AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESCHOOLERS' READING ATTITUDES AND HOME LITERACY ENVIRONMENT

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY
DİLEK ALTUN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

JANUARY 2013

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

_____

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

_____

Prof. Dr. Jale Çakıroğlu
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

_____	_____
Prof. Dr. Douglas K. Hartman Co-Supervisor	Assist. Prof. Dr. Feyza Tantekin Erden Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özgül Yılmaz Tüzün	(METU, ELE)	_____
Assist. Prof. Dr. Feyza Tantekin Erden	(METU, ELE)	_____
Prof. Dr. Douglas K. Hartman	(MSU, CTE)	_____
Assist. Prof. Dr. Refika Olgan	(METU, ELE)	_____
Assist. Prof. Dr. Betil Eröz-Tuğa	(METU, FLE)	_____

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Name, Last name: Dilek Altun

Signature:

ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
PRESCHOOLERS'READING ATTITUDES AND
HOME LITERACY ENVIRONMENT

Altun, Dilek
M.S., Department of Early Childhood Education
Supervisor : Assist. Prof. Dr. Feyza Tantekin Erden
Co-Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Douglas K. Hartman

January 2013, 214 pages

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between preschool children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment. In addition, children's perceptions of reading in terms of their reading attitudes were examined as a part of this study.

The sample of this study consisted of 261 parents and their 5 year-old children who were enrolled preschool in Ankara, Turkey. The data of this study were collected through child interviews, demographic information forms, and the following questionnaires: the Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire (Umek et al., 2005) and the Preschool Children Reading Attitudes (Saracho, 1986) questionnaire. These questionnaires were both translated into Turkish, and statistical analyses were conducted to control for validity and reliability issues through a pilot study.

The results of the study showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between preschool children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment. In addition, the study revealed there were some differences in children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment in regards to demographic variables. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that children who have more positive reading attitudes tended to give clearer and more detailed responses to questions and were more aware that writing contains messages. In addition, those children mentioned letters and the role of letters in the learning to read process.

Key Words: Reading Attitudes, Home Literacy Environment, Preschool Children's Perceptions of Reading

ÖZ

OKUL ÖNCESİ DÖNEMİ ÇOCUKLARININ OKUMAYA KARŞI TUTUMLARI İLE EV İÇİ OKURYAZARLIK ORTAMININ İLİŞKİSİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI

Altun, Dilek
Yüksek Lisans, Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Feyza Tantekin Erden
Ortak Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Douglas K. Hartman

Ocak 2013, 214 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı, okul öncesi dönemi çocuklarının okumaya karşı tutumları ile ev içi okuryazarlık ortamının ilişkisinin araştırılmasıdır. Ayrıca bu çalışma kapsamında çocukların okumaya karşı tutumları ölçeğinden aldıkları puanlara göre okuma ile ilgili algıları incelenmiştir.

Çalışmaya Ankara ili merkezinde bulunan okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarına devam eden 5 yaş grubu 261 çocuk ve bu çocukların aileleri katılmıştır. Çalışmada veriler araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan görüşme soruları, demografik bilgi formu, Okul Öncesi Dönemi Çocukların Okumaya Karşı Tutumları Ölçeği (Saracho, 1986) ve Ev İçi Okuryazarlık Ölçeği (Umek ve

ark., 2005) ile toplanmıştır. Anketler İngilizce'den Türkçe'ye çevrilmiş ve pilot çalışması ile anketlerin geçerlik ve güvenirlikleri incelenmiştir.

Çalışma sonucunda çocukların okumaya karşı tutumları ile ev içi okuryazarlık ortamları arasında pozitif yönlü orta derecede ilişki olduğu bulunmuştur. Çocukların okumaya karşı tutumları ve ev içi okuryazarlık ortamlarının bazı demografik değişkenler açısından farklılaştığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, okumaya karşı tutumları daha yüksek olan çocukların okuma algıları ile ilgili sorulan sorulara daha detaylı ve net cevaplar verdikleri, yazının anlam taşıdığından, harflerden ve harflerin okumayı öğrenme sürecinde ki yerinden bahsettikleri tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okumaya Karşı Tutum, Ev İçi Okuryazarlık Ortamı, Okul Öncesi Çocuklarının Okuma ile Algıları

To My Family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of the degree of master and this thesis is attributed to so many people. Firstly, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN, and my co-advisor, Prof. Dr. Douglas K. HARTMAN, for their endless support, guidance, trust, and encouragement throughout the process of writing this thesis. Their invaluable guidance has not only helped me to conduct the study but has also helped me to learn many things about my own professional development.

I also would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özgül YILMAZ TÜZÜN, Assist. Prof. Dr. Refika OLGAN, and Assist. Prof. Dr. Betil ERSÖZ for their willingness to serve on the committee and their invaluable contributions to my thesis.

I also wish to thank Assist. Prof. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN and Assist. Prof. Dr. Refika OLGAN for their precious contribution to my knowledge and vision of early childhood education.

I am truly thankful to my undergraduate professors of the Primary Teaching Department at Gazi University. I would like to thank them for their invaluable contributions to my educational life. Thank you, Prof. Dr. Hayati AKYOL, Prof. Dr. Selma YEL, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bekir BULUÇ, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rabia SARIKAYA, Assist. Prof. Dr. Kemal KÖKSAL, and Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa ULUSOY.

My special thanks to my family members: my father Necati ALTUN, my mother Zennure ALTUN, my sister Didem ALTUN, and my brother Sinan ALTUN. I could not complete the thesis and many things without your help.

I also would like to thank my dear sister April NIEMELA for her valuable support, encouragement, and friendship. I feel lucky to have met you.

I also wish to thank my friends and colleagues: Sema SÖNMEZ, Simge ALKUŞ, Berna SİCİM, Çağla ÖNEREN ŞENDİL, Özlen DEMİRCAN, Tim XERILAND, Fatma AY, Tuna ÇOŞKUN, Elif KAYA, İrem BEZCİOĞLU, Gözde EKEN and Ümit Ünsal KAYA for their support, encouragement, and friendship.

Finally, I thank the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBİTAK) for their scholarship. Thanks for their financial support of my graduate education.

Thank you all very much indeed.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HLEQ: Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire

PRAS: Preschool Children's Reading Attitus Scale

MONE: Ministry of National Education

PIRLS: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Universally, education has been accepted as a fundamental human right with the Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Education enables an individual to fulfill his/her potential. Literacy is a pivotal component of education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2009). It is an essential way to attain, use and reconstruct information (Allen, 2012). It is one of the crucial skills to acquire in order to fully participate in today's literate societies (Council of The European Union (EU), 2012; Neutman, 2008). In addition, literacy achievement is a major indicator of a country's developmental levels (Henry, Lagos & Berndt, 2012; Roberts, 2000; World Development Indicators (WDI), 2012). Therefore, ensuring basic literacy skills for each citizen is a principal goal of all national educational systems (UNESCO, 2009).

Countries determine their literacy policies according to literacy research results and the requisite human resources for the modern world. It is also important to note that the definition of literacy has evolved over time, corresponding with changes in economy, culture, technology and society (Mioduser, Nachmias & Forkosh-Baruch, 2008; National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), 2009; Programme for International Student Assessment

(PISA), 2009; UNESCO, 2009). In 1958, UNESCO defined a literate person as an individual who can both read and write a simple statement in his or her daily life comprehensively (UNESCO, 1958). However, two decades later UNESCO used a new term "*functionally literate*" to define the latest notion of the literacy (UNESCO, 1978). Functional literacy term means reading and writing abilities can be used effectively in social, economic and cultural contexts (Güneş, 2004). According to the functional literate definition, the ability to read and write simple statement is not enough. A person should be able to competently use literacy skills in his/her social life and career. Furthermore, these literacy skills should enable him/her to make a contribution within his/her own personal life, as well as the community (UNESCO, 2006). Together with the new term, the contexts and the roles of the literacy have also been expanded. A decade later, World Declaration on Education for All (1990) announced the concept of "basic learning needs". The Declaration admitted that literacy is a lifelong skill for children, youth and adult in both formal and informal education. In June 2003, international experts met under the auspices of a UNESCO committee to define the term "literacy "operationally. They defined literacy as an ability that covers multiple sub-skills such as "*recognize, comprehend, interpret, create, communicate and compute"* from written materials in diverse contexts (p.21). Literacy is a continuum of learning and it enables human beings to evolve their knowledge, to accomplish their goals, to fulfill their potential, and to fully participate in their society (UNESCO, 2004). With the new operational definition, social dimensions of literacy in relation to both acquisition and application have become a current issue (UNESCO, 2004).

Literacy education has changed over time in parallel with the findings of the research and the subsequent changes in the notion of literacy. At the beginning of the 1900's, it was believed that literacy learning was unlikely to take place until children were mentally and physically mature (Morrow, 2009; Soderman, Gregory & McCarty, 2005). Furthermore, it was assumed that children were not ready to learn literacy until they entered the first grade (Gillen & Hall, 2003; Tealy & Sulzby, 1986) That view of literacy education was called the reading readiness perspective (Crawford, 1995). Under this perspective, literacy instruction was postponed until the first grade (Soderman et al., 2005). Similarly, Gesell (1925),who was a developmental psychologist, claimed that maturation was a key factor in learning to read and his ideas influenced the perspective of postponing literacy instruction until a child was ready to read (as cited in Morrow, 2009). Contemporary researchers, Morphett and Washburne (1931) investigated the reading readiness notion with children. They asserted that reading readiness was closely related to mental age. In addition, they supported the postponement of literacy instruction until the child reached a mental age of six years and six months. In the wake of the readiness perspective, preschool years were seen as a preparation to reading readiness (Soderman et al., 2005).

However, at the end of the 1970s, this idea of how children acquired reading and writing skills changed dramatically (Gillen & Hall, 2003). The roots of this change might be based on two trends: the increasing presence of the cognitive point of view in development and learning researches and renewed interest in the early years of life's influence on development (Tealy & Sulzby, 1986). One issue that attracted researchers'

attention was that some children were able to learn how to read and write before they enrolled in primary school (Durkin, 1966; Forester, 1977). In contrast to the reading readiness perspective assertion, children learned reading and writing before entering primary education. The early reader and writer made a sensation and children's construction and acquisition of literacy became a popular research topic (Gillen & Hall, 2003). Reid (1966) and Downing (1969, 1970) investigated how children construct and understand literacy (Tealy & Sulzby, 1986). Similarly, Clay (1967, 1969, 1972), Read (1970), and Goodman (1967) examined the process of developing literacy skills in early childhood. As a result of these studies, the notion of emergent literacy has emerged (Gillen & Hall, 2003; Tealy & Sulzby, 1986). In contrast to the reading readiness perspective, the emergent literacy perspective advocates that literacy learning is a developmental process and that children's early literacy experiences play a crucial role in the process (Griffith, Beach, Ruan & Dunn, 2008; Soderman et al., 2005). Children are active constructers of their literacy development from birth. Literacy develops in real-life settings through children's active engagement with their physical and social environments. Children explore the function of language and print on their own, and they benefit from modeling of literacy by parents and other people (Tealy & Sulzby, 1986). According to the emergent literacy perspective, becoming literate is a developmental process and the developmental precursors of reading originate in the early stages of life (Lonigan, 2004; Sulzby & Teale, 1991; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998, 2001).

With the emergent literacy perspective, attention was drawn to the importance of language and literacy experiences gained in the early stages

of childhood development (Whitehurst, Zevenbergen, Crone, Schultz, Velting & Fischel, 1999). Studies showed that children's early home literacy experiences influence their literacy skills (e.g. Cassel, 2011; Evans & Shaw, 2008; Farver, Xu, Lonigan & Eppe, 2012; Foy & Mann, 2003) and that emergent literacy based interventions have a positive effect on children's early literacy skills (e.g. Bailet, Repper, Piasta & Murphy, 2009; Justice, Chow, Capellini, Flanigan & Colton, 2003). Additionally, these studies demonstrated that early literacy skills have an effect on primary grades' reading skills (e.g. Badian, 1998; Bishop, 2003; Coast-Kitsopoulos, 2010; Kim & Petscher, 2011; Stephenson, 2011).

Furthermore, The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of 234 articles to examine the impact of early literacy skills on later literacy skills. According to NELP (2008), the following six early literacy skills had a medium to large predictive relation to future literacy skills: (1) alphabet knowledge, (2) phonological awareness, (3) rapid automatic naming of letters or digits, (4) rapid automatic naming of objects or colors, (5) writing names, and (6) phonological memory. In the light of related literature, it is evident that early literacy skills are predictive variables for later literacy skills and early childhood experiences have important effects on fostering children's early literacy skills. With the increasing realization of the importance of early literacy skills, developed countries such as the USA, Canada and England formed early literacy programs such as Early Reading First (2005- USA), Grow Start Grow Smart (2002-USA), Read to Me! (2002- Canada), Wellness through Literacy (2008/2018- Canada), Raising Early Achievement in Literacy (1995-England),

and Peers Early Education Partnership (2001- England). The aims of these programs were to foster children's early literacy skills through research-based programs, to provide children literacy-rich environments, to provide the opportunity to close the gap between the children who come from low socio-economic status and high status homes, to screen for children's early literacy problems, and to reverse these initial literacy problems in the hope of preventing reading and writing difficulties early on (Balla-Boudreau & O'Reilly, 2002; Evangelou & Sylva, 2003; Israel, 2007).

When examining Turkish early literacy policy, it might be said that reading readiness is still a dominant perspective in early literacy education. The preschool years are often seen as a readiness program for entering the primary grade. Currently, the National Early Childhood Education Program (2006) use the term "reading and writing readiness activities" and has provided some example activities (p.44). In addition, the program has stated that the aim of the activities is to prepare children to enter primary grades and to facilitate their transition to primary school. Perhaps due to these literacy policies, there is no nation-wide survey to investigate Turkish children's early literacy skills, reading problems, or reading comprehension levels. However, small scale studies have revealed that Turkish children have some reading problems (Akyol & Temur, 2006; Kartal & Özteke, 2010). International surveys such as PISA (2003; 2006, & 2009) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (2001) indicated that Turkish students' reading levels were below the average. PISA (2006) reading comprehension results demonstrated that 32 percent of the Turkish students tested

cannot read even at the basic reading level. According to PISA (2009) results, among 65 countries Turkey ranked 41st in students' reading performance. Additionally, PIRLS (2001) investigated fourth grade students' reading achievement and the literacy related home activities that took place before they entered school. They collected data about the children's home literacy environment from their parents, based upon their retrospective memories. The survey results showed that early literacy related home activities were important predictors of later reading achievement. According to this survey, Turkey ranked below average in early literacy related home activities. Furthermore, the surveys showed that only 0.08 percent of Turkish people have a regular reading habit (Sünbül et al, 2010). In light of these results, it can be said that the Turkish sample reading level is below the average and has poor reading habits when compared with other participant countries. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (1998) closely examined the relationship between reading achievement and reading habits. The report indicated that regular reading habits are the best way to become a competent reader and that children should have regular reading habits and practice the skills. In this context, studies showed that children's reading habits were related to their reading motivation and attitudes (Ley, Schaer & Dismukes, 1994; Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Stoksman, 1999). In addition, reading attitudes are also important to students' engagement during the reading process (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth, 1995).

According to Huck (1973), if educators teach children the skills and strategies of reading without instilling a love of reading, children

may gain competency in reading but prefer not to add reading into their lives. He used the term "*illiterate literates*" to bring attention to the importance of positive attitudes toward reading from early ages.

In parallel with Huck (1973) ideas, the 17th National Educational Council (2006) presented a policy statement that children should gain a love of reading and reading habits beginning in preschool and continuing through high school (Decision 83, p.9). According to Mason (1967), children's reading attitudes arise from their experiences and studies showed that early childhood experiences are important for the development of reading attitudes (Cunningham, 2008; Saracho & Dayton, 1991). Furthermore, previous studies reported that parents' reading habits and home literacy sources and activities were related to children's affective responses to reading (e.g. Padlick-Field, 2011; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2006, 2010). At this point, it is expected that preschool children's home based literacy related experiences and environment are important for children's reading attitudes. Therefore, in the present study, preschool children's reading attitudes and its relationship with their home literacy environments were examined. In addition, preschool children's perceptions of reading in terms of their reading attitudes were examined.

1.1. Significance of the Study

In the related literature, a great body of research investigated children's early literacy practices and how home environments influence their literacy development (e.g. Bracken & Fischel, 2008; DeTemple, 2001; Evans, Shaw & Bell, 2000; Evas & Shaw, 2008; Farver, Xu, Lonigan & Eppe, 2012; Frijters, Barron & Brunello; 2000; Murray & Yingling, 2000).

However, in the Turkish context, emergent literacy is not a widely researched topic (Altıparmak, 2010). While there have been some studies that investigated preschool children's literacy skills regarding phonological awareness (Karaman & Üstün, 2011; Turan & Akoğlu, 2011), receptive language (Güler & Dönmez, 2007), language development (Aydoğan & Koçak, 2003; Poyraz, 1995; Temiz, 2002; Yıldırım, 2008) reading readiness (Erduran, 1999;), writing readiness (Alisinanoğlu & Şimşek, 2012; Yangın, 2007) and reading attitudes (Kotaman, 2008; Yücel, 2005), only a small number of researchers have investigated preschool children's home literacy environment, as far as the researcher has been able to determine. Altıparmak (2010) investigated preschool children's home literacy activities in her master thesis. However, studies reveal that the home literacy environment (HLE) covers more than literacy activities. Further, HLE covers home literacy sources and parental reading habits etc. (Burgess, Hecht & Lonigan, 2002; Marjonovick Umek, Podlesek & Fekonja, 2005; Wheaton, 2010). Therefore, the present study collected data not only about home literacy activities, but also sources and parental reading habits. In a different study, Park (2008) used PIRLS (2001) data to compare participating countries fourth grade children's reading achievement and their early home literacy environments. Turkey was one of the participant countries in PIRLS (2001). In the international survey, fourth grade children's parents filled out early home literacy environment questionnaires based on their retrospective memory.

The present study aimed to investigate Turkish preschool children's home literacy environments through their parents. This study also provides information about preschool children's home based literacy

related experiences and sources. The information might give teachers an opportunity to understand children's home literacy backgrounds. In addition, teachers might benefit from the information as they prepare literacy related classroom and parent involvement activities.

The other aim of the present study was to investigate children's reading attitudes. According to Saracho and Dayton (1991), children's positive reading attitudes are comprised of positive early reading experiences and children should gain a love of reading and positive reading attitudes from their early childhood years. Thus, reading attitude is one of the components of children's early literacy experience, and the present study examined children's reading attitudes. In the related literature, reading attitude studies which investigated early childhood mainly focused on children's reading attitudes in terms of age group (Saracho, 1985 1986, 1988; Saracho & Dayton, 1989; Saracho & Dayton, 1991; Sperling & Head, 2002; Yücel, 2005), gender (Cunningham, 2008; Saracho, 1986; Yücel, 2005), socioeconomic status (Yücel, 2005), and race (Cunningham,2008; Saracho &Dayton, 1991). Additionally, Cunningham (2008) compared young children's reading and writing attitudes in terms of the quality of their preschool literacy environment. He found that children possessing more qualified preschool literacy environments had more positive attitudes toward reading. Although, children's home literacy environments and parental factors are accepted as crucial factors in children's literacy development by previous studies, there are no current published studies regarding this issue, as far as the researcher could access. Thus, the present study investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of children's gender, preschool attendance year, time watching

TV and on the computer, parental educational levels, household income, parents' time spent reading, parental enjoyment of reading, the time spent in parent-child shared reading, the number of books at home, and the frequency of children asking their parents to read to them. The study also investigated children's reading attitudes regarding home technological sources because children are growing up in a literate and technological society (National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAECY), 2012). They have used computers, tablets and cell phones to play games, to watch cartoons and animations, to paint pictures and to read e-picture books. The devices may affect children's attitudes toward reading. Therefore the present study was conducted to gain a broader understanding regarding children's reading attitudes in today's literate and technological society.

In addition, the study investigated the relationship between children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment. Previous studies showed that both the frequency and the quality of reading to children were related to children's interest in literacy (Hood, Conlon & Andrews, 2008; Martinez, 2008; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2006). The studies mainly focused on children's reading interests and collected data through parent-response questionnaires. Differing from these previous studies, the current study focused on children's reading attitudes and the data collected through children-response scales. Since previous studies showed that preschool children were capable of responding to a pictorial reading attitudes scale (Saracho, 1985, 1986; Saracho & Dayton, 1989, 1991; Yüce, 2005), the current study used a child-response scale to gain children's own reading related

feelings from the children, themselves. Furthermore, as far as the researcher could discover, there has not been any published study to investigate the relationship between preschool children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment. Therefore, the study attempted to investigate this relationship and to provide a deeper understanding of the issue of early childhood literacy.

Lastly, the study examined children's perceptions of reading in terms of their reading attitudes. In the related literature, studies reported that older children who have positive reading attitudes prefer engaging reading related activities (Ley, Schaer & Dismukes, 1994; Stocksman, 1999). Children, who engage in more reading related activities, may have more enriched perceptions of reading than children who do not. Therefore, the present study was interested in examining preschool children's reading perceptions in terms of reading attitude. The other reason was to examine children's reading perceptions in terms of the Downing (1979) Cognitive Clarity Theory of learning to read process. According to the cognitive clarity theory, children's initial perceptions and concepts of reading are important in the learning to read process. Downing (1979) indicated that the cognitive phase is the first phase of the learning to read process. This phase includes understanding the roles and functions of reading, as well as understanding the task of reading. According to his theory, some children's reading problems stem from their inadequate reading conceptions and understandings. He emphasized the importance of the initial concepts and perceptions of reading in the learning to read process. Furthermore, Alley (2002) indicated that children's initial perceptions about reading are related to

their literacy development. Children who have a better understanding of letter-sound relationships can describe the roles of letters and sounds in the reading process. Children's initial reading perceptions are important for this learning to read process. Thus teachers should give importance to children's initial reading perceptions (Levy, 2009). In reviewing the related literature, as far as the researcher could find, there was no published studies that investigated preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of their reading perceptions. Therefore, the present study attempted to examine children's reading attitudes in terms of their reading perceptions and to provide detailed information in order to better understand the issue.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The study had three main goals. The first goal was to investigate preschool children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environments in terms of demographic variables. The second goal was to investigate the relationship between preschool children's home literacy environments and their reading attitudes. The third goal was to examine children's perceptions of reading as they relate to their reading attitudes.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to attain the goals of the present study, the following research questions were investigated.

Research Question (RQ1): What are preschool children's attitudes toward reading?

Research Question (RQ2): What is the home literacy environment of preschool children?

Research Question (RQ3): Is there a significant relationship between children's attitudes toward reading and their home literacy environment?
Research Question (RQ4): What are children's perceptions of reading in terms of their reading attitudes?

1.4. Definitions of the Important Terms

Home Literacy Environment (HLE): refers to the variety of sources, opportunities, social interactions, and parent-child shared activities provided to children at home and around the home by parents or caregivers that foster children's literacy skills (Burgess, Hect & Lonigan, 2002; Markenovick Umek, Podlesek & Fekonja, 2005).

Preschool Children's Reading Attitudes: refers to "*systems of feelings related to reading which causes children to approach or avoid reading and reading related situations" (*Alexander & Filleri, 1976, p.1). This definition was adapted to describe the reading situations of preschool children from the Alexander and Filleri (1976) definition.

Preschool Children's Perception of Reading: refers to children's notions of what it means to read, the functions and purposes of reading, how they will learn to read, and reading related materials (Alley, 2002; Michel, 1988).

Preschool Children: In this study preschool children refer children who are five years old and are enrolled in private or public preschools.

interactions between the biological and psychosocial environments of early childhood (Shonkoff & Philips, 2000; Walker et al., 2011). Brain researchers have reported that early childhood is a sensitive period for both brain and language development, and they described theimportance of the early childhood period by using "*window of opportunity*" term (Beaty & Pratt, 2003). These findings emphasized the importance of environments such as home environment sources, interactions and experiences, and how these affect language development. Therefore, this present study considered the findings of brain research.

2.1.3 Socio-cultural Theory

Lastly, Socio-cultural theory advanced by Lev Vygotsky provided to the theoretical framework for the study. The Socio-cultural theory emphasizes the role of culture, history, customs, social groups and social interactions on human development and learning (Berk, 2009). According to Vygotsky (1978), adults can foster and extend children's development through social interactions. He explained the adults' contribution to child development by using the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), children have two different developmental levels. The first level is the *actual developmental level*, that is, the children's current matured developmental level. Children are capable of independently completing tasks in the actual developmental level. The second level is *potential/proximal developmental level,* that is to say, children have not matured to their developmental level and they are not able to complete these developmental level tasks independently. However, with the help of adults or other competent people (e.g. siblings,

peers etc.), the child can complete the task. According to Vygotsky (1978), there is a difference between the actual developmental level and the potential developmental level. He called the difference the zone of proximal development (ZPD). He indicated that learning takes place in the ZPD through and with the guidance of adults. This present study relies on the Vygotskian framework because of its emphasis on the importance of social interactions and adults' guidance on children's development as well as the premise that language is the primary cultural tool for social interaction. Children internalize language based on social interaction.

