Mothers' Perception of Social Participation and Its Reflection on their Children

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Abstract

This qualitative research aims to examine mothers' perception of social participation and their practices to improve their children's social participation skills. The research was designed following the phenomenology method, one of the qualitative research models. This was based on the idea that mothers with close relationships to their children have a more significant impact. The study involved 12 volunteer mothers; data were collected using a semi-structured interview form. The data obtained from the interviews were presented in the form of themes, categories, and codes. Additionally, direct quotations are included to provide a detailed view of the observations and experiences of the mothers. The study findings reveal that mothers' perceptions of social participation and their efforts to improve their children's social participation skills were categorized under the headings of "political literacy" and "community service. "The majority of mothers tend to explain social participation through the lens of political literacy. Consequently, they primarily encourage community service practices to enhance their children's social participation skills. Only a few mothers have attempted to explain social participation and their efforts to enhance their children's social participation skills in terms of collective action. The study's findings revealed that while mothers understood the concept of social participation, their practices predominantly focused on a single dimension, namely community service. It has been determined that mothers need to be informed about political literacy dimension of social participation to enhance their children's social participation skills.

Keywords: *Community service, mother, political literacy, social participation.*

Introduction

All forms of communication within the family also affect the lives of family members beyond the family. The family serves as the initial social environment where children acquire fundamental knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values, and attitudes toward their environment. Children acquire the foundation of the content, attitudes, values, behaviors, and skills encompassed in social studies within the family. The family serves as the bridge between child's society and its members, where

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the child initially learns socialization Skills, such as the ability to express oneself as an individual and contribute to society, start developing within the family early during early life. This environment holds importance for citizenship education, serving as both a role model and an information source for children (Halstead, 1999; Hess & Torney, 2006; Ichilov, 1988).

Children acquire an important portion of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values related to citizenship within the family. For example, parents' comments on the news related to elections at home or their attitudes while watching politician's speech on television will affect the formation of children's perception regarding elections, political awareness, and political participation. In a home environment, parents can engage their children in discussions on subjects such as human rights, state administration, democracy, rights and freedoms, justice, and law. On the contrary, some families may prefer to keep their children from political conversations and social issues.

Both family models have different effects on the development of citizenship awareness in children. Therefore, the family's perception and awareness of citizenship play a vital role in fostering effective citizenship awareness among children. According to Ekinci (2010), social engagement entails building connections with organizations within the social system where individuals live, becoming involved as partners, and participating in the meetings of these organizations. According to Chan et al.'s study (2014), social participation is defined as a combination of individual and collective activities aimed at addressing social anxiety issues and enhancing societal well-being. Based on these definitions, children who are entrusted with responsibilities by their parents first learn about social responsibility within the family. Hence, the family environment unquestionably plays a crucial role in citizenship education as it serves as both a model and an information source for children (Hess & Torney, 2006). Children need social participation skills to effectively navigate society and express themselves freely.

Social participation is a crucial skill that helps individuals in shaping their identities from a young age (Chong & Tsubota, 2023). Families serve as the primary social environments where children acquire knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors, which in turn shape their favorable or unfavorable attitudes (Hess & Torney, 2006; Ritter, 2020).

Children who engage in activities provided by their parents can better integrate into society, enhance their daily life skills, and improve their interpersonal communication skills, making it easier for them to express themselves (Bornstein & Cote, 2004). The "environment" that the mother provides for the child contributes significantly to the development of the child's sense of self (Winnicott, 1998). As mothers are generally more concerned with their children's educational

needs (Russell & Russell, 1987) than just their basic care, the child's relationship with his/her mother and the environment created by the mother undoubtedly has a pivotal role in the child's development. Mothers who engage in close relationships with their children are considered to be more effective on their children (Gürbüz & Kıran, 2018). Therefore, mothers' perceptions of social participation and the social participation skills they impart to their children are of paramount importance.

