

## Primary School Students' Benefiting From Museums With Educational Purposes

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### ABSTRACT

*The aim of the study is to investigate what primary school students' benefiting from museums with educational purposes. That learning and teaching environments are connected with reality enables the realization of meaningful learning. Nevertheless, relations have been determined between allocating time for museum visits and the joys inside teachers waken by Social Studies course. Museum provides an excellent environment which enables students to learn while living and experiencing that can contribute to their mental, physical, affective, cognitive, and social development. The contribution of museums in getting time concept concrete will be at highest level due to the fact that families will share mutual time and place with their children. Relation was detected between teachers' having libraries that they can improve themselves professionally, allocating time for museum visits, and feeling that Social Sciences course creates joy inside them.*

**Keywords:** Museum, Students, Education, Social Studies, Family.

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## INTRODUCTION

In education systems, a school loses its quality of being a school of the society if it keeps itself isolated from the surroundings. Such a school would be one that cannot meet the educational needs of the society. A school is not an independent system. It is related to some other subordinate and superior systems. Therefore, schools and surroundings can affect one another and cause some changes. Schools are the places where people gain kinds of competence and get prepared for the roles and duties in social life. Schools are charged with transmitting a society's culture, order and structure to the coming generations (Güçlü, 2002, 167, 168). A school cannot provide children and adolescents all the practical education environments they need and stir their imagination with "do together" activities such as games and experiments (Adıgüzel, 2000, 130). For that reason, schools should always cooperate with families by getting closer to people and controlling the informal processes at the same time.

The opportunities created by information society have provided an opening-up for education. Instead of reproducing what past generations knew, modern education aims to build a society expanding and contributing to what is already known. It tries to educate people with creative and questioning minds (Yavuzoğlu & Atasoy, 1999, 147). What is meant by elementary education is that people are educated at particular levels in some particular ways within the framework of formal or informal education systems no matter how old they

The major goal of primary education, which is the second phase of modern education following the one given in kindergartens, is to prepare students for higher educational institutions and life in accordance with their interests, abilities and developmental and pedagogical qualities with effective guidance and counseling services given starting from very young ages. To achieve that goal, students should be taught the fundamentals to be physically, mentally and socially healthy people who are modern citizens producing and consuming in proper ways. In primary education where such an important mission is undertaken, what people are to focus on is improving the quality. A major aim should be to improve all the parts of the system to enhance the quality as a whole. In people's educational lives, primary education is considered to be the key stage. Reaching a higher level of civilization could be possible only with information. The fundamentals of all the information and skills we need in our lives are taught in primary education. Turkish education system consists of such consecutive subsystems as preschool education, primary education, secondary education

and higher education. They are supposed to work in harmony with one another and educate people who have the qualities creating an information society would require (Oğuz, 2004).

### **Out-of-School Time**

It is obvious that only classroom activities would not suffice for children between the ages of 6 and 14 to have the qualities they need. According to the modern learning theory, learning requires active participation. The conclusions a learner arrives at should be compatible with the realities he or she has developed in mind, and the standards somebody else has set before would not matter. For that reason, there should always be different points of view and active learning ways in an education system. It should be given priority to the learning experiences that give students the opportunities to see the connections between objects and life, do experiments, guess about things and make inferences. Verbal instruction based on symbols is now being replaced by teaching that is predicated on visual materials and experiences, for active participation is necessary for effective learning (Paykoç and Baykal, 2000, 102, 103). Studies have shown that people remember after a certain period of time just 10% of what they read, 20% of what they have hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they both see and hear, 70% of what they say and 90% of what they both do and say (Söylemez, 2004, 396).

Every student should be given the opportunity after school or at the weekends to get help with their homework, participate in social and cultural activities, produce artistic works, do sport, study in libraries, learn foreign languages, search about things, use computer and internet systems, play chess, etc. The students in our country should be provided with all of the abovementioned opportunities. It is a necessity concerning the 15 million students in Turkey and the fact that they lack it is one of our major problems we must address.

According to the prevailing attitude in our country, children go to school, roam the streets or play games after leaving school and get back home. This makes it a controversial issue whether our children have decent education and we show deep sensitivity towards that or not. In our time, going to school is a must but it is not sufficient on its own at all, for it has become an essential feature of good education that people have some skills and

interests peculiar to them and they need to focus on them with an analytical approach (Duru, 2007).

Among the goals of modern museums and education through museums, some major ones are enlightening people within the framework of lifelong education, disseminating science-based information and establishing true democracy. As Allan once said, "What every museum curator should do is serve people and try to make them more qualified and wiser..." Unlike in a classroom, learning in a museum is visual. Instead of giving information about a thing, what a museum aims to do is arousing interest and curiosity. According to Booth and his friends, "one of the major aims of education through museums is supposed to be inspiring imagination and increasing emotional awareness. Educationalists employing museums consider learning to be an open-ended, continuous, lifelong experience (Akyol, 2007). Museums built and organized in a modern way give students some special rooms where they can do their homework (Özsoy, 2002, 59).

The major goal of primary education, which is the second phase of modern education following the one given in kindergartens, is to prepare students for higher educational institutions and life in accordance with their interests, abilities and developmental and pedagogical qualities with effective guidance and counseling services given starting from very young ages (Oğuz, 2004).

### **State of the Problem**

"How is the state of primary school students who benefit from museums with educational purpose?" is the research question of the study.