2.2 Home Literacy Environment

With the increasing realization that early childhood experiences have an important effect on children's development, researchers investigated the influence of the home environment on children's literacy development (Burgess, Hect & Lonigan, 2002; Evans & Shaw, 2008; Griffin & Morrison, 1997; Hammer, Frakas & Maczuga, 2010; Hart, Petrill, DeThorne, Deater-Deckard, Thompson, Schatschider & Cutting, 2009; Johnson, Martin, Brooks-Gunn & Petrill, 2008; Marvin & Wright, 1997; Melnuish, Phan, Sylva, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2008; Niklas & Schneider, 2013; Snow, 1991; van Steensel, 2006; Weinbergen, 1996). The studies demonstrated that children's early home experiences and parental factors influence their literacy development in terms of (1) phonological awareness (Foy & Mann, 2003; Kim, 2009; Niklas & Schneider, 2013) , (2) letter / print knowledge (Davidse, de Jong, Bus, Huijbregts & Swaab, 2011; Farver, Xu, Lonigan & Eppe, 2012; Kim,

2009;Manolitsis, Georgiou & Parilla, 2011; Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2006; Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2005), (3) vocabulary (Connor, Son, Hindman & Morrison, 2005; Davidse et., 2011; Hammer, Farkas & Maczuga, 2010; Hart et al., 2009; Hood, Conlon & Andrews, 2008; Manolitsis, Georgiou & Parilla, 2011 Niklas & Schneider, 2013; Raikes et al., 2006), (4) receptive and expressive language (Burgess, Hect & Lonigan, 2002; Griffin & Morrison, 1997; Murray & Yingling, 2000; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005; Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas & Daley, 1998; Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2005), and (5) reading achievement (Connor et al., 2005; de Jong & Leseman, 2001; Martinez, 2008; Park, 2008; Wheaton, 2010).

The earliest attempts to determine the effects of the home environment on literacy were sparse in nature and provided minimal elaboration regarding the complexity of the concept. In fact, the earliest studies focused mainly on shared book reading and the parents' socioeconomic status (e.g. Bus, IJzendoorn & Pellegrini 1995; Burgess, 1997; Pellegrini, Brody & Siegel, 1985; Reese & Cox, 1999; Taylor, 1995). Recent studies have advocated that HLE is a much more complex notion and covers a variety of sources, opportunities and skills (Burgess, Hecht & Lonigan, 2002; Philips & Lonigan, 2009; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2005).

While no common definition of home literacy environment (HLE) is universally accepted in the literature, there are several different views about the definition and scope of HLE that reveal the nuances and complexity of the concept. Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002), described six different conceptualizations about the HLE. According to them, *Overall HLE* consists of the following conceptualizations: *limiting*

environment, literacy interface and *shared reading.* The *limiting environment* refers to the parents' qualifications for supplying literacy opportunities for children. These qualifications cover parents' socioeconomic status, IQ, reading ability, language skills and attitudes. *Literacy interface:* refers to the parental endeavor to boost their children's literacy experiences through activities and opportunities. The researchers categorized *literacy interface* into two groups: *passive HLE* and *active HLE.* The *active HLE* covers activities in which children can directly join with parents in order to foster literacy and language development (e.g. visiting library, playing with puppets). On the other hand, in the *passive HLE* children observe parents' literacy related activities and enhance their knowledge and skills through indirect activities. Parents are role models for children who learn from those models (e.g., seeing his/her mother read a journal, seeing a parent writes a card). The last conceptualization is *shared reading.* It covers parents' reading activities with children.

Wheaton (2010), examined the kindergarten through first grade home literacy environment,. Parents answered questions about *literacy sources*, *shared reading experiences,* and *activities and cognitive stimulations* that may have been supplied in the home for their children. The HLE *activities and cognitive stimulations* part consisted of questions related to parents' reading habits, parents oral interactions with their children, and activities that children and parents performed together. *Shared reading experiences* covered questions about the frequency and types of shared reading activities, while the last portion included questions about the quantity and availability of different kinds of literacy sources such as books for children and parents and/or records, audio tapes, and CD's in the home.

In another study, Marjonovick Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005), examined the HLE of preschool children. They developed a questionnaire to measure the different dimensions of the HLE. They identified the following five dimensions of the HLE: (1) *stimulation to use language and explanation*, (2*) reading books to children, visiting library and puppet theatre*, (3) *joint activities and conversations*, (4) *interactive reading*, and (5*) zone of proximal-development (ZPD) stimulations*. The *stimulation to use language and explanation* section consists of items related to parents' efforts to enhance their children's oral language skills. For example, this may include prompting a child to use language appropriately, providing a child the opportunity to discuss daily life, answering a child's questions, and encouraging a child to talk with others. The *reading books to children, visiting library and puppet theatre* section covers items regarding parent-child joint book-reading activities and library & theatre visiting experiences. The third section, *join activities and conversations,* contains items addressing activities that support children for talking about visual materials and play activities. In the fourth section called *interactive reading,* items appear, such as supporting children to think and to ask questions about the books they read, encouraging children to construct their own ideas about the content of those books, and giving children the opportunities to make up their own stories during the shared reading process. The last section, *ZPD stimulations*, covers items related to parents' attempts to enhance children language skills through adult assistances (e.g. using more complicated sentences and new words, encouraging them to learn new words, numbers, and concepts etc.).

In the present study, the Marjonovick Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005) questionnaire was used to assess children's HLE. The more detailed information about the questionnaire and the reasons to use the questionnaire are explained in the next chapter.

In summary, the HLE is a multifaceted notion and numerous studies have investigated the different aspects of the notion. In the following section, the components of the HLE in early childhood period are described in detail, drawing upon the related literature.

2.2.1. Shared Reading

Parent-child shared reading is accepted as one of the most common and important reading experience for young children (Beaty & Pratt, 2003; Deckner, Adamson & Bakeman, 2006; Scarbrough & Dobrich, 1994). According to Beaty and Pratt (2003), young children are "*dependent readers*", that is to say, they need parents to read to them. During the reading process, children are not only listeners of the stories but also they are dependent readers of them. They gain information about the structure of the story, concepts about books, the functions of print, as well as enrich their vocabulary through parent-child reading experiences (Beaty & Pratt, 2003; Morrows, 2009; Thompkins, 2005). Books give children the chance to encounter new words, themes, and characters. Children not only listen to the stories but also examine visuals, prints and, peritextual features of the books such as covers, the dustjacket, the title page, etc. (Sipe & Brightman, 2005). Therefore, children need to speak about the cover page, illustrations, story characters, and the

further dimensions: types of books and quality of books. With technological progress, e-books have gained popularity. In the related literature, there are many researchers (e.g. de Jong & Bus, 2004; Korat & Shamir, 2007; Moody, Justice & Cabell, 2010; Shamir & Shlafer, 2011; Smeets & Bus, 2012) who have investigated the influence of e-books vs. printed books on children language development. This dimension can be added the framework. The other issue is related to the quality of a book. The content (Güneş & Güneş, 2011), illustration and organization (Walker, 2012), and writing style of the book are accepted influential factors for shared reading quality (Jalongo, 2004).

In summary, shared reading quality is a multifaceted concept and many factors affect the quality. In the related literature, there is a great body of research that has investigated the different dimensions of children literacy and language skills within the activity of shared reading. Research has showed that parent-child shared reading experiences influence children's language and literacy development in terms of (1) vocabulary acquisition (Mol, Bus, de Jong & Smeets, 2008; Raikes et al., 2006; Sénéchal, 1997; Sénéchal, Lefevre, Hudson & Lawson, 1996; Sénéchal, Pagan, Lever & Quellete, 2008), (2) narrative skills (Zevenbergen, Whitehurst & Zevenbergen, 2003; Lever & Sénéchal, 2011), (3) oral language skills (Isbell, Soboli, Lindauer & Lawrence, 2004; Karras & Braungart-Rieker, 2005), (4) morphological knowledge (Sénéchal et al., 2008), and early literacy skills (Bingham, 2007; Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Bus, IJzendoor & Pelligrin, 1995). In addition, studies indicated that parent-child reading experiences have a positive effect on children's

reading interest (Sonnenchein & Munsterman, 2002; OECD, 2012; Ortiz, Stowe & Arnold, 2001; Scarbrough & Dobrich, 1994).

The studies focused mainly on the quality (e.g Aram, Fine & Ziv, 2013; Bingham, 2007; Frosch, Cox & Goldman, 2001; Reese, Sparks & Leyva, 2010) and quantity (e.g Adrian, Clemente, Villanueva & Rieff, 2005; Sénéchal et al., 2008; Sonnenchein & Munsterman, 2002) of the parent-child reading experiences and how and in what ways these influence children's language development. The results showed that both of them influence children's language development. Children who are exposed to more frequent and qualified reading experiences have enhanced literacy skills.

The magnitude of the relationships between shared reading and children's language outcomes was investigated through meta-analysis studies. Bus, IJzendoorn and Pelligrini (1995), conducted meta-analysis research to examine the contribution of parent-child reading experiences to children's language outcomes. They used 29 papers, published between 1951 and 1993, in their meta-analysis. According to the meta-analysis, parent-child book reading explained about 8% variance in children's language outcomes. In another meta-analysis, Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) confirmed the variance percentage. More recently, Mol, Bus, de Jong and Smeets (2008) conducted a meta-analysis study to examine the influence of a dialogic parent-child book reading experience on children's language skills. They used 16 studies from 1988 to 2003. They reported that dialogic parent-child book reading experience explained about 4% of variance in general children's language outcomes

and 8% variance of the expressive vocabulary outcomes. Researches from past to present have reasonably demonstrated the influence of parent-child reading experiences on children language and literacy skills.

2.2.2 Parent-Child Joint Activities and Interactions

Parent-child shared reading is not the only experience that fosters children's language and literacy development (Zhou, 2000). Meaningful activities and interactions that children are exposed to at home also contribute to children's language and literacy development (Jacobs, 2004; Zhou, 2000). According to Jacobs (2004), meaningful parent-child interactions are based upon a child's developmental level, needs, interests and individual differences. For meaningful interactions, first parents should be aware of the child's developmental needs and interests; then parents can turn the awareness into interactions to improve their child's development. The worth of the meaningful interactions is a key factor of parent-child experiences for all age groups (Jacobs, 2004). In the related literature, great bodies of studies have examined the quality of the parent-child interactions. These studies mainly investigated maternal responsiveness, sensitivity, and warmth (e.g Bornstein, Hendricks, Haynes & Painter, 2007; Haden & Fivush, 1996; Gould, 2011; Karras & Braugngart-Rieker, 2003; Paavola, 2006; Tamis-LeMonda, Bornstein & Baumwell, 2001). The results showed that maternal responsiveness contributes to children's literacy and language development (Dodici, Draper & Peterson, 2003; Gould, 2011; Karras & Braugngart-Rieker, 2003; Tamis-LeMonda, Bornstein & Baumwell, 2001).

Dodici, Drape and Peterson (2003), videotaped 27 low-income families' parent-child interactions in their homes. Parents and children were videotaped when children were 14, 24 and 36 months. Before the children enrolled in kindergarten, the researchers administered a standardized test to assess the children's literacy skills. The results showed that parents' responsiveness, guidance, emotional tone, engagement and parental talk are all strongly associated with their children's receptive vocabulary, symbolic representation and phonemic analysis. The results revealed that parents can easily foster child literacy skills through quality daily interactions.

In this regard Otto (2006), offered guidelines for parents and teachers regarding their interactions with preschool children in order to foster their language development. According to her guidelines, parents and teachers should use effective strategies to foster children's language skills. She presented four strategies*: questioning*, *linguistic scaffolding*, *mediation* and *conflict resolution.*

The first strategy is questioning. Questioning is a good way to communicate with children (Otto, 2006). Parents can learn children's understandings, interests, feelings and ideas by asking questions. Parents can also enhance children's communication and literacy skills through questions (Mac Naugton and Williams, 2009; Otto, 2006). Hansen (2004) investigated the role of questions in promoting kindergarten children's literacy development. He indicated that questions and responses support children's *literary talks.* Similarly, Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) pointed out the role of questions to foster children's literacy skills. They offered

that while reading, parents should ask age-appropriate questions to enhance their child's comprehension, to extend his/her vocabulary, and to prompt their child's curiosity about the reading material. In another study, De Rivera, Girolametto, Greenberg and Weitzman (2005) investigated children's responses to different types of questions in day care play groups. The results showed that the types of questions affected the children's responses depending on their age groups. Thus, parents should ask questions based on the child's developmental level.

In addition, questions enable children to seek information. Parents should encourage children to ask questions. When children ask questions, parents should listen to them carefully and then answer the questions warmly and consistently (Mac Naugton & Williams, 2009; Otto, 2006). In summary, questioning is an opportunity to invite children to participate in dialogs, conversations, and discussions. Parents should select questions based upon their children's developmental level (Mac Naugton & Williams, 2009).

The second strategy identified by Otto (2006) is *linguistic scaffolding*. The term is based on Vygotsky's ideas, mainly the *zone of proximal development*. Bruner developed the term scaffolding for this adult guidance, based on Vygotsky's ideas of ZPD (Smidt, 2009). Scaffolding refers to an adult's temporal guidance for a child to reach his/her potential developmental level. The adult gradually withdraws his/her guidance until the child achieves the task independently (Justice & Sofka, 2010; Mac Naugton and Williams, 2009; Smidt, 2009). For Otto (2006), linguistic scaffolding covers the linguistic guidance of adults to

foster children's language skills. For example, adults broaden children's language skills by using more complex sentences, correcting pronunciations, repeating new words, etc. According to Justice and Sofka (2010), adults can use modeling, giving alternatives, explanations, and demonstrations as guidance in order to foster children's literacy skills. Adults foster children's language and literacy development through different types of scaffolding (Henderson, Many, Wellborn & Ward, 2002; Justice & Sofka, 2010; Mac Naugton & Williams, 2009; Neuman, Hood & Neuman, 2009).

The third strategy is mediation. According to Otto (2006), linguistic scaffolding is a part of the mediation strategy. In the mediation strategy, adults must first be aware of the child's actual developmental level related to the learning task and then move to mediate the child and the task. The adult should assess the child's participation of the learning tasks regularly and through this process, gain information about the child's actual developmental level. Parents should use the information to regulate the next learning task and mediation type. For example, parents may notice that their 5 year-old child confuses some animal names. Parents can mediate the child's learning by visiting zoo, reading picture books, or examining animal cards, etc. Parents can alter the mediation type depending on the learning task and the child's actual developmental level.

The last strategy is conflict resolution. Otto (2006) adapted the conflict resolution strategy from the fields of classroom management and discipline. According to her, conflict resolution can also be used to foster

children's language skills. In daily life children encounter conflicts with other children and adults. To resolve these conflicts, children and parents need to express their ideas and feelings and then they need to negotiate for solutions. Parents should support their children in expressing themselves, and they should listen their children's statements carefully. Children improve interpersonal communication and problem solving skills by the use of conflict resolution. In summary, parents can foster children's language and literacy skills through different kinds of daily interactions. Parents can use different kinds of materials such as books, objects, cards, toys, TV etc. to enrich the parent-child interaction. In the following section, the importance of home environment literacy sources on children's language development is described in detail.

2.2.3 Home Literacy Sources

The literacy sources that parents supply for children, such as toys and picture books, are an essential component of the home literacy environment (Tomopoulos et al., 2006). Purcell-Gates (1996) investigated the home literacy sources and the relationship between the sources and children's emergent literacy knowledge. First of all, her study demonstrated that parents can use a variety of things, such as a TV guide, brochures, greeting cards, food packaging, and magnetic letters to foster their children's emergent literacy skills. The results also showed that children who were frequently exposed to literacy events and materials with their parents had better understandings of print and alphabetic principles. In the related literature, studies investigated home sources mainly in terms of (1) the numbers of books and other kinds of printed

materials (e.g. Farver et al., 2012; Foy & Mann, 2003; Grieshaber, Shield, Luke & Macdonald, 2011; Griffin & Morrison, 1997; Hall, 2008; Hood, Conlon & Andrews, 2008; Manolitsis, Georgiou & Parilla, 2011; Park, 2008; Payne, Whitehurst & Angell, 1994; Tomopoulos et al., 2006), (2) toys (Farver et al., 2012; Tomopoulos et al., 2006), (3) the hours spent watching TV (Grieshaber et al., 2011; Griffin & Morrison, 1997; Foy & Mann, 2003; Marsh, 2004; Marsh & Thompson, 2001; Xu, 1999), (4) and the hours spent using a computer (Foy & Mann, 2003; Marsh, 2004 Marsh & Thompson, 2001) at home. Studies generally examined total effects of different kinds of home sources on children's literacy skills. The results showed that home sources support children's literacy skills (e.g., Griffin & Morrison, 1997; Hood, Conlon & Andrews, 2008; Wheaton, 2010). However, some studies examined the unique contribution of each kind of home source and its effects on children's literacy development. Payne, Whitehurst and Angell (1994) found that the number of picture book at home and the frequency of library visiting are associated with children's language outcomes. Sénéchal, LeFevre, Hudson and Lawson (1996) also found that the number of books at home and library visits were associated with children's receptive vocabulary outcomes.

In another study Park (2008) examined PIRLS (2001) data in terms of home literacy environment and 4th grade reading achievement. He compared the data of 25 countries, such as Turkey, Germany, Sweden, Iran, Canada and Moldova etc. He investigated the relationship between children's 4th grade reading achievement and early home literacy environments. After controlling for parental educational levels and other individual characteristics, the number of books at home was significantly associated with

children's 4th grade reading achievement in almost all countries. He reported that Sweden, Norway and Iceland had the highest number of book average scores, whereas Iran, Colombia, Argentina and Turkey had the lowest scores. The results showed that books are important sources of fostering children's literacy skills and they have a lasting effect on children's reading achievement.

Toys are accepted as a home literacy source, as well (e.g. Farver et al., 2012; Tomopoulos et al., 2006). Tomopolous et al., (2006) investigated the effects of toys on children's language development. They found that toys provided at 6 and 18 months were predictive of a 21-months' receptive language outcomes. According to them, toys are important tools to foster parent-child verbal interactions. In addition, Roskos and Neuman (1990) found that providing toys enriched a child's literacy learning and behavior.

The last source is the technological literacy sources at home. According to Marsh (2004), many studies mainly investigated the effect of printed literacy environments' on children's early literacy skills. However, with advances in technology, children are also exposed to "techno-literacy" environments in their daily lives. According to the U.K Government Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, 2007) report, 46% of 5 to 7 year-olds group children can access a computer at home and use the Internet. Akkoyunlu and Tuğrul (2002) examined preschool children's computer literacy skills. They indicated that 54 % of the children have a high level of computer literacy skills.

In related literature, Foy and Mann (2003) examined the reading related media (TV show, computer and video games etc.) effects on children's literacy skills. They found that reading media is directly associated with children's phonemic and rhyme awareness. Similarly, Marsh and Thompson (2001) indicated that media provide a rich source of narrative pleasure for children in the home environment and it contributes to their literacy skills (Watt, 2010).

In summary, HLE is a multifaceted notion and it affects children's literacy development in variety of forms. Studies showed that children's early reading experience affects their interest in reading (Sonnenchein & Munsterman, 2002; OECD, 2012; Ortiz, Stowe & Arnold, 2001; Scarbrough & Dobrich, 1994). In the following section, children's early reading interest and attitudes are described in detail, as described by the related literature.

2.3. Reading Attitude

In order to understand a child's reading attitude, the concept of attitude in general must be explored. In related literature, there is a great body of models and definitions that have made an effort to clarify the content and the structure of attitude, such as the multi-component of attitude model (Haddock & Huskinson, 2004), a model of dual attitudes (Wilson, Lindsey & Schooler, 2000), and a meta-cognitive model of attitudes (Petty, 2006). According to Eagly and Chaiken (2007) an attitude is *"a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor"* (p.17). Besides, Crano and Prislin (2005)

stated that "an *attitude represents an evaluative integration of cognitions and affects experienced in relation to an object"* (p.347). More specifically, in the literature there is quite a number of domain specific attitude definitions in terms of reading (Alexander & Filler, 1976), science (Zhang & Campell, 2011), math (Byler, 2000), and technology (Bagchi, Mandal & Mukhopadhya, 2011). The present study focused on only the issue of reading attitudes. Thus, in this section the following issues are described based on the literature. They are the definition of reading attitude, the role of attitudes in the reading process, and the importance of preschool children's attitudes toward reading.

Alexander and Filler (1976) defined a reading attitude as *"a systems of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation"* (p.1). According to Alexander and Cobb (1992), attitude is one of the most important factors for reading process. Reading is a transactive and multifaceted process in which the reader constructs his own meaning from text (Thompkins, 2005). During the reading process, a reader needs to use many other accomplishments such as attention, memory, language, and motivation (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). Affective factors also play a role in the reading process (McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth, 1995). According to the Mathewson model, attitude is an influencing factor for intending to read and continues with the act of reading (Mathewson, 1994). In the related literature, studies showed that there is a relationship between reading attitude and reading achievement (e.g. Diamond & Onwuegbuzie, 2001; Ghait & Bouzeineddine, 2003; Petscher, 2010; Walberg & Tsai, 1985) and students' reading attitudes are associated with their engagement in the reading activity (Ley, Schaer &

Dismukes, 1994; Stocksman, 1999). Stanovich (1986) proposed one explanation about the issue with his "*Matthew Effects*" term and the "*rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer* "pattern. The term means that good readers who prefer to read more improve their reading skills. Poor readers avoid reading and, as a result, their reading skills are gradually weakened. Children's engagement in reading is important to foster reading skills and gain reading habits. On the other hand, Huck (1973) drew attention to the problem of *"illiterate literates*". He advocated nurturing a love for reading, explaining that when children gain reading skills without the love of reading, educators grow a generation of students who *can* read but *do not* read. Therefore, positive affective factors and attitudes are important factors for reading achievement, and children should gain a love of reading and positive reading attitudes from early childhood years.

The second issue, reading attitude, also plays an important role in the learning how to read process (Mathewson, 1994). Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998) indicated that inadequate initial motivation to read is one of the primary reading obstacles for children. Cunningham (2008) stated that there is a significant association with children's reading attitude and their literacy development levels. In another study, McTaggart (2003) investigated the contribution of kindergarten children's interest in reading on later reading interest and reading. They found that children's initial reading interests predicted third grade reading interests and word reading. In addition, Kusk, Watkins and Brookhart (2005) found a temporal-interaction between early primary reading attitude and later reading achievement and proposed a model. According to the temporal-

interaction model, a child's early reading attitude is not closely related to his/her primary reading achievement. However, over time the relationship becomes clearer, and early reading attitude can predict seventh grade reading achievement. The model was also confirmed by another study (Martinez, Arıcak & Jewell, 2008). According to the model, early reading attitudes are important and predictive factors for future reading achievement, hence initial attitudes cannot be disregarded (Kush & Watkins & Brookhart, 2005).

Children acquire early reading attitudes through their experiences (Mason, 1967). According to Stokmans (1999), reading attitudes can increase by direct and indirect experiences. An example of the direct experiences is when a child shares personal experiences with a parent during shared reading. On the other end of the spectrum, the comments, ideas, behaviors and feelings about reading (such as enjoyable, beneficial, or boring), of the child's family members and other adult figures are examples of indirect experiences for children. Similarly, studies showed that children exhibited greater interest in books and reading-related activities when their parents frequently read to them (e.g. Lyytinen, Laakso & Poikkeus, 1998; Scarbrough & Dobrich, 1994; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2010). Frequency of book reading is not the only factor influencing a child's reading interest. Studies show that the affective quality of the reading experience is also important (e.g.Baker & Scher, 2002; Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002). Affective quality covers behaviors which reflect pleasurable and appealing interactions (Baker & Scher, 2002). Parents' reading beliefs, habits, and attitudes affect the

quality of reading experiences (PIRLS, 2006; Weigel, Bennett & Martin, 2006).

In another study, Strommen and Mates (2004) interviewed students in sixth and ninth grade who fell into one of two categories: readers, who consistently preferred to read for pleasure, and not-readers, who rarely preferred read to for pleasure. They stated that while readers detailed their enriched early reading experiences in terms of titles, characters, conversations about books with family members, library visiting etc., not-readers relayed vague memories of early reading experiences. Moreover, readers talked about family members around them who interested in reading and find reading as a pleasure activity, whereas not readers did not. According to Strommen and Mates (2004) adult messages about reading and books played a role in fostering children's love of reading. In addition, they pointed out the role of accessible *interest and age-appropriate* books in fostering children's love of reading. Similarly, Padlick-Field (2011) pointed out the the impact that the home environment, in terms of materials, interactions, and parental attitudes, has on children's reading interests.

In the related literature, multiple studies pointed out the importance of the initial reading attitude of the child and the influence of the early home environment on the child's interest in reading. While the majority of these studies cover primary grade children, a small number of studies investigated the reading attitudes of preschool children (e.g Cunningham, 2008; Kotaman, 2008; Saracho, 1988; Saracho & Dayton, 1991; Sperling & Head, 2002; Yücel, 2005). The studies mainly examined

children's reading attitudes in terms of age group (Saracho, 1985, 1986; Saracho & Dayton, 1989, 1991; Sperling & Head, 2002; Yücel, 2005), gender (Cunningham, 2008; Saracho, 1986; Yücel, 2005), and socioeconomic status (Yücel, 2005) race (Cunningham, 2008; Saracho & Dayton, 1991). Yücel (2005) investigated 4 and 5 year-old Turkish preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of age, gender and socioeconomic status. The results showed that older children have higher reading attitudes scores than younger children and that children's reading attitude scores do not differ significantly in terms of gender and socioeconomic status. Similarly, Saracho and Dayton (1991) indicated that preschool children's reading attitude scores do not differ according to gender, though there is an age related difference. Older preschoolers have more positive reading attitudes than younger preschoolers. In contrast, Sperling and Head (2002) investigated the changes in children's reading attitudes during the kindergarten period. They found that children's reading attitudes slightly decrease.

Saracho and Dayton (1991) also investigated preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of race. They indicated that African-American children have lower attitude scores than Anglo-American and Mexican-American children. In contrast to Saracho and Dayton (1991), Cunningham (2008) indicated that there are no significant differences between children's reading attitudes in terms of race; however, there was a significant difference in terms of SES. Children who come from high risk-status families had a lower attitude scores than other statuses. Moreover, Cunningham (2008) examined children reading attitudes in terms of the quality of the preschool classroom environment. He

determined that the classroom environment quality is also associated with children's reading attitudes. In addition he stated that children's reading attitudes are related to their literacy developmental level.