When examining studies conducted on social participation in Turkey (Alabaş, 2018- The investigation of the social participation skills in the social studies curricula (1968-2018); Altınok, 2012- The effect of social participation activities on social sensitivity of 12-14 years old students; Coşkun, 2020- Evaluation of social participation skills development process in middle school social studies course and school practices; Dinç and Üztemur, 2016- Improving Middle School Students' Environmental Awareness and Social Participation Skills through Designing Banners; Karatekin et al., 2014-Social Studies Pre-Service Teachers' Social Participation in Solutions to Environmental Problems; Memişoğlu, 2016- Opinions of Social Studies Teachers about Social Participation; Samancı et al., 2018-Developing Scale for Determining the Social Participation Skills for Children and Analyzing Its Psychometric Characteristics; Seyhan, 2014- The Metaphor Situations of the Social Teacher Candidates Regarding the Concept of "Social Participation"; Sömen, 2016 - Case of Social Studies Teachers' Providing Social Participation Skills to the Students; Sömen, Metin Göksu and Taşyürek 2017- The Place of Social Participation Ability in the Unite on "the Adventure of Democracy; Şahin and Şahin 2020 - The Effects of Participation in Sports on Social Skill Development of Mentally Disabled Children; Ülgen, 2012- Investigation of Factors Affecting Social Participation in Elderly People Living at Home; Yılmaz Kara 2017 - The effect of cooperative learning on academic achievement and social participation of 5th-grade students in middle school social sciences lesson) and when looking at the studies conducted on social participation abroad (Avramidis, 2013-Self-Concept, Social Position and Social Participation of Pupils with Sen in Mainstream Primary Schools; Bossaert et al. 2015- Social Participation of Students with Special Educational Needs in Different Educational Systems; Garrote, 2015- The Relationship Between Social Participation and Social Skills of Pupils with an Intellectual Disability: A Study in Inclusive Classrooms; Koster et al., 2011- Assessing Social

Participation of Students with Special Needs in Inclusive Education: Validation of the Social Participation; Levasseur et al., 2010- Inventory and Analysis of Definitions of Social Participation Found in the Aging Literature: Proposed of Social Activities; Piskur et al., 2014 -Participation and Social Participation: Are They Distinct Concepts? Clinical Rehabilitation; Urnikyte, 2017-Social Participation of Children in Need of Special Support in Mainstream Elementary Schools-Dimensions And İmpact Of Teaching Assistants A Systematic Literature Review), although various studies have been conducted on social participation in a wide sample of studies conducted both in Turkey and abroad, ranging from preschool children to pre-service teachers, teachers, and the social studies curriculum in Turkey, it has been determined that such a qualitative study has not been conducted with the mothers of secondary school students at the 8th (13-14 age) grade level.

Although the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades in the Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum in 2018 cover content related to social participation, the conducted studies in this area are currently unsatisfactory. It's worth noting that mothers in the family tend to be more directly involved in their children's educational needs and primary care compared to fathers (Russell & Russell, 1987). Hence, mothers' perception of social participation and its impact on their children's social participation skills within the home setting represents a critical concern. Determining the importance of mothers' social participation in Turkey concerning political literacy, community service, group efforts, and self-improvement is considered crucial in uncovering their viewpoints and results. For a clearer overview, this study is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Domestic History of the Social Participate Curriculum

Altınok, 2012- The effect of social participation activities on social sensitivity of 12-14 years old students

Coşkun, 2020- Evaluation of social participation skills development process in middle school social studies course and school practices

Dinç and Üztemur, 2016- Improving middle school students' environmental awareness and social participation skills through designing banners

Karatekin et al., 2014-Social studies pre-service teachers' social participation in solutions to environmental problems

Memişoğlu, 2016- Opinions of social studies teachers about social participation

Samancı et al., 2018-Developing scale for determining the social participation skills for children and analyzing its psychometric characteristics

Seyhan, 2014-The metaphor situations of the social teacher candidates regarding the concept of "social participation

Sömen, 2016- Case of social studies teachers' providing social participation skills to the students

Sömen, Metin Göksu and Taşyürek 2017- The place of social participation ability in the unite on "the adventure of democracy

Şahin and Şahin 2020- The effects of participation in sports on social skill development of mentally disabled children

Ülgen, 2012- Investigation of factors affecting social participation in elderly people living at home

Yılmaz Kara 2017- The effect of cooperative learning on academic achievement and social participation of 5thgrade students in middle school social sciences lesson

Tablo 2

Abroad History of the Social Participate Curriculum

Avramidis, 2013-Self-concept, social position and social participation of pupils with in mainstream primary schools

Bossaert et al., 2015- Social participation of students with special educational needs in different educational systems

Garrote, 2015- The Relationship between social participation and social skills of pupils with an intellectual disability: A study in inclusive classrooms

Koster et al., 2011- Assessing social participation of students with special needs in inclusive education: Validation of the social participation

Levasseur et al., 2010- Inventory and analysis of definitions of social participation found in the aging literature: Proposed taxonomy of social activities

Piskur et al., 2014-Participation and social participation: Are they distinct concepts? clinical rehabilitation

Urnikyte, 2017-Social participation of children in need of special support in mainstream elementary schoolsdimensions and impact of teaching assistants a systematic literature review

Hence, the research seeks to unveil the perceptions of mothers with students in this age group regarding the concept of social participation and what they impart to their children during the development of social participation skills. It is hoped that the research findings would contribute to enhancing family experiences, aiding in the development of children's social participation skills.

