarını tercih nedenleri ile sosyoekonomik düzeyleri arasındaki ilişki. *Erken Çocukluk Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 3(2), 352-379.
- Foot, H., Howe, C., Cheyne, B., Terras, M., & Rattray, C. (2000). Pre-school education: Parents' preferences, knowledge and expectations. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 8(3), 189-204.
- Fuller, B., Holloway, S. D., & Liang, X. (1996). Family selection of child-care centers: The

- influence of household support. ethnicity. and parental practices. *Child Development*, 67(6), 3320-3337
- Gordon, A. M., & Browne, W. (2011). *Beginnings and beyond: Foundations in early childhood education* (8th). Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.
- Güven, G. ve Azkeskin, K..(2014). Erken çocukluk eğitimi ve okul öncesi eğitim. İçinde Diken, İbrahim H. (Ed.), *Erken çocukluk eğitimi* (ss. 2-53). Ankara: Pegem.
- Han, W. J. (2004). Nonstandard work schedules and child care decisions: Evidence from the NICHD study of early child care. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19(2), 231-256.
- Hazar, Y. (2019). *Erken çocukluk eğitim-bakım hizmetleri ve iş-yaşam dengesi arasındaki ilişki* [Yayınlanmış yüksek lisans tezi]. Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Johnson. A. D., Padilla. C., & Votruba-Drzal, E. (2017). Predictors of public early care and education use among children of low-income immigrants. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 73, 24-36.
- Karakütük. K. (2006). Yükseköğretimin finansmanı. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 17, 219-242.
- Karasar. N. (2014). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemi* (26. Baskı). Ankara: Nobel.
- Kaymaz M., & Öztürk. N, (2019). *İnsani sermayeye kritik yatırım: Erken çocukluk eğitimi*. SETA Yayınları.
- Kreyenfeld. M., & Hank., K. (2000). Does the availability of child care influence the employment of mothers? Findings From Western Germany. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 19(4), 317-337.
- Leslie, L. A., Ettenson, R., & Cumsille, P. (2000). Selecting a child care center: What really matters to parents? *Child And Youth Care Forum*, 29(5), 299-322.
- Li-Grining, C. P., & Coley, R. L. (2006). Child care experiences in low-income communities: Developmental quality and maternal views. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 21(2), 125-141
- Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Okul Öncesi Eğitim ve İlköğretim Kurumları Yönetmeliği. (2019, Temmuz 10). *Resmi Gazete* (Sayı: 30827). <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2019/07/20190710-6.htm>
- Millî Eğitim Bakanlığına Bağlı Okul Öğrencilerinin Kılık ve Kıyafetlerine Dair Yönetmelik. (2012. Kasım 27). *Resmi Gazete* (Sayı No. 24480). <http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/dosyalar/1617.pdf>
- Nartgün. Ş. ve Kaya, A. (2016). Creating school image in accordance with private school

- parents' expectatons. *Journal of Research in Education and Teaching*, 5(2), 153-167.
- Nohutçu, A. (1999). *Velilerin özel okul tercihlerini etkileyen faktörler ve özel okulların reklam stratejileri* [Yayınlanmamış doktora tezi]. Marmara Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Oğuzkan, Ş. ve Oral, G. (1997). *Okul öncesi eğitimi*. Milli Eğitim Basımevi.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2006). *Starting strong: Early childhood education and care*. <http://Www.Oecd.Org/Dataoecd/14/32/37425999.Pdf>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2017). *Starting strong early childhood education and care*. <https://www.oecd.org/education/starting-strong-2017-9789264276116-en.htm>
- Oseni, G., Huebler, F., McGee, K., Amankwah, A., Legault, E., & Rakotonarivo, A. (2018). *Measuring household expenditure on education: A guidebook for designing household survey questionnaires*. World Bank.
- Özel Kreş ve Gündüz Bakımevleri ile Özel Çocuk Kulüplerinin Kuruluş ve İşleyiş Esasları Hakkında Yönetmelik (2015, Nisan 30). *Resmi Gazete* (Sayı: 29332). <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2015/04/20150430-4.htm>
- Polat, C. ve Çelmeli, Ö. (2015). Okul öncesi eğitim kurumu seçiminde tüketici tercih etkenleri. *Kastamonu Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 8(2), 144-166.
- Saklan, E. (2011). *Türkiye’de okul öncesi eğitim politikaları, finansmanı ve uygulamaya ilişkin görüşler* [Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. Gaziosmanpaşa Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Saklan, E. ve Erginer, A. (2016). Policy and finance implementation for preschool education in Turkey. *Journal of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University*, 6(2), 15-44.
- Sarıışık, D. (2019). *Okul öncesi eğitime yönelik özel harcamalar: Muğla ili Menteşe ilçesi örneği* [Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. Sıtkı Koçaman Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Tiyab, B.K., & Ndabananiye, J. C. (2013). *Household education spending. Approach and estimation techniques using household surveys. methodological guidelines*. Dakar: UNESCO.
- Tokuç, H. ve Tuğrul, B. (2017. Kasım 15-17). Anne ve babaların okul öncesi eğitim ile ilgili görüş ve beklentilerinin incelenmesi [Conference Presataion]. Ulusal İlköğretim Kongresi. Hacettepe Ankara. Turkey.
- Tokuç, H. (2007). *Anne ve babaların okul öncesi eğitim hakkındaki görüş ve beklentilerinin in-*

- celenmesi* [Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi] Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Topaç, N., Yaman, Y., Ogurlu, Ü. ve İlgar, L. (2013). Okul öncesi dönem çocuğu olan ailelerin okul öncesi eğitim kurumu seçerken göz önünde bulundurdıkları ölçütlerin incelenmesi. *İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 2, 206-218.
- Tunalı, D. (2019). Ebeveynlerin özel kreş ve anaokulu tercihlerine yönelik tutumlarının konjoint analizi ile incelenmesi. *Akademik Araştırmalar ve Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 11(20), 162-171.
- Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu. (2006). 2002 Türkiye eğitim harcamaları araştırması. TÜİK Matbaası.
- Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu. (2023). Eğitim harcamaları istatistikleri. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Egitim-Harcamalari-Istatistikleri-2021-45553>
- Türkmen-Kılıç, Ö. (2022). Okul öncesi eğitimde maliyet – yarar çözümlemesi [Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Yeşil -Dağlı, Ü. (2012). Çocukları okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarına devam eden velilerin önem verdikleri kurum özellikleri. *Gaziosmanpaşa Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7(2), 266-286.
- Yesil-Dagli, U. (2011). Center-based childcare use by hispanic families: Reasons and predictors. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(7), 1298-1308.
- Yolcu, H. (2019). Erken çocukluk döneminde ailelerin evde ücretli bakım hizmetlerine yönelik talepleri. *Erken Çocukluk Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 3(2), 228-257.
- Yolcu, H. ve Yalçın-Yeşilyurt, E. (2020). Ailelerin erken çocukluk bakımı ve eğitimi dönemi eğitim harcamaları. *OPUS Uluslararası Toplum Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 16(30), 2448-2477