Lastly, Kotaman (2008) investigated the effects of parents' dialogical story book reading on children's reading attitudes. In his study, he provided instructions regarding dialogical story book techniques to an experimental group of parents. He then compared the reading scores of the children in the experimental with those in the control group; the experimental group showed significantly higher reading attitude scores than the control group.

In summary, studies reveal that children's initial reading attitudes are important for later reading achievement and interest. The other crucial issue is children's perception of reading before they learn to read (Allen, 2002; Levy, 2009). In the following section, children's perception of reading is described based on the literature.

2.4. Children's Perceptions of Reading

The acquisition of literacy is a socio-cultural issue (Goodman, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978). Literacy has been developed by the society just as it has developed the society. Thus, there is an interaction between society and literacy (Goodman, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). As previously mentioned, the notion of literacy has evolved over time, paralleling the changes in society (Mioduser, Nachmias & Forkosh-Baruch, 2008; UNESCO, 2009) The current notion of literacy involves more complex

skills and purpose when compared the ones of the past (UNESCO, 1958, 1978, 2004, 2009). Likewise, society has become more complex in terms of culture, economy, and technology. Children grow up in a more literate and technologic society (Carrington, 2005). Children can easily encounter different kinds of print in their environments (Heibert, 1983). With the technological progress, children are not only exposed to *paper-based* print (Levy, 2009) but they also encounter "*new textual landscapes*" (Carrington, 2005). Children are exposed to TV, computers, cell-phones, tablets, and billboards. They recognize that the print contains messages and that people use print for different functions such as communication, fun, and the acquisition of knowledge (Heibert, 1983; Strickland & Schickedanz, 2004;Venn & Jahn, 2004) Children explore the environmental print sources and, depending on the exploration, they construct their own literacies (Goodman, 1986). First, children recognize the environmental print such as signs, logos, and labels (Strickland & Schickedanz, 2004). For example, they can distinguish their favorite chocolate brand among others or they can identify some traffic signs such as stop and school signs. Valkenburg and Buijzen (2005) reported that 2 to 3 year-olds children recognize 8 out of 12 brands from TV commercials. In another study, Brenneman (1996) found that children who are 2.5 and 3 year-olds can differentiate print from pictures.

When they start to distinguish print from pictures, they start to construct the functions and forms of a written system. Even though they cannot read, they know that written materials contain messages (Clay, 2004; Justice & Sofka, 2010). Goodman (1986) provided examples of children who could not read but showed written materials to their

parents and demanded that they read the message to them. Moreover, some children scribbled nonsense squiggles or tried to copy some letters and then demanded their parents to read what was written.

Children construct their literacy knowledge and skills from the early years of life (Goodman, 1986, 1990; Heibert, 1983; Neumann, Hood & Ford 2012; Venn & Jahn, 2004). According to Downing (1979) children's initial understandings and perceptions of reading are important for their learning to read process. He proposed a theory about how children learn to read. He proposed the Cognitive Clarity Theory through the use of five different field perspectives: child development, educational psychology, reading, psycholinguistic and special education. According to the theory, the learning to read process consists of three phases: cognitive phase, mastering phase and automaticity phase. The first phase covers cognitive dimensions of the reading process. Children should be aware of the featural and functional concepts of written systems. He indicated that children who have reading difficulties have cognitive confusion about the function and features of the written language. According to the theory, children's initial perceptions and understandings about reading are included in the first phase and they are essential for the learning to read process.

Alley (2002) posited that children's initial perceptions and understandings were related to their learning to read process. She investigated the emergent and beginner reader kindergarten child's perception of reading. She reported that beginner readers had clearer responses than emergent readers did. In addition, those students in the

emergent reader group who provided clearer responses to questions also had better letter-sound corresponding knowledge than those who did not. Therefore, knowing a child's perceptions of reading can provide important data in order to organize literacy related activities and environments for that child and to extend his/her understandings about literacy before he/she enters formal education (Alley, 2002). The present study aimed to examine children's perceptions of reading in terms of their attitude scores because the previous studies showed that older children who have more positive attitudes toward reading are more likely to engage in literacy activities (Ley, Schaer & Dismukes, 1994; Stocksman, 1999). If young children who have higher positive reading attitudes engage more frequently in literacy related activities, they will have more experiences regarding literacy. It is expected that frequent literacy experiences can foster children's knowledge, understandings, and perceptions of literacy. Therefore, the present study aimed to examine children's perception in terms of their reading attitudes.

In the following section, the studies, which investigated young children's reading perceptions, are described from past to present. The studies are described in a chronological fashion because time is an important factor in shaping the notion of literacy and literacy related social environment (Goodman, 1986). According to Michel (1988), McConkie (1959) conducted one of the first extensive research projects to examine children's perception of reading in completion of his dissertation. He reported that only 25% of 5-year-old children responded that reading is related with letter or words (as cited in Michel, 1998).

Later Reid (1966) interviewed 5-year-old children to discover their notions about reading. She interviewed the children three times during their first year of school. She stated that children have "*vague ideas"* about reading and that reading is a "*mysterious*" activity for them. She indicated that although the children have very few accurate notions of what comprises reading activity, almost all are conscious of the fact that they cannot read. In addition, she reported that very few children are conscious of the fact that written words are comprised of letters which represent sounds.

Downing (1970) extended and replicated Reid's (1966) study. Similarly he reported that children have very little understating about sounds and words and have obscure notions of the purpose of reading and the written language.

In another study, Heibert (1983) investigated preschool children's concepts of reading before they learned to read. According to Heibert (1983), preschool children have accurate perceptions of their reading ability. Some children responded that "they cannot read yet and they need some help and practice" (p.258). Some of children responded that "they can read only some words such as stop, mum, and dad etc." (p. 258).

Lastly, Alley (2002) investigated emergent and beginning reader kindergarten children's perceptions of reading. As mentioned above, she reported that beginning readers have clearer responses than emergent readers. In addition she conducted some language tests such as The

Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Spelling, with the children. According to her study, those emergent readers who responded more clearly had better knowledge of sound-letter correspondence.

In summary, the acquisition of literacy is a complex process and children's early literacy related experiences play essential roles in that process. From infancy, the HLE influences their literacy skills. The literature revealed that the HLE is a multifaceted notion and covers home literacy related sources, interactions, parental factors and experiences. It is believed that children construct their own literacy knowledge, understandings and attitudes based on these experiences. For this reason, it is necessary to explore the relationship between children's reading attitudes and HLE and investigate children's perceptions of reading in terms of reading attitudes. The present study aimed to investigate the issue through the self-reported reading attitudes scale completed by preschool aged children, a parent -reported HLE questionnaire, and interviews conducted with the children.

2.5. Studies Related to Home Literacy Environment and Preschool Reading Attitudes in Turkey

Altıparmak (2010) adapted the "Home Literacy Activities" scale into Turkish and then investigated parents' perceptions on emergent literacy during the early childhood period in her master thesis. She conducted the study with 667 parents in Ankara. She reported that the majority of the parents accepted that home literacy activities are important for children's literacy development. According to her findings, half of the parents cited

that they performed 23 of 45 the home literacy activities at least one or two times per month. In addition, parents placed more emphasis on structured than unstructured activities. Furthermore, she examined the home literacy activities in terms of demographic variables. She cited that parental educational level was related to parental engagement in home literacy activities. On the other hand, household income was related to the quantity of time in which parents and child engaged in home literacy activities together. Lastly, she found a strong positive correlation between parents' responses regarding the importance of home literacy activities items and the frequency of home literacy activities items.

Yücel (2005) adapted the "Preschool Reading Attitude Scale" into Turkish and also investigated preschool children's reading attitudes in her master thesis. She conducted the study with 323 preschool children who were 4 and 5 years old in Ankara. She investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of gender and SES. According to her findings, children's reading attitude scores did not differ regarding gender or SES.

Kotaman (2008) investigated dialogical storybook reading influences on children's reading attitudes and vocabulary development. He conducted the study with 40 parents and their children aged 36-48 months in Bursa. He used pretest-posttest design in the study. He determined the experimental and control groups' member by using random assignment. He gave instructions regarding dialogical story book reading to parents of the experimental group. Seven weeks after the instruction ended, he compared the two groups' children's reading attitudes and vocabulary scores. According to his findings, the children's reading attitudes and

vocabulary scores of the experimental group significantly increased, whereas the scores of the control group did not.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, methods and procedures of the present study is presented in detail. First, the design of the study is explained. Then, the description of the participants, instruments, the adaptation and pilot study of the instruments are presented. Lastly, data collection, data analysis, assumptions, and limitations of the study are given.

3.1 Design of the study

The study aimed to investigate preschool children's attitudes toward reading, their home literacy environment (HLE), and the relationship between children's reading attitudes and HLE. Moreover, children's perceptions of reading in terms of reading attitudes were examined.

In order to investigate the research questions, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. With the aim of gaining information and describing preschool children's reading attitudes and their HLE, survey research design was used. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2005), survey research design is used to collect data from a group of participants to describe some features (such as attitudes, opinions etc) of the population. In survey research design, data is typically collected by asking questions through questionnaires or interviews, to a group of people rather

3.2. Population and Sample

The target population of the study was all 5 year-olds preschool children and their parents in Ankara. There were two reasons to conduct this study with 5 year-olds. First, in 2012 the Turkish Primary Education System changed drastically. Starting primary school has been brought forward one year. Children who turned 66 months start primary school. With these changes, the current early childhood education period covers children who are 37 months to 66 months (MONE, 2012). The second reason was that the study did not aim to investigate age differences in terms of reading attitudes, HLE or perceptions of reading. The study focused on understanding children's reading attitudes and reading perceptions before they enter primary grades. Therefore, the study's target population comprised all 5 year-old preschool children and their parents. According to MONE statistics (2012), there were 1.295 preschools in Ankara. Because it was difficult to access all preschool children and their parents in Ankara, all preschools in Çankaya, Etimesgut, Keçiören, Sincan, and Yenimahalle districts of Ankara were identified as an accessible population of this study. Then, a sample of the study was selected by using two-stage random sampling methods. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2005), when individuals cannot be selected by using a simple random sampling method or a stratified random sampling method because of administrative restrictions or a list of all members are unavailable, the groups can be selected randomly by using cluster random sampling. However, Fraenkel and Wallen (2005) also stated that when a researcher selects only a cluster and then collects his/her data from all individuals in that cluster, the sample representativeness of the population may be problematic. They recommend

using cluster random sampling and individual random sampling methods together to strengthen the sample's representativeness of the population. Thus, a two-stage random sampling method was used in the study. First, ten preschools were selected randomly from each district, and then eight children from each school were selected randomly. The children were selected according to their class list number and half of them were boys. The sample of the study was 261 parents and their 5 year-old children. Detailed information about the numbers of questionnaires distributed is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Information about distributed questionnaires

	Number	**%**
Distributed	**400**	**100**
Responders	322	80.5
Non-responders	78	19.5
Total of Excluded Questionnaires	**61**	**15.25**
Did not give permission to their children participate the study	21	5.25
Did not complete demographic information	16	4.00
Did not complete all questions	15	3.75
Children did not differentiate between flash cards and/or emotions	4	1.00
	3	0.75
Children had learning disabilities preventing participation in the study (e.g. hearing , mental, etc)	2	0.50
Children did not want to participate the study		
Total Eligible Questionnaires	**261**	**65.25**

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to parents. Of those 400, 322 questionnaires (80.5 %) were returned. Sixty-one questionnaires (15.25%) were not eligible for the study and were excluded. The sample of the study consisted of 261 parents and their children. The rate of return for the questionnaire was 65.25%. The demographic information of participants is presented in Table 2.

Table 3. 2. Demographic Information of parents

	Mother		**Father**	
	Frequency	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**
Questionnaire completed by	197	75.5	64	24.5
Educational Level of Parents*				
Primary school	41	15.7	39	15.0
Middle school	35	13.4	41	15.7
High school	85	32.5	82	31.4
University	82	31.4	78	29.9
Postgraduate	18	7.0	21	8.0
Age Group of Parents*				
21-25	20	7.7	9	3.4
26-30	81	31.0	47	18.0
31-40	76	29.1	98	37.5
41-45	62	23.8	71	27.2
45+	17	6.5	23	8.8
	5	1.9	13	5.0

**Both mothers' and fathers' demographic information was collected through a demographic information questionnaire.*

Questionnaires were most commonly completed by mothers (75.5%) with a mean age of 32.76 (SD=5.45). The age range of the mothers was 21 to 52. About one fourth of the questionnaires were completed by fathers (24.5%) with a mean age of 34.85 (SD=5.56). The age range of the fathers was 27 to 55. The majority of parent participants (mothers: 32.5% and fathers: 31.4 %)

were high school graduates. Further demographic information of parents and children is presented in Table 3.

Table 3.3 Demographic Information of Participants

	f	%
Household Income (monthly-Turkish Lira)		
0-1000 TL	60	23.0
1001-2000 TL	87	33.3
2001-3000 TL	49	18.8
3001-4000 TL	29	11.1
4001-5000 TL	25	9.6
5001+ TL	11	4.2
Gender of Children		
Girl	128	49
Boy	133	51
Previous early childhood education experience		
No	142	54.4
Yes	119	46.6
Number of children in the family		
1	38	14.56
2	146	56.00
3	56	21.5
4+	21	8.04

Most of the participants' household income (33.3%) was between 1001 to 2000 TL. The range of participants' monthly household income was 550 TL to 17.000 TL (M=2404 TL). Further information regarding family demographics included the number of children. The majority of the families had two children (56 %).

The study also collected data from the children. All of the children who participated in the study were 5 year-olds as mentioned before, and almost half of them were boys (51%) and half of them were girls. Of these children, 54.4% of them did not have any previous early school experience, whereas, 46.6 % of the children had.

Finally, the researcher interviewed 12 children. A more detailed description about the children is presented in the following chapter.

3.3 Instruments

The data were collected through the interview and the following questionnaires: the Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire and the Preschool Children Attitudes toward Reading Scale. In this part, the instruments are described in detail.

3.3.1 Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire

The Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire (HLEQ) was developed by Marjanovic Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005) to measure the quality of children's home literacy environment. The questionnaire consists of 32 items which are 6 point- Likert type (never to always). Furthermore the questionnaire comprises 5 factors and all factors explain 54.1% of the variance together. Each of the factor's item numbers and unique contribution that explain the variance percentage are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. 4 Factors and explained variance of the HLEQ

The Name of the Factors	**The item numbers**	**Explained variance (%)**
1: Stimulation to use language, explanation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12	**30**
2: Reading books to the child, visiting the library and puppet theatre	9, 13, 14, 15, 16.17.18.19	**8.8**
3: Joint activities and conversation	20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25	**5.7**
4: Interactive reading	26, 27, 28	**3.5**
5: Zone-of-proximal-development stimulation	29, 30, 32, 32	**4.4**
Total		**54.1**

The questionnaire reliability coefficient is .91 and each factors reliability coefficients are respectively; F1: .85, F2: .84, F3: .84, F4: .79 and F5: .77.

As a result of the literature review regarding studies that investigated the HLE, the HLEQ (2005) was selected to be used in this study because of high reliability coefficient, the numbers of item, format, and content of the items, etc. After having obtained permission to use and adapt the questionnaire to the Turkish context from the authors, the questionnaire was translated by three people. All of the translators graduated from Foreign Language Education (English) Department. Two of them were instructors at the university and one of them was a retired instructor from the university. Furthermore, two of the translators were also graduate students in the Early Childhood Education Department. First the questionnaire was translated into Turkish by the first translator and then the second translator translated the Turkish items back into English. The last person translated the items

into Turkish again. The final version of the questionnaire was checked one-to-one to ensure the appropriate language was used and the translated items provided the original meaning of the items. The final version was evaluated by two early childhood field experts. Two items were modified in accordance with the experts' opinions. For example, item number 17, which stated, "I go to the puppet theatre or cinema with my children" was modified into "I go to the children's theatre or cinema with my children". After the translation a pilot study was conducted to check the reliability and validity of the Turkish version of the questionnaire.

3.3.1.1 Pilot Study of the HLEQ

The pilot study was conducted with 754 parents from the same five districts of Ankara**.** A total of 83% of the participants were mothers (N=622) and 17% of them were fathers (N=132). After collecting the questionnaires, a statistical analysis was conducted to control for reliability and validity of the Turkish version of questionnaire. First, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed to check for reliability issues. Marjanovic Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005) reported that Cronbach's alpha coefficient was.91 for the original questionnaire. In the pilot study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .89. According to Pallant (2007), higher than .70 Cronbach's alpha coefficient values are admitted as acceptable, though values higher than .80 are preferable. Thus, the Turkish version of the scale was accepted as highly reliable.

Then, to conduct the explanatory factor analysis, the following three steps were applied: "check the suitability of the sample size and the strength of "intercorrelations among the items" (p.180, 181). Tabachnick and Fidell

(2007) recommended more than 300 cases for factor analysis. In addition, there was different ratios such as a 10 to 1 and a 5 to 1, suggested by different authors (Tabachnick & Fidell , 2007). The sample of the study (N=754) and the data set was appropriate to factor analysis. Linearity and outliers were also checked before a factor analysis was conducted. Afterwards, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequancy (KMO) and Barlett's Test of Sphericity were checked. According to Pallant (2007) the KMO value should be higher than .60 and Barlett's Test should be lower than .05. In the study, the KMO value was. 89, and Barlett's Test was significant (x^2= 8749.68, p=.000), therefore the factor analysis was appropriate.

The explanatory factor analysis was conducted with eigenvalues over 1 section was selected. The scree plot was examined to determine the number of factors in the questionnaires. According to Pallant (2007), parallel analysis is one way to compare the size of the eigenvalues to determine the factor numbers. To determine the number of factors, parallel analysis (32 variables x 754 cases) was conducted by using Monte Carlo PCA (2000). The comparison of the actual eigenvalue and criterion values from parallel analysis was presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 The comparison of the actual eigenvalue and criterion values from parallel analysis

Component Number	Actual eigenvalue	Criterion values from parallel analysis	Decision
1	8.219	1.4052	Accepted
2	2.514	1.3523	Accepted
3	1.994	1.3156	Accepted
4	1.921	1.2800	Accepted
5	1.338	1.2494	Accepted
6	1.151	1.220	Rejected

The results of parallel analysis support the scree-plot and five-factor as appropriate for the questionnaire. Before giving the final decision for the number of factors, the Pattern Matrix table was examined. Lastly, the factor analysis was conducted again but number of factors section was written 5. To aid the interpretation of these three components, oblimin rotation was conducted. The rotated solution displayed that the five factors structure a number of strong loadings and each variables loading greatly on only one component. The Pattern Matrix table was examined to gain information about the factor loading of each of the variables. The Structure Matrix table was examined to gain information about the correlation between variables and factors. The 32 items were loaded ≥.40 into five factors. The original version of the questionnaire was also comprised of five items. The Turkish version of the questionnaire, factor loading and Cronbach's alpha coefficient are presented in Appendix B. The five factor solution explained a total of 48.7% of the variance, with factor 1 contributing 25.68%, factor 2 contributing 7.85%, factor 3 contributing 6.23 %, factor 4 contributing 4.75% and factor 5 contributing 4.18%.

3.3.2 Preschool Reading Attitudes Scale- (PRAS)

The scale was developed by Saracho (1988) in order to measure the attitudes 3 to 5 year-old children toward reading. It is a pictorial attitudes scale and comprises 12 questions. There are three different faces (unhappy, ok, very happy). The scale covers questions to gauge children's feelings about reading and reading related activities. Questions were asked to children individually. After each question, the child was asked to respond to the questions by selecting the appropriate face that represented his/her attitude. The PRAS was administered to 2232 young children to refine the items. The scale comprised 4 factors. The factors and item numbers are presented in Table 3.6

Table 3.6 The factors and item numbers of PRAS

Factors	**Item Numbers**	**Reliability Estimate (The Spearman-Brown)**
School reading activities	**2,5,6**	**.86**
Non-school reading activities	**1,7,4**	**.85**
Library reading activities	**3,8,10**	**.84**
General reading activities	**9,11,12**	**.84**

The PRAS total reliability was a .95 on test-retest method and a. 89 on Kuderson Richardson 20 (Saracho, 1988). She reported that the scale construct validity was significant and predictable (t= 44.2, df=238, p<.001). The PRAS has been used in preschool reading attitudes studies (e.g. Kotaman, 2008, Saracho & Dayton, 1991; Sperling & Head, 2002) with 12 item and 34 item versions. Therefore, the scale was used in this present study. The original version of the scale was published by the Taylor& Francis Group. The researcher received permission to use and translate the

scale into Turkish from both the author and the group. The 12 item version was translated into Turkish by the previously mentioned translator using the same previously described process. After the translation process, a pilot study was conducted.

3.3.2.1 Pilot Study of the PRAS

The pilot study was conducted with 414 5-year-old children from the five districts of Ankara: Çankaya, Etimesgut, Keçiören, Sincan, and Yenimahalle. Of these children, 54 % were female (N=223) and 46 % were male (N=191).
First, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed as .73, an acceptable value for reliability test (Pallant , 2007). The value might be obtained due to the small number of items. Later the assumptions of the explanatory factor analysis were checked such as sample size, linearity, and outliers, etc. All of the assumptions were provided from the data set.

The twelve items of the PRAS were subjected to an explanatory factor analysis by using PASW Version 18. The KMO value was .78, above the recommended value of .6, and the Barlett's Test was statistically significant (x^2=745.91, p=.000), while the correlation matrix showed that all coefficients were above 3. The values showed that the data set was appropriate for the factor analysis.
A factor analysis was conducted with selected eigenvalues over 1 buton. The presence of three factors explained 46.31 %, 26.7 %, 10.29% and 9.28% of the variance respectively. Scree plot and parallel analysis supported the three factors with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values

for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (12 variables x 414 cases).

Table 3. 7 The comparison of the actual eigenvalue and criterion values from parallel analysis

Component Number	Actual eigenvalue	Criterion values from parallel analysis	Decision
1	3.850	1.2950	Accepted
2	2.056	1.2163	Accepted
3	1.235	1.1544	Accepted

The three-factor solution explained a total of 46.31 % of the variance with the first factor contributing 26.7%, the second factor contributing 10.29% and the third factor contributing 9.28%. To aid the interpretation of these three components, an oblimin rotation was conducted. The rotated solution showed that the three factors structure a number of strong loadings and each variable loading greatly on only one component. The Turkish version of the PRAS, factor loading and Cronbach's alpha coefficient are presented in Appendix C. The Turkish version was different from the original version and consisted of three factors. When the items were examined, they were distributed into three components: school related activities (2, 4, 5, 7), library or book corner related activities (3, 6, 8, 10) and general reading activities (1, 9, 11, 12). Since the PRAS was developed in the USA context, it is likely that different reading habits exist between the populations of the two countries.

3.3.3 Interview Questions

Children were interviewed to gain information about their perceptions of reading. For this purpose, 10 questions were asked of the children. The questions were prepared in accordance to those of previous studies (Alley, 2002; Downing, 1970; Heibert; 1983; Reid, 1966; Shook, 1996) as well as new questions such as 2, 7, 8 and 9. After the interview questions were constructed, two early childhood field experts' opinions were obtained. Some corrections and manipulations were made according to these experts' opinions. Finally, the pilot study was conducted with four children (two girls and two boys) to ensure the clarity of the questions.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected during the 2012-2013 fall education term in Ankara. After the official permission was received from the university's Human Subjects Ethics Committee and the Ministry of National education the HLEQ, parent consent form, and the demographic information (See Appendix D) form were sent to parents. One week later, the researcher collected the completed questionnaires and made an appointment with a teacher to administer the PRAS to those children whose parents' had given permission and responded to the HLE questionnaire. On the appointed day, the researcher went to the school and introduced herself to the children, using a puppet. It was a deer puppet. The puppet was selected by children. When the researcher conducted the pilot study of the PRAS, she

showed several puppets to the children. Almost all of the children liked and chose the deer puppet (See Appendix E). The puppet name was Red Nose.

After the introduction part, the researcher applied the PRAS to each child individually. The teacher also encouraged the children to participate in the PRAS (e.g. The guest teacher has a very enjoyable activity. You will participate in the activity one-by-one, etc.). The researcher conducted the PRAS with children outside of the classroom. In the PRAS administration environment there was a child-size table and chairs. In addition the environment was away from the classroom traffic and noise before administering the PRAS, the researcher re-introduced herself to the child. Then, the researcher introduced the child with Red Nose puppet. The researcher said to the child, "I have a friend. I want to introduce you to him. His name is Red Nose and he has brought some flash cards (See Appendix F) for us. Let's see the cards." The researcher presented the three flash cards (very unhappy, ok and very happy) to the child one by one. The researcher asked the child, "What do you see in the card? How does the person feel?" after the child described the person's feeling, the researcher and the child talked about the feeling. The researcher asked, "Have you ever felt such a feeling (happy, unhappy, ok-neither very happy nor unhappy)?" Through this conversation, the researcher was able to determine whether the child could differentiate feelings correctly and helped the child to feel comfortable with the interview. After the conversation, the researcher called the feeling's name (happy, unhappy etc.) and asked the child to show the related card. Following the test, the researcher again showed her puppet and told the child, "My friend, Red Nose, could not go to school. He is very

unhappy. He wonders about school, reading and books. He told me (child name) is a successful student and has a nice school. He wonders whether you can help him and answer his questions." Once the child agreed to help Red Nose, the researcher put the puppet in her bag and explained the rules of the process. "I will ask you some questions. After each question you will think about how you generally feel related to the situation. Let's do one example. (Child name), your favorite friends play at the park together. You also want to play with your favorite friends at the park but your mother does not give you permission. How do you feel? Can you show me the card which is related to your feeling? After this exercise, the researcher asked the PRAS questions to the child one-by-one and the child selected the pictorial cards. The researcher marked the child's responses on the score table. After the administration of the questionnaire, Red Nose came back and thanked the child for his/her help and gave a balloon to him/her. The PRAS administration time took approximately ten minutes for each child without the introduction and practice part.