Method

Research Design

This research was conducted using the phenomenological approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), a qualitative research method, to explore the spectrum of mothers' perceptions and experiences related to social participation and how these contribute to the development of their children's social skills. This design aims to uncover users' experiences related to a phenomenon and the significance they attach to these experiences, as outlined by Creswell (2007).

Study Group

Critical situations are characterized by their unique significance, which clearly reflects a certain phenomenon. Therefore, the study employed critical case sampling, a type of purposeful sampling, to select participants (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). In critical case sampling, the researcher can provide a comprehensive perspective on the subject of interest, as the comprehensive environment, group, or individual possesses special characteristics (Mertens, 2014).

According to extensive research, mothers play an active role in addressing issues such as students' educational problems and school-family cooperation (Aslanargun, 2007; Özgan & Aydın, 2010). For this purpose, the research was conducted with the mothers of children attending secondary schools across low, middle, and high socioeconomic levels. For school selection in the research, four secondary schools were chosen for each economic level from a list provided by the Denizli Provincial Directorate of National Education, based on the socio-economic status of the schools. The research's objective was communicated in written form to the mothers of 8th-grade students in these schools, inviting their participation. Thus, the study included the voluntary participation of 12 mothers with children educated at various socio-economic levels. Information regarding the code names and characteristics of the mothers whose opinions were quoted are provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Personal Characteristics of Mothers Whose Opinions Were Directly Quoted

Code name	Age	Educational level	Working status	Occupation	Meeting duration
Ceren	41	High school	Working	Legal secretary	40 minutes
Pelin	41	University	Not working	Housewife	48 minutes
Seyhan	42	High school	Working	Police officer	54 minutes
Fatma	35	Middle school	Not working	Housewife	36 minutes
Canan	43	Postgraduate	Working	Lawyer	52 minutes
Betül	44	University	Working	Teacher	50 minutes
Zeynep	39	Middle school	Working	Worker	38 minutes
Mine	38	High school	Not working	Housewife	56 minutes
Hatice	43	University	Working	Doctor	52 minutes
Tuğba	44	University	Not Working	Housewife	49 minutes
Özlem	45	Doctorate	Working	Academician	48 minutes
Ayşe	36	High school	Working	Government employee	36 minutes

Based on Table 3, it's observed that the majority of mothers fall within the age range of 35 to 44, with most of them in their 40s. Interestingly, there is a relatively lower number of mothers with middle school, postgraduate, and doctoral degrees, despite the majority of them holding high school and university qualifications. Table 3 displays significant differences in the education levels and occupations of the participating parents when compared to each other.

Data Collection Tools and Procedure

The study data were collected through semi-structured interviews with mothers in February and March 2022. A semi-structured interview approach was employed to explore how mothers reflect their social participation perceptions on their children's development of social participation skills. A voice recorder was employed to document the interviews. Interview forms, parental consent form, and ethics committee approval issued by the University's Publication Ethics Committee, along with audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews, are retained for potential ethical concerns. The mothers were posed the following questions during the interviews:

• What do you interpret the concept of social participation?

• What actions are you taking to facilitate your child's social skills development?

The research's reliability was assessed using the formula developed by Miles and Huberman

(1994): Reliability = Consensus / (Agreement + Disagreement)." "You should elaborate this section in the research instrument." In line with this suggestion, the following paragraph was added to the Research Instrument section. "Within the framework of the reliability analysis of the study, the answers given by the mothers to the research questions with similar content were brought together and classified accordingly. In creating the categories, the analyses of both researchers were compared, and common aspects were agreed to be included in the emerging categories. As a result of the similar categories of both researchers, the consistency level of data analysis was tried to be determined. In light of the consistency analysis made via Miles and Huberman's (1994, p. 64) formula (Reliability=consensus/consensus + disagreement x 100), it was revealed that the inter-rater reliability was %90 regarding the emerging categories. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), ensuring a consistency of 90 percent or above while comparing classifications made by two researchers increases the reliability of the studyData collection tools that are utilized for the study should be stated in this section. Each tool should be introduced by describing its features and explaining the reasons for choosing it while providing information regarding reliability and validity issues.