The sub-problems of the study are as follows:

- 1) How is the state of students of visiting museums, activities, participation in games, and observing?
- 2) Who do students mostly visit museums with?
- 3) Do schools realize their responsibilities related to museums?
- 4) Do teachers allocate time to visit museums?
- 5) What is the importance of museums in out of school education?

6) What is the importance of role of families in relation to benefiting educationally from museums?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate primary school students' state of benefiting from museums with educational purpose in the schools of Ministry of National Education, within family and school frame.

### **METHOD**

In this study is a survey model which investigates students' state of benefiting from museums with educational purpose, within family, school and teacher frame. Survey model is a research approach which aims at describing a situation that existed in the past or one that still exists in the way it is (Karasar, 2005).

### **Participants and Sample**

The participants of the study are 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in the schools of Ministry of National Education in the province of Bursa, teachers who deliver Social Sciences course, and museum staff. And, the sample consists of totally 50 Social Sciences teachers who work in six schools in Osmangazi, Yildirim, and Nilüfer counties of Bursa province, and of art historian, archeologist, and staff that are employed in the Bursa City Museum and Archeology Museum.

### **Data collection tool**

Questionnaire and observation forms that were prepared by the researcher were used as data collection tool in this study. While forming the items professionals were consulted for their opinions and a draft was prepared. That draft was applied to 30 teachers and incomprehensible questions of the questionnaire items were removed, defective expressions were corrected, and the final form of the questionnaire was created. Additionally, an interview form, which consists of six open-ended questions was created to apply it to museums' staff in order to determine primary school students' state of benefiting from museums with educational purpose, and to pose and compare the differences.

### **Data Analysis**

In the section which is related to teachers, correlation analysis was estimated according to Spearman correlation coefficient. Information gathered from the interviews carried out with museums staff was interpreted, differences and similarities were compared.

## FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

An interview form, which consists of six open-ended questions was created to apply it to museums' staff in order to determine primary school students' state of benefiting from museums with educational purpose, and to pose and compare the differences. Views and applications of teachers within family, school, and teacher frame related to primary school students' state of benefiting from museums with educational purpose, relation between these were found by estimating spearman queue correlation coefficients

**Table 1.** Bursa City Museum and Museum Of Archeology –Meeting

QUESTIONS	BURSA CITY MUSEUM - MEETING	MUSEUM of ARCHEOLOGY- MEETING
		<b>1-Name Surname :</b> Dilek Yıldız <b>Date and Place of Birth:</b> 1979, İzmit <b>Profession :</b> Art Historiographer <b>Meeting Date and Place:</b> 24.05.2007, Bursa <b>Hour:</b> 9:30, Bursa
How many persons have visited within the last few years? What is the number of the students?	80 thousand persons have visited. Approximately 40 thousand of this was students. Especially, primary school, second phase students (6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students) form the majority of the visitors.	All students except 8 <sup>th</sup> grades visit the museum within the frame of school curriculum. Especially, in the week of museums, plans are made as end of the year "let's travel and see" excursions. Totally 147308 persons have visited 6 museums. 14810 of these are students. And, among all museums the portion of Bursa Museum of Archaeology is 17352. 16031 students, 297 foreigners, and 1024 local persons have maid a visit
Can schools fulfil their responsibilities?	No. Teachers are especially very disinterested. Students come with student families, and the most interested ones are students	It can be said that they can moderately fulfil their duties. Teachers are disinterested. Student families come only if homework is given. They ask about the entrance price and change their mind.
Do students come together with their teachers, or on their own, or with their friends?	They come to make group visits with their teachers. Additionally, the ones who come with their friends are majority. The students who come with their families bring their parents to the museum. And, a part of students is coming individually. However, teachers are extremely disinterested, and museum visit is seen almost as extra unnecessary work. The ones who are most interested are students. They visit in various hours.	Students visit the museum with their teachers in groups such as morning students, noon students, fourth grades, fifth grades, etc. They come together with their friends when homework is given, but there aren't many students who come alone. Additionally, student families are quite disinterested. Approaches such as "I better wait aside while the child walks around" are majority. Additionally, there can be parents who come on their own without their children, and want to shoot around with their cameras.
"Museum game" is performed in the frame of Museum Pedagogy. How many persons have participated in this program?	Museum hunt is played as a group with the willing students and teachers. While with approximately 750 persons museum hunt has been played within a year, with 500 persons crossword puzzle games have been played. Games are played	Only the students of a private school carry out animation. 15 students have realised this. Additionally, there are teachers who sometimes act accordingly with pre-school personality development view. Except this there are no any other game playing activities.

	with the literate ones
<b>What is the number of the ones who have watched the games within a year?</b>	It is approximately 15 thousand. Games are not played. Spectator number in our open air theatres can be larger.
<b>Are visits within a program?</b>	No. They are usually realized No. Density along the day is between 15:00-17:00. Visit time changes between 10 minutes and 2 hours. For the ones who come out of the city transportation facilities are important.

As comprehended from the table, it is possible to catch the attention of students more than teachers if museums become entertaining. Families, on the other hand, become interested when homework related to museums is given. Interest to fields related to activities regarding museums is quite high. Our study done with 2000 students in Bursa in 2004-2005 academic year would provide some information about how students spend their free time. There were found to be some relationships between teachers' allowing time for museum visits and students' feeling interested in the topics of social studies lessons. It is known that enough time is allowed for museum visits in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades but some problems arise because of transportation costs and museums' rules (Papa Jani, 2003, 59,60).