After the administration was completed, the children's attitude scores were examined. The researcher interviewed the children one-by-one. The interviews took approximately 15 minutes for each child. Interviews were tape recorded.

3.5 Data Analysis

The quantitative data of the study were analyzed by using PASW 18. The demographic characteristics of the sample were analyzed through descriptive statistics. For the research questions, including the children's reading attitude scores in terms of gender, parental educational level, etc., and the relationship between the HLE and children's reading attitudes, inferential statistical methods including ANOVA and Pearson product-moment correlation were conducted.

The qualitative data of the study were mainly analyzed by using the approach proposed by Miller and Huberman (1994). They offered three concurrent flows of qualitative data analysis process: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. Differing from their analysis process, the present study did not use the data reduction process. The children's responses were directly presented for two reasons: the children gave short responses because of their developmental level and their original answers represent their perceptions more accurately. First, the children's responses to each question were transcribed into written text and then those responses were displayed in a table regarding their reading attitudes groups (low-medium-high) for each question. Finally, general patterns and both common and distinctive responses were presented.

3.6 Assumptions and Limitations

The study covered some assumptions and limitations. The first limitation was that the study was only conducted in the Çankaya, Etimesgut, Keçiören, Sincan, and Yenimahalle districts of Ankara with 261 parents and their 5 year-olds children. Therefore, the results could not be generalized to other age groups or parts of the Turkey.

The second limitation was the application time which differed for children since some of the preschools were full-day and some of them were half-day. This difference in administration might affect children's reading attitude scores. In order to minimize the limitation, the researcher consulted each classroom teacher to learn the most appropriate time for each child to participate in the study. The administration day and time were determined according to the classroom teachers' recommendations.

On the other hand the study contained some assumptions. The first assumption was the sample of the study. It was selected by using the two-stage random sampling method, and thus it was assumed that the sample could represent the population. The second assumption was that parents responded to the instruments accurately and sincerely.

In the following section, the internal and external validity of the study is described in detail.

3.7 Internal and External Validity of the Study

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), when the study lacks internal validity, the researcher finds a difference or relationship between a dependent variable and an independent variable. The observed difference or relationship can be rooted in other factors such as data collector bias or location instead of the dependent variable directly related to the independent variable. Therefore, reducing internal validity threats is important in order to reduce the probability of reaching misleading results. In this section internal and external validity issues for the study is explained.

Data collector characteristics such as language or communication skills, might affect the PRAS administration. For this reason, all PRAS administrations and interviews were conducted by the researcher. The researcher provided the same directions to all children in the same way.

The second issue was location. The PRAS administration environment might have an effect children's attention and responses. For this aim, all administrations were conducted in a similar environment. The environments' common characteristics were that they were conducted away from the classroom environment and noise, and there was one child-size table and two child-size chairs. The researcher sat on the child-size chair to speak with the child at eye level.

The third validity issue was related to loss of subjects. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2005), the loss of participants was excluded from correlational study thus it was not a problem for correlational study. When

the loss of participants did not violate the representativeness of the sample, it was not a problem for the correlational study. In the present study, 8 children were absent during the PRAS and interview days because of illness or other reasons. The researcher was able to receive permission from the classroom teacher and apply the instruments on another day.

The last issue related to participant characteristics. According to previous research, participants' characteristics such as educational level or income level, might affect the relationship between a child's reading attitude score and the HLE score. Therefore, the sample was selected from the Çankaya, Etimesgut, Keçiören, Sincan, and Yenimahalle districts of Ankara by using the two-stage random sampling method.

The other issue was related to external validity of the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2005), generalization to a larger population is the purpose of applying the scientific method. External validity was about the generalizability of the results of this study. The study was conducted with 261 parents and their 5 years-old preschool children. The sample was selected from the previously mentioned five districts of Ankara by using the two-stage random sampling. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2005), the two-stage random sampling was a good way to increase the representativeness of a sample when individuals cannot be selected by random sampling. Therefore, the sample could be accepted to represent the study population and the results could be generalized in this context and for 5 year-old children. The results could be not generalized the other regions of Turkey or other age groups.

3.8. Research Questions and Hypothesis of the Study

The present study was investigated the following research questions and related hypotheses:

Research Question (RQ1): What are preschool children's attitudes toward reading?

Sub-question 1: Is there a significant mean difference between girls' and boys' attitudes toward reading?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference between girls' and boys' reading attitudes.

Sub-question 2: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parental educational levels?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parental educational levels.

Sub-question 3: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of household income?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of household income.

Sub-question 4: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of children's time in attendance of early childhood education?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of children's time in attendance of early childhood education.

Sub-question 5: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books at home?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books at home.

Sub-question 6: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the time spent watching TV?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in children's reading attitude in terms of the time spent watching TV.

Sub-question 7: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of time spent on the computer?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in children's reading attitude in terms of time spent on the computer.

Sub-question 8: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parental enjoyment of reading?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parental enjoyment of reading.

Sub-question 9: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent reading?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent reading.

Sub-question 10: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent in shared reading activities with children?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent in shared reading activities with children.

Sub-question 11: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of their parents reading to them?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of their parents reading to them.

Sub-question 12: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children asking parents to read to them?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children asking parents to read to them.

Sub- question 13: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves

Research Question (RQ2): What is the home literacy environment of preschool children?

Sub-question 1: Is there a significant mean difference in children's HLE in terms of parental educational levels?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's home literacy environments in terms of parental educational levels.

Sub-question 2: Is there a significant mean difference in children's HLE in terms of the household income?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's home literacy environments in terms of household income.

Research Question (RQ3): Is there a significant relationship between children's attitudes toward reading and their home literacy environment?

H_0: There is not a significant relationship between children's attitudes toward reading and their home literacy environment.

Research Question (RQ4): What are children's perceptions of reading in terms of their reading attitudes?

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the study are presented with regard to the research questions of the study. First, the descriptive information of the data is presented and then the quantitative results are presented. Finally, the qualitative results are presented.

4.1 Descriptive Information about the Data

Before presenting the research questions, first the participants' demographic information, as well as the home environment are described. Later the descriptive information of the instruments is presented.

According to parents' responses**,** 23.5% of the parents had between 41 and 80 books in their homes. The total number of books at home ranged from 0 to 550 with a mean of 52. However, 18.8% of the participants (*N*=49) did not own any parents' books in their homes, and 40.2 % of the participants owned less than 16 children's books. As the Table 4.2 indicated, 33.7% of the participants had between 1 and 15 children's books in their homes. A total of 6.5% of the homes did not have any children's books. The number of children's books ranged from 0 to 300 with a mean of 22. The detailed information is presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 The demographic information about participants' HLE

	F	%
Number of books at home (out of children's books)		
0-	49	18.8
1-40	49	18.8
41-80	61	23.5
81-120	18	6.9
121-160	59	11.2
161+	24	20.7
Number of children's book at home		
0-	17	6.5
1-15	88	33.7
16-30	73	28.0
31-45	37	14.2
46-60	25	9.6
60+	21	8.0
Computer		
Available	213	81,6
Unavailable	48	18.4
Internet connectivity		
Available	171	65.5
Unavailable	**90**	34.1

Most of the participants had a computer (81, 6 %,) and internet connection (65.5 %) in their homes. In fact, 77% of the children used a computer daily. As the Table 4.2 indicated, 34.5% of the children spent between 16 and 30 minutes a day on a computer. The range of the children's time on the computer was 0 to 120 with a mean of 30. In contrast, 35.2% of the mothers and 30.35% of the fathers spent less than 15 minutes on the computer each day. The range of fathers' time on computer was 0 to 480 with a mean of 60.35. On the other hand, the range of mothers' spending time on computer was 0 to 350 with a mean of 40.81. The detailed information is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 The frequency of parents' and children's time on TV and computer

	Children		Mothers		Father	
At home daily	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**
Spending time on TV (Minutes)						
0-60′	96	36.8	68	26.1	84	32.2
61-120′	91	34.9	90	34.5	84	32.2
121-180′	44	16.6	53	20.3	58	22.2
180+	30	11.5	50	19.2	35	13.4
Spending time on computer (Minutes)						
0′	60	23.0	92	35.2	79	30.3
1-15′	35	13.4	21	8.0	39	15.0
16-30′	90	34.5	45	17.2	53	20.4
31-45′	10	3.8	8	3.1	15	5.8
46-60′	49	18.8	34	13.0	42	16.1
60′+	47	6.5	61	23.4	32	12.4

The other issue was participants' time spent watching TV. As the Table 4.2 indicated, 36. 8% of the children watched TV less than 61 minutes. The range of the children' spending time on TV was 10 to 400 with a mean of 114. Moreover, 34.5% of the mothers watched TV between one and two hours a day (*M*= 140.21, range 15 to 600 minutes). Similarly, 32.2% of the fathers watched TV between one and two hours a day, and the same number of the fathers watched TV less than 61 minutes a day (*M*= 121.50, range 0 to 360 minutes).

According to the parents' responses, the majority of the children (66.3%) spent less than 61 minutes in shared reading experiences weekly. The range of the shared reading time was 0 to 300 with a mean of 63.74. Similarly,

most of the children (65.9%) who spent time alone with books did so less than 61 minutes per week (*M*=76.70, range 0 to 420). The detailed information is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Children's weekly time of reading related experience

	f	**%**
The weekly amount in minutes of parents participating in shared reading activities with children	173	66.3
0-60′	56	21.5
61-120′	19	7.3
121-180′	10	3.8
180-240′	3	1.1
240+		
The weekly amount in minutes of children spending time with a book (e.g. look at, pretend read, etc.) by themselves.		
0-60′	172	65.9
61-120′	42	16.1
121-180′	20	7.7
180-240′	14	5.4
240+	13	5.0

In parallel with the children's weekly reading experiences, 30.7% of the mothers and 33.7 % of the fathers (33.7%) read less than 61 minutes a week. The range of mothers' weekly reading time was 0 to 600 with a mean of 27.22. On the other hand, the range of fathers' weekly reading time was 0 to 1000 with a mean of 28.30.

Table 4.4 Parents' weekly time of reading

	f	%
The weekly amount of time in minutes of mothers spending time with books		
0-60′	80	30.7
61-120′	53	20.3
121-180′	68	26.1
180-240′	25	9.6
240+	35	13.3
The weekly amount of time in minutes of fathers spending time with books		
0-60′	88	33.7
61-120′	51	19.5
121-180′	58	22.2
180-240′	20	7.66
240′+	44	16.85

4.1.1 Descriptive Results for Home Literacy Environment and Preschool Reading Attitudes Instruments' Score

The descriptive information about the instruments used is presented in Table 4.5. As the table indicates, the children's reading attitude scores ranged from 20 to 36. The mean score for the PRAS was 28.06 with a standard deviation value of 4.04. The Skewness and the Kurtosis values indicated that the PRAS score had a normal distribution. The histogram of the PRAS also displayed the normal distribution (See Appendix J).

4.5 Descriptive Results for HLEQ and PRAS Instruments' Scores

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Stat	SE	Stat	SE
PRAS	261	20	36	28.06	4.04	.14	.15	-.75	.30
HLEQ	261	110	190	141.79	15.86	.39	.15	-.20	.30

The HLEQ scores ranged from 110 to 190. The mean score for the HLEQ was 141.79 with a standard deviation value of 15.86. The values of the Skewness and the Kurtosis for the scale showed that the distribution of the scores was normal. The histogram of the HLEQ displayed a normal distribution (See Appendix J).

4.2 Inferential Statistics

In this section, the research questions are examined through the use of inferential statistics which include the Independent sample *t*-test, the One-Way ANOVA and the Pearson product-moment.

4.2.1 The Difference in Children's PRAS Scores in terms of demographic variables

RQ1: What are the preschool children's attitudes toward reading?

The first research question investigated the children's reading attitudes using demographic information such as gender, household income, etc. In this section, the thirteen sub-research questions and their results are presented.

4.2.1.1 The Difference in Children's PRAS Scores in terms of Gender.

Sub-RQ1: Is there a significant mean difference between girls' and boys' attitudes toward reading?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference between girls' and boys' reading attitudes.

An independent sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of girls' and boys' reading attitudes. The assumptions of the *t*-test, normal distribution and level of measurement, were checked. The data set was appropriate for the test. After the t-test was conducted, the equal variances assumption was checked. The Levene's test results were not significant so the first line in the table was reported. According to the test results, there was no significant difference in scores of for girls (*M*=28.43, *SD*= 4.27) and boys (*M*=27.60, *SD*= 4.06; t (259) = 1.63). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean differences = .84, 95% Cl: -.173 to 1.86) was a small effect (eta squared = .01).

4.2.1.2 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of parental educational level.

Sub-RQ 2: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parental educational levels?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parental educational levels.

A one-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of parental educational levels.

Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The Levene Static value was greater than .05. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test. Parents' educational levels were divided into five groups (Group 1: primary school, Group 2: middle school, Group 3: high school, Group 4: university and Group 5: postgraduate). The test was both conducted for mothers' and fathers' educational levels.

The test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for mothers' educational level groups: [F (4, 256) = 4.54, $p = .00$] with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .07). Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M= 26.34, SD= 4.58) significantly differed from Group 5 (M= 30.81, SD= 2.99). The means plot of PRAS regarding mothers' educational levels is presented in Figure 4.1

In addition, the test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for the fathers' educational level groups, as well: [F (4, 256) = 8.75, $p = .00$] with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .12). Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M=25.70, SD=4.00) was significantly differ from Group 4 (M=29.56, SD=3.85) and Group 5 (M=31.22, SD=2.86). Group 3 (M=27.44, SD=3.93) was significantly differ from Group 4 (M=29.56, SD=3.85). The means plot of PRAS regarding the fathers' educational levels is presented in Figure 4.1

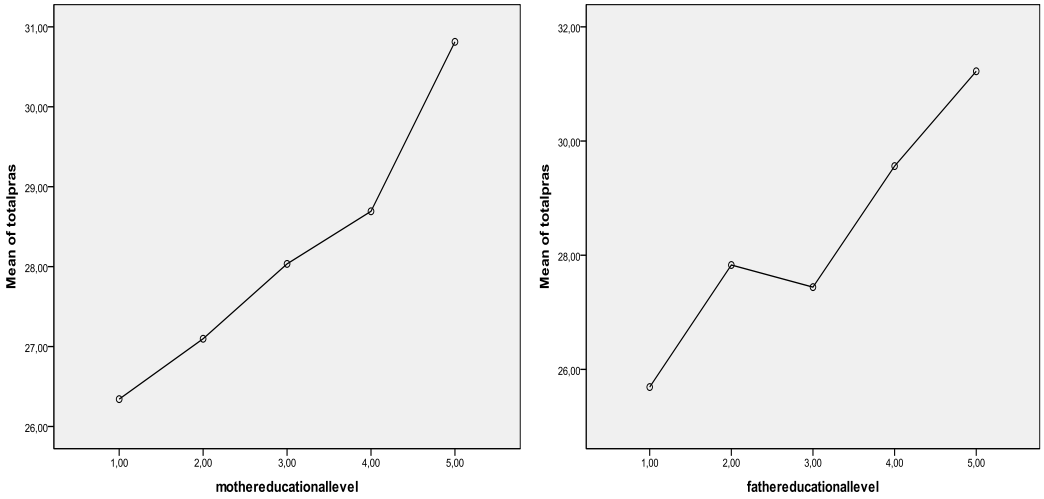


Figure 4.1 The PRAS' means plots regarding mothers' and fathers' educational levels

4.2.1.3 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of household income

Sub-RQ3: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of household income?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of household income

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of household income. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The Levene Static value was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test. Household income was divided into six groups (Group 1: 0-1000 TL, Group 2: 1001-2000 TL, Group 3: 2001-3000 TL, Group 4: 3001-4000 TL, Group 5: 4001-5000 TL, and Group 6: 5000+ TL). The test results showed that there was a

statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for household income: [F (5, 255) = 4.95 p= .00] with a moderate effect size

(eta squared = .08). Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M= 26.78, SD= 4.60) significantly differed from Group 3 (M=29.26, SD=3.87) and Group 6 (M=31.00, SD=1.84). The means plot of PRAS regarding household income is presented in Figure 4.2.

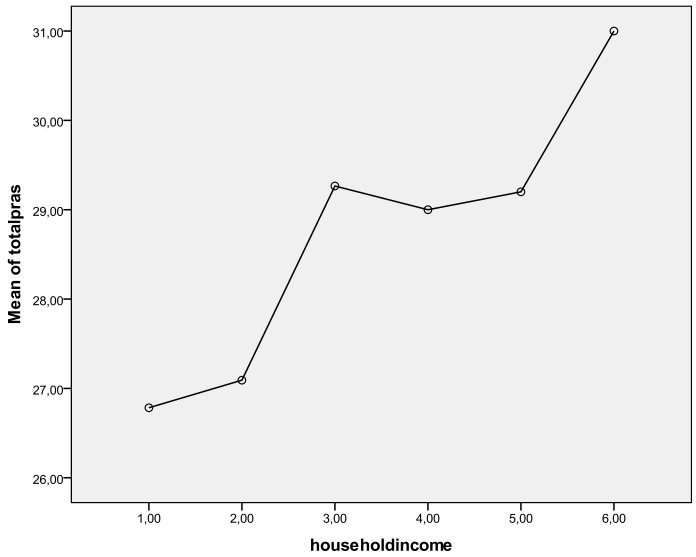


Figure 4.2 The means plot of PRAS regarding household income

4.2.1.4 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of children's attendance time of early childhood education

Sub-RQ 4: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of children's time in attendance of early childhood education?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of children's time in attendance of early childhood education.

The data showed that 54.4 % of the children (*N*=142) had not previously enrolled in early childhood education, whereas 46.6% of the children (*N*=119) had some form of previous early childhood education experience. An independent sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of the two groups' reading attitudes. The assumptions of the *t*-test: normal distribution and level of measurement were checked. The data set was appropriate for the test. After the *t*-test was conducted, the equal variances assumption was checked. The Levene's test result was not significant so the first line in the table was reported. The results displayed that there was a significant difference in the scores of those children who had previous ECE experience (*M*=29.26, *SD*= 3.84) and those who did not have previous ECE experience (*M*=27.28, *SD*= 4.21; *t*(259) = -3.78). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean differences = -1.98, 95% Cl: -3.01 to -.95) was a small effect (eta squared = .05).

4.2.1.5 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of the numbers of books at home.

Sub-RQ 5: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books at home?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books at home.

A one-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books at home. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The Levene Static value was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test. The number of books at home was divided into six groups (Group 1: none book , Group 2: 1-40, Group 3:41-80, Group 4: 81-120 , Group 5:121 to 160 and Group 5: more than 160). The test results demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for the number of books at home groups: [F (5, 255) = 7.70 p= .00] with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .13).

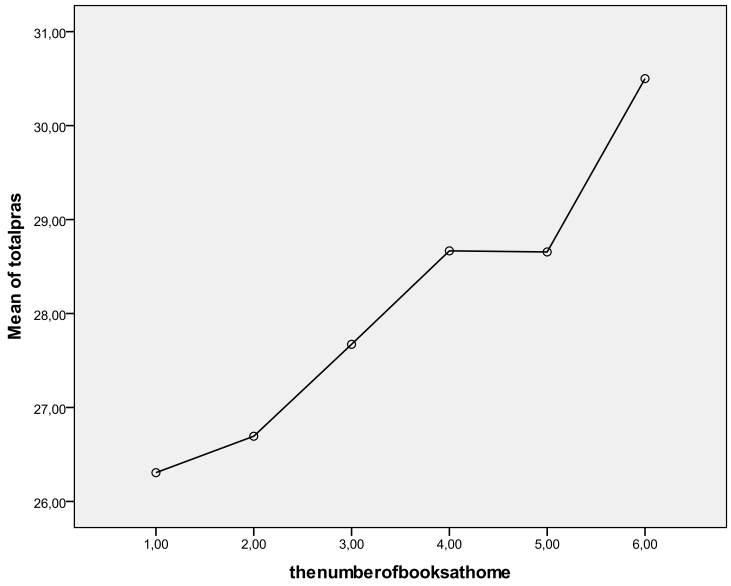


Figure 4.3 The means plot of PRAS regarding the number of books at home

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 6 (M= 30.50, SD= 3.77) significantly differed from Group 1 (M=26.30, SD=3.71) and Group 2 (M=26.70, SD= 4.70) and Group 3 (M=27.67,

SD=3.68). The means plot of PRAS regarding the number of books at home is presented in Figure 4.3.

Moreover, a One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of children's book at home. The previously mentioned assumptions were checked for the data set. The value of the Levene Statistic was not significant. The number of children's books at home was divided into six groups (Group 1: none book, Group 2: 1-15, Group 3: 16-30, Group 4: 31-45, and Group 5: 46 to 60 and Group 5: more than 60). The test results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for the number of children's books at home groups: [F (5, 255) = 6.31 p= .00] with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .11).

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M= 25.00, SD= 3.82) significantly differed from Group 4 (M= 29.95, SD= 3.55) and Group 6 (M=30.71, SD=3.75). The mean plots of the number children's books at home is presented in Figure 4.4

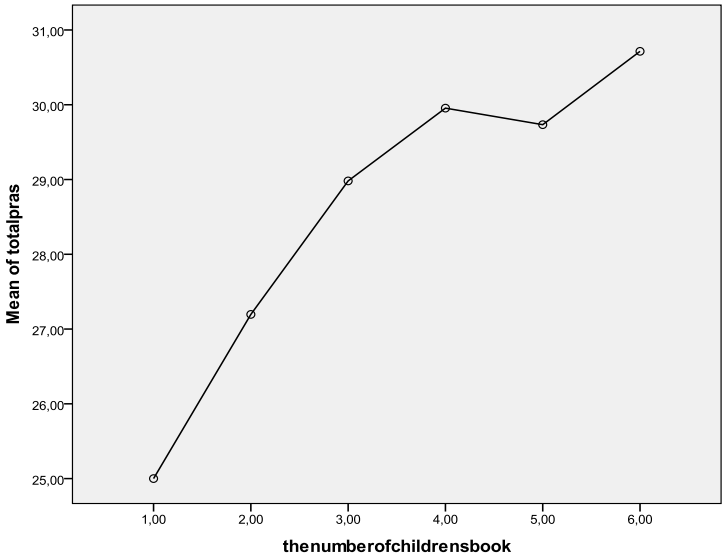


Figure 4.4 The means plot of PRAS regarding the number of children's books at home

4.2.1.6 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of the time spending time on TV

Sub- RO6: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the time spent watching TV?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in children's reading attitude in terms of the time spent watching TV.

A one-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the time spent watching TV. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not significant .The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The time spent watching TV were divided into six groups (Group 1: 0-60' , Group 2: 61-120', Group 3: 121-180', and Group 4: more than 180'). The test results showed that there was no statistically significant difference at the $p< .05$ level in PRAS scores for the time spent watching TV:[F (3, 257) = 2.0 $p> .00$] with .01 eta squared. The mean plots of the time spent watching TV are presented in Figure 4.5

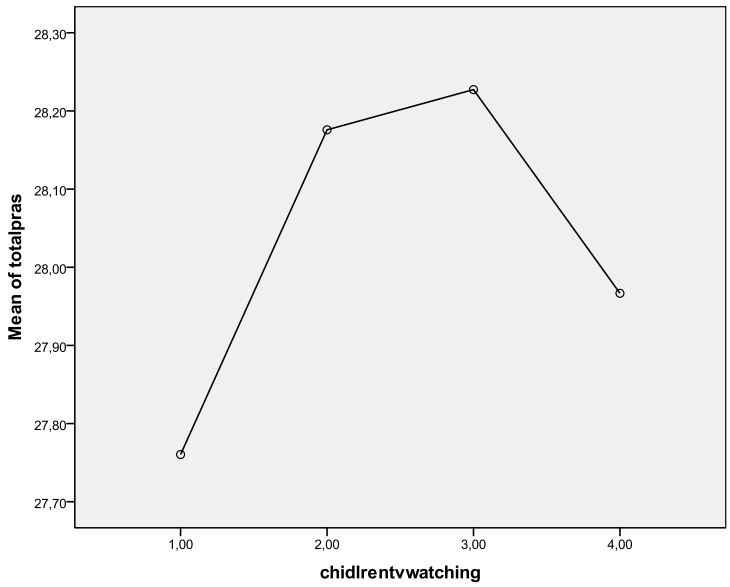


Figure 4.5 The means plot of PRAS regarding the time spent watching TV

4.2.1.7 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of time spent on the Computer

Sub-RQ 7: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of time spent on the computer?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in children's reading attitude in terms of time spent on the computer.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the time spent on the computer. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The time spent on computers was divided into six groups (Group 1: non user, Group 2: 1-15', Group 3:

16-30′, Group 4: 31-45′, Group 5: 46-60′ and Group 6: more than an hour). The test results showed that there was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for the time spent on computers: [F (5, 255) = 1.85 $p > .00$] with a .03 eta squared. The mean plots of the time spent on computers is presented in Figure 4.6

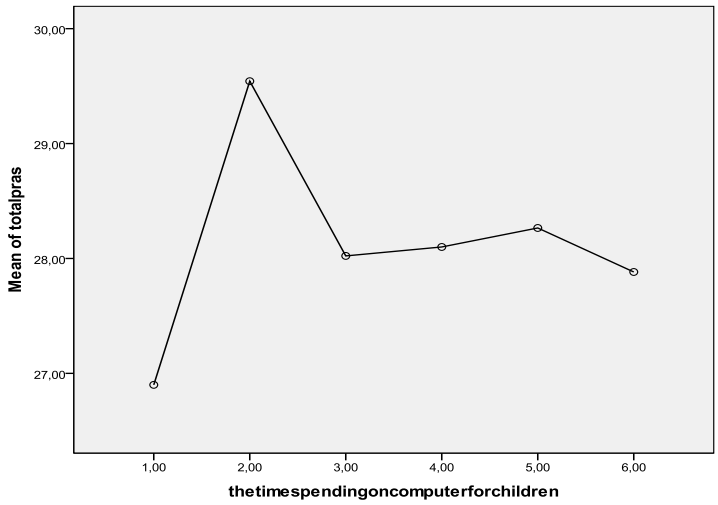


Figure 4.6 The means plot of PRAS regarding the time spent on computers

4.2.1.8 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of parental enjoyment of reading

Sub-RQ8: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parental enjoyment of reading?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parental enjoyment of reading.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitude in terms of parental enjoyment of reading. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement

and normal distribution. The value of the Levene Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The parental enjoyment of reading was divided into four groups (Group 1: not enjoy, Group 2: moderately enjoy, Group 3: enjoy, and Group 4: very enjoy). The test results demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p< .05$ level in PRAS scores for the maternal enjoyment of reading: [F (3, 257) = 3.70 $p= .01$] with a .04 eta squared. Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 2 (M= 26.98, SD= 4.14) was significantly different from Group 4 (M= 29.56, SD= 4.20). The means plot of the maternal enjoyment of reading is presented in Figure 4.7.