Data Analysis

For analyzing the research data, descriptive and continuous comparison analysis forms, typically utilized for qualitative data analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The collected data is conceptualized. As concepts accumulate, the researcher must classify them into more abstract and descriptive terms. (Struss & Corbin, 1998). The data analysis process involved collaboration between the researcher and another field specialist, following the stages outlined below. Initially, sentences and word groups from the interview recordings, transcribed into a Word document, were analyzed on a line-by-line basis and coded accordingly. Utilizing Word software for qualitative data analysis enables the researcher to establish codes, categories, and themes based on her/his own intellectual understanding of the subject matter. Subsequently, the two researchers independently conducted coding. Themes were derived by comparing the codes assigned by both researchers. Once the themes were established, similarities and discrepancies were identified through a comparison of the data and codes related to each mother. The creation of themes was informed by the existing literature on the subject, with the concept of social participation rooted in the dimensions of community service and political literacy. The research's reliability was assessed using the formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The study was deemed reliable with

an obtained reliability coefficient of 0.90. The themes uncovered in the research were substantiated by direct quotations from mothers' statements. Code names were employed to safeguard the confidentiality of participating mothers' identities.

Findings

The findings from the mothers' perspectives were organized into two categories: mothers' perception of social participation and the actions mothers take to enhance their children's social participation skills.

Mothers' Perception of Social Participation

The participating mothers in the study sought to explain social participation in the context of political literacy and community service.

Political Literacy

Political literacy stood out as one of the most emphasized characteristics of what mothers comprehended within the concept of social participation. Mothers, who attempted to explain social participation through the lens of political literacy addressed topics including understanding and exercising one's rights, engaging in discussions about politics and current affairs, advocating for personal rights in both domestic and workplace settings, affiliating with political and participating in elections through voting.

Ms. Ceren expressed her viewpoint, stating,

"When I think of social participation, it involves expressing my thoughts about a social event in any setting. I believe that having strong social participation skills is crucial for discussing politics and current issues effectively. Without these skills, individuals may find it challenging to engage in political conversations and address societal events.''

Ms. Canan has linked social participation to the behavioral aspect of political literacy by stating, *"Social participation entails involvement in political parties, attending public meetings during elections, listening to leaders, and participating in voting during elections."*

Ms. Hatice, on the contrary, has conveyed her belief that individuals with social participation skills should possess an understanding of their rights and utilize them judiciously when required. She stated,

"I believe that individuals who are aware of their rights and can anticipate when and how to exercise them may have higher levels of social participation."

Only one of the mothers, Ms. Betül, defined social participation as the ability to correspond with relevant government institutions via e-mail or engage in face-to-face discussions with their employees regarding social events. In contrast, another mother, Ms. Ayşe, sought to explain social participation by actively participating in activities such as the census or elections. Ms. Özlem shared her perspective on the matter, stating,

"A person who can participate in elections or engage in a social event such as censuses can express themselves confidently, understand and adhere to relevant regulations, and collaborate with others. I believe that individuals with high social participation can possess all of these skills."

Upon examining the views of the mothers who shared their perspectives, it becomes evident that they underscore the attributes of active citizens who possess knowledge of and exercise their rights, engage in discussions on contemporary issues, and vote with a sense of awareness. Conversely, it's evident that the mother who mentioned her ability to send e-mails to state institutions may have, knowingly or unknowingly, alluded to the concept of digital citizenship. The mothers' mention of the knowledge, skills, and behavioral facets of political literacy while elucidating social participation suggests that there is an intersection between social participation and political literacy to some extent.

Community Service

Mothers attempted to explain social participation in the context societal issues and pursuit of solutions to these problems. This illustrates their awareness of the challenges faced by individuals in their society and their commitment to addressing these societal issues.

Their discussion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as a means to address these issues indicates that they perceive social participation as a form of community service. Ms. Hatice conveyed her thoughts by stating:

"I believe that social participation is linked to NGOs dedicated to serving society. Both my daughter and I are members of TEMA. Through TEMA's activities, we engage in group tree planting events. I consider this type of collective and beneficial work for society to be a part of social participation."

Ms. Tuğba, who is concerned about contributing to the betterment of her society, expressed,

"I believe that social participation is the capacity to assist others. When engaging in helping, an individual collaborates with NGOs, or they can personally aid those in need."

Ms. Özlem remarked,

"I believe that actions such as donating blood or signing up for organ donation are connected to social participation. The necessity for blood and organ donations is a critical concern for our society. I think one must possess social participation skills to act and not remain indifferent to these matters."

During the discussions, the mothers addressed topics such as environmental issues violence against women, assisting the homeless and the elderly, as well as donating organs and blood to KIZILAY (Turkish Red Crescent). It was evident that the mothers expressed concern or discomfort regarding these issues and actively sought solutions independently.

The mothers' awareness of social issues, their expression of interest and sensitivity toward them, their desire to shoulder responsibility, engage in discussions about beneficial actions, and their willingness to contribute to problem-solving all indicate that they perceive social participation as a form of community service. This framework is how they seek to explain it.