Students attach more importance to learning through games, language study and artistic works such as books and pictures. Thanks to the technology developing fast, the audiovisual sector has developed much. There are studies reporting that playing video games does not necessarily prevent adolescents from participating in free time activities but it could affect self-concept development badly (Alantar, 1999, 78). Out-of-school activities about students' needs and interests make positive contributions to the education of healthy and successful individuals. It has been found that the activities students like doing out of school are reading books, listening to music, playing games, watching TV, and using computer systems. When asked about how they usually spend their time out of school, what Turkish students say is that they watch TV or videos for 1 or 2 hours, meet friends, do housework or sport and read books. It has been found that Turkish students spend less time playing computer games than other students do (Özgün-Koca & Şen, 2007).

Children encouraged by their families to do in-school and out-of-school activities can improve their social skills. On their way to understanding what they like and don't like and defining their own qualities, it would help children know themselves better to be allowed to make decisions about what they want to do or buy. Children who know themselves can express themselves better in their relationships with others and they are appreciated. The atmosphere at home and school should be welcoming and convivial.

Children's emotional health is closely related to their effective thinking and learning skills. Children would learn more and better when provided an environment where there is no tension, fear and frustration and they feel secure and happy (Kansu, 2005). The out-of-school activities that students mostly do are writing, using computer systems and reading. Studies report that students put much time to such free time activities as doing sports, watching TV and going to the cinema. The findings are in accordance with some researchers' (Creasey and Myers, 1986, 261; Lin and Lepper, 1987, p.89) views that there is a positive relationship between playing video games and doing other free time activities (Alantar, 1999).

In Alexander's (1997) study carried out in England, it was found that students spare 33% of their time for writing, 28% for exercising with tools, 24% for reading, 20% for having rest or personal care and 14% for going for an outing. In their study done in small village schools, Galton et al. (1998) found that students spare 33% of their time for listening, 28% for writing, 17% for observing things, 10% for drawing, 7% for reading, 5% for chatting, and the main activities preferred by students are listening, observing and writing (Pollard and Triggs, 2000, 52). It is seen that activities about writing and reading are the most popular ones. On the other hand, the studies reported that computer use comes next. Thanks to the activities that students would like to do and those which are suitable for them, effective learning could be achieved. Learning environments in and out of a school complement each other. Davies (1991) thinks that a child is to be educated by the whole society. Considering museums in this context, some findings could be mentioned here. Those who "sometimes" allow time to visit museums are the majority (52%). Museum visits are organized regularly in schools of higher socioeconomic status, which is "sometimes" done in other schools (57.1%). Teachers and parents have influence over students in terms of the way they manage their free time.

### **The Importance of Museums in Out-of-School Education Definition of a Museum**

Traditionally, a museum is a place where collections are exhibited in halls and showcases. However, museums have lately had the function of an education institute that teaches people the ways to improve themselves by helping them grasp the meaning, use and importance of the works exhibited. In this context, a museum is an institute where works and things to be inherited from the past are collected, kept, protected and exhibited to help people to see what they mean functionally and artistically and make assessments considering the related historical and social aspects (Yavuzoğlu & Atasoy, 1999, 147). Museums tell a lot about the cultural values, customs,

traditions, social characteristics and intellectual heritage of the places where they are in (Perdahcı, 2004, 298).

What an individual or a nation hands down is the mirror of their own time. Things, motifs and their stories are all the traces of what has been experienced. Exhibiting and presenting them give information about the events and problems people experienced in the past. "Museums house the dust, smell and color of the past and tell about what "past" really means" (Haşal, 2007, 99). Museums are actually living things. Visitors come to museums to feel living in the past and find things to excite them (Yılmaz, 2007, 126).

Museums have also the functions of teaching people the ways to improve themselves and inducing them to make comparisons between what they already know and what they have newly learnt. In this context, museums are to show people that development is almost inevitable and the future is going to be different from the present time (Oğuzoğlu, 2007, 34). The primary function of museums is to compile the products of local and/or national culture, protect them for coming generations, research into things and educate people. The functions of the museums giving people the chance to visit as often as possible can be grouped into three:

1. Physical Access: Making the museum itself and the collections in it physically more accessible for people.
2. Intellectual Access: Making the collections and exhibition themes more understandable for the visitors who are not specialist in any way.
3. Access to Possibilities: Working in cooperation with people who never go to museums and removing the cultural and psychological obstacles which prevent them from visiting museums (Merriman, 2000, 71).

As an asset of the society it is within, a museum has a significant role in the economic, social and political development of that society (Paykoç & Baykal, 2000, 103). Due to that sense of responsibility to people, museums now consider offering programs to educate children to be one of their primary functions. In terms of the concepts taking on importance such as being active in education, gaining experience, environment, interaction and constructivism, the importance of museums in education is emphasized by many theoreticians. Museums provide a favorable environment in which children can do and experience things to improve themselves cognitively, physically, affectively and socially. In museums, children get to know many documents about culture in an atmosphere of social interaction, which helps them to comprehend that they belong to that particular society and gain self-

confidence. Young children who encounter works of art and do activities about them would have an aesthetic point of view and learn how to appreciate art (Tezcan Akmehmet A, 2007).