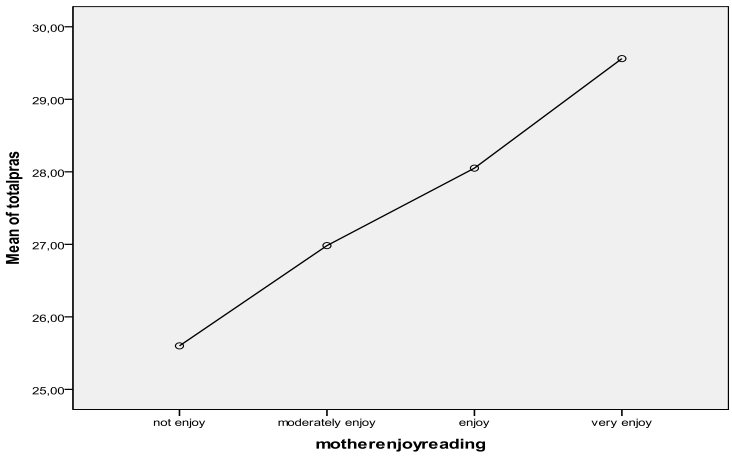


Figure 4.7 The means plot of the maternal enjoyment of reading

Moreover, children's reading attitude scores were compared in terms of fathers' enjoyment of reading. The test assumptions were checked. The value of the Levene Statistic was not significant .The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The test results showed that there was no statistically difference

at the $p< .05$ level in PRAS scores for the fathers' enjoyment of reading: [F (3, 257) = 1.80 $p>.05$] with a .02 eta squared. The means plot of the fathers' enjoyment of reading is presented in Figure 4.8.

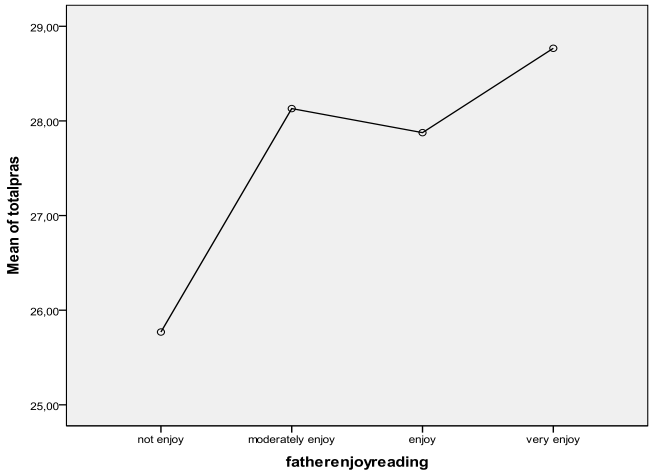


Figure 4.8 The means plot of the fathers' enjoyment of reading

4.2.1.9 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of parents spending time reading

Sub-RQ 9: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent reading?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent reading.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' weekly time spent for reading. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The parents' spending time

reading was divided into five groups (Group 1: 0-60', Group 2: 61-120', Group 3: 121-180', Group 4: 181-240', and Group 5: more than 3 hours). The test results demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p< .05$ level in PRAS scores for mothers' weekly time spent reading: [F (4, 256) = 2.95 $p= .01$] with a .04 eta squared. Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated the groups were not significantly different from one another. The means plot of the mothers' weekly time spent reading is presented in Figure 4.9.

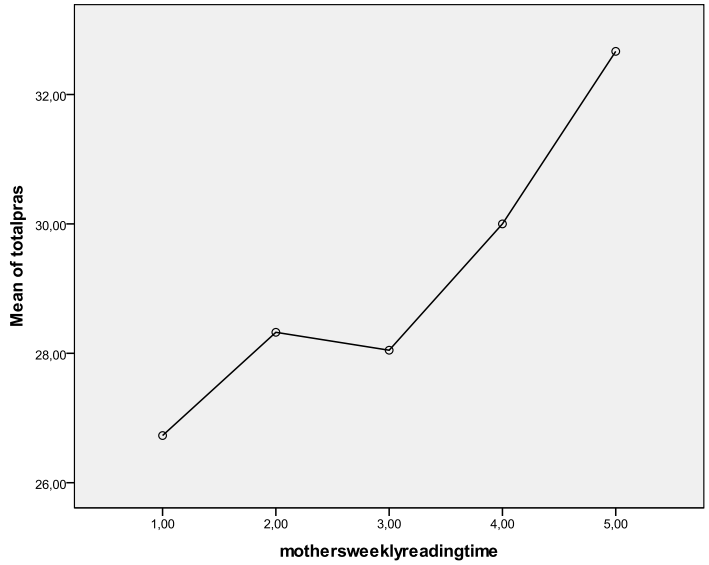


Figure 4.9 The means plot of the mothers' weekly time spent reading

Additionally, children's reading attitude scores were compared regarding fathers' weekly time spent reading. The assumptions of the test were checked. The value of the Levene Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The test results showed that there was no statistically significant differences at the $p< .05$ level in PRAS scores for the fathers' weekly time

spent reading: [F (4, 256) = .48 p>.05] with a .00 eta squared. The means plot of the fathers' time spent reading is presented in Figure 4.10.

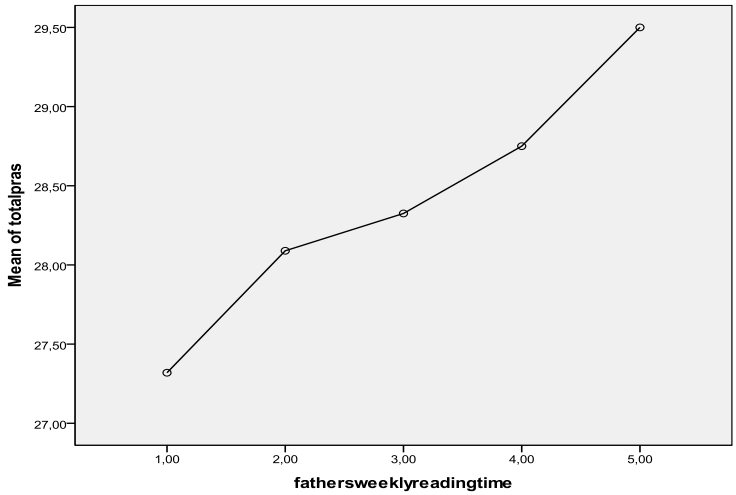


Figure 4.10 The means plot of the fathers' weekly time spent reading

4.2.1.10 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of parents spending time reading with their children

Sub-RQ 10: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent in shared reading activities with children?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' time spent in shared reading activities with children.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of parents' weekly time spent in shared reading activities. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not a significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the

test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The parents' time spent in shared reading activities was divided into five groups (Group 1: 0-60', Group 2: 61-120', Group 3: 121-180', Group 4: 181-240', and Group 5: more than 3 hours). The test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p< .05$ level in PRAS scores for parents' weekly time spent in shared reading activities with children: [F (4, 256) = 3.26 $p =.00$] with .05 eta squared. The means plot of the parents' weekly time spent in shared reading activities with children is presented in Figure 4.11.

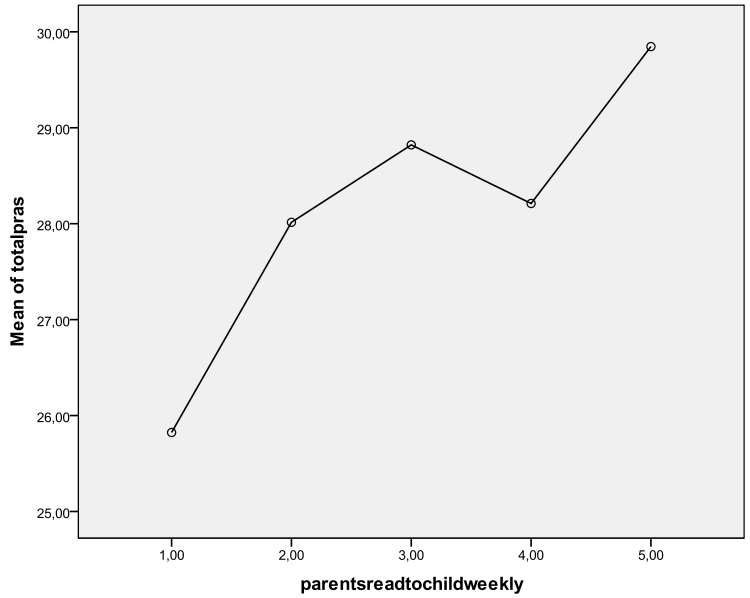


Figure 4.11 The means plot of the parents' weekly time spent in shared reading activities with children

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M= 25.82, SD= 3.31) was significantly different from Group 2 (M= 28.01, SD= 4.08), Group 3 (M= 28.82, SD= 4.26), and Group 5 (M= 29.84, SD= 3.41).

4.2.1.11 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of the frequency of parents engaged in reading with a child.

Sub-RQ 11: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of their parents reading to them?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of their parents reading to them.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of parents engaged in reading to a child. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The frequency of parents reading to a child was divided into five groups (Group 1: 0-3, Group 2: 4-6, Group 3: 7-9, Group 4: 10-12, and Group 5:13+). The test results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for the frequency of parents engaged in weekly reading activities with their children: [F (4, 256) = 5.68 $p = .00$] with a .08 eta squared.

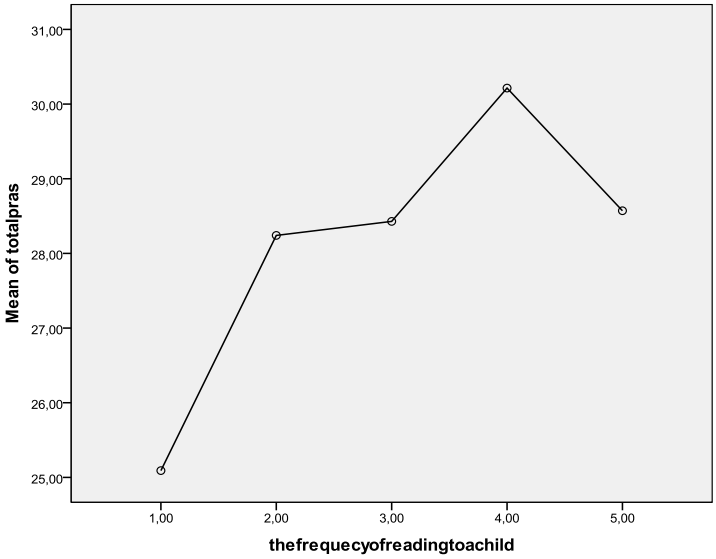


Figure 4.12 The means plot of the frequency of parents engaged in weekly reading activities with their children

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (*M*= 25.09, *SD*= 3.60) significantly differed from Group 2 (*M*= 28.24, *SD*= 4.00), Group 3 (*M*=28.42, *SD*= 4.27), and Group 4 (*M*= 30.21, *SD*= 4.15). The means plot of the frequency of parents engaged in weekly reading with their children is presented in Figure 4.12.

4.2.1.12 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of the frequency of children asking parents to read to them

Sub-RQ 12: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children asking parents to read to them?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children asking parents to read to them.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children asking their parents to read to them. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The frequency of a child asking a parent to read to him/her was divided into four groups (Group 1: hardly ever, Group 2: once or twice a month, Group 3: once or twice a week, Group 4: almost daily). The test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for the frequency of children asking their parents to read to them: [F (3, 257) = 14.18 $p = .00$] with a .14 eta squared.

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M= 24.82, SD= 3.48) significantly differed from Group 3 (M= 28.59, SD= 3.88) and Group 4 (M= 28.95, SD= 4.07). In addition, Group 2 (M= 25.03, SD= 3.43) was significantly different from Group 3 (M= 28.59, SD= 3.88) and Group 4 (M= 28.95, SD= 4.07). The means plot of the frequency of children their parents to read to them is presented in Figure 4.13.

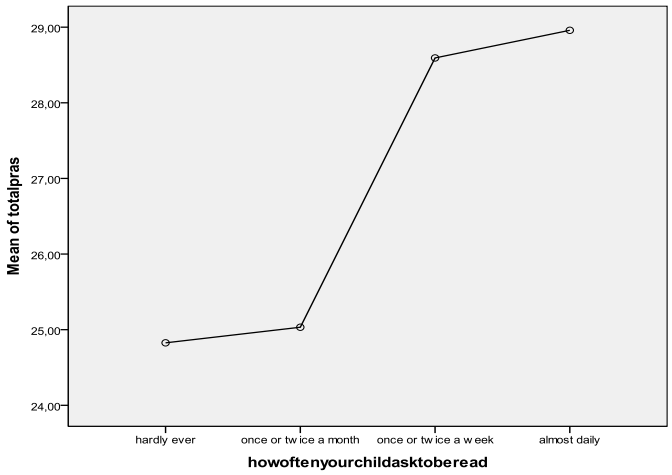


Figure 4.13 The means plot of the frequency of children asking their parents to read to them

4.2.1.13 The Difference in Children's PRAS scores in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves

Sub-RQ 13: Is there a significant mean difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test and then a One-Way ANOVA was conducted. The frequency of children looking at books by themselves was divided into 4

groups (Group 1: hardly ever, Group 2: once or twice a month, Group 3: once or twice a week, Group 4: almost daily). The test results demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p<$ .05 level in PRAS scores for the frequency of children looking at books by themselves: [F (3, 257) = 8.08 $p= .00$] with a .09 eta squared.

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M= 23.45, SD= 4.48) significantly differed from Group 3 (M= 28.41, SD= 4.21) and Group 4 (M= 28.47, SD= 3.83). In addition, Group 2 (M= 25.68, SD= 3.88) significantly differed from Group 3 (M= 28.41, SD= 4.21) and Group 4 (M= 28.47, SD= 3.83). The means plot of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves is presented in Figure 4.14.

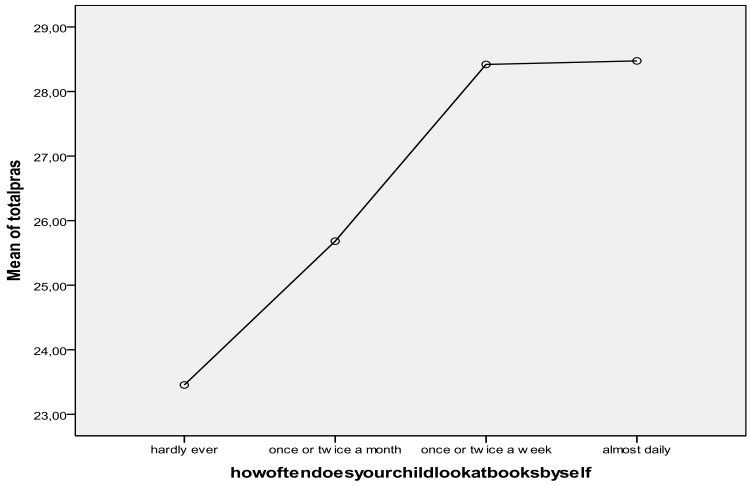


Figure 4. 14 The means plot of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves

4.2.2 The Difference in Children's HLEQ scores in terms of parental educational levels and household income

RQ 2: What is the children's home literacy environment?

The second research question investigated the children's HLE regarding parental educational level and household income. The following two sub-research questions and their results are presented.

4.2.2.1 The Difference in Children's HLEQ scores in terms parental educational levels

Sub-RQ1: Is there a significant mean difference in children's HLE in terms of parental educational levels?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's home literacy environments in terms of parental educational levels.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's home literacy environments in terms of parental educational levels. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test. Parents' educational levels were divided into five groups (Group 1: primary school, Group 2: middle school, Group 3: high school, Group 4: university, and Group 5: postgraduate). The test was conducted for both mothers and fathers. The value of the Levene test was not significant for the mothers' educational level groups. The test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in HLEQ scores for the mothers' educational level groups: [F (4, 256) = 4.01, p= .00] with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .06).

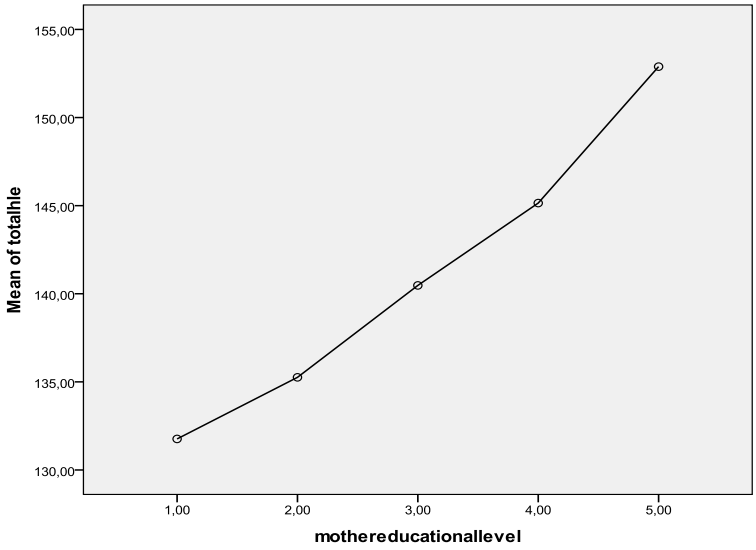


Figure 4.15 The HLEQ means plot of the mothers' educational level

Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (*M*= 131.76, *SD*= 24.35) significantly differed from Group 4 (*M*= 145.14, *SD*= 18.17). The means plot of mothers' educational level is presented in Figure 4.15

Additionally, the test was conducted for fathers. The value of the Levene test was not significant for the fathers' educational level groups. The test results demonstrated that there was a statistically signficiant difference at the $p < .05$ level in HLEQ scores for the fathers' educational level groups:[F (4, 256) = 5.36, p= .00] with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .07). Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (*M*= 128, *SD*= 27.28) significantly differed from Group 4 (*M*= 146.76, *SD*= 20.52). The means plot of fathers' educational level is presented in Figure 4.16.

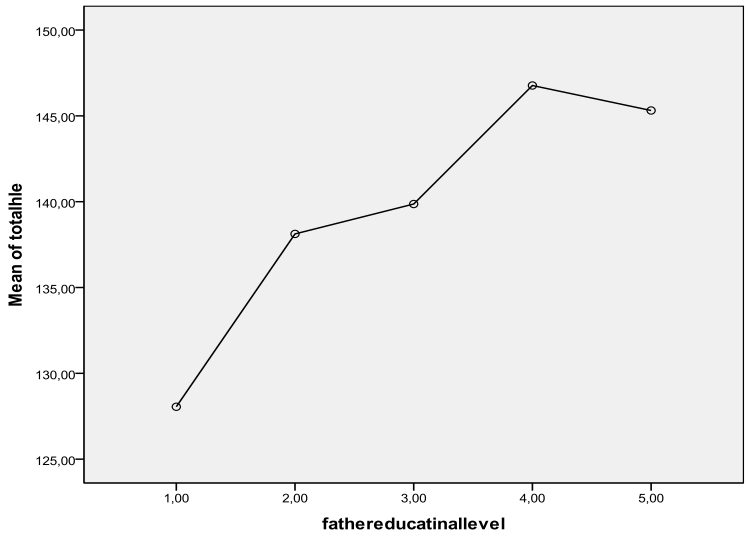


Figure 4.16 The HLEQ means plot of the fathers' educational level

4.2.2.2 The Difference in Children's HLEQ scores in terms of the household income

Sub-RQ2: Is there a significant mean difference in children's HLE in terms of the household income?

H_0: There is not a significant mean difference in preschool children's home literacy environments in terms of household income.

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores of children's home literacy environment in terms of household income. Before the test, the following assumptions were checked: a level of measurement and normal distribution. The value of Levene's Statistic was not a significant. The data set was appropriate to conduct the test.

Household income was divided into six groups (Group 1: 0-1000 TL, Group 2: 1001-2000 TL, Group 3: 2001-3000 TL, Group 4: 3001-4000 TL,

Group 5: 4001-5000 TL, and Group 6: 5001+ TL). The test results showed that there were statistically significant differences at the $p < .05$ level in PRAS scores for household income groups: F (5, 255) = 3.17 p= .00 with a moderate effect size (eta squared = .06). Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated the Group 6 (M= 154.54, SD= 23.80) significantly differed from Group 1 (M= 136.35, SD= 24.21) and Group 2 (M= 136.71, SD= 22.72). The means plot of household income is presented in Figure 4.17.

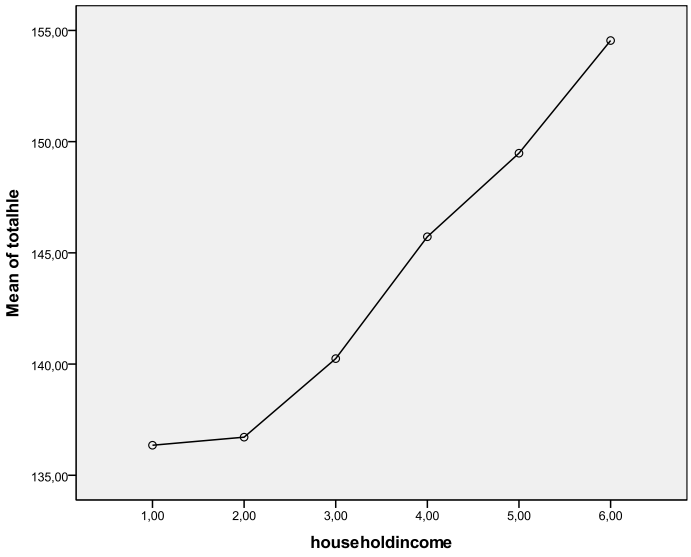


Figure 4.17 The HLEQ means plot of household income

4.2.3 The Relationship between Children's Reading Attitudes and Home Literacy Environment.

RQ 3: Is there a significant relationship between children's attitudes toward reading and the home literacy environment?

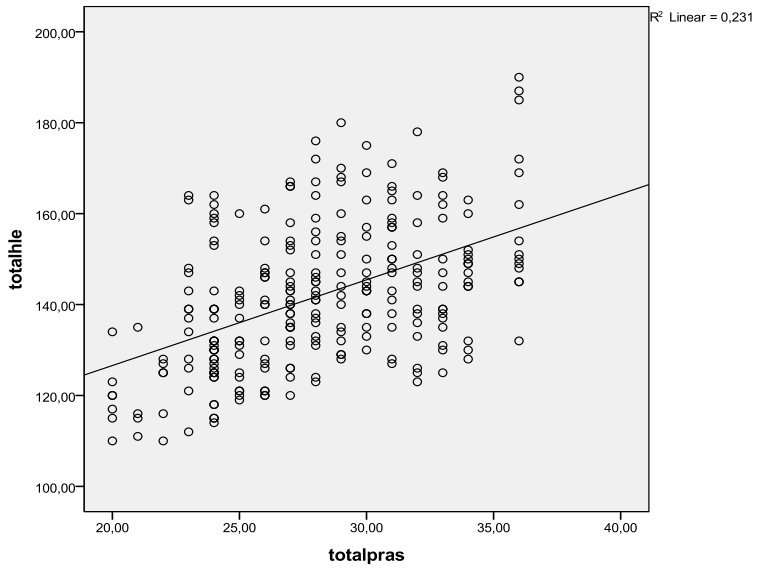
H_0: There is not a significant relationship between children's attitudes toward reading and the home literacy environment.

The last research question is related to investigating the relationship between children's reading attitudes and the home literacy environment. In

order to examine the relationship between the two variables, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted. Before the analysis, the following assumptions for a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis were checked: level of measurement, related pairs, independence of observation, normal distribution, linearity, and homoscedasticity.

The research had two dependent variables, the reading attitude and the home literacy environment, both of them continuous. Thus, the level of measurement was ensured. In the study there were no missing scores; each participant had a related score. Hence, the related pairs' assumption was provided. As indicated in Table 4.4., the scores of the two dependent variables were normally distributed (See Appendix G). The assumption of the normal distribution was also met.

The other point relates to the linearity of the variables. According to Pallant (2007), linearity means that "*the relationship between the two variables should be linear*" (p. 124) and the last assumption was homoscedesticity. The assumption refers to the variability in scores that should be similar at all values for each variable (Pallant, 2007). The last two assumptions were checked through the scatter plot. The linear line on the scatter plot showed that the linearity assumption was provided. For the homoscedesticity assumption, the cigar-like shape of the scatter plot indicated that the correlated score pairs were mostly gathered around the linear line. Hence the assumption was ensured. The scatter plot is presented in Figure 4.18.



4.18 Scatterplot of HLEQ and PRAS mean scores

The correlation analysis showed that there was a medium positive correlation relationship between children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment, r= .48, n= 261, p < .01, and the relationship was statistically significant. Afterwards, the coefficient of determination was calculated and the two variables shared 23.04 percent of their variance.