Numerous non-governmental organizations in Turkey undertake significant initiatives in the domains of education and health, including the Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV), Association for the Support of Contemporary Living, Autism Association, Down Syndrome Association, and Cancer-Free Life Association. The mothers' mention of well-known organizations like the Red Crescent, TEMA, and the Child Welfare Agency, without referencing other associations and foundations, implies that they may lack awareness of other nongovernmental organizations and their initiatives.

Practices of Mothers to Increase Their Children's Social Participation Skills

Considering the responses provided by the mothers to the question "What do you understand by social participation?", it is evident that they predominantly link social participation with political literacy. In contrast, when examining the efforts made by mothers to enhance to their children's social participation skills, it becomes apparent that they primarily focus on imparting these skills through their actions and explanations, with a strong emphasis on community service.

Mothers appear to have a conceptual understanding of social participation, but in practice, they primarily emphasize activities related to community service. This emphasis may stem from a potential lack of knowledge or guidance on how to engage with the dimensions of social participation, such as political literacy, collective action, and personal development.

Political Literacy Dimension

The analysis of the codes within the category of political knowledge in Table 3 revealed that the participating mothers in the study offered insights into guiding their children on where and how to address issues, how to advocate for their rights, societal norms, citizenship information, and an awareness of current events. Ms. Tuğba, who aspired for her son to stay informed about current events by following the news, stated:

"I granted my son permission to create a Twitter account. I advised him that by following journalists, lawyers, and politicians, he could stay informed about current affairs. I believe this will help him develop a well-rounded perspective by considering various viewpoints on different events." She elucidated how she guided her child toward becoming a conscientious and socially aware citizen.

Ms. Canan, who believes that certain associations and organizations contribute to the enhancement of social welfare and assist the state, expressed:

"When I go to the market with my daughter, I make sure to explain that if we purchase an expired product, we have the right to return it. If the market refuses, we can file a complaint with the Consumer Rights Protection Association, an organization that advocates for people's rights. I also educate my daughter about when and how to engage with this institution. My aim is to instill in her a sense of awareness regarding her rights."

Ms. Ceren endeavored to teach her child how to assert their rights in writing, as described below:

"We faced a prolonged garbage issue in our neighborhood. Residents were disposing of trash in inappropriate locations, leading to a persistent foul odor." Therefore, I visited the municipality with my child. I had my daughter compose the petition that solved this issue and within a week, the authorities responded. They cleaned the area and installed a "no littering" sign. As a result, I became a role model for her in terms of how to articulate an issue and where seek assistance. She also acquired the understanding that staying silent about societal issues is not the way forward and that solutions are attainable."

Ms. Tuğba, Ms. Canan, and Ms. Ceren appeared to possess fundamental political knowledge and exhibit a positive attitude toward politics. By instructing their children in activities such as voicing their political opinions on social media, writing petitions, expressing dissent with public institutions, and seeking information from these institutions, it is evident that they are striving to impart fundamental political knowledge to their children and translate their emotional inclinations into action.

Ms. Mine, who believes that individuals who can comprehend and address issues within their school can play a more engaged and empathetic role in society, expressed the following:

"I encourage my children to participate in school councils and their schools and guide them on their potential roles as student representatives. I explain the process of becoming a student representative, the significance of voting, and the impact it can bring about. Both of my children served as student representatives. Based on what they shared with me, it appeared that a significant number of students had concerns regarding the school canteen and desired to be consulted when decisions affecting the students were being made at the school. My children brought these concerns to the notice of the school principals and the relevant teachers. In essence, they demonstrate empathy toward others' concerns and endeavor to find solutions in their unique manner."

Ms. Mine, who asserts that school councils have a direct impact on transforming knowledge, skills, and democratic attitudes into actions, contends that her children acquire a practical understanding

of democracy through real-life experiences facilitated by their involvement in school council activities.

Ms. Seyhan, who aims to instill in her daughter an understanding of the pivotal roles of public authorities in society, expressed:

"I advise my daughter to promptly locate a police officer if she gets lost and provide them with our home address. I also educate her about the roles and responsibilities of the police, the duties of our local mukhtar, mayor, and governor. I emphasize that every public servant works for wellbeing and tranquility of the people."

It is evident that Ms. Seyhan, beginning with her own career, has endeavored to raise her child's awareness of power dynamics and authority structures within society. She has also sought to educate her child about the active roles played by public officials in society and their associated duties and responsibilities.

Community Service Dimension

Out of all the mothers, only Fatma, Betül, and Hatice referred to NGOs in the context of linking social participation with community service. While Ms. Betül explained the importance of supporting Foundation for Children with Leukemia (LÖSEV) to her child, Ms. Hatice, discussed the benefits of Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion (TEMA).