Among the goals of modern museums and education through museums, some major ones are enlightening people within the framework of lifelong education, disseminating science-based information and establishing true democracy. As Allan once said, "What every museum curator should do is serve people and try to make them more qualified and wiser..." Unlike in a classroom, learning in a museum is visual. Instead of giving information about a thing, what a museum aims to do is arousing interest and curiosity. According to Booth and his friends, "one of the major aims of education through museums is supposed to be inspiring imagination and increasing emotional awareness. Educationalists employing museums consider learning to be an open-ended, continuous, lifelong experience (Akyol, 2007). Museums built and organized in a modern way give students some special rooms where they can do their homework (Özsoy, 2002, 59).

As it is the way in daily life, enabling people to be exposed to three-dimensional entities would produce much better results (Buyurgan, 2002, 106). Thanks to the findings of interdisciplinary studies and the changes and developments regarding the approach towards museums, it is now a widely known fact that learning should not be limited with the extent it can occur at school. Museums make use of interactive exhibitions and even drama to have the active participation of their visitors and they organize several educational programs for different sectors of society (Buyurgan, 2002, 106). Museums also have the role of warning people about what is shared and beneficial for all or most members of a given community (Yavuzoğlu & Atasoy, 1999, 147). To motivate people to visit museums, what matters is not only the exhibition designs with educational concerns but also the ones in which educational features are not highlighted a lot (Atagök B, 1999, 144-145).

Visitors need to know the definitions and functions of the pieces in museums. All pieces or thematic exhibitions should be in a way that visitors can benefit emotionally and educationally. Visitors should be given the chance to explore the meaning via the way a piece is exhibited. Educational materials to be prepared considering the relationships between pieces and themes should not be at an academic level. Content should never be ignored in exhibitions. Museums or exhibitions can be the only educational relationship for many visitors from different cultures (Yavuzoğlu & Atasoy,

1999, 148- 149). Clearness in visual perception and orderliness in presentment serve to protect visitors from psychological pressure and keep their attention for a long time. Places to have a rest during museum visits make them more effective. Studies have reported that what can be perceived depends more on who perceives than things to be perceived, which accounts for the fact that the way things are exhibited (audiovisual effects) can serve as a very effective method to teach (AtagökB, 1999, 145). What every museum presents to its visitors differs from one another in surprising, interesting and thought-provoking ways in terms of the accessible sources, financial possibilities, priorities in themes, target groups and curators' imagination and skills in exhibiting things (Birkan, 2002, 21).

### **Museums and Education**

Museums are ideal places to enrich what is learnt at school. The main reason for that is they have any kind of pieces related with cultures. Things learnt at school are rather theoretical and students cannot see any links between them and real life. Museums have objects that can serve as representative examples of what is taught in social studies and science courses. Museums exhibit objects in a way that would provoke creative thinking and effective learning. Museums are ideal places for socialization as well. Thus, they serve to achieve the long-term goals of education providing socialization besides helping students follow syllabuses. Museums serve also as laboratories in which teachers can learn much about their students. In museums, the hierarchy in classroom relationships changes just like the location does. Meeting new people and new cultures in a new place helps students look at things from different viewpoints. Students who have difficulties learning at school could turn out to be quick learners in museums since intelligence and senses are used in all possible ways in museums. Children who have difficulties learning with traditional teaching methods can learn more easily with activities in museums, where the features of intelligence not used at school and abilities not noticed are all revealed. All these attest to the power of museums in education.

Museums can contribute to education via schools. The best way to do that is promoting cooperation between museums and schools. Some museums have founded units to support schools and they collaborate with schools and teachers (Tezcan Akmehmet, B, 2007). In this context, Bursa City Museum aims to live together with the society, provoke thinking, produce things and share with its visitors the desire to redesign the urban life and future ( Yıldız, 2007, 63).

Views and applications of teachers within family, school, and teacher frame related to primary school students' state of benefiting from museums with educational purpose, relation between these were found by estimating spearman queue correlation coefficients.

**Table 2.** Correlation Analyses Related to Teachers (Spearman Correlation Coefficients)

	Students are aware that they learn something new	Students are bored of Social Sciences course	Social Sciences course awakes joy and happiness in me
Communication with student families	.32*	-	-
age	.33*	-	-
year of work	.30*	-	-
managing student time in and out of school	-	.37**	-
museum visits	-	-	.38**

\* 0.05 level, \*\*0.01 level

There is relation between teachers' age, year of work, increase in their experiences and the development of families and children; and students' awareness of having learnt something new. Teachers' desire to professionally improve themselves and behaving in a way that they believe in school-society relationship enables students to make knowledge meaningful.

In the correlation analysis of "Social Sciences course awakes joy and happiness in me" item of the assessment tool of teachers and education, there is positive correlation at 0.01 level. Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient is .38\*\*. Relation was detected between teachers' having libraries that they can improve themselves professionally, allocating time for museum visits, and feeling that Social Sciences course creates joy inside them. Schools have benefited from their environment for a very long time while delivering history lessons. Nevertheless, it has not gone forward than school excursions and nature walks, being mostly museum visits or excursions of geographic directions. This adds to social skills and manners, in other words, being concerned about cultural or natural inheritance

(Roldan 2003:96). It was observed that there is sufficient time allocated for museum visits in 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. However, transportation expenses can cause problems regarding museum visit arrangements (Papa Jani 2003:59,60). The teachers working for the schools of high socioeconomic status attach more importance to museum visits (Doğan, 2006, 131, 132).

In modern museums, people can have informal education, which refers to spontaneous processes of learning things with no specific goals and plans. Museums have become institutions undertaking demanding educational tasks in social and environmental relationships. They have established their identity as important cultural centers working in harmony with surroundings to help people develop themselves (Oğuzoğlu, 2007, 33). Modern museums are no longer simple display rooms.