4.3 Interview Findings

This section contains the interview findings and the demographic information of the children**.** After completing the PRAS administration, the researcher examined the children's PRAS scores. The PRAS scores ranged from 20 to 36. The children were selected according to their PRAS scores and three groups were constituted. The first group of children had the lowest scores (20) of the PRAS. Detailed information about the low reading attitude group of children is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 The demographic information of the low reading attitude group of children

	AX1*	**AX2**	**AY1**	**AY2**
Gender	Girl	Girl	Boy	Boy
PRAS Score	20	20	20	20
Mothers' Educational Level	Middle School	Middle School	High School	High School
Fathers' Educational Level	High School	Middle School	University	Middle School
Household Income	2.000	750	2.600	1.000
ECE Experiences	First year	First year	First year	Second year
Number of books at home				
For children	10	10	22	10
For parents	10	4	46	0
Total	20	14	68	10
Weekly shared reading time	30′	30′	100′	60′
Daily spent time on TV	90′	60′	100′	120′
Daily spent time on computer	100′	0′	15′	0′

***A= Low attitude group, X= Girl, Y= Boy, 1-2= the children's code number**

The second group of children from the medium reading attitude score group. Detailed information about the children is presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 The demographic information of the medium reading attitude group of children

	BX1*	**BX2**	**BY1**	**BY2**
Gender	Girl	Girl	Boy	Boy
PRAS Score	28	28	28	28
Mothers' Educational Level	High School	University	High School	High School
Fathers' Educational Level	University	University	High School	University
Household Income (TL)	4.000	10.000	3.500	2.500
ECE Experiences	First year	First year	Second Year	First year
Number of books at home				
For children	30′	30′	50′	25′
For parents	5′	50′	150′	15′
Total	35′	80′	200′	40′
Weekly shared reading time	30′	90′	180′	100′
Daily spent time on TV	120′	180′	60′	120′
Daily spent time on computer	20′	20′	120′	15′

***B= Medium attitude group, X= Girl, Y= Boy, 1-2= the children's code number**

The last group of children scored in the high reading attitude group. Detailed information about the last group of children is presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 The demographic information of the high reading attitude group of children

	CX1*	**CX2**	**CY1**	**CY2**
Gender	Girl	Girl	Boy	Boy
PRAS Score	36	36	36	36
Mothers' Educational Level	University	University	University	Postgraduate
Fathers' Educational Level	High School	University	University	University
Household Income	1.800	5.000	3.000	3.500
ECE Experiences	First year	Second Year	Second Year	Second Year
Number of books at home				
For children	20	30	100	55
For parents	50	50	250	200
Total	70	80	350	255
Weekly shared reading time	100′	120′	140′	120′
Daily spent time on TV	45′	60′	60′	120′
Daily spent time on computer	25′	30′	60′	60′

***C= High attitude group, X= Girl, Y= Boy, 1-2= the children's code number**

4.3.1 Children's responses to the question: "what is reading for you?"

The researcher asked 10 questions of the children (See Appendix A). The researcher aimed to investigate the children's perceptions of reading by asking these questions. Therefore, the children's original responses are presented respectively. The first question was, "What is reading for you?"

and, if needed, "what do you think about reading?"(as a prompt). The response of each child is presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9.The children's responses to "what is reading for you?"

The child	Q1: What is reading for you?
AX1	*" Do not speak and listen"*
AX2	*" To sleep; my mother reads me story before sleep "*
AY1	*" School, teacher, homework , my older sister knows how to read and she does her homework"*
AY2	*" to handle a book and keep quiet, but sometimes my father moves his lips"*
BX1	*" Books, telling a story, my mother reads me a story"*
BX2	*" School, books, to be happy"*
BY1	*"Stories, we read story with my mother every night. Sometimes, my grandfather tells me stories. He knows lots of funny stories. My favorite book's name is Keloğlan but I cannot read yet.*
BY2	*" Good things; to be happy, to do homework and then the teacher loves you"*
CX1	*"to look at the books and tell what is written"*
CX2	*"It is very nice and funny but I could not read yet. My older brother can read and write. He can read books alone. I want to learn how to read*
CY1	*" to be successful, to be clever, to be grown up and to become an older brother"*
CY2	*" to read, to look at the prints and to understand a book"*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

Children gave short responses to the questions. Children had different ideas about reading. When examining their responses, AX1 mentioned her behaviors when someone reads to her. AX2 stated her shared reading activities with her mother. Considering her experiences, reading was associated with sleep for her; also she thinks people read in order to sleep.

AY1 mentioned the things related to school, as well as his older sister's reading related activities. AY2 relayed some reader behaviors and he shared his father's reading behaviors.

When examining the second group children's responses, BX1 talked about stories and her shared reading experiences with her mother. Similarly, BY1 talked about his reading experiences, his favorite book, and his current reading ability. On the other hand, BX2 and BY2 mentioned about their feelings and the things related to school.

When examining the last group of children's answers, CX1 described the reading process according to her perception. According to CX1, reading is looking at the books and telling what is written. Similarly, CY2 described the reading process as looking at the print and understanding a book. On the other hand, CY1 mentioned his sense that reading meant being clever and becoming an older brother, etc. CX2 mentioned her feelings about reading and her current reading ability. She compared her reading ability with her brother's reading ability. Although, her brother could read and write independently, she could not read and write. She wanted to learn reading and she said that reading was an enjoyable activity.

4.3.2 Children's responses to the question: "why do people read?"

The second question was about why people read. The responses of the children are presented in Table 4.10

Table 4.10.The children's responses to "why do people read?"

The child	Q2: Why do people read?
AX1	*"To do activities; we cannot read. Our teacher reads our books and we do our activities, she reads us a story and sometimes she reads us a poem"*
AX2	*"To Sleep, to make babies to sleep"*
AY1	*"To do their homework and to be successful , because teachers give it and the teacher will get angry if you do not your homework,"*
AY2	*"to read a story to his/her children"*
BX1	*"To learn the answers of questions; for example: Does a dog die?"*
BX2	*"To go to school, to be successful "*
BY1	*"For sake of God to protect them. My grandfather reads the Quran , "*
BY2	*" To be happy"*
CX1	*"to learn reading, to learn how to read and write"*
CX2	*" they want to read in order to enjoy; books are so beneficial, people should read"*
CY1	*"To use their intellect, to learn the news, and to learn everything."*
CY2	*"To know everything, to have a lot of information, to be successful, to have a job and money"*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

As indicated in Table 4.10, the children stated different reasons about why people read. AX1 answered the question by relating reading with her teacher. According to AX1, her teacher read because they could not read. The teacher read and they did their activities. For AX1, teacher read for the purpose of students completing activities and she mentioned that her teacher sometimes read a story and a poem. AX2 responded according to her home experiences. She explained that people read to sleep. Similarly, in the previous question, she also expressed that her mother read a story before sleeping. On the other hand, AY1 answered the questions related to school content. According to AY1, people read because their teachers give them homework. If they do not do their homework, their teacher will get

angry. In addition, he stated that people read to be successful. Lastly, AY2 said that people read stories to their children.

When examining the second group of children's answers, BX1 indicated that people read to learn the answers of questions. In addition, she gave an example of question: "Does a dog die?"According to BX2, people read to be successful and to go school. With a different view than that stated by other children, BY1 indicated that people read so that God protects them. Lastly, BY2 said that people read to be happy. He stated an affective reason about why people read.

In examining the third group of children's answers, we see that CX1 stated that people read to learn how to read and write. According to CX1, people read to gain and practice reading skills. In addition, she made a connection between reading and writing. On the other hand, CX2 stated purely affective reasons to read. According to CX2, reading is an enjoyable activity and people want to read because they enjoy reading. Moreover, she cited that books are beneficial so that people should read. CY1 gave responses related to learning and intelligence. For CY1, people read to sharpen their wit and to learn the news and all the things. Similarly, CY2 mentioned enhancing knowledge and knowing all things. In addition, he cited reasons of success, jobs, and money. He made connections between reading, knowledge, intellect, success, jobs and money.

4.3.3 Children's responses to the question: "what do people do when they read?"

In the third question the researcher asked to children about what people do when they read. The responses of the children are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11.The children's responses to "what do people do when they read?"

The child	Q3: What do people do when they read?
AX1	*"Keep quiet and look at books"*
AX2	*"Hold a book and look at it"*
AY1	*"Look at the written things and write them"*
AY2	*"Hold a book and keep quiet"*
BX1	*"Look at the books quietly but sometimes my father moves his lips"*
BX2	*" not speaking and looking at the books and sometimes they write something"*
BY1	*"Sitting somewhere, opening a book and* ***telling a story****"*
BY2	*"Holding a book ,keeping quiet; they do not speak, look at the printings,* ***have information about a book****"*
CX1	*"Hold a book, my father holds a newspaper, opens his arm big (she showed) looks at the pages,* ***learns news*** *and tells it to my mother."*
CX2	*"Look at the writing and* ***telling a story****. I can tell a story by looking at the pictures but my father* ***can tell a story even there is not picture in the book****"*
CY1	*"They hold on writings and* ***know them****"*
CY2	*"Look at the writings and* ***understand the writing*** *"*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

The children gave different responses to the question. All of them mentioned their observations about a reader's behaviors such as holding a book, looking at a book, or keeping quiet. They cited their observations of a reader's behaviors. Furthermore, six of the children (BY1, BY2, CX1, CX2, CY1, and CY2) also cited that the reader gets meaning and information from writings. Moreover, they were aware that writings contain meaning and

information and the reader understands or gains the information in reading process. In addition, CX2 was aware of her current reading ability and compared her current reading ability with her father's. She said that she could tell a story from pictures but her father could tell a story from a book that included no picture. She was aware that reading is related to written things.

4.3.4 Children's responses to the question: "what kinds of things do people read?"

The fourth question was about the kinds of things people read. The responses of the children are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12.The children's responses to "what kinds of things do people read?"

The child	Q4: What kinds of things do people read?
AX1	***"Books**, stories, their names, pictures, medicines to know when we drink them. Bills the cost of cell phone bill."*
AX2	*"Story, **books**, newspapers*, (homework)"*
AY1	***"Books**, newspapers*, big books, school books"*
AY2	***"Books**, stories, writings, numbers, washing machine book; our washing machine was broken down and my father read a book and repaired it."*
BX1	***"Books**, (homework), written things that teacher sends home; recipe, my mother reads recipes and makes a cake, the shopping list, the price of the toys"*
BX2	***"Books**, magazines, stories, newspapers*, (homework) my older sister reads homework on the computer; sometimes we watch a movie together; clothes, my mother looks for clothes on the computer and reads their price."*
BY1	*"Keloğlan, **books,** the Quran, sura, newspaper*"*
BY2	*"Stories, **books**, **books with no picture**, magazines, newspaper*"*

The child	Q4: What kinds of things do people read?
CX1	*"Stories, **books,** magazines; writings, messages: for example, my grandfather lives in Yalova, He sends us a message "when will you come? I miss you" and we send him a message."*
CX2	***"Books**, (homework), dictionary, magazines, and newspaper* my father sometimes reads a newspaper on the computer. There are lots of written things."*
CY1	*"Stories, **books**; movies, my father watches the news, he reads the written things on TV, he reads Beşiktaş (soccer team) how many points they have, I read footballer numbers and flags at play station but they are in English."*
CY2	*"Beautiful **books,** writings, my mother sometimes reads written things: the shop is closed, a hospital there, a house for sale. She reads the names of animals at the zoo. She reads newspaper*, magazines. She has lots of big books. Sometimes, she reads something on computer. We can learn where a plug is sold online. We write and read where we can buy and we can go to buy."*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

As indicated in Table 4.12, all of the children indicated books and eight of the children also included stories in their responses. In addition, seven of the children revealed newspapers and four of them stated homework. In addition to the common responses, children mentioned different things that people read. For example, AX1 mentioned medicine and bills. She said that people read medicine to learn the dosage and usage of medicine. AY2 mentioned the user's manual of a washing machine. He indicated that their washing machine had broken down and that his father repaired it by reading the manual. BX1 mentioned recipes, and that her mother made a cake by reading a recipe. She also mentioned shopping lists and the price of toys. CY2 gave an extensive response to the question and he also mentioned technological sources such as computers and the internet. Similarly, CY1

BX2 also mentioned computers. In addition, CX1 mentioned text messaging and she shared a related memory about her grandfather. Lastly, BY1 included reading the Quran and sura in his response.

4.3.5 Children's responses to the question: "where do people read?"

The fifth question was about where people read. The responses of the children are presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13. The children's responses to "where do people read?"

The child	Q5: Where do people read?
AX1	*School*, ***home***, *neighbor*
AX2	*School* ,***sitting room, bedroom, kitchen, in bed***
AY1	*Desk, school, Ankara, ocean** **He watched a cartoon. In the animation, the main character reads a book in order to find their way.*
AY2	*School , classroom*, ***home***
BX1	*Classroom*, ***home***, *garden,*
BX2	*Holiday,* ***in bed,*** *classroom, in car, in hairdresser*
BY1	*School,* ***hom****e, street, mosque, picnic*
BY2	*School,* ***home,*** *bus stop; hospital, when they wait for their sequence*
CX1	***Home,*** *classroom, park, bus, ship*
CX2	*School, office,* ***home,*** *library, during long journey*
CY1	***Home****, classroom, street, , forest, beach*
CY2	***Home,*** *school, market, bank,* ***his/her room, balcony****, library,*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

As indicated in Table 4.13, all of the children said that people read at school. Eleven of the twelve children included in their responses the home and home related places, such as the sitting room, bedroom, balcony, his/her own room, and bed. Besides the common responses, children also gave a variety of responses. Children not only gave responses related to indoor areas, but also they gave responses related to outdoor areas. The children's

(CY1, CX1, BY1, BX1, AY1) outdoor related responses included the forest, beach, picnic area, street, park, garden, Ankara, and ocean. Furthermore, some children gave interesting responses such as one's neighbor (AX1), hairdresser (BX2), holiday (BX2), ship (CX1), bus stop (BY2), ocean (AY1), and long journey (CX2). Only 2 of the children mentioned the library. Lastly, one child (BY1) said that people read in the mosque.

4.3.6 The children's responses to the question: "Can you read?"

The sixth question was about whether or not the children themselves could read. The responses of the children are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14.The children's responses to "can you read?"

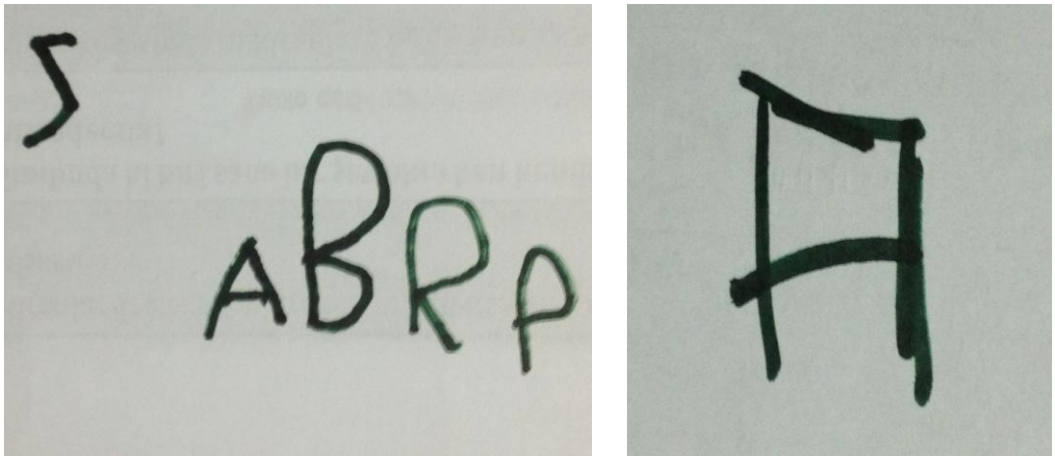
The child	Q6: Can you read?
AX1	*Children cannot read, only older brothers, sisters, mother and fathers can read*
AX2	*Yes **
AY1	*No*
AY2	*Not yet*
BX1	*No, but I can read my name*
BX2	*No*
BY1	*I can read only numbers*
BY2	*No*
CX1	*No, I can only read pictures*
CX2	*No, but I can read some letter. I can write them (A, B,R,P,S)*
CY1	*Not yet*
CY2	*No, but I know a letter and I can write it (A).*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

**She could not read.*

As indicated Table 4.14, except for AX2, the children indicated that they could not read. According to AX1, children could not read and only adults and older sisters and brothers could read. Five of the children (AY1, AY2,

BX2, BY2, and CY2) only responded to the question with "no", but five of the children (BX1, BY1, CX1, CX2, and CY2) gave more detailed information. The children were not only aware that they could not read yet, but also they were aware that they could read some symbols and letters such as numbers, pictures, their names, or letters. Two of the children (CX2 and CY2) mentioned letters. They indicated that they could identify and write some letters. The two children wrote the letters which they knew. The letters are presented in Figure 4.19.



(CX2 – S, A, B, R, P) (CY2 – A)

Figure 4.19 The writing letters of CX2 and CY2

4.3.7 The children's responses to the question: "Do you want to learn to read?"

After the sixth question, the researcher asked to children about whether or not they wanted to learn to read and then asked "why "as a follow-up question. The responses of the children are presented in Table 4.15. As indicated in Table 4.15, except for AY1, all of the children indicated that they wanted to learn to read. AY1 shared that he did not want to learn to

read because his older sister told him that learning to read is very difficult. However, the other eleven children wanted to learn to read. The ten children also explained why they want to learn to read, with the exception of AX1.

Table 4.15.The children's responses to whether they wanted to learn how to read

The child	Q7: Do you want to learn how to read Why?
AX1	***Yes****- I want to learn (no reason)*
AX2	***Yes****- To read a story to my younger brother*
AY1	*No- My older sister says that learning to read is difficult*
AY2	***Yes-*** *It is a good thing, to grow*
BX1	***Yes****- To go to a big school (primary), to grow, to be able to* ***write my name***
BX2	***Yes*** *-* ***To learn writing*** *and I write I love you to my teacher.*
BY1	***Yes*** *– To read Keloğlan and the Quran.*
BY2	***Yes*** *– To play computer games independently. There are some writings but I cannot understand I cannot pass to the next level.*
CX1	***Yes*** *– Because my mother sometimes does not read to me. I can read books alone whenever I want.*
CX2	***Very much****- to be the first at school* *-which school?* *– Not this school. It is a real school* for older girls and boys, to read many books and to be smart*
CY1	***Yes-*** *I want to be like Atatürk. He read many many books and he became very intelligent. I want to be clever like him. I saw his pictures. He had many books. To grow up.*
CY2	***Very much*** *– I will read everything and I will know everything. I will* ***write everything***

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

*Primary school

When examining the children's reasons for learning to read, AX2 wanted to learn to read so that she could read a story to her younger brother. According to AY2, reading was a good thing and it meant growing up. Similarly, BX1 mentioned growing up. She wanted to learn to read so that she could attend a "big school". According to her, primary school was a big school. She also wanted to learn how to write her name. BX2 and CY2 also mentioned writing related reasons. BX2 wanted to learn to write in order to tell her teacher *"I love you"*. CY2 gave extensive reasons regarding his desire to learn to read. He wanted to learn how to read in order to be able to read and write everything. On the other hand, BY1, CX1, CX2 and CY1 wanted to learn how to read books independently. BY1 gave some specific names of books such as Keloğlan and the Quran, whereas CX1 did not mention any specific book titles. CX1 wanted to read independently so that she could read books whenever she wanted, since sometimes her mother did not read to her. She wanted to be an independent reader instead of a dependent reader. Additionally, CX2 and CY1 wanted to read many books. CX2 added that to read many books meant that one was smart. CY1 also mentioned a role model for him. He wanted to learn to read, and to read many books, because Atatürk read many books and he was smart. He wanted to read many books so that he could be like Atatürk. He selected Atatürk as a role model for himself. Lastly, BY2 mentioned a different reason to learn how to read. According to him, computer games included some written text but he could not read it. For this reason he could not pass to the next levels. He wanted to learn how to read in order to play these computer games independently.

4.3.8 The children's responses to the question: "who will teach you how to read?"

The eighth question asked students about the person who would teach them how to read. The children's responses are presented in Table 4.16

4.16 The children's responses to "who will teach you how to read?"

The child	Q8: Who will teach you how to read?
AX1	*I don't know. Maybe* ***my mother***
AX2	***My father, my mother***
AY1	***My older sister*** *can teach me reading. She can read and write.*
AY2	**My teacher (preschool),* ***my mother***
BX1	***My mother and my father***
BX2	***My mother, my father,*** **my teacher*
BY1	***My mother, my father, my grandfather****, *my teacher*
BY2	*First grade teacher,* ***my mother***
CX1	***My mother and my father,*** *my teacher but not the teacher (preschool teacher) I asked my teacher she said that I will go a real school. The teacher will teach me*
CX2	*My mother said me that next year I will go to first grade and I will learn there*
CY1	***My father,*** *first grade teacher*
CY2	***My mother***

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

As indicated in Table 4.16, eleven of the children thought that their family members would teach them how to read. Moreover, three children (AY2, BX2, and BY1) said that their preschool teacher would also teach them how to read. However, four children (BY2, CX1, CX2 and CY1) indicated that a first grade teacher would teach them how to read.

4.3.9 The answers of children about whether they have any idea about how they will learn to read.

As a follow-up question the researcher asked children whether they had any idea about how they would learn how to read. Four children (AX1, AX2, AY2, and BY1) did not have any ideas about how they would learn to read, whereas eight children responded with clear ideas. The children's responses are presented in Table 4.17.

4.17 The children's responses to whether they had any idea about how they would learn to read

The child	Q9: Do you have any idea about how you will learn to read?
AX1	***"I don't know."***
AX2	***"No, I don't know"***
AY1	*"By writing. My older sister learned like that"*
AY2	***"I do not know, but*** *we will sit at a desk and we will learn"*
BX1	*"My mother reads to me and I will learn"* *-What kinds of things does your mother read to you? How will you learn to read?* *No answer*
BX2	*"By looking at my mother"* *-How will you learn to read by looking your mother?* *"She will read a book. I will look her and I can learn to read"*
BY1	***"I do not know"***
BY2	*"Teacher will give us homework. We do homework and we will learn."* *-What kinds of homework? Do you have any idea?* *""No "*
CX1	*"My mother will teach me to write and I will learn."*
CX2	*"First grade teachers will teach us letters, For example, A is a like that and we will learn to read. My older brother taught me letter (A, B, R, P, and S). I only know them, yet."*
CY1	*"First grade teacher will tell, I will listen to her and I will learn.* *What will your first grade teacher tell you? (Silence) "I do not know."*
CY2	*"My mother is teaching me letters. I can write "A". She is teaching me to read."*

According to AY1, he could learn to read by writing because his older sister learned how to read by writing. Similarly, CX1 indicated that her mother will teach her to write and she will learn to read. Moreover, CX2 and CY2 mentioned letters. They cited that they will learn to read by learning their letters. Four children (AY1, CX1, CX2, and CY2) made connections between learning to read and learning to write. Lastly, four different children (BX1, BX2, BY2 and CY1) gave superficial responses. According to BX1, her mother read her and she would learn to read. Similarly, BX2 said that she could learn to read by looking her mother. CY2 said that he would learn to read by listening to his first grade teacher. In addition, BY2 mentioned homework. He thought that he would learn to read by doing first grade homework. Four children mentioned some ideas regarding learning to read but they did not express clear ideas about the process or content of the learning required in order to read.

4.3.10 The children's responses to the question: "What kind of things do you like to read?"

Lastly, the researcher asked the children about the kinds of things they liked to read. As indicated in Table 4.18, five of the children (AX1, AX2, AY1, AY2, and BX1) responded with answers such as picture books, story books, and books about animals, whereas the other seven children mentioned specific book titles such as Keloğlan, Pepee, and Köstebek Kuki. When we examined the children's responses, five children (BX2, BY1, CX2, CY1, and CY2) named book titles related to popular cartoon or animation characters.

4.18 The children's responses to what kind of things they like to read

The child	Q10: What kinds of things /books do you like to read?
AX1	*"Picture books"*
AX2	*"Story books, my books at home,"*
AY1	*"Books about animals but my favorite: books about horses"*
AY2	*"Books about dinosaurs"*
BX1	*"Funny books, story books,"*
BX2	*"*Barbie books, *Bratz Books,"*
BY1	*"*Keloğlan books, *Caillou books"*
BY2	*"Ali Baba'nın Çiftliği, Tiger story"*

The child	Q10: What kinds of things /books do you like to read?
CX1	*"Cinderella, Köpük, Büyülü yüzük,"*
CX2	*"*The Smurfs Book, *Pepee Books, Cemile Books"*
CY1	*"*The Ice Books, *Sponge Bob Books, *Ben 10 Books"*
CY2	*"Tavşan Kardeşler, *Pepee Books Köstebek Kuki, Minik Balık, Küçük Yunus"*

Children's original statements presented verbatim.

** Books related to popular cartoon or animation characters*

4.4 Summary of the Results

The results of the study revealed that there were mean differences in children's PRAS scores regarding the mentioned demographic information except for gender, children's time spent watching TV and on the computer, father's enjoyment of reading, and fathers' time spent reading each week. In addition, there were mean differences in children's HLEQ scores, regarding parental educational level and household income. According to the Pearson product-moment results, there was a significant positive correlation between children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment.

The interview findings revealed that the majority of the children were aware of their current reading ability, as well as the fact that they wanted to learn how to read. While most of the children thought that their family members would teach them how to read, four children mentioned primary school or first grade teachers. Children generally did not have a clear idea about how they would learn to read, however, two children mentioned that they needed to learn letters. Those two children were the members of the third group. The majority of the children gave positive affective responses to reading related questions, and in general the children from the third group gave more detailed and clearer responses to questions than the first and the second groups.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The present study had three major aims. The first aim was to investigate the reading attitudes and home literacy environments of Turkish preschool children regarding demographic variables. The second aim was to explore the relationship between children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environments. The last aim was to examine the reading perceptions of children in terms of their reading attitudes. In this chapter, the findings of the study are discussed in light of the related literature, and then the implications and the recommendations for future research are presented.