Both mothers explained the importance of volunteering in NGOs to their children, emphasizing the need to provide both material and moral support. This helps nurture individuals who are sensitive to their country's problems. Ms. Fatma, who visited the Child Welfare Agency with her children, shared,

"I save my children's outgrown clothes and unused toys. We go to the Child Welfare Agency together, where we donate these items to the children there. I aim to bring happiness to both my children and those in need." Emphasizing that individuals should not be insensitive to those in and should strive to provide as much as help possible."

Ms. Betül said:

" Each month, I donate 100 Turkish Liras to the LÖSEV Foundation, and I always discuss with my son why make this donation. Sometimes, my son also saves some of his pocket money and asks me

to donate it to LÖSEV. I believe that if my son understands the needs and reasons behind the struggles of others in his country and strives to be empathetic toward them, he will mature into an individual capable of effective self-expression and possessing strong social participation skills."

In her attempt to emphasize the significance of another NGO, Ms. Hatice drew attention to the importance of such endeavors by saying:

"I enrolled my daughter as a TEMA member, stressing the significance of trees to society. Additionally, we planted pine saplings purchased from TEMA in our garden."

Ms. Pelin described how she seized opportunities to raise her children's awareness of the positive impact tree planting can have on society:

"At a wedding, we received tree seeds instead of traditional wedding candy. I explained to my children that we could plant these seeds in the vacant lot across the street from our house and cultivate our very own forest. The next day, we planted all the seeds in the vacant lot. My children diligently watered them and patiently awaited their growth. Today, those seeds have grown into trees, and the land remains unsold, providing shade for us. The residents sat and conversed over tea beneath these trees. Both of my children learned the meaning of hard work and patience and grasped the significance of these trees for our society.''

Ms. Hatice endeavored to cultivate her child's environmental consciousness by involving her in eco-friendly activities, aiming for her to become a more environmentally responsible individual. Ms. Özlem and Ms. Ayşe aimed to address certain societal issues visually by creating posters with their children. Ms. Özlem said,

"My children and I worked together to display anti-smoking posters on every floor of our apartment building and on neighborhood poles. They drew crossed-out cigarettes on oversized picture books, wrote about smoking-related illnesses on some posters, and painted images depicting harmful substances found in cigarettes. They educated passersby about the dangers of smoking by displaying these posters on neighborhood poles. Seeing their efforts, I genuinely felt proud to raise them as individuals who are aware of a critical issue in our society and even globally.''

Ms. Ayşe stated that individuals who learn to maintain cleanliness in their neighborhood refrain from littering elsewhere. She underscored the significance of instilling environmental awareness in children and entrusting them with responsibilities in this regard, stating:

"We, five women, took our children with us and collected the garbage in our neighborhood. Furthermore, our children wrote "DON'T LITTER ON THE GROUND" on large cardboard signs, prominently displaying them throughout the area. In doing so, I believe we effectively conveyed the significance of environmental care to our children."

Highlighting the importance of addressing the issue of stray animals, another societal challenge, Ms. Mine expressed:

"My son and I raised funds for stray animals, purchasing food with the money we raised. We positioned food and water in designated spots around our neighborhood for cats and dogs. My children were very overjoyed when they saw the cats and dogs come to eat the food."

Ms. Zeynep and Ms. Pelin have shared their practices to teach their children the importance of visiting, caring for, and helping the elderly. Ms. Pelin described their activities in nursing homes as follows:

"My kids and I bake pies and pastries together, which we bring along when we visit. They serve these homemade treats to the elderly residents, engage in games of chess with them and enjoy painting together. They invest significant quality time with the elderly, allowing my children to alleviate their loneliness, even if only briefly," she added, noting that children raised while helping the elderly tend to develop greater compassion.

Ms. Zeynep said:

"During the weekends, when my daughter buys bread for us, she also buys bread for an elderly couple living upstairs. In this way, she not only discovers the joy of helping the elderly but also develops sensitive toward them.''

Ms. Pelin explained her efforts to assist illiterate women alongside her daughter, stating,
"In our neighborhood, there were four illiterate women in our neighborhood. Three times a week, we engage in literacy activities with them, and I ensure my daughter is present at home while I work with these individuals. For example, I have my daughter double-check the homework I assign

to these women. During these moments, I engage my daughter in conversations about the benefits of women's education and the importance of becoming socially aware individuals.''

When examining the efforts mothers make to enhance their children's social participation skills, it becomes evident that they endeavor to nurture their children as environmentally conscious individuals, instill awareness of volunteerism, cultivate collaboration skills with NGOs, foster selfconfidence, and promote a sense of responsibility.

Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

When examining endeavors of mothers aiming to instill social participation skills in their children at home, it becomes evident that their focus primarily centers on community service initiatives. In this context, it can be observed that there is a disparity between the perception of social participation among the among mothers and the social participation practices they try to instill in their children. While these mothers demonstrate a substantial understanding of the concept, it is apparent that they have identified areas where they require further education in this regard. Mothers seem to associate the concept of social participation with qualities of good citizenship. Their home practices also reflect an equation between community service and being a responsible citizen. This finding aligns with Coşkun's (2020) assertion that secondary school students aim to exemplify social participation through acts of good citizenship and initiatives for social benefit. Based on their study involving social studies teachers and 5th-grade students, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) found that recycling waste materials, donating blood, and volunteering to support individuals in difficult circumstances were considered measures of being good citizens and forms of serving society. Memişoğlu (2016), on the other hand, claimed that teachers who participated in his study defined social participation as the act of generating solutions to societal problems.

Coşkun and Kodal (2017) evaluated the perceptions of social studies teacher candidates regarding social participation within the framework of the citizenship concept. The study revealed that teacher candidates defined social participation as encompassing integration-cohesion, help and support, volunteer activities, sensitivity, societal contribution, knowledge, skill development, and endeavors to become exemplary citizen. In conclusion, the prevailing perception of the social

participation concept predominantly revolves around community service activities. Nevertheless, the aspects of social participation related to political literacy and collective action are not widely recognized. Therefore, it is equally imperative to formulate strategies for integrating collective action and political literacy into the cultivation of social participation skills.

It appears that these mothers attempt to describe social participation as encompassing "political participation." This broader perspective activities such as listening to political leaders' speeches, engaging in marches and protests, voting political parties, discussing politics and current affairs, as well as participating in community service initiatives where citizens contribute their time, resources, or effort for public causes, such as voluntary activities and charity campaigns. Observing at the practices undertaken by mothers to enhance their children's social participation skills, it becomes apparent that they place significant emphasis on activities that facilitate acquisition of knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes about active citizenship.

It has been observed that mothers, whether consciously or inadvertently, place significant emphasis on nurturing their children's abilities for social integration, self-expression, and active engagement in society. The fact that many mothers mentioned various dimensions of political literacy while defining social participation underscores their proficiency in instructing their children to become proficient and active citizens.

As an illustration, Ms. Tuğba, one of the mothers, permitted her son to create a Twitter account. This enabled him to stay informed about current affairs by following journalists, specific lawyers, and politicians. Through reading diverse comments from various individuals about different events, her son gained a distinctive perspective. It is evident that Ms. Tuğba aims to instill in her child an attitude encompassing the affective dimension of political literacy.

While the results of this study do not align with Holden's (2004) research, which identified parental support for social citizenship education over political literacy dimensions, they do correspond with Ersoy (2012)'s findings, which noted that a minority of mothers engage in discussions with their children about citizenship, social participation, and political literacy.

In Bruyere's (2010) study, which examines the role and importance of Articles 12, 13, and 15 pertaining to children's right to participation in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the development of young individuals, it was discovered that children who actively engage in social environments such as school, family, and their environments are more likely to succeed. The research has revealed that individuals who can more readily exercise their participation rights tend to benefit positively from this engagement. Oldfield (2012) emphasizes

that in order for citizens to actively participate in both political and social aspects of society, it is crucial to create a suitable environment and understanding of civic responsibilities from a young age. In interviews with students conducted by Lailiyah et al. (2018), it was revealed that students who engage in political discussions with family members regarding current events in their society maintain a positive political perspective. Tarhan (2019) found that parents support their children's political involvement.

In this study, it was determined that mothers engaged in political conversations with their children and were capable of discussing agenda topics. Doğanay et al. (2007) found in their study that teacher candidates with families more interested in politics exhibited the highest levels of political participation, while those with families uninterested in politics displayed the lowest levels of political participation. The significance of the family factor becomes evident in students' knowledge internalization and acquisition.

In the fifth chapter of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) 2008 Turkey National Human Development Report on youth, dedicated to participation, it is asserted that young people in Turkey have notably restricted engagement in country's social and political affairs. Economic, behavioral, cultural, and political factors have been identified as the primary causes of this situation. The report states that younger generations struggle to find a supportive family environment for nurturing autonomy and self-confidence during early childhood. Many families still uphold cultural traits that hinder the active engagement of older generations in social life.

It is believed that the policies pursued in Turkey, particularly in the 1980s and after, have steered the country's social structure toward excessive consumption, a deficiency in political education, and the upbringing of a generation displaying insufficient concern for the nation's issues. During this period, families strive to shield their children from politics (Erdoğan, 2009; Boyraz, 2009). In this study, the finding that students can comfortably discuss politics and social issues with their mothers, that parents who grew up Turkey's political climate in the 1980s, along with the family structure of that era, can engage in political conversations with their children, demonstrates a departure from traditional family dynamics. Mothers may have various reasons for prioritizing social participation dimension when imparting social engagement skills to their children outside of school. One potential reason is that some mothers, as mentioned in interviews, aim to raise awareness about societal issues and address them in their unique manner alongside their children.