As Hooper and Greenhill (1999, 175) stated, one of the major benefits of regular museum visits by students is that museums give them the chance to learn in different ways, study things actively and use their abilities and skills that are hardly ever employed in formal education environments. Schools prefer to visit especially art museums as they host memorable exhibitions enabling students to learn interactively and experimentally, share the happiness with friends and benefit from many other direct learning experiences (MacCoy, 1989, 148). It can be claimed that art education is not satisfactorily common in museums and the museums in Turkey have some traditional approaches. Museums do not feel the need for renewal probably because schools do not encourage education in museums (Mercin, 2002, 341, 342, 345). The developments of the last century in education, communication and museums have made the role of museums in education much more important, and school-museum relationships have been systematized and widespread. As institutions in interaction with schools, museums have contributed to learning experiences. The positive effect of museums on learning is mainly produced by what they have to display. They help students throughout the process in which abstract bits of information are replaced by concrete ones in mind (Tezcan Akmeahmet, 2003, 35).

Having the child to acquire the habit of visiting exhibitions and museums starting from kindergarten age will protect him/her from rote learning. Verbal skills, which gain strength with school training, can be supported by the activities that a museum provides (Perdahcı, 2004, 298). As a result of the findings attained from the study of Gürkan (2004, 251), it was observed that museum education through experience motivated and entertained students, and ensured permanent learning. As an old approach, schools benefit from their close environment while teaching history topics. However, this

application has not gone too further from being just school excursions and nature walks, and mostly has been implemented as museum visits or trips related to geography aspects. It contributes to social skills and manners, that is, dealing with cultural or natural inheritance (Roldan, 2003, 96).

Interdisciplinary interactions, and with the shift in the understanding of museum and museum studies, and new improvements the necessity of not limiting learning in educational studies just with schools, the results provided by multiple environments in learning, covered programs, new discipline, methods and techniques form the significant improvement point of this view (Adıgüzel, 2000, 131). In the age of information, which improves so fast, in future time it will become necessary to consider functions of museums as primary for public service. Many contemporary countries carry on this with great pleasure of duty as the necessity of a developed society (Atik, 2003, 31).

Museums are one of the most efficient out of classroom environments. The importance of museums for education is basically related to the objects in the collection. Students are provided with rich experiences by the help of these objects. In museums;

\* It is provided opportunity to work, and do research with first hand sources.

\* Participation in the active learning process is assured.

\* The improvement of many skills such as observation, proof usage, research doing, comparison, assessment, empathy, social participation, creativity, etc. are assured.

\* The feeling of liking together with features of being creative come into prominence (Atagök, Özkasım& Tezcan Akmehmet, 2006, 2). Museums, which are places that multiple intelligence theory can be applied with respect to art education, provide opportunity to use and develop almost all of visual, logical, linguistic, bodily, musical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and naturalistic intelligence areas (Mercin, 2002, 346). Museum education is a field which allows quite big opportunities to be prepared and applied according to the different features of students (Gürkan, 2004, 248).

### **The Place and Importance of Family in Utilization of the Time Out of Classroom**

Students need individuals with whom they can share their thoughts, from who they can attain correct information, and who can help them determine on appropriate decisions. It was dwelled upon the role of families in the acquisition of contemporary information, whether student families are aware of the contemporary information or not, what kind of attitude they adopt in the way of enhancing them to use their creativity, think independently, and express their thoughts. Within the out-of-school factors that affect the information acquisition of the individual, the district of residence, the possibilities that families have (socio-economic statue), the number of siblings and their gender, the number of the siblings who go to school, and the professional situation of parents have also been taken into consideration. Human beings learn a part of the behaviours that form their character from their families.

In the contemporary school management and classroom management, students, teachers, and the families of the students are involved in the process. The support of the environment out of school ensures the success of the school and educational system, and the application of TQM in education (Şişman & Turan, 2002, 56).

Environment variables affect the quality of school greatly. In this respect, it is a must to improve the relationship between the school and environment (Güçlü, 2002). The student, whose behaviours are tried to be changed in school, comes from outside. Families, who are among the ones that form the external environment, have a quite important function. In the projects realised in USA, with respect to enable school-family cooperation, families are attached great importance. Families have been accepted as a partner of school in the training of students (Özmen & Kolay, 2004, 1304).

Family would allocate special time for children, express that they are loved and respected, help them to gain confidence by keeping good relations with them, and thus, be affective in enabling them to have good relation with others. Children, who receive response to their emotional needs within the family, and who are listened and understood without being criticised would trust their parents and would easily share and get help when they have problems. Children, who are encouraged to take part in the activities both in school and out of school by their parents, improve their social skills. In order to help them understand what they like and dislike and identify their characteristics, providing them with the right to chose related to what they would like to take or do will help children know themselves. Children who know themselves can positively express themselves in their interactions with people, and be understood and accepted. Family environment and school

environment should be enjoyable. Children's emotional health and their skill of efficiently think and learn are closely related. Providing children with an environment where tension, fear and disappointment are not experienced very often, but there is mostly joy and happiness and they would feel safe, will enhance their learning positively (Kansu, 2005).