5.1. Children's Reading Attitudes

The first research question of the study aimed to investigate children's reading attitudes regarding demographic variables. In this section, the results of the sub-research questions which were related to the first research questions are discussed considering the related existing studies.

The first sub-research question investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of their gender. The results of the study showed that there were no statistically significant gender differences in preschool children's reading attitudes. This result is consistent with previous studies which investigated preschool children's reading attitudes (Cunningham, 2008; Saracho & Dayton, 1991; Yücel, 2005). Saracho and Dayton (1991) investigated the

reading attitudes of preschool children, ages three to five-years-old. They reported that there were no gender differences in any of the age groups. Similarly, Cunningham (2008) did not find any gender differences in preschool children's reading attitudes. In addition, Yüce (2005) examined four and five- year- old Turkish preschool children's reading attitudes, and she indicated that children's reading attitudes did not differ according to gender. However, reading related activities are generally accepted as feminine activities in the traditional understanding of societies (Millard, 1997). The present study results demonstrated that both girls' and boys' reading attitude scores ranged from 20 to 36.

According to Petscher (2010), then, any gender differences in reading attitude studies may be negligible. He offered that the sources of the reading attitudes should be investigated. As determined by the findings of the previous studies and the findings of the present study, it can be inferred that parental reading habits, parent-child reading experiences, home literacy sources, and parental beliefs about reading may have role in encouraging children's development of reading attitudes. Children who receive more positive messages about reading, engage in pleasurable and valuable activities with their parents, and have higher quality reading-related experiences may have more positive reading attitudes, independent of their gender. Parents are the role model for their children, and their beliefs and behaviors influence their children (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, both home literacy experiences and parents' affective responses about reading may influence and form the reading attitudes of children. It can be said that this assumption appeared to be consistent with the results of the previous studies. The previous studies demonstrated that children who

had more literacy sources and reading experiences tended to develop more interest in reading (Frijters, Barron & Brunello, 2000; Martinez, 2008; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2006). In conclusion, it might be said that the findings provide information about the role of home literacy environments in supporting children's reading attitudes. In addition, it can be inferred that parents should give equal opportunities to their children, exposing them to reading related experiences and sources without considering gender.

The second sub-research question investigated children's reading attitudes regarding parental educational levels. The results of the study showed that children's reading attitudes are statistically different according to their parental educational levels. The results revealed that as the parental educational level increases, the children's reading attitudes also increase. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies. The studies revealed that parental educational levels, especially the maternal educational level, are an important factor for children's literacy development (Connor, Son, Hindman & Morrison, 2005; Cottone, 2012; Evans, Shaw & Bell, 2000; Hammer, Farkas & Maczuga, 2010; Korat, 2009; Magnuson, Sexton, Davis-Kean & Huston, 2009; Melnuish et al., 2008; Marjanovick Umek, Podlesek & Fekonja, 2005; Payne, Whitehurst & Angell, 1994).

Furthermore, Evans, Shaw and Bell (2000) indicated that shared book-reading was a regular family routine in highly educated parents' homes. Similarly, Altıparmak (2010) indicated that highly educated parents engage in home literacy activities with their children more frequently. In addition,

Marjanovick Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005) reported highly educated mothers provided their children a more enriched literacy environment. Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006) cited that highly educated mothers tended to enjoy reading more, to spend more time reading, to read to their children from an early age, to spend more time in reading with their children, to tell stories more often and to play games more often. As a result, in light of the previous studies, it can be inferred that parental educational levels may be related to children's reading attitudes in different ways. First, highly educated parents have more regular reading habits, and these habits may influence their children's attitudes, as parents serve as role models for their children. Second, highly educated parents may enjoy reading more and provide more positive messages about reading to their children. According to Bandura (1997), parents' behaviors and beliefs are important factors that influence their children's behaviors and beliefs. Therefore, the children of highly educated parents may develop more positive reading attitudes than those of poorly educated parents. Third, highly educated parents may be more aware of the importance of early literacy experiences for their children's literacy development; for this reason, they may attempt to provide enriched literacy experiences for their children. In addition, they may supply more enriched literacy sources such as different types and themes of books that appeal to their children's interests. In conclusion, there are possible explanations regarding the influence of parental education levels on children's reading attitudes; however, in order to understand the contributions of each assumption and to seek the other possible explanations, there is a need to investigate the issue in a more detailed way.

The third sub-research question investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of household income. Children's reading attitudes revealed significant differences in terms of household income. The children from the lowest income group had the lowest reading attitude mean scores. In the related literature, studies demonstrated that household income influenced children's literacy skills (Cadima, McWilliam & Leal, 2010; Dexter, 2000; Foster et al., 2005). Furthermore, Cunningham (2008) investigated preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of SES. He also reported that children's reading attitudes differed in terms of economic level. The children who came from low income (high risk) families had more negative reading attitudes than other children (Cunningham, 2008). In the related literature, there were different findings about the ways that household income affected children's reading skills. First, studies showed that the household income affected the quality and variety of the home literacy sources (e.g. Davis-Kean, 2005; Foster, Lambert, Abbott-Shim, McCarty & Franze, 2005).Thus, the quality and variety of the home literacy sources might be related with children's reading attitudes. Previous studies showed that home literacy sources were directly related to children's literacy skills (Foy & Mann, 2003; Tomopoulos et al., 2006).

Second, some studies examined the relationship between household income and parental reading pleasure. Baker and Scher (2002) indicated that more middle income mothers stated that pleasure was their primary reason for reading than did low income mothers. Similarly, in another study, families were asked to keep a diary about print-related activities with their children. According to the diaries, more middle income families tended to find reading activities as a source of entertainment than did low income parents

(Sonnenschein, Baker, Serpell, Scher, Truitt & Musnterman, 1997). In addition, Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006), stated that parental enjoyment of reading correlates with children's interest in reading. Thus, parental pleasure of reading might be related to children's reading attitudes.

Lastly, Altıparmak (2010) reported that household income is related to the quantity of time in which parents and children participate in shared home literacy activities. Children's reading related experiences may foster their reading attitudes. Apart from these, household income may be related to the parental stress level. According to Lantz, House, Mero and Williams (2005) low income was strongly predictive for parents' stress levels. In another study, Zajicek-Farber, Mayer and Daughtery (2012) reported that parental stress was related to bedtime reading routines and child development. Similarly, Hill (2001) indicated that parental stress was associated with parenting behaviors and children's pre-reading scores. A possible conclusion is that low income parents might not enjoy reading as much as middle or high income group because of high stress level associated with financial burdens. In addition, low income parents may spend more time earning money so they have limited time to engage in their children's activities. They provide limited literacy sources due to their restricted financial sources. In addition, studies showed that parental stress levels, especially maternal stress levels, affect the development of their children (Talge , Neal & Glover, 2007; Yeung, Linver & Brooks-Gunn, 2002). According to the studies, the children of low income parents experience more disadvantages regarding language and cognitive development than the children of other income groups. Children's developmental level may affect their reading attitudes so that low income group's children have

lower reading attitude scores. Each of these explanations contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how household income may influence children's reading attitudes. However, in order to draw a well-grounded conclusion, the issue needs to be investigated in more detailed.

The fourth sub-research question investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of their time spent in attendance of early childhood education programs. Children's reading attitudes revealed significant differences in terms of their attendance time. Children who had previous early childhood education experiences had higher reading attitude scores. In the related literature, studies showed that early childhood education positively affected children's literacy skills (Arslan, 2009; Erkan & Kırca, 2010; Şen, Yıldız-Çiçekler & Yılmaz, 2010; Kılıç, 2008; Yılmaz & Dikici-Sığırtmaç, 2008). Kılıç (2008) indicated that children who had early childhood education experiences were more eager to read books in first grade than children who did not. It might be possible to say that the preschool classroom literacy environment, reading experiences, and other literacy integrated activities might foster children's reading attitudes. Cunningham (2008) reported that the quality of preschool classroom literacy environments were related to children's reading attitudes. He cited that children who had higher quality classroom literacy environments had more positive reading attitudes. In light of these results, it can be said that after the home environment, a child's secondary literacy related experiences are situated in his/her early childhood education environment. According to the Ecological Systems theory, the home and school environments are parts of the first

environmental systems and influence children's development. Therefore, it can be inferred that preschool classroom literacy environments should not be ignored and that the education program should implement goals that can help spur a love of reading from an early age.

The fifth sub-research question investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books at home. Children's reading attitudes revealed significant differences according to both the number of children books and adult books. Previous studies demonstrated that the number of books at home was positively related to children's literacy skills (Payne, Whitehurst & Angell, 1994; Foy & Mann, 2003; Tomopoulos et al., 2006). Furthermore, Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006) indicated that children who were exposed to a rich literacy environment developed a greater interest in reading. The presence of books have been accepted as one of the important literacy sources for children (e.g. Bus et al, 1995; Beaty & Pratt, 2003; Bennett-Armistead, Duke & Moses, 2005; Scarborugh & Dobrich, 1994). The number of books at home is directly related to the opportunity that children have to engage in reading related experiences (Beaty & Pratt, 2003; Bennett-Armistead, Duke & Moses, 2005), and children's reading experiences are directly related to children's reading interest (Frijters, Barron & Brunello, 2000).The number of books at home might foster children's reading attitudes through reading experience. In addition, the number of books may increase the variety of the books and different types and topic of books might draw children's attention and affect their perception of reading activities. Similarly, Strommen and Mates (2004) emphasized the importance of appropriateness as both age and interest in a book play a role in fostering children's love of reading. Each child may have different

interests that draw them to different topics or different types of books. For example, the interview findings revealed that some children liked books about animals, dinosaurs, or containing traditional stories such as Keloğlan and Cinderalla, whereas some children preferred popular books related to the character of cartoons or animations such as the *Ice Age* books and *Sponge Bob* books. Therefore, it can be said that providing children with the opportunity to encounter a variety of books can be important for engaging and sustaining their interest. Furthermore, the number of books at home might be related to more than one issue such as household income, parental educational levels, and parental reading attitudes.

In addition, the present study showed that 40.2 % of the children had less than 16 children's book in their home. However, 6.5 % of the children did not have any children's book in their homes. The number of children's book ranged from 0 to 300 with a mean of 22. In the related literature, studies discussed the difference in the number of children's book at home. Foy and Mann (2003) reported that the number of children's books ranged from 0 to 250 and with a mean of 81 in the USA context. Additionally, Senechal and LeFevre (1998) indicated that Canadian children had between 61 and 80 children's book in their homes. In Australian, Hood, Conlon and Andrew (2008) cited that 75% of the children had 50 or fewer books in their homes. In light of these results it can be said that the sample of Turkish children in the present study had less children's books in their homes than the children in these countries. According to PIRLS (2001) data, the economic development level of countries has an effect on the number of books at home (Park, 2008). Furthermore, the data demonstrated that Turkey had the lowest average of number of books at home. According to The United

Nations' International Human Development Index (HDI) Report (2011), Australia, Canada, and USA are developed countries, whereas Turkey is a developing country. The lower number of books in homes can be derived from our economic development level because low income families have limited financial sources and their priority is to supply the essential needs. Therefore, they have a restricted income source to buy books. The lower number of books in the Turkish home might be explained in this way.

On the other hand, some countries such as Bulgaria have a lower gross domestic product (GDP) but have a higher number of books in their homes (Park, 2008). According to Evans, Kelley, Sikora and Treiman (2010), in society, scholarly culture plays role in the number of books at homes. A scholarly culture refers to daily routines in which adults engage with reading related materials and participate in activities at home such as talking about books and using knowledge (Evans et al., 2010). The research indicates that a scholarly culture is related to the number of books at home. In light of these results, it might be said that cultural issues play a role in the number of books at home. PIRLS (2001) data demonstrated that only 0.08 percent of Turkish people have a regular reading habit. The findings can provide insight into the daily engagement of Turkish people in reading activities. Therefore, it can be inferred that a scholarly culture is related to the number of books at home. In conclusion, the number of books at home is an accepted indicator of the home literacy environment by international studies (PIRLS, 2001; The World Inequality Study-Kelley, Evans & Sikora 2007) and the studies showed that the quantity of books is related to children's literacy skills. Similarly, the present study revealed the differences in children's reading attitudes in terms of the number of books

at home. It can be said that the present study's findings are consistent with previous studies.

The sixth and seventh sub-research questions investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of time spent watching TV and time spent on the computer. The results of the study demonstrated that there was no statistically significant difference in preschool children's reading attitudes regarding their time spent watching TV or spent on the computer. Although Foy and Mann (2003) reported that reading related media such as the TV, computer, and videos, positively correlated with some children's literacy skills, the present study did not find any difference. This finding might be explained in two ways. First, children's reading attitudes might have a different structure than other literacy related skills, so media related factors affect children's reading attitudes differently. Children can enrich their vocabulary development and language skills by watching TV or using the computer (Farias, 2010; Linebarger &Walker, 2005). However, children's reading attitudes may be related to reading related activities. Children may prefer watching TV and using the computer more than reading books. Thus, the time spent watching TV and using the computer might prevent children's reading related experiences. In addition, Nathanson and Rasmussen (2011) compared mother-child communication and interaction in terms of TV viewing, book reading, and toy playing. They indicated that shared book reading activities provided the most mother-child interaction, whereas TV viewing provided the least interaction. According to Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006), the affective mother child interaction play a role in children's reading interest. Therefore, spending time on media related

sources might not support children's reading attitudes in the way that reading activities would.

As a second assumption, it might be said that not only the time spent but also the quality and the types of the media related sources affect children's reading attitudes. According to the research of Linebarger and Walker's (2005), the content and the program type of media sources influenced children's literacy skills. They investigated different TV programs effects on children's language skills. According to their findings, some TV programs such as *Arthur* and *Dragon Tales* had a story book like nature; whereas *Teletubbies* did not provide an enriched literacy source for children. In fact, they reported that *Teletubbies* was negatively associated children's language outcomes. Therefore, the time and the quality and the types of the reading related media sources might be investigated together to understand the larger picture of the issue.

The eighth sub-research question investigated children's reading attitudes regarding parental enjoyment of reading. The results demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference in preschool children's reading attitudes in terms of their mothers' enjoyment of reading, whereas there was no statistically significant difference for their fathers' enjoyment of reading. The findings of this current study are consistent with the findings of Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006). They reported that the mothers' enjoyment of reading was related to parental literacy habits, whereas the fathers' enjoyment of reading was not. In addition, they indicated that maternal enjoyment of reading correlated with children's reading interest. Similarly, in another

study, parental entertainment was stated as an important source of fostering children's literacy development (Sonnenschein et al., 1997). In addition, Baker and Scher (2002) found that children whose mothers mentioned that reading was an important source of pleasure had higher reading motivation than other groups. They claimed that mothers' pleasure from reading can have influence their children's pleasure from reading. In light of these results, mothers' reading enjoyment and children's reading attitudes might be explained in several different ways. On the one hand, mothers who enjoy reading might provide more reading related activities to their children. Participating in more reading experiences may support children's reading attitudes. The current study also showed that there was a significant difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the time mothers spent in reading to themselves in a given week, the amount of time spent in parent-child shared reading activities, and the frequency of shared reading. Furthermore, previous studies showed that the frequency of reading to children was related to children's interest in reading (Frijters, Barron & Brunello, 2000; Martinez, 2008; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005).

On the other hand, mothers' affective responses about reading may play a role in their children's affective responses about reading (Burgess, Hect & Lonigan, 2002). Bandura (1997) emphasized the influence of parental behaviors and beliefs on children's behaviors and beliefs. Parental messages about the value and pleasure of reading might affect children's attitudes toward reading. Similarly, Sonnenschein and Munsterman (2002) emphasized the affective quality of parent-child reading as a powerful predictor for children's interest in reading rather

than the frequency of reading experiences. Therefore, it can be inferred that parental affective responses about reading is important for children's reading attitudes.

Lastly, the present study showed that there was a significant difference in children's reading attitudes in terms of the frequency of children looking at books by themselves and children asking an adult to read to them. The results demonstrated that children who looked at books by themselves and asked to be read to frequently had more positive reading attitudes. In the related literature, Frijters, Barron and Brunello (2000) found that there was a strong correlation between children's reading interest and looking at books by themselves. In addition, Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) stated that the frequency of children exploring books by themselves and asking to be read to were indices of early interest in literacy. It might be inferred that children-initiated reading activities are related to their reading attitudes. Children's own preference in reading-related activities might mean that they enjoy reading-related activities and prefer to engage in this type of activity. Therefore, it can be said that parents should meet their children's reading requests and facilitate their looking at books. In order for children to look at books by themselves, parents should take into account the accessibility of books for their children.

As a result, the findings and existing studies revealed that children's reading attitudes and interests were related to many factors and that some factors may be related to each other. It can be claimed that the results of the present study appeared to be consistent with the results of

the existing studies presented above. Different from previous studies, the focus in this study was on children's reading attitudes. Previous studies mainly investigated children's literacy interest. While a limited number of studies, which the researcher could find, investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of gender, age, race and SES (Cunningham, 2008; Saracho & Dayton, 1991; Yücel, 2005), the present study explored the issue in a more detailed way to gain broader information regarding children's reading attitudes. The current study might be a step to broaden the understanding of children's reading attitudes and examine the issue in a path analysis or any model analysis.

5.2 Children's Home Literacy Environment

The second research question of the study aimed to investigate children's home literacy environments in terms of demographic variables. In this section, the results of the sub-research questions were discussed in light of existing related studies.

Children's home literacy environments were compared to the parental educational levels and household income. The results revealed that children's home literacy environment scores significantly differed in regard to the parental educational levels and household income. The highest income groups had significantly higher scores from the HLEQ, whereas the lowest income families had significantly lower scores. This finding is consistent with previous studies that showed household income was associated with the home literacy environment (Davis-Kean, 2005; Foster, Lambert, Abbott-Shim, McCarty & Franze, 2005; Melhuish et al., 2008). Melhuish et al. (2008) reported that there was a moderate positive

correlation between household income and the home literacy environment. First, household income might be related to the opportunities parents have to provide literacy related sources for their children. Low income parents might have limited opportunities to supply literacy related materials in their homes. As mentioned previously, studies showed that the number of books at home was related to the socio-economic level. Therefore, financial circumstances may be important for home literacy environment. Another issue that often affects low income parents is increased life stress as they struggle to earn a living. This could result in parents not having enough time to engage in home literacy activities with their children. The third issue may be related to parents' educational levels. In the related literature, studies mainly investigated the income and parental educational level together under the SES variable. These studies found that parental educational levels and income were associated with the home literacy environment (Davis-Kean, 2005; Foster et al., 2005; Van Steensel, 2006). Studies also showed that highly educated parents had higher income in general. The difference might also be related to their educational level. The present study's findings revealed that children's HLEQ scores differed significantly in terms of both maternal and paternal educational levels. Griffin and Morrison (1997) found a strong association between maternal educational levels and HLE. Similarly, other studies reported the association between the maternal educational level and the HLE (Davis-Kean, 2005; Foster et al., 2008; Marjonovick Umek, Fekonja, Bajc & Kranj, 2006; Marjonovick Umek, Podlesek & Fekonja, 2005; Melnuish et al., 2008). According to Marjonovic Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005), the maternal educational level can affect the HLE in different ways. More educated

mothers may have more knowledge about children's language development and thus provide more verbal interaction and joint activities with their children. Studies also indicated that more educated mothers may provide enriched materials and learning environments for their children. In another study, Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006) found that more educated mothers tended to provide a more enriched HLE. They also added that more educated mothers tended to read and to tell stories, to draw pictures, and to sing songs with their children more often than did less educated mothers.

In general, the results of the current study were consistent with findings in other studies cited above. When examining the related literature, studies were mainly focused on the maternal educational level. The present study investigated both of the parents' educational levels in terms of home literacy environment. The results showed that children's HLEQ scores significantly differed not only with the maternal educational level but also with the paternal educational level. Fathers, like mothers, are also members of the family. The home environment is formed by both mothers and fathers. Therefore, it can be said that paternal characteristics are also important for home literacy environments because the home literacy environment covers interactions, shared experiences, and adult guidance in order to foster children's literacy skills. Paternal education levels might affect the fathers' engagement in home literacy activities with children, their guidance, and their interaction with children. In addition, the paternal education level might contribute to household income. Therefore, it can be said that the paternal educational level should be taken into account in home literacy environment related studies. In conclusion, the present study's findings and

previous studies provide some information to understand the influence of household income and parental education levels on the home literacy environment but this issue needs to be investigated in a more detail.

5.3 The Relationship between Children's PRAS and Their HLEQ

The second main goal of the study was to investigate the relationship between children's PRAS and their HLEQ scores. The results indicated that there was a medium positive correlation between children's PRAS and their HLEQ scores. In the related literature, studies investigated the influence of the number of literacy related sources, as well as the frequency and the quality of reading experiences on children's literacy interest. The studies reported that the frequency and the quality of reading to children were related to children's interest in literacy (Frijters et al., 2000; Martinez, 2008; Roberts, Jurgens & Burchinal, 2005; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2006). In addition, Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006) indicated that mothers who provided enriched home literacy environments for their children facilitated their children's interest in literacy. Thus, it can be said that the findings of the present study is consistent with previous studies' findings. The important difference being that the current study focused on children's reading attitudes and home literacy environment.

Cunningham (2008) investigated children's reading attitudes in terms of the quality of preschool classroom environment. He reported that children who had more qualified classroom environment developed positive reading attitudes. The study suggested that a quality classroom environment was important for children's reading attitudes, which was consistent with the current study that also found environmental factors important.

According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspective, both family and school are components of the microsystem. Home and school related experiences, sources, and interactions are important for children's development. Cunningham (2008) investigated the classroom environment and he determined that children's reading attitudes were related to the classroom environment. In addition, the home environment is the first environment which provides opportunities to foster children's skills. The characteristics of the home environment are expected to relate to children's skills. Therefore, it can be claimed that the result is consisted with previous studies and the ecological system theory. Furthermore, previous studies mainly focused on the home environment and children's literacy skills. It might be said that a child's reading attitude has a different structure than other literacy skills. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), attitude develops based on the evaluative responses such as cognitive, affective and behavioral. Reading attitudes covers reading related feelings *"which cause the person to approach or avoid the reading situation"* (Alexander & Filler, 1976, p.1). Differing from other literacy skills, it can be said that reading attitudes cover affective responses. Therefore, studies which investigated children's reading attitudes and environmental factors might be important to understand the relationship between the environment and children's reading related affective responses. This is why in the present study an important consideration is the connection between the home literacy environment and the children's reading attitudes. It can be inferred that print-enriched home environments and home literacy activities play a role in supporting children's reading attitudes. The number of books at home may give children the opportunity to handle different types of books and to

gain an interest in reading. In addition, children may gain reading pleasure and interest in books by being exposed to different and enriched reading related materials. Furthermore, affective parent-child shared experiences might foster children's reading attitudes. These enjoyable reading experiences may foster children's attitudes towards reading. In addition, parents' reading behaviors and affective messages might play a role in increasing children's reading attitudes. Similarly, Bandura (1997) indicated that the parents play an important role on children's behaviors and beliefs. Thus, parental factors may be related to children's reading attitudes. In conclusion, the relationship between the home literacy environment and children's reading attitudes can be explained through these previous studies, however, in order to understand the relationship and the direction of the relationship, further research is needed.

5.4 Children's Perception of Reading

The third main aim of the study was to examine children's perceptions of reading in terms of reading attitudes. When examining the children's responses to questions, it was evident that each child mentioned his/her personal experiences and observations about reading and generally gave short responses to questions. Similary, Saracho (1984) indicated that children's answers about reading related questions were affected by their developmental levels and experiences.

The findings revealed that all of the children said that people read at school and one out of the twelve children said that people read at home. Similary, Saracho (1984) investigated children's responses to the "where do people read?" question. According to her findings, however, the majority of the

children said school, and most of the children said home. According to the ecological system theory, children first encounter things in their home and school environments, and thus their responses cover home and school related experiences. In addition, the findings revealed that the majority of the children responded that their mother or father would most likely teach them how to read. This finding is consistent with the findings of Shook (1996). She reported that the majority of five-year-old children said that their mothers and fathers would teach them how to read. According to these findings, it can be inferred that both parents and the home environment are important sources for children literacy related experiences, as their responses covered these experiences.

The other findings of the current study revealed that all of the children responded that people read books, however each child, depending on his/her observations and experiences, gave different responses such as medicines, cell phone bills, the washing machine manual, and the Quran. The children talked about different purposes of reading such as reading the manual of a washing machine in order to repair the machine and reading medicine labels to learn when to take the medicine. Furthermore, five of the twelve children not only mentioned printed reading sources but also electronic reading sources such as the computer, cell phone, and TV. These findings are consistent with Heibert's (1983) ideas about children's print acquisition. He claimed that children learn the functions and purposes of the printed word through their daily life experiences. Children acquired the functions and purposes of print by exploring their environments. Toys, TV commercials, billboards, computer programs, and signs were all potential sources of print acquisition for children. The current study's findings also

demonstrated that children mentioned daily life-related reading sources and different functions and purposes of printing. Through these findings, it can be inferred that children's daily literacy experiences enrich their understanding regarding reading materials and the different purposes of reading.