These mothers who emphasize this perspective view social participation as an individual's capacity to be attuned to societal issues in their environment and take proactive steps to seek solutions.

Mothers enhance their children's social participation skills through activities in volunteering in community organizations and organizing events aimed at addressing societal issues. The inclusion of concepts such as serving society, sensitivity to problems, unity, solidarity, cooperation, and a sense of belonging in mothers' explanations of social participation perception reflects their humanistic perspective, which prioritizes societal interests.

From the mothers' viewpoints, it is evident that they possess a sense of social responsibility and social sensitivity. This study's finding aligns with Ersoy's (2012) conclusion that "Mothers place greater emphasis on social and moral development aspects when imparting social participation skills to their children in extracurricular environments." Furthermore, these findings align with the conclusion of Elma et al. (2010), who highlighted that teacher candidates, as identified in their studies, contribute to their socialization in areas such as communication, solidarity, sense of responsibility, and problem-solving skills through the projects they develop in the CSP course. Mothers emphasized that NGOs contribute their children's development by fostering a sense of responsibility, encouraging diverse perspectives, socialization, enhancing problem-solving skills, nurturing empathy, and fostering sensitivity to societal problems. Mothers' community service activities with their children have been observed to offer opportunities for outdoor experiences.

Altınok (2012) found that social participation activities positively impacted students' social sensitivities.

In Tarhan's (2019) study, students endeavored to explain how NGOs allow them to cultivate a sense of responsibility, explore different perspectives, socialize, acquire problem-solving skills, foster empathy, contribute to their country, and display sensitivity toward their country's problems. Mothers who highlight that community service can enhance their children's social participation skills and contribute to raising responsible and empathetic citizens through serving others, only mention non-governmental organizations such as Kızılay, TEMA, LÖSEV, and Child Protection Agency, which are frequently featured in public service advertisements in Turkey. This may suggest that they are unaware of other significant NGOs in Turkey and their roles. In their study, Eryılmaz et al. (2018) found that both teachers and students perceive NGOs as social assistance groups. Similarly, Elma et al. (2010) discovered that pre-service teachers contributed to students' students' social development in aspects such as communication, solidarity, responsibility, and problem-solving through projects developed in the Community Service Practices (CSP) course. In

Guo et al.'s study (2015), it is evident that classroom participation plays a mediating role in the impact of service-learning on students' problem solving abilities. It is apparent that all the interviewed mothers define social participation based on their personal beliefs and experiences, and they actively involved in various practices, both indoors and outdoors, to increase their children's social participation skills.

It can be seen that all of the interviewed mothers defined the concept of social participation in line with their own thoughts and experiences, and that they implemented some practices in different areas both inside and outside the home to improve their children's social participation skills. It is a remarkable result that each of the mothers who participated in the interview, regardless of their education level and employment status, had something to say about the research.

It was revealed that the majority of mothers who expressed their opinions in the research tried to explain the concept of social participation within the framework of political literacy. When we look at the practices that these mothers implement to improve their children's social participation skills, it is seen that they attach great importance to practices that will support their children to gain knowledge, skills and positive attitudes regarding active citizenship. Thus, it is seen that the mothers, perhaps knowingly or unknowingly, attach importance to developing their children's abilities to exist in society, express themselves, and participate in society.

When we look at the practices of the mothers who shared their ideas about social participation skills to help their children to acquire these skills at home, it is seen that social participation is especially concentrated in the community service aspect. In this sense, it can be claimed that there is no parallelism between the social participation perception of the mothers participating in the research and the social participation practices they try to impart to their children. According to this result, it can be thought that the mothers have knowledge about social participation skills, but they do not know what practices to do in the political literacy dimension of social participation while trying to teach these skills to their children. For this reason, it seems that mothers need awareness and training on this issue.

Recommendations

The study findings reveal noteworthy insights into mothers' perceptions of social participation and its impact on their children. Within the confines of these limitations, the following recommendations for practical applications and future research can be proposed based on the research findings:

Teachers should educate parents about social participation skills and methods to foster them in their children. Schools should involve families in activities aimed at enhancing their students' social participation skills, political literacy, and social participation competencies through collaborative efforts between the school and families.

Ethical Approval

This research was conducted by Pamukkale University Social Sciences and Humanities Department. Date 13.01.2021 and taken at the meeting numbered 01 of the Research and Publication Ethics Board. It has ethics committee permission with decision numbered 68282350/2018/G01.

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