### **Education Motivated Communication with Families**

This matter is of utmost importance since it provides support for the learning of children. The child learns to be able to express himself/herself, and to become an individual who can manage himself/herself from his/her parents (Yalçınkaya& Şanlı, 2003). The child needs the support of his/her parents especially while trying to establish his/her character during the adolescence (11-16). Most of the population in Turkey is below the age of 16. The rate of the 11-16 age group is 11,8%, and the rate of the 0-11 age group is 36,4%. Patterson has observed the children in their homes, and supports the idea that family should be seen as a social system which affects each other (Gander&Gardiner, 2001, 419). The communication of the child with the families affects their support towards the learning of him/her. A good partnership between home and school: 1- Creates a positive attitude towards the school. 2- Creates a positive personal image. 3- Increases the performance of families towards education. 4- Makes them put more effort for the learning of the child. 5- Creates and improving motivation for education. 6- Provides support for training and education. 7- Creates a better family understanding. 8- Carries out the function of creating a collective aim, and feeling of possession. The behaviours of parents create deep and permanent effects in the emotional life of the child. Parents, who do not care about the feelings of the children, also prevent their mental development. Children who tend to commit violence are generally individuals who have usually suffered from apathy, always been shoved, and never been understood, and who have been imposed heavy punishments. A good relation that might be established between the family and the school during the school period can make a child more important. With this respect, children who are respected more often by their parents will trust them, and share their problems when necessary and attain help. As a result of communication that will be established, families, who will be educated about the activities within the school and out of the school, will encourage their children and help them, improve their social skills. Letting children the right to choose about the things they want to do helps them to know themselves. So, they will gain the competence to express themselves in their social relations, being understood and accepted. Providing a safe environment where tension, fear, and disappointment do not exist but there is mostly joy and happiness, affects education positively.

Teachers do not have enough time in school environment. For this reason, s/he should be in interaction with the family of the child with which s/he lives out of school, and organize educational activities for museum. In this phase there are some duties that student families should undertake:

\*Assisting class teachers and class/section guide teachers during the applications.

\*Contributing to the activities to be carried out individually or by groups.

\*Helping students in the studies out of the school.

\*Providing financial aid when necessary.

It is also the responsibility of the family, as much as the school-teacher couple, to ensure that students consciously and beneficially spend their time out of school\*. In this sense, positive investment might be made regarding having students do research and investigation in museums, and thus, ensuring that museum and history awareness is developed. When not enough cooperation is established among school, family, and environment, especially student will be affected negatively. In Turkey, school has gradually fallen behind the family and society. In Turkish educational system, it can't be claimed that the relationships between school and environment, and thus, school and parent are healthy. It is necessary that units, which are mediator institutions that ensure the relationship between school and environment, work properly and harmoniously. In Turkish educational system, one of the most important factors that reduce the quality of education greatly is that the cooperation between school and family, which are two components of primary role and importance, is not established sufficiently. Students go out and come back between the beginning and end of the day, and between their homes and schools, which are two different lives. Many teachers think that social and private problems hinder the educational process at school. One of the complaints of teachers related to families is that the support provided by families for school is not enough, and they are not interested in the aim of the schools and the things they want to do. Many factors such as the time that families can allocate for school is limited, and their educational level is low can hinder the participation of families in school activities and the cooperation process. Teachers and student families should meet frequently.

\*Who will create those conditions that can undertake quite functional roles in the training and education of people, and especially of our children? As there is no corner on the world, where there are endless heaps of money, and in our country, either, for the solution of this problem our main source

will be all of us, our cooperation, our great effort, and endeavour. In this field, as well, local authorities are to be the essential responsible parts, and owners of the problem. Local authorities are to provide solution for this matter, too, by encouraging the society, pioneering them, aiding social organizations as they do in every field, and creating alternative funds. The learning process of the student can keep going at time and places after school, when it is passed to the system of information, and teaching information. Learning is a process that goes on not only during the limited time at school, but always and everywhere, primary at home, and museums. The curriculum should and actually must urge the student to study, read, and research at home. The new curriculum urges parents to actively participate as if they are teachers, and follow the education and learning process of their child. Parents are to care more about their children.

### **Applications of Museums**

In the developed countries, museums and art galleries, which are frequently consulted by class and art teachers nowadays, realize special training programs for the students and the public. It will make happier not only the students but also the teachers in our country to take students away of the closed classroom or art room atmosphere, and realize the art lessons in a more animate, living and experience broadening environment. As a matter of fact, the main institutions that can meet this need, and create this environment are museums, galleries, artist ateliers, and designer studios. Today in developed countries, in the reformative actions related to schools, while teachers are encouraged to use social sources, it is foreseen that they benefit from museums, art galleries, and especially from the educational programs of these establishments. That's why, the special programs prepared by museums for children and students nowadays have become much more important than any other time. On the one hand, while providing lifelong education, on the other hand, it supports formal training by educational museum excursions. Mostly children and youngsters come into prominence. Attention should be paid that the things taught at schools are applied in real life (Cömert, 2002,.204). English pedagogue, Hord, also stresses that cooperative programs between museums and schools should be implemented under equal conditions according to the mutual and shared targets and results, within the principles of planning and working together. It is necessary that museums are pulled out from being places that are visited once a year by schools, and develop projects so that they can be used always in art education, and museum sources are used sufficiently in art education. School managers should contribute to the cooperation program seriously and frankly. It would be a serious indicator of school managers that they seriously support the program if they allocate one day of the week,

or a special time for teachers to work together with museum educators. That students sufficiently benefit from museums is based on their motivation that will be established prior to the visit. Additionally, it is necessary that the assessment of the educational activities and applications, which will take place before and during the excursion, is done. For this reason, a pre-questionnaire/post-questionnaire should be prepared. Story telling becomes an important device that establishes strong relation between languages of the world and image languages, in other words, visual languages. This method, which is seen in the museums of developed countries, spreads rapidly. Some museums in USA employ special story tellers, or benefit from volunteer art teachers. By the help of these trainers, students are told stories, mainly about plastic arts, and also, all art works and topics and themes they include. In our country it will be more colourful, enjoyable, educational and instructive if museum visits are carried out with the help of story telling method in many museums where archaeological and ethnographic works are exhibited. Museums, which contain rich and original collections, expect to catch the interest of art trainers (Özsoy, 2002, 1). "When the key place of museums in establishing the cultural background in society is understood, the necessity that they have to work together with the other institutions and foundations, which can contribute to the benefit and development of the public, will be revealed." (Atagök A, 1999, 136) The use of museums has gained importance with the stress of active education all over the world, use of first hand sources, and research. The role of museums in education has expanded as a result of realised museum visits. Teachers do not have enough information and experience about how they can use museums in education. In Turkey, it is not benefited from the contribution of museums to education yet.

In this educational program, which has been arranged and formed according constructivist approach, and is student and activity focused, balancing knowledge and abilities from the social studies aspect, providing opportunity for interaction with environment considering his/her own experiences and individual differences, it is stressed that interactive learning environments out of classroom should be used as they can improve mental and physical reaction of the students; guidance is provided in museums in order to enhance that training activities be applied (Atagök, Özkasım&Tezcan Akmehmet, 2006). Some of the applications in museums that create different impact on spectators from written texts and descriptions are story telling and dramatic performances (Merriman, 2000, 75).

Visitors can be directed by the help of museum education programs. In today's Turkey, for the ones in the basic education level museum has not gone beyond being a place which is visited by children in the week of

museums prior to having picnic, passing in front of works of art in a row under the control of their teacher, holding each others hands. In the contemporary education, it is necessary to prepare the sources in a way that they complete one another (Yavuzoğlu&Atasoy, 1999, 149).

### **Museum Excursions**

It is necessary that museum excursions be arranged within the frame of museum education program, and with the assistance of a trainer, or a guide. Museums should show the same interest and care to their visitors that they show for their collections. Beside the knowledge gain, it should also affect social life (Yavuzoğlu&Atasoy, 1999, 153).

One of the most significant benefits of the school excursions made to museums is that students face alternative learning ways, and get the opportunity to work actively with concrete evidence. It can be very motivating and triggering for all students to go to a new place, meet new people, try new approaches in obtaining information, and meet real things, and they can install the information they attain at school at a place with a perspective. Museum and gallery visits are formed of three units: Pre-preparation, museum or gallery visit, and observation activity (Buyurgan, 2002, 105). In Turkey, it can't be said that the shift from object focused application to human centred education, and interaction valued museum studies has been realized sufficiently (Buyurgan, 2002, 105,106).

Another condition of preparing quality museum education is that schools realize the duties they have to. Schools should always be in contact with museums. Teachers should leave the students to museum educators, and intervene in case a problem occurs. The studies carried out related to museum should be done regarding the interests of visitors, and so that they are entertained. Museum education is necessary for people of all ages, education level, and all parts of society, and extremely beneficial (Ocak, 2002, 462, 463). It is necessary that the theoretical information delivered at schools is put into practice (Cömert, 2002, 204). Educational programs can be applied out of museums as well. Especially, in order to separate the groups that visit the museum within a program from the other visitors, it is very beneficial that a place, which is called as front room or multi-intention saloon, be allocated for education (Abacı, 2002, 5). While entertaining people and helping them have nice time, aiming at informing large parties assists in delivering the message that history is not boring. It has been started to provide visitors with attractive environments that worth discovering ( Kahn M., 2000, 124, 128). It is important to ensure that attention is focused on

museum, and direct each student towards participating actively in this process (Gürkan, 2004, 249). In the study that Papajani (2003, 59-60) carried out related to museums, he has determined that there was enough time for museum visits in the program of 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, and any problem was experienced related to transportation expenses, and museum visit hours.

### **Recommendations towards Benefiting from Museums Educationally Recommendations for Parents**

Education is the most important duty of a contemporary museum. Museums are vocational education institutions that are established as alternatives for schools, which are formal education institutions. Museums enable education to be carried on in environments different than usual. Museums and art galleries are in the scope of formal and vocational education due to the experienced cultural life and their function related to education. Although the number of museums in our country and developed countries has increased, it is known that the public and education institutions are not interested much in museums and their activities. As a result of this, some museums and art galleries have had to change the way they exhibit their collections considering the criticisms they have received, and aiming to increase the number of visitors, which has been decreasing rapidly, and also have started to organise activities that could catch the attention of the public. The farseeing museums have become successful in the realization of the changes in this way, and have become efficient institutions, which contribute to active life, education and culture by getting out of being just warehouses of old art works. Some of the state and private museums and art galleries in our country have started action in this sense. However, most of them don't seem to have the qualifications of a contemporary museum or gallery. There are very few museums or galleries that have increased the variation of their activities, and can be effective in the education of the public. When the education given in every level in our education institutions is considered, it is seen that educational programs of courses either don't contain units that will benefit from the galleries and museums, the kinds of which have increased, or contain very limitedly. We can arrange in order some of the activities that were carried out during museum excursions as follows:

The "Museum Hunt" crossword puzzle, which is effective in making museum excursions more entertaining and attractive for children, is an activity that prior to the excursion question-answer method is used related to the object, and detailed information and photographs are provided. Later, children go into the museum and try to find the object (Oğuzoğlu, 2007, 35-

36). "Museum Hunt" is seen as a method that will make students active in museum visit, and ease their learning (Özsoy, 2003, 1).

The educational environment that is created by the help of activities in museum, place of visit, and artist ateliers, will help students gain aesthetic experiences, and bring variation, joy, and liveliness to the routine courses carried on in classrooms. Museum and gallery excursions is accepted as an extremely effective teaching method in growing individuals who are sensitive to art, show developed aesthetic behaviours, and are kind spirited; as well as in revealing special talents, and improving them (Özsoy, 2003,1).

In order to improve the creativity of the students, story completion activities are carried out. The first and last sentence about the story of an object in the museum is given, or a story is cut at a certain place, and students are asked to complete it. The real story and students' stories are compared and debated (Oğuzoğlu, 2007, 36). It can be worked with models as well. Desired scenes can be watched with the help of projector. Drama activities are also carried out in museums (Yıldız, 2007, 60). Drama activities that are performed with appropriate clothes of the times place accelerate learning of children in affective aspect.

The ones who will benefit most from museum education are children and students. It is necessary that especially families and school-family unions persistently request this. The life styles of mothers and fathers have a great influence on the establishment of general culture in the family. Among the general culture information that a child acquires within family are museums, which are in the scope of art knowledge. Families are to determine what their children will get from museums. The educational programs of museums can be investigated under the headlines of common-public education and vocational education. Abroad, those centres that child is taken to realize this habit as a part of the education starting from pre-school age of children. Pedagogical information about the educational function of teachers and museums is given. There is need to plan activities for every part of the society. It is necessary to lodge different applications, especially language service, for the ones who come from other locations and abroad. New programs aimed at families should be run also in all museums as in big ones. It is necessary that there is demand towards museums coming from student families and schools. Additionally, it is necessary that student families believe in the efficacy of museums. Museum management doesn't prepare special programs for student families and teachers. Education in museums should be prepared appropriate for school groups, families and

little children, youth and old, regarding their interests and delectation. Beside teachers, seminars should be given to families as well.

Individuals, institutions, and establishments should participate in the works carried out towards family-school-museum cooperation. Aims, functions, and importance of the museums should be introduced to families. Guide books for families should be prepared. Web sites where museums are introduced to families should be developed. It is necessary to increase the demands of families for contemporary museums.

Museums and activities related to museums should be arranged in a way that the joy of cultural inheritance is raised inside everyone. Museums that public can visit and give meaning to should be established. Museum curators should provide publications not only for students but also for parents. Student families should be also accepted to museums for free. It is necessary to involve student families to contribute in the pre-preparation of museum visits. School managers, families, and teachers should work in collaboration to develop students' feeling of protecting the values of art, cultural and historical inheritances as well as improving their visual literacy by organising excursions. It is necessary to determine the targets of the program related to museum visits, and carry out works together with families.

The development features of children should be evaluated with respect to individual differences. Most museums have not been designed appropriate for primary school children. It is necessary to take museum education in consideration with respect to equipment and arrangement. Buildings should be modernized. Museums are able to hold their liveliness and strong position by giving importance to what visitors acquire and is presented to them. Transportation facilities are important for the ones who come out of the city. Since museums that serve multiple senses help students gain real environment experience, it is of great benefit that visits are planned by consulting museum managers.

In the study of S. Dornbusch and his friends (1987), the relationship between parents and their children, special communication and its quality between parents and children, the positive emotional relationship, expectations of families, family beliefs of their children, was investigated considering control understanding, and variables were determined. It was concluded that in families the gender, age, ethnic group, and education level of the student parent is also important.

Families, in school environment expect too much from teachers. However, the load of teachers is quite heavy. In this situation, meeting all expectations is very hard. Related to the benefit that students will get from museums, activities should be planned together by families and their children. In order to increase the participation, if necessary, families should be allocated certain hours as appointment system. There should be provided areas where families can sit during museum visits. Education aimed exhibition places should be arranged considering both students and families. It is necessary to arrange appointment by connecting museum management. Additionally, service at a certain standard can be provided for large parties by preparing printed paper forms. It is also necessary to make assessment related to the gains of families in the end of museum activities. It is necessary to take into consideration the socio-cultural composition of student families while the guided tour is carried out along with booklets and audiotapes. It is necessary to build parts in the ateliers where families can also make application related to the subjects after these tours together with the children. Families can choose museums as meeting place related to birthday celebrations. Thus, as Abaci stated (2003, 10), museums would stop being unfamiliar places to children. Parents can participate in the activity called "museum hunt" as well and they can establish empathy with their children when pieces or works in question are found. As mentioned earlier, story-telling technique helps students remember what they learn. In that technique, students are asked to complete a story about a piece in a museum. Children trying to do that with the support of their parents can develop their creativity. In the discussion technique; the content, way of expression, material etc. of a certain work in a museum are all discussed in consideration of similar and different works. Like the ones prepared considering the developmental stages of children, books for parents can serve as a good guide for them during and after museum visits. Time is a difficult concept for children to grasp. Contributions of museums to making that concept concrete for children can be enormous if parents spend as much time as possible with their children.

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