In addition, the findings of the present study revealed that only one of the twelve children could not evaluate their current reading ability correctly. Similarly, Heibert (1983) reported that only four of the 60 children could not evaluate their current reading ability. Most of the children were aware of their own reading ability. In addition, some of the children said that they could not read yet but they could identify numbers, pictures, or some letters. In his study, Heibert (1983) also provided similar responses from children and he reported that the majority of children could correctly perceive their own reading ability. The findings revealed that the child who could not evaluate her current reading ability was from the minimum PRAS score group (Group 1), whereas three of the five children who could evaluate their reading abilities were from the maximum PRAS score group (Group 3). In addition, only two of the children from Group 3 mentioned letters and they wrote those letters. Two children also said that they would learn how to read by learning letters. However, three of the four children who did not any ideas about how they would learn to read were from Group 1. Similarly, Alley (2002) indicated that children who gave clearer responses to reading perception questions had better understanding of sound-letter relationships. Furthermore, only five children indicated that written materials contain a message or information and four of the five children were from Group 3. The children of Group 3 also gave more

detailed information about what kind of things people read than the other groups of children. They mentioned both printed and electronic reading sources such as the computer, cell phone, TV, play station, and the internet. According to these findings, it might be said that children who have more positive reading attitudes are more likely to mention letters and the role of letters in the process of learning how to read. They also had clearer ideas regarding the reading process and how they would learn to read. Children's reading related experiences might foster their print awareness and letter knowledge.

In addition, the reason most of the children did not mention letters may be related to the Turkish preschool educational context. In Turkey, the National Early Childhood Education Program (2006) has not provided any goals or objectives related to letter learning. The program covers some goals related to phonological awareness but there are no goals regarding letter-sound correspondence or letter knowledge. Therefore, it may be understandable if most of the children do not mention letters in their responses.

Lastly, the findings revealed that the children of Group 3 gave more specific book titles when asked what kind of things they like to read, whereas the children of Group 1 gave more general responses such as story books, picture books, and books. Considering these results, it might be said that children who had more positive reading attitudes also had more reading related experiences. Children's reading related experiences might give them the opportunity to encounter different types of books, and children's book

preference is formed through these experiences. Thus, children who have more positive reading attitudes were able to state more specific book titles.

In conclusion, it can be said that children's perceptions of reading might provide helpful information for preschool teachers in order to understand children's literacy related knowledge and to determine their needs and misconceptions. In addition, Heibert (1983) indicated that children's perceptions about their own reading and print awareness were important for the reading process and that educators should provide appropriate reading-related experiences in order to foster children's print awareness. It can be said that teachers can benefit from information regarding children's reading perceptions in order to develop appropriate literacy-related activities that foster children's literacy skills. Lastly, according to the findings, children who had more positive reading attitudes tended to give clearer and more detailed responses to questions. The quantitative data of the present study revealed that children who had more enriched home literacy environments also had more positive reading attitudes. There was a significant medium positive correlation between children's reading attitudes and home literacy environment. The present study has suggested children who have more positive reading attitudes may give more elaborated and clearer responses to questions because of their enriched home literacy environments and experiences. The interview findings revealed that children answered the questions related to reading perceptions according to their home and school literacy experiences. Therefore, it might be said that children's home literacy experiences are important in terms of their reading attitudes and perceptions of reading. These findings may provide ideas about children's reading attitudes and

perceptions of reading, but the issue needs to be investigated in more detail with a larger sample of children in order to suggest a more well-grounded conclusion.

5.5 Implications

The related literature showed that in order to be successful readers, children should have some precursor skills, experiences, and positive feelings related to literacy (NELP, 2008). The home environment is accepted as a good source for children to gain experience and to develop their skills (Berns, 2004). The present study revealed that there was a positive relationship between children's reading attitudes and the home literacy environment. These findings will provide an idea about the roles of parents, literacy related home activities, and environments on children's reading attitudes. Parents can benefit from these results by assessing their current home literacy environment and by preparing both the environment and activities to expose their children to enriched literacy experiences. Teachers can also use these results to support children's home literacy experiences through parent-involvement activities. Teachers can inform parents about the importance of the home literacy environment on children's reading attitudes. Moreover, the results have great importance not only for teachers and families but also for The Ministry of National Education (MONE) as they plan interventions for preschool children who come from disadvantaged families, in order to foster love of reading.

Furthermore, the current National Early Childhood Education Program has not provided any goals or objectives regarding the love of reading

directly. MONE might add goals and objectives to foster children's attitudes toward reading.

In addition, the current study demonstrated that children's reading attitudes differed in terms of maternal enjoyment of reading and the mother's time spent on reading (by herself). This means that maternal affective ideas and personal literacy habits are also important for children's reading attitudes. Parents can be informed that not only their literacy habits but also their affective ideas play a key role in developing their children's attitudes toward reading.

Furthermore, the study revealed that children's reading attitudes did not differ in terms of gender. Both girls and boys can have high or low reading attitudes. Considering these results, it can be said that parents should not be biased in thinking that girls have more positive reading attitudes than boys. They should be aware of their children's attitudes towards reading and then they should foster their children's attitudes independent of their gender. Similarly, preschool teachers can benefit from these findings to enhance children's reading attitudes without considering gender.

In addition, the findings revealed that children responded to the reading perception questions by relating their home literacy related experiences and observations. Parents can be informed about how their children acquire print-related knowledge and awareness by exploring their environment. Home literacy experiences are one of the most important sources for children's print awareness. Furthermore, teachers can inform parents about how they can enrich their home environment in terms of print. In addition, the teacher's classroom practices and classroom organization can encourage

and guide parents in how they can foster their children's literacy skills. In addition, parents can be educated through parent education programs. For example, mother and child education programs have been conducted by AÇEV (Mother Child Education Foundation) in collaboration with MONE, the social services, and the Child Protection Agency. The program aims to foster children's whole development by improving mothers' parenting skills (AÇEV, 2013). By conducting home based programs, parents, especially those low income and less educated, can be informed about the importance of the home literacy environment on their children's reading attitudes and how they can enrich their home literacy environments. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations and governmental agencies may supply literacy sources such as books and educational toys, in order to foster literacy skills in those children who come from disadvantaged families.

Lastly, preschool children's reading attitudes and perceptions of reading might provide helpful information to preschool teachers in order to understand children's literacy related knowledge, interests, and needs. Teacher can benefit from the information to organize their activities and classroom environment and to foster children's literacy related skills. The Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO, 2008) tool showed that the organization of the book center, the accessibility of books, the variety of books, the presence of book reading, and the storytelling approaches used by the teacher were all related to the quality of the classroom literacy environment. Books should be accessible for children. Teachers should organize the book center carefully. A variety of books should be available at the book center, and children should be able to access the books easily. In addition, teachers should demonstrate different ways to

read such as flannel boards, puppets, story cards, and slides, in order to increase children's interest in reading. Lastly, the teacher should be a model for children, both in terms of demonstrating positive reading attitudes and in exhibiting extensive reading habits. In this way, teachers can share their affective responses related to reading. Teachers may foster a love for reading in children through their own reading and through deriving pleasure from reading.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Research

The present study examined children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment in terms of demographic variables and investigated the relationship between PRAS and HLEQ. First, the data of the children's home literacy environment were collected through parent-reported questionnaire. Nord, Lennon, Liu and Chandler (1999) reported that parents may respond to questions according to social expectations or requirements rather than the real condition. Therefore, further studies might collect data through interviews and observations. In addition, children might be observed in terms of reading attitudes in the classroom environment. Parents and teachers might be interviewed about their children's reading attitudes.

Secondly, the study was conducted in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. Although the study covered participants with different income and educational levels and provided information regarding children's reading attitudes and home literacy environments, further studies should be conducted with different samples from different parts of Turkey. Because literacy is accepted as a socio-cultural issue (Goodman, 1986; Vygotsky,

1978), the socio-cultural context might play a role in the children's reading attitudes and the home literacy environment

Thirdly, this study examined the relationship between children's reading attitudes and their home literacy environment. In further studies, the issue might be examined in more detailed in a model analysis. Furthermore, these studies might investigate children's reading attitudes regarding children's personal characteristics such as temperament, language development, or IQ. This is particularly relevant since, during the PRAS administrations, four or five children mentioned that they did not enjoy reading or looking at books because they did not like sitting. The children expressed that they did not enjoy immobility and so they did not prefer reading-related activities. As indicated by the children's answers, children's personal characteristics might affect their reading attitudes. In further studies, the issue might be examined in more detailed.

Finally, the study focused on the home literacy environment. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the school environment was another component of the microsystem. Therefore, further studies might investigate children's reading attitudes in both the home and the preschool classroom environment together. Additionally, preschool teachers' reading enjoyment or personal reading habits role in children's reading attitudes might be examined in order to understand the issue in more detail.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN TURKISH

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. (Sence) okumak nedir? Okuma deyince aklına neler geliyor

2. (Sence) insanlar neden okurlar? Okuma nedenleri ne olabilir

3. İnsanlar okurken ne (neler) yaparlar?

4. İnsanlar ne tür şeyler okurlar?

5. İnsanlar nerelerde okurlar?

6. Sen okumayı biliyor musun?

7. Okumayı öğrenmek istiyor musun?

8. (Peki) sana okumayı kim öğretecek?

9. (Sence) okumayı nasıl öğreneceksin?

10. Sen en çok neleri okumayı seversin?

APPENDIX B: FACTOR LOADINGS of HLEQ AND THE QUESTIONAIRE SHEET

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Çocuğumun sözel ifadelerini tamamlar ve bunları geliştiririm (Örneğin: "Çocuk ağlıyor." ifadesini uzatarak "Evet, çocuk ağlıyor çünkü canı yanmış olmalı.")	0.41				
Çocuğumla konuşurken dilbilgisi açısından doğru ve düzgün cümleler kurarım.	0.41				
Çocuğumla gününün nasıl geçtiği hakkında konuşurum.	0.65				
Aynı soruyu defalarca sorsa bile çocuğumun sorduğu soruları cevaplar ve konu ile ilgili açıklamalarda bulunurum.	0.42				
Çocuğumun anlamadığını düşündüğüm şeyleri açıklamaya çalışırım.	0.63				
Çocuğumun konuşmasında ilerleme gördüğümde onu sözlerimle takdir ederim.	0.52				
Çocuğumu akranlarıyla ve yetişkinlerle konuşması için cesaretlendiririm	0.45				
Eğer çocuğumun ne dediğini anlamazsam ondan tekrar etmesini ya da ne demek istediğini açıklamasını isterim.	0.54				
Çocuğumun sorduğu soruları tutarlı bir şekilde cevaplandırırım.	0.48				
Çocuğum çoğul eklerini yanlış kullandığında onu düzeltirim ve doğru bir şekilde kullanmasını teşvik ederim.	0.46				
Çocuğumun geçmiş ve gelecek zamanı kullanırken yaptığı hataları düzeltirim ve doğru bir şekilde kullanmasını teşvik ederim.	0.51				

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Çocuğuma kitap okurum		0.49			
Çocuğum benden ne zaman isterse ona kitap okurum.		0.45			
Çocuğumla birlikte kütüphaneye giderim.		0.42			
Çocuğum kütüphaneden istediği kitapları ödünç alır.		0.41			
Çocuğumla birlikte çocuk tiyatrosuna ya da sinemaya giderim.		0.45			
Çocuğumla birlikte izlediğimiz çocuk tiyatrosu veya film hakkında çocuğumla konuşurum.		0.53			
Çocuğuma hediye olarak çocuk kitapları / resimli kitaplar satın alırım.		0.58			
Çocuğumla birlikte resimli kitaplar okuruz.		0.53			
Çocuğumun kitaplarda ki resimlere bakarak hikâye anlatmasını teşvik ederim.			0.54		
Çocuğumla oyun oynarken farklı nesne ve oyuncakların isimlerini kullanır ve bunları açıklarım. (Örneğin: Evet bu uçak ama diğeri helikopter. Bak helikopterin kanatları uzun değil.)			0.58		
Çocuğumla günde en az yarım saat oynarım.			0.56		
Çocuğumla birlikte televizyon seyrederim.			0.60		
Çocuğumla televizyonda izledikleri hakkında onunla konuşurum.			0.47		
Çocuğuma kitap okurken sözümü kesmesine ve bana sorular sormasına izin veririm.				0.53	
Çocuğuma kitap okurken onun kendisine ait hikâyeler oluşturmasına izin veririm.				0.57	
Çocuğuma kitap okurken onunla kitabın içeriği hakkında konuşuruz.				0.60	
Çocuğuma sayı saymayı öğretirim.					0.50
Çocuğumu birkaç kelimeyi (Örneğin: kendi adını) okuyabilmesi için onu teşvik ederim.					0.44

Çocuğumun harfleri öğrenmesi konusunda ona destek olurum (Örneğin: Ona kitaptaki harfleri gösteririm, Ona kendi adındaki harfleri öğretirim).					0.41

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Çocuğumla konuşurken uzun ve karmaşık cümleler kullanırım (Örneğin: Kurallı ve devrik olmayan cümleler, bileşik cümleler, isim cümleleri).					0.41

CRONBACH'S ALPHA COEFFICIENT OF HLEQ'S FACTORS

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
F1	0.84
F2	0.82
F3	0.83
F4	0.76
F4	0.75
Total	0.89

APPENDIX B: TURKISH VERSION OF HLEQ

Çocuğun Adı: _____ **Çoçuğun Yaşı:** _____ **Çocuğun Cinsiyeti:** _____

Sayın Veli,

*Lütfen her bir maddeyi dikkatlice okuyup eviniz dahilindeki davranışlarınızın sıklığına göre aşağıdaki herbir sorunun yanında bulunan 1-6 arası rakamlardan **birini** seçiniz. Anketin araştırmamızda kullanılabilmesi için **tüm sorulara** cevap verilmesi gerekmektedir. Bir soru bile boş bırakıldığında anket çalışma dışı kalmaktadır. Zaman ayırıp anketi doldurarak çalışmamıza yapmış olduğunuz katkınız ve desteğiniz için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.*

	Hiçbir zaman	*Nadiren*	*Bazen*	*Sık Sık*	*Genellikle*	*Her zaman*
1. Çocuğumun sözel ifadelerini tamamlar ve bunları geliştiririm (Örneğin: "Çocuk ağlıyor." ifadesini uzatarak "Evet, çocuk ağlıyor çünkü canı yanmış olmalı.")	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Çocuğumla konuşurken dilbilgisi açısından doğru ve düzgün cümleler kurarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Çocuğumla gününün nasıl geçtiği hakkında konuşurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Aynı soruyu defalarca sorsa bile çocuğumun sorduğu soruları cevaplar ve konu ile ilgili açıklamalarda bulunurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Çocuğumun anlamadığını düşündüğüm şeyleri açıklamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Çocuğumun konuşmasında ilerleme gördüğümde onu sözlerimle takdir ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Çocuğumu akranlarıyla ve yetişkinlerle konuşması için cesaretlendiririm	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Eğer çocuğumun ne dediğini anlamazsam ondan tekrar etmesini ya da ne demek istediğini açıklamasını isterim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Çocuğuma kitap okurum	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Çocuğumun sorduğu soruları tutarlı bir şekilde cevaplandırırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Çocuğum çoğul eklerini yanlış kullandığında onu düzeltirim ve doğru bir şekilde kullanmasını teşvik ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Çocuğumun geçmiş ve gelecek zamanı kullanırken yaptığı hataları düzeltirim ve doğru bir şekilde kullanmasını teşvik ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Hiçbir zaman	*Nadiren*	*Bazen*	*Sık Sık*	*Genellikle*	*Her zaman*
13. Çocuğum benden ne zaman isterse ona kitap okurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Çocuğumla birlikte kütüphaneye giderim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Çocuğumla birlikte kütüphaneye gittiğimizde çocuğum kütüphaneden istediği kitapları ödünç alır.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Çocuğumla birlikte çocuk tiyatrosuna ya da sinemaya giderim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Çocuğumla birlikte izlediğimiz çocuk tiyatrosu veya film hakkında çocuğumla konuşurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. Çocuğuma hediye olarak kitaplar / sırf resimlerden oluşan resimli kitaplar satın alırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Çocuğumla birlikte resimli kitaplar okuruz.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Çocuğumun kitaplarda ki resimlere bakarak hikâye anlatmasını teşvik ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Çocuğumla oyun oynarken farklı nesne ve oyuncakların isimlerini kullanır ve bunları açıklarım. (Örneğin: Evet bu uçak ama diğeri helikopter. Bak helikopterin kanatları uzun değil.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Çocuğumla günde en az yarım saat oynarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Çocuğumla birlikte televizyon seyrederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Çocuğumla televizyonda izledikleri hakkında onunla konuşurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Çocuğumla yapmak istediği şeyler hakkında onunla konuşurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Çocuğuma kitap okurken sözümü kesmesine ve bana sorular sormasına izin veririm.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Çocuğuma kitap okurken onun kendisine ait hikâyeler oluşturmasına izin veririm.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Çocuğuma kitap okurken onunla kitabın içeriği hakkında konuşuruz.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Çocuğuma sayı saymayı öğretirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Çocuğumu birkaç kelimeyi (Örneğin: kendi adını) okuyabilmesi için onu teşvik ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Çocuğumun harfleri öğrenmesi konusunda ona destek olurum (Örneğin: Ona kitaptaki harfleri gösteririm, Ona kendi adındaki harfleri öğretirim).	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Çocuğumla konuşurken uzun ve karmaşık cümleler kullanırım (Örneğin: Kurallı ve devrik olmayan cümleler, bileşik cümleler, isim cümleleri).	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX C: FACTOR LOADINGS of PRAS

Items	F1	F2	F3
Sınıfında ki biri sana bir şey okurken kendini nasıl hissedersin?	0.45		
Başka kişilerle birlikte okuma yaparken kendini nasıl hissedersin?	0.42		
Öğretmenin sana bir hikâye okurken kendini nasıl hissedersin?	0.44		
Sınıfında herkesle birlikte okuma yaparken kendini nasıl hissedersin?	0.60		
Kitap köşesinde ki kitaplara bakarken kendini nasıl hissedersin?		0.56	
Sınıfında ki kitaplık köşesine gittiğinde kendini nasıl hissedersin?		0.51	
Kitaplık köşesinde kitaplarını arkadaşlarınla paylaşırken kendini nasıl hissedersin?		0.63	
Kitaplık köşesinden (bakmak ve okumak için) eve götürmek için kitap alırken kendini nasıl hissedersin?		0.48	
Kitaplarda ki resimlere bakarken kendini nasıl hissedersin?			0.65
Bir arkadaşına hikâye anlatırken kendini nasıl hissedersin?			0.52
Kitaplar hakkında konuşurken kendini nasıl hissedersin?			0.47
Biri (evde ailen /okulda öğretmenin) sana sessiz bir yerde kitap okurken kendini nasıl hissedersin?			0.51

CRONBACH'S ALPHA COEFFICIENT OF PRAS'S FACTORS

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
F1	0.71
F2	0.69
F3	0.70
Total	0.73

APPENDIX D: PARENT CONSENT FORM

Sayın Veli,

Bu çalışma, ODTÜ İlköğretim Bölümü öğretim üyesi Yrd. Doç. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN danışmanlığında ve Arş. Gör. Dilek ALTUN tarafından yürütülmektedir. Yüksek Lisans tezi kapsamında, okul öncesi dönemi çocuklarının okumaya karşı tutumlarının ev okuryazarlık ortamı ile ilişkisinin araştırılması ve çocukların okuma ile ilgili algılarının tespit edilmesi hedeflenmektedir. Bu kapsamda, bu çalışmaya katılacak olan çocuğun okumaya karşı tutumu " Okul Öncesi Çocuklarının Okumaya Karşı Tutum" ölçeği ile ölçülecektir. Ölçek okul öncesi çocuklarının okumaya karşı tutumlarını ölçmeye yönelik 12 adet sorudan oluşmaktadır. Çocuklar araştırmacı tarafından sorulacak soruları 3'lü gülen yüz formatında (mutlu-nötr-mutsuz) yer alan yüzlerden birini seçerek cevaplayacaktır. Velisi olduğunuz çocuğunuz bireysel olarak görüşmeye alınacak ve araştırmacı tarafından sorulacak sorulara mutlu-nötr-mutsuz yüzlerden birini seçerek cevaplaması istenecektir. Çocuğunuzun araştırmacıya vereceği cevaplar araştırmacı tarafından gizli tutulacaktır.

Araştırmacı tarafından yapılacak uygulamanın sonucunda çocuğunuzun kimlik bilgileri tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler sadece bilimsel araştırma için kullanılacaktır.

Bu çalışmaya katılım tamamen gönüllü olup arzu edildiği takdirde herhangi bir yaptırıma maruz kalmadan katılımcı katılımdan vazgeçme hakkına sahiptir. Bu çalışma için velinin onayının yanı sıra, çocuğun kendi gönüllülüğü de katılım için önemli bir önceliktir. Çocuğunuz istemediği takdirde uygulamaya katılmama hakkına sahiptir.

Bu çalışmaya katılarak bize sağlayacağınız bilgiler çocukların okumaya karşı tutumlarını belirleme açısından önemli bir katkı sağlayacaktır.

Bu çalışmaya ya da çocuğunuzun katılımına yönelik daha fazla bilgi için aşağıda belirtilen numara ve adreslerden araştırmacıya ulaşabilirsiniz.

Katılımınız ve desteğiniz için teşekkür ederim.

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN
Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi
Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı
Tel. No:0312 210 36 99
E posta:tfeyza@metu.edu.tr

Arş. Gör. Dilek ALTUN
Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi
Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı
Tel. No:0312 210 75 38
E posta: daltun@metu.edu.tr

Lütfen bu araştırmaya katılmak konusundaki tercihinizi aşağıdaki seçeneklerden size en uygun gelenin altına imzanızı atarak belirtiniz ve bu formu çocuğunuzla okula geri gönderiniz.

A) Yukarıda açıklamasını okuduğum çalışmaya, oğlum/kızım _____'nin katılımına izin veriyorum. Ebeveynin:

Adı, soyadı: _____

İmzası: _____

Tarih: _____

B) Yukarıda açıklamasını okuduğum çalışmaya, oğlum/kızım _____'nin katılımına izin vermiyorum. Ebeveynin:

Adı, soyadı: _____

İmzası: _____

Tarih: _____

İmzalanan bu formu lütfen çocuğunuz aracılığı ile öğretmene ulaştırın.

Çocuğunuzun katılımı ya da haklarının korunmasına yönelik sorularınız varsa ya da çocuğunuz herhangi bir şekilde risk altında olabileceğine, strese maruz kalacağına inanıyorsanız Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Etik Kuruluna (312) 210-37 29 telefon numarasından

Demographic Information Form

Sayın Veli,

***Bu bilgiler çocukların okumaya karşı tutumlarını etkileyen faktörleri incelemek amacıyla sorulmaktadır. Sorularda isim , soy isim, adres vb kimlik bilgileri sorulmamaktadır. Katkınız için teşekkür ederiz*.**

1. Anketi dolduran kişi (çocuğun) ☐ annesiyim ☐ babasıyım ☐ diğer (……) lütfen belirtiniz

2. Çocuğunuzun yaşı: _____ yıl _____ ay

3. Çocuğunuzun cinsiyeti : ☐ kız ☐ erkek

4. **Çocuğunuzun daha önceki okul deneyimi: (birden fazla seçenek yazılabilir)**

☐ hiç okula gitmedi ☐ kreş / Gündüz Bakım Evi (0-3 yaş)

☐ özel yuva/ anaokulu (3-6yaş) ☐ devlet anaokulu (3-6yaş)

.

☐ özel anasınıfı (6yaş) ☐ devlet anasınıfı (6yaş)

5. **Çocuğunuz şimdiye kadar ne kadar süre okul öncesi eğitim aldı?** …….

6. Yaşınız: _____ **7. Eşinizin Yaşı:** _____

8. Eğitim durumunuz :

☐ İlkokul ☐ Ortaokul ☐ Lise

☐ Ön lisans ☐ Üniversite ☐ Yüksek lisans /Doktora

9. Eşinizin eğitim durumu:

☐ İlkokul ☐ Ortaokul ☐ Lise

☐ Ön lisans ☐ Üniversite ☐ Yüksek lisans/Doktora

10. Evde yaşayan toplam çocuk sayısı: ____

11. Sizin ve eşinizin ortalama *aylık* geliriniz toplamı: _____
TL

12. Evinizde bilgisayar var mı? ☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

13. Evinizde internet bağlantısı var mı? ☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

14. Çocuğunuz günde ortalama ne kadar süre bilgisayar başında geçiriyor?
_____ dakika

15. Çocuğunuz günde ortalama ne kadar süre televizyon seyreder?

_____ dakika

16. Haftada ortalama ne kadar sure siz veya eşiniz çocuğunuza kitap okursunuz? **_____** dakika

17. Çocuğunuz haftada ortalama ne kadar süre kendi başına kitaplara bakıp, inceleyip kitaplarla zaman geçirir? **_____** dakika

18. Bir hafta içinde kaç defa siz veya diğer bir aile üyesi çocuğunuzla birlikte kitap okur? **_____** defa

19. Çocuğunuzla birlikte kitap okuduğunuz sure haricinde gün içinde kendiniz toplam kaç dakika kitap/gazete vb. okursunuz? **_____** dakika

20. Çocuğunuzla birlikte kitap okuduğunuz sure haricinde gün içinde eşiniz toplam kaç dakika kitap/gazete vb. okur? **_____** dakika

21. Çocuğunuz ne sıklıkla kendisine kitap okunmasını ister?

☐ neredeyse hiç ☐ ayda bir – iki defa

☐ haftada bir – iki defa ☐ neredeyse her gün

22. çocuğunuz kendi başına ne sıklıkla kitapları karıştırır ve inceler?

☐ neredeyse hiç ☐ ayda bir – iki defa

☐ haftada bir – iki defa ☐ neredeyse her gün

23. Evde kitaplığınız var mı? ☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

24. Kitaplığınızda ortalama adet yetişkinlere yönelik kitap mevcut? …… adet

25. Çocuğunuza yönelik evinizde yaklaşık kaç tane resimli kitap mevcut? …… adet

APPENDIX H: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ■

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Altun
Adı : Dilek
Bölümü : İlköğretim Bölümü /Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği

TEZİN ADI: An Investigation Of The Relationship Between Preschoolers' reading Attitudes And Home Literacy Environment

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ■ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ■

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: