

EVALUATION REPORT  
OF THE  
FATHER SUPPORT PROGRAM



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## INTRODUCTION

Fathers have been ignored for a long time in psychology. Various studies of socialization have focused on types of mother-child interactions or family types, concentrating on the influences on child's personality and social behaviour. Few systematic studies exist that investigate father-child relationship and their consequences (Lynn, 1974). This was mainly because mothers were believed to be more important than fathers in influencing the development of children. Two theorists, Sigmund Freud and John Bowlby were particularly important in this "traditional conception of the remote father" Parke, 1981, p. 4). Freud believed that the relationship between the infant and the mother is very important in shaping his/her later personality and social relationships. Fathers were considered to be important in a later period in childhood. Bowlby stressed the importance of attachment and stated that the first and most important object in infant attachment is the mother (Parke, 1981). Fathers were given a secondary role, where they could only support the mother.

There have been technological, economic and ideological changes in the society, which are redefining being a father (Parke, 1981). The number of women working full time outside the home has increased in the recent years, whether with the purpose of personal fulfilment or because of economic necessity, as well as the emergence of the Western feminist movement (Lynn, 1974). This has caused major changes in fathers' role (Presser, 1998). Besides, the time between the birth of a child and returning to work has shortened. The number of nuclear families, especially in big cities, has risen. More divorced fathers than in the past are claiming custody of their children. All these changes have urged fathers to be more involved in early infant and childcare (Presser, 1998). Therefore, recent research has tried to find out the consequences of the father's involvement on child's development (Lynn, 1974; Parke, 1981).

Historically fathers have been accepted to have various roles such as moral overseer, breadwinner, and sex role model, nurturant/participant. The attention given to each one changed over time and now the interest is in the role of the father as nurturant participant, playing an active role in daily care and upbringing of children (Daly, 1995, Lamb, 1997). Although there has been a rapid change in the concept of fatherhood, fathers' active involvement in childcare has not caught up with this change, mainly because no clear and appropriate paternal roles were present (Daly, 1995). This fact emphasized the need for studies that dwell upon the role of fathers and their importance on child development. There are few studies in Turkey that were carried out in recent years and they mainly focused on fathers of preschool children (Arı Güleç, 1998, Evans, 1997). Some few studies investigated fathers' involvement with preadolescents and adolescents (Yılmazçetin, 2003).

Therefore, considering the importance of fathers in child development and the lack of support available to fathers in Turkey, Mother Child Education Foundation initiated Father Support Program as a pilot study in 1996. The aim of the program was to create awareness in fathers regarding their importance in childcare as well as to inform and support them about child development. This report is the first evaluation of the Father Support Program, which is carried out in two parts: the quantitative evaluation of the program through the attitude inventory and the qualitative evaluation of the program through the interviews conducted with both the fathers and the mothers.



## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The early years of a child's life, when very rapid growth is observed, are very important for the whole development of the child. Evidence from various fields has shown that intelligence, personality and social behaviour are formed in these critical early years (Myers, 1992; Young, 1996). Therefore, it is argued "The type and nature of early experience to which human infants are subjected will make a measurable and permanent difference in their developmental course as children and adults" (Upshur, 1990, p. 633).

In these critical early years, children need other people, namely adults in their life to help them develop in the most appropriate way (Myers, 1992). Children need a consistent and predictable care-giving environment with opportunities provided for discovery and exploration. This need emphasizes that the family has important functions for the healthy development and socialization of the child. Family is the first place where socialization starts, and the quality and the quantity of care provided to the child account for his/her healthy well-being. When the importance of family is emphasized, most of the responsibility is believed to be on the mother. However, it is now an established fact that fathers have an important and unique role in the development of the child (Lynn, 1974), and their absence may have possible negative outcomes, especially in gender identification and gender typing, as well as in social, emotional and intellectual development of the child.

Fathers have different roles assigned to them in the society but the most important one that plays a key role in the society today is the breadwinning role (Baruch and Barnett, 1987). Another important role, which has indirect influence on the child, is the role of the father as a source of emotional support to the mother. This helps improve the quality of mother-child relationship, and when, on the contrary, fathers do not provide support to the mother and when there is high marital conflict, children may be in danger of suffering (Cummings and O'Reilly, 1997). Besides, when fathers are involved in housework regarding children, they help decrease the workload of the mother, and this affects the quality of relationships within the family (Pleck, 1983, cited in Lamb, 1997). In helping with the housework, fathers constitute a role model for their children as well. Another direct influence of father results from his direct interaction with the child. When fathers take care of their children, when they teach and play with them, they always create this influence (Lamb, 1997).

Research shows that fathers and mothers are mainly similar in ways of interacting with the child, though there are differences, but this does not show that fathers' interactive style has less of an impact than that of mothers (Marsiglio, 1995). Evidence from various cultures reveals that the interaction style of fathers is unique and different. During infancy, mothers from various cultures establish relationship with their babies different than fathers. Mothers spend more time with physical care and expressing affection, whereas fathers devote more time to play (Lamb, 1997). These differences in the interaction style have different impact on the child's socio-emotional development. Verschueren and Marcoen (1999) found that when fathers hold their infants for playing, they encouraged them to explore the environment, thereby creating a sense of independence. However, this situation has undergone some changes in some families as more women are working today. Employed mothers spend more time in playful interaction than do unemployed mothers. Besides, the husbands of employed mothers are more interested in the care giving of child (Cox, Owen, Henderson & Margand, 1992).

Although infants usually choose the mother for comfort and security, over the second year of life, this preference for the mother declines. Besides, babies were observed to approach, ask to be held by, vocalize to and smile at both of the parents when they are not in stress (Lamb, 1997). When they can, it was observed that young children tend to choose their fathers to play with (Clarke-Stewart, 1978). Fathers' sensitive care giving, like mothers', is a factor influencing secure attachment and this influence becomes stronger when fathers spend more time with their babies (van Ijzendoorn & De Wolff, 1997).

The father-child relationship does not occur in isolation between two people. The family context where the relationship between the father and the child takes place includes the mother and other siblings as well (Lynn, 1974). The father is important on the development of the child



through direct influences as well as through indirect influences on the infant's early interactions with other people. Father affect the mother's behaviour, and thus indirectly affect their infants and children. In fact, when we consider the relationship between a parent and a child, parents must be considered as part of the family system. Furthermore, families, being a part of the chain of a wide network, exist in relation to other parts of the society (Parke, 1981). In that respect, father represents the society within the family, and represents the family within the society (Lynn, 1974). Participating in the childcare may influence the father, the child's development and the mother positively, especially in lowering the stress level that employed mothers experience (Evans, 1997).

### **Father's Influence on Child Development**

When children have close, warm relationships with their fathers, they were observed to be better adjusted psychologically, have better performance at school, show less antisocial behaviour and their relationships with their peers, through their lives, are better (Lamb, 1997; Verschueren & Marcoen, 1999). Radin (1994, cited in Berk, 2003) stated that the more the father is in contact with his children, the higher the intelligence and achievement, as well as mature social behaviour and gender-stereotype flexibility. It was found that overall security of attachment to both the mother and the father was significantly related to positive friendship qualities; and availability of the father was an important factor in decreasing friendship conflicts (Lieberman, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 1999).

The degree of father's involvement, the time they spend with their children is also influential on child development. Various studies revealed that fathers spend much less time with their children than mothers do (Pleck, 1997). Amato and Rivera (1999) looked into the effects of time spent together with the child. The authors considered the behaviour problems of 5-18 years old children, both at school and at home. The results of the study revealed that the number of behaviour problems that children showed decreased when fathers' involvement increased. Another study by Radin (1973) investigated the relationship between fathers' behaviours and children's intellectual competence. Results indicated that the quality of fathers' behaviour towards their sons was highly influential on the performance of their son's in intellectual tests. The study of Easterbrooks and Goldberg (1984) revealed similar results. The involvement of the father in childcare was found to be positively correlated with cognitive development and problem-solving skills of children.

When the influence of father involvement on the social and emotional development of children is taken into consideration, again there was a positive correlation, with variables such as family income, maternal involvement, parental age and neonatal health held constant (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, Lamb, 2000).

To conclude this section, there are various studies that have focused on the role and the involvement level of fathers, especially in the Western culture. As Lamb (1997) puts it, fathers mainly choose to play with their children. However, whatever type they choose, research indicates a positive correlation between involvement level of the father in childcare and child's healthy development (Cabrera et al., 2000; Liebermann et al., 1999; Radin, 1973; Verschueren and Marcoen, 1999).

### **Types of Paternal Involvement**

Father involvement consists of three components of childcare when the conceptual framework is taken into consideration (Lamb, 1987).

1. **Engagement:** This component includes the types of interaction between the father and the child, in other words, the father's direct contact with the child.
2. **Accessibility:** This term refers to father's being present or being available to the child, both physically and psychologically. Atkinson (1991) stated that being present referred to the father's direct interaction with the child, while being available meant that the father is not directly engaged with the child but the child knows that s/he can call his/her father when needed.



3. Responsibility: This component emphasizes remembering and planning activities and events for the child such as taking the child to the doctor or arranging a meeting with friends, and does not necessitate direct contact with the child.

Lamb (2002) identified four factors that seem to influence these types of paternal involvement, which are: motivation, self-confidence, social support and institutional practices. These dimensions are interrelated and affect each other. Besides, there are some psychological factors that are closely related to how men adapt to parenting. The first one is how the man remembers his own childhood relationships. These recollections are correlated with his paternal sensitivity.

Studies reveal that men display lower levels of engagement than women, especially in industrial societies. However, there has been a change in the patterns of paternal involvement in Europe and North America (Lamb, 2002).

#### **Antecedents of father involvement**

Every father does not display the same level of involvement in childcare; some are closely involved in every activity of their children, whereas others seem to be happy with their limited roles (Atkinson, 1991). Therefore, researchers have tried to look into this fact to see what factors influence father involvement.

#### **Marital satisfaction**

Research revealed that marital satisfaction and the harmony in the marriage has a substantial influence on how men behave as a father (Cox, Owen, Lewis, & Henderson, 1989; Crouter, Perry-Jenkins, Huston, & McHale, 1987; Doherty, Kouneski, & Erickson, 1998; Levy-Shiff, & Israelashvilli, 1988). It was found that men who have a happy marriage possibly have some sense of security and competence, which encourages them to be more involved (Levy-Shiff, & Israelashvilli, 1988). Another study carried out by Cox et al. (1989) revealed that when men had a close relationship with their wives, their attitude regarding children and themselves as a father were positive.

On the other hand, the involvement of the father may positively affect the marital relationship. The degree of paternal involvement and engagement were closely related to the degree of mother-father engagement and social support (Lamb, 1997). In other words, paternal, more than the maternal behaviour seems to be influenced by the quality of the relationship with the partner and social context factors. This may be related to the fact that traditional parental roles make paternal involvement voluntary, while maternal involvement is the prerequisite of maternal role (Russell, 1978). Both parents' involvement with babies is further secured when there is a warm, satisfying marital relationship, and this support is even more meaningful for fathers (Braungart-Rieker, Courtney, & Garwood, 1999; Frosch, Mangelsdorf, & McHale, 2000). However, when the responsibilities of the father and the mother are not equal, there is the possibility of more conflict and less marital satisfaction and mental health problems after childbirth. This is especially valid for women and leads to negative parent-infant interaction (Levy-Shiff, 1994).

These studies support the view that a satisfactory marital relationship is influential on father's level of involvement.

#### **Maternal employment status**

With the recent changes in society, especially in big cities, the number of women working outside home is increasing. Parent-child relationship is important when the effects of maternal employment on children are assessed. Besides, there are other factors such as the satisfaction the mother gets from her work, the support of her partner, the sex of the child and the quality of child care (Berk, 2003).

Several studies examined whether there was a difference in father involvement between families where the father is the only financial provider and where both the father and the mother are working, and mothers' employment and her working schedule have been shown to influence





father involvement in various studies (Brayfield, 1995; Coltrane, 1995; Radin, & Harold-Goldsmith, 1989; Marsiglio, 1995). Fathers in dual-earner families were observed to be more involved in childcare. In other words, father's participation in child related activities increased in cases where the mother was working. This might be due to mother's expectation that the father must be more involved and share responsibilities related with childcare as she is working (Presser, 1998). However, in families where fathers are the only financial provider, they were observed to be involved as a result of an intrinsic motivation. In other words, the father wants to be involved in daily child rearing activities as he gets pleasure from his participation (Crouter et al, 1987). Mother's income is another factor influencing father involvement. It was stated that when both spouses' income levels are similar, fathers tend to be more involved in housework. However, the author also added that mother still does much of the work at home, and another factor, the working hours of each spouse, might be influential (Coltrane, 1995).

### **Perception of the role of the father**

How a man perceives himself as a father, how he identifies himself with this role also determines his involvement in childcare (Doherty et al., 1998, Levy-Shiff & Israelashvili, 1988). These studies revealed that the meanings attributed to fatherhood is essentially influential, and when being a father is seen as something positive and meaningful, father's level of involvement has a tendency to increase.

### **Timing for fatherhood**

Becoming a father too young, when one does not feel ready yet may result in a crisis. The unplanned child might be considered to be an obstacle for his future (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000). This study revealed that a planned pregnancy led to positive parenting. On the other hand, little involvement and support of parents who had to face the responsibilities of an unplanned pregnancy, resulted in long-term negative effects on child's self-esteem. However, there are other factors which affect whether these children would be at risk or not, such as economic resources, child characteristics, individual psychological adjustment level of parents and social factors (Cabrera et al., 2000).

### **Child's gender and gender role development**

The child's gender is another factor influencing the involvement level of the father. Mother is generally accepted as the primary caregiver and during the gender role development of children; boys have to change from identifying with their mother to identifying with their father (Lynn, 1974). In other words, girls already have their mothers as their role model, but boys need their fathers.

Marsiglio (1991) found that fathers communicated with their sons more than they did with their daughters. In his study, fathers spent more time in leisure and project activities, and played more with their sons. Baruch and Barnett (1987) found coinciding results in their middle class North American sample of 5-10-year-old children. Fathers were observed to spend more time in childcare of their sons and to spend more time with their male children. Similarly, Parke (1981) stated that fathers had more tendencies to show affection to their infant daughters, while stimulating their infant sons. A similar statement could be seen in Green (1976, cited in Evans, 1997), who argued that fathers tend to discourage problem solving abilities as well as other types of intellectual development in girls, and emphasize social abilities and dependency. When fathers' attitude towards boys is taken into consideration, fathers give importance to mastery and independence in their sons, and have higher occupational expectations from boys (Parke, 1981).



## Family Structure in Turkey

Following the foundation of the Turkish Republic, certain legal reforms were realized to ameliorate women's rights. Starting from 1950s, Turkey has lived through rapid social and economic development, which left its mark on all social institutions, including the family (Erder, 1985). The legislative rules were slow to adopt to the changing social environment, and this created major problems regarding the structure and functions of the family. In 1960s, as a result of the emphasis on comprehensive social and economic planning for development, research was given importance and urban family became a major topic, while the interest in rural families still continued (Erder, 1985).

This emphasis on the urban family was the result of the fact that the number of women living in urban areas have risen substantially in recent years. The number of women in the working ages and the number of women over 65 years of age were foreseen to increase (Kandiyoti, 1982), and this was expected to have consequences on job demands, child care and health services in cities.

When both the rural and urban families are taken into consideration, Turkey, as a whole, is accepted as a developing country and the Islamic religion strongly affects the cultural values in the society (Kazgan, 1979). The ideology resulting from the Islamic cultural values organizes everyday life depending on the sex. The role of the mother and the father is clearly defined in the Turkish culture, and the Turkish family is still traditional, when generation and gender issues are taken into consideration (Fişek, 1982). The man is considered to be the head of the family and having authority over females and children, he is the main decision maker. However, the decision making process of the modern families needs to be investigated empirically as there is not any recent study done on this issue (Yalçınkaya, 1990).

Women living in the urban parts of Turkey have made some social and economic adjustments, and regardless of the social role, it was seen that male role was never challenged and norms of family functioning are accepted (Kandiyoti, 1982). Kıray (1985) also supports this view by stating that although the production and consumption activities of the rural family are not applicable to the family in the metropolitan environment, the intra-family relations and roles have not changed significantly. Society has changed to a great extent but still the status of women is lower than that of men (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1981; Kandiyoti, 1978; Kıray, 1976). The woman is responsible for taking care of both the children and the man in the household, meaning that her first role is to be a housewife and a mother. (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1981). The man works outside and he is responsible from the external relations of the family, whereas the woman is supposed to organize the domestic environment and household activities, such as consumption and supporting good relations among the members of the family. However, with the changing family structure, the woman's role is replaced by the responsibility of organizing the relations of the family with the friends and relatives who are outside the nuclear family circle.

Regarding the communication within the traditional Turkish family, open negotiation and discussion are not given too much of priority. The communication between spouses in the traditional family is observed to be limited (Kandiyoti, 1978) although there is an affectionate and controlling home environment for children to grow up (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1972). This controlling and protective aspects are the constituents of discipline at home (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1981), although recent studies indicate an interest in more democratic and egalitarian relationships (Okman, 1980, cited in Yalçınkaya 1990). Children are considered to become a security agent for their parents' old age, therefore, families tend to prefer boys over girls. In line with this expectation, male children are given more opportunity to receive more education than females (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1985). However, with socio-economic development and with education, the importance given to the "old-age security" value of boys decreases. Sunar's more recent study (cited in Öğüt, 1998) revealed similar findings by stating that the preference for a male child in the urban sample decreased significantly.

Evans' study (1997) supported these findings. Evans found in her low socio-economic sample of Turkish fathers that physical caretaking of children was believed to be the mother's job. The fathers in the study perceived their role as a father to be mainly the breadwinner. They also stated making long-term decisions regarding the child's education and teaching him/her cognitive skills. In other words, these fathers believed that their most important role was to



provide the family with financial means, as well as loving and showing affection to the child. They were mostly present during meal times, but reported low levels of engagement. On the other hand, fathers believed that socialization of the child was the responsibility of both parents. Evans (1997) concluded that the fathers in her study had highly traditional attitudes to fathering. A further examination looked into the effects of the child's gender and mother's employment status on fathers' attitudes and involvement. Results indicated that the gender of the child had no influence on the attitudes or on the actual involvement of the father. However, mother's employment status had a small influence on fathers' attitudes regarding the division of labor in the family. In families where mothers were working outside, fathers were observed to have more tendency to think that certain child-care tasks and some of the decision making could be shared by both parents. However, this change in the attitude was not reported to be influential on the actual behaviour of the father.

### **The current status of fathers in Turkey**

The society does not provide any education for fathers before they become a father. When men become a father, they cannot find any time for education along with their work. The times we live, with rapid changes, make it even more difficult for fathers to realise and fulfil their role. Therefore, there is a need for an education program for fathers and Mother Child Education Foundation fills this need in Turkey with the Father Support Program (FSP).

There are few studies carried out in Turkey concerning father involvement. Evans (1997) examined the involvement patterns of Turkish fathers coming from low socio-economic backgrounds. Fathers' attitudes regarding their fathering roles, the division of labour in their family concerning childcare and how they perceive certain aspects of fathering roles were the main concerns of the study. Both dual-earner and single-earner families were included in the study. Another study, which had complementary results, investigated patterns of paternal involvement of upper and middle class SES Turkish fathers of preschoolers in terms of intensity of engagement and responsibility sharing regarding child care (Öğüt, 1998). This study also looked into the influence of gender and age of the child, and employment status of the mother on father involvement. Eighty fathers of firstborn children were interviewed using a structured interview. The results of both studies revealed that mothers were mainly responsible in the physical care of their children, whereas fathers believed that their most important role was to be the financial provider (Evans, 1997; Öğüt, 1998). However, fathers shared some responsibility with the mother, especially regarding decisions about child's education (Evans, 1997; Öğüt, 1998). Öğüt (1998) found that both parents in her middle and upper class sample shared the responsibility of making decisions regarding educational issues, such as choosing a school. Parallel to this study, Evans (1997) observed that both parents in her low SES sample were equally responsible in teaching social and moral behaviours.

When the effect of the gender of the child on father's involvement was considered, neither of the studies revealed any significant influence. The gender of the child, however, was seen to affect the content of interaction (Öğüt, 1998). Upper SES fathers and fathers of male children were observed to take more responsibility in basic care. It was found that fathers of male children had a preference for cognitively oriented games, such as computer games, allowed the child join them during a nonchild-oriented activity, and helped the child with bath taking more frequently. On the other hand, fathers who had female children were reported to have engaged significantly more often in verbally interactive activities with their daughters as well as doing arts and crafts together. This study also revealed that fathers of young preschoolers interacted more frequently with their children, such as having regular conversations and especially engaging in rough and tumble play. In both studies, mother's employment status was found to influence father's involvement only to some extent (Evans, 1997; Öğüt, 1998). Fathers in dual-earner families had significantly more meals together with their children. The fathers in low SES families, whose wives were employed, talked about shared responsibilities regarding child care and decisions about family matters although these ideas were not observable in their actual practice.

Another study conducted in Turkey, aimed to find out whether there would be a significant difference in the maternal involvement of working versus non-working mothers when father involvement and maternal role satisfaction were taken into consideration (Arı Güleç, 1998). 35





high SES single and 35 dual earner families with children aged 3-5 were included in the study. An interview was developed by the researcher to assess father and mother involvement. The aim of this interview was to find out the time spent with the child, the frequency of interaction, and physical and psychological presence both in care giving and leisure-play activities. Maternal role satisfaction was also assessed by an interview, developed by the researcher. The study revealed that only mother's working status affected maternal involvement. Non-working mothers were found to be significantly more involved in their children in care giving and leisure activities when compared to working mothers. No significant difference was found in mother's involvement, whether the husbands are involved or not involved. Besides, it was reported that father's involvement was not affected by the mother's employment status.

The studies mentioned above mainly described the types and levels of fatherhood, focusing on different socio-economic levels. Besides, their main sample was the fathers of preschool and primary school children. Taking this fact into consideration, another study by (Yılmazçetin, 2003) aimed to find out the degree of relationship between levels of father involvement and school performance, competence and behavioural problems of preadolescents. The study also examined whether father involvement was influenced by the gender of preadolescents, the employment status of the mother, and the satisfaction the father gets from his income and job. The results of the study revealed that father involvement was significantly more evident in the responsibility dimension than engagement and availability dimension. Engagement dimension had the lowest level of father involvement. However, Yılmazçetin (2003) mentioned that engagement was the most influential aspect regarding the behavioural problems of preadolescents. No relationship was found between father involvement and satisfaction level of fathers with their job and salary and the gender of preadolescents. The only factor that was found to be affecting the level of father involvement of middle and upper-middle class fathers was the employment status of the mother. The study revealed negative relations between total father involvement and total behaviour problems and external behaviour problems of preadolescents (Yılmazçetin, 2003).

Another study conducted by Güngörmüş (1986) aimed to find out the effects of father's absence on the self-concept of adolescents. The results revealed that adolescents who were still living with their fathers had a more positive self-image than those who had lost their fathers. These adolescents with a negative self-image were also found to be prone to have more conflicts in peer relationships when compared to other adolescents (Güngörmüş, 1986).

All these studies emphasize the important role that fathers play in children's development. The review of literature reveals that father's level of involvement is multidimensional, has some determinants and bears some consequences on the child's well being.

There is not much research in Turkey regarding the effects of father involvement on child development, although there are some studies regarding the effects of mother involvement on child development. The importance of mother involvement has long been recognized, and to fulfil this aim, mother enrichment program was developed. The origins of the Mother-Child Education Program (MOCEP) date back to 1982 and rest on the research project entitled "Turkish Early Enrichment Project" (TEEP) (Bekman, 1990, 1995, 1998; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1991, 1992, 1996, 1997; Kağıtçıbaşı, Sunar and Bekman, 1988). Since 1982, the TEEP has been revised and was named as Mother-Child Education Program. MOCEP gave rise to the development of Mother-Child Education Foundation (MOCEF) in 1993.

The main aim is to make the mother more sensitive to the child's cognitive, social and emotional development as well as empowering the mother to create a positive mother-child relationship through preparing a home environment.

The Program is currently being implemented for 25 weeks, as nationwide in Turkey through the joint efforts of the MOCEF, the Ministry of National Education and the General Directorate of Social Welfare and Child Protection Agency of the Prime Minister's Office. Evaluation research of the MOCEP Program indicates very promising results (Bekman, 1998).

Although fathers are not seen as the main targets of the Mother-Child Education Program, a handout is given in the first meeting for fathers to provide them with some information about the contents of the program. Furthermore, mothers are asked to share and discuss the other



handouts given to them throughout the meetings with their husbands. When there is a demand from the members, two meetings are organized by the group leader for fathers where father's role in child development is emphasized as well as positive discipline methods.

The results of evaluation research about Mother-Child Education Program (Bekman, 1998) and the results of the qualitative study (Koçak, 2000) revealed that fathers had benefited from the program indirectly, as a result of the changes the mother has experienced. Mothers expressed their wish for a program to be carried out with fathers. Therefore, taking all these issues into consideration, Mother-Child Education Foundation initiated the Father Support Program. This is the first qualitative and quantitative evaluation of this program and aims to find out fathers' perspectives and ideas regarding the program as well as whether they observed any changes in their attitudes, behaviour and perceptions. Fathers' reports were supported by the interviews carried out with the mothers, to see whether their responses are validated.

### **Father Support Program (FSP)**

Turkey has a considerable percentage of young population. However, seeing that there are not enough programs for these young people, Father Support Program was initiated with the aim of filling at least some portion of this gap, as it is impossible to be a definitive answer. The purpose of the program is to create an awareness and consciousness in fathers, especially in those coming from low socio-economic backgrounds, regarding child development and education.

Learning that being unemployed or having a low salary does not mean that a father is bad, and feeling himself more adequate and satisfied in his relationship with his children, and hence feeling less stress will have positive effects on family relationships. It is a known fact that in our culture, contrary to women, men do not share their concerns about home, family, financial situation with their friends. The fact that fathers do not have much opportunity to share their concerns adds to their stress. The implementation of FSP in the form of group discussions and participants' sharing their problems and experiences with each other enable fathers to talk about things that maybe they have not shared with anybody else.

FSP has especially fathers who have migrated to İstanbul and who have low salary as the target group. This bears great importance, as these fathers constitute a risk group for adaptation problems to a big city, as well as for the possibility of experiencing all kinds of social and emotional problems.

The program has a preventive nature for the problems that might arise out of relationship within family and psychological health. Therefore, FSP serves an important function in the preventive health care.

Father's becoming aware of his own importance in child education and his participation to this process results in his sharing responsibilities with the mother. Mothers in low-income families who have migrated to İstanbul, and therefore experiencing many problems have more responsibilities within the family traditionally. It is believed that men's contribution to child education and development will bring about an important change within the family. A happier family both regarding woman's status and within family relationships will emerge.

Fathers are as important as mothers in child development. Therefore, Mother-Child Education Foundation initiated Father Support Program as a pilot study in 1996. The aim of the program is to inform and support fathers about child development and to create an awareness regarding their importance in child education.

### **History of Father Support Program**

Three pilot studies of the program have been carried out since 1996 and the program has been implemented on a larger scale in İstanbul and Kocaeli as of 1999. The implementations were realized within the following stages:



#### **a) Pilot studies:**

The first pilot study was realized with the attendance of 11 fathers as a 5-week program between April 14 and May 26, 1996, on Sundays, at a Public Education Center in İstanbul. Following this pilot study, the duration of the program was decided to be short and it was increased to 12 weeks. The second pilot study, where 15 fathers participated, was carried out in Paşabahçe Glass factory, as a result of the agreement made with Kristal-İş Syndicate, affiliated at Türk-İş. During the graduation ceremony of the second pilot study, it was observed through the feedback provided by wives of some of the participant fathers that the program had supported the establishment of a democratic and adaptive environment within the family. When the sharings of participants were taken into consideration, it was seen that their relationship with their children developed further, their reactions like anger decreased and that they felt themselves more powerful in solving their problems. The idea of forming a library for children at the syndicate building and exchanging books was supported heatedly by the workers and was realized. The third pilot study was realized in five groups, in four different provinces of İstanbul between February 1998 and July 1998. These groups were chosen from regions varying in socio-economic status. The two groups carried out with parents of third grade students at Kurfalı Şeyh Şamil Primary School consisted mainly of fathers with low income and education, whereas the group for parents of first grade students at Kemerköy Primary School consisted of a group of fathers who had higher income and education. The groups conducted at Foundation for Societal Research-Kadıköy Branch and Küçükyalı Social Services and Child Protection Agency (husbands of the mothers who have attended the Mother-Child Education Program) consisted mainly of fathers with medium-low income and education.

These implementations have shown us that the program can be carried out with fathers coming from different economic and educational backgrounds, and that the effects for all groups are similar. Fathers from different backgrounds have similar experiences and demands related to their fatherhood and these similarities enable the implementation of the program within the whole population.

Besides, the fact that a participant method was used during the meetings, where fathers could share their experiences, was observed to have affected positively fathers' participation and attention. During these sharings, it was seen that fathers needed to talk about many topics; such as being afraid of hugging the newborn baby or having concerns that their older children would become gang members. These observations are in line with the fact that if a program to meet these needs could be presented, fathers would participate in that program.

#### **a) Implementations:**

Following the pilot studies, effective strategies were sought after the expansion of the program. It was decided that the most effective institutions for the implementation of the program would be primary schools and the voluntary teachers working in those schools. As a result, 33 voluntary teachers from İstanbul and Kocaeli, started their training within the framework of leadership training model as of January 2001, and they earned the right to be leaders after one year of education. All these implementations have been very successful. Teaching skills of the voluntary teachers in easing the implementation of the program has added greatly to this success. Furthermore, the program serves not only to fathers, but supports the in-class activities and teaching skills of the teachers. Besides, it also affected parents getting more interested in school and being more sensitive to education needs of their children. Eighty-nine implementations were realized with these teachers at primary schools and Public Education Centres, in 2001, with the permission of District Directorate of National Education; and 928 fathers participated in the program. 1799 fathers benefited from this service in İstanbul and Kocaeli, in January of 2002. A further revision was made in 2002-2003 program year in accordance with the feedback received from observers and group leaders. Certain topics were expanded whereas some were merged, and contents of all topics were revised. As a result, the program, which lasted for 15 weeks, was reduced to 13 weeks. As of 2003, the program has been implemented as 13 weeks.

The participant fathers must have a child who is 3-9 years old and be literate. However, being a high school or university graduate does not constitute an impediment. The groups are limited to 15 people. Each weekly session lasts about 2,5 hours. There is a tea break at each session, which enables the fathers to be more social with each other and with the group leader. The



participants share their problems and experiences with each other by using a group dynamics approach. A medium is created where fathers can share their ideas and feelings that they have never told anyone else before, and fathers are expected to find a solution to a problem as a group. The meeting time is decided upon with the participants. The groups can be held during the day or in the evenings during the week or at weekends. Written material, in the form of handouts, is given to participants by MOCEF.

### **General Characteristics of Father Support Program**

The aim, content, implementation characteristics of the program will be covered in this section.

#### **Aim of the program**

The family unit consists of a mother, a father and children, and fathers play as important a role as mothers in the development of children. Therefore, the aims of the program can be listed as:

- Father realizing his own importance in child development
- Father getting knowledge about child development
- Father having developmentally appropriate expectations from the child, in light of the knowledge acquired
- Prevention of child abuse
- Father getting the required support to be able to play a more effective role in child development
- Establishment of a balance between sexes with the inclusion of the father in child rearing
- Father learning democratic methods and using them with his wife and children at home, which will support a more democratic and happier family structure and society
- Father using some of the skills learned during the program (communication skills, problem solving strategies, etc.) in other relationships

### **Topics of the Program**

1. Making a contract / Getting to know each other
2. Father's role, importance and effects on child
3. Family attitudes
4. Accepting the child's behaviour and effective listening
5. I language
6. Positive methods of discipline I
7. Positive methods of discipline II
8. Developmental characteristics of children and physical development
9. Cognitive development and the importance of book reading
10. Child's social development
11. Child's emotional development
12. The importance of play and time spent with the child
13. Generalization - Ending of the program, certificate ceremony



## METHOD

### Aim

Father Support Program was initiated in 1996 in the form of pilot studies and has been implemented in İstanbul and Kocaeli since 1999 on a larger scale. However, no evaluation of the program has been carried out so far.

The aim of this study is to investigate the effects of the Father Support Program on fathers' experiences, relations and perceptions both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Overall effectiveness of the program, the way it was implemented in the group, and how the fathers

benefited from the program are the main concerns.

The method section will be reported in two sections:

- a) The quantitative evaluation of the program through attitude inventory
- b) The qualitative evaluation of the program through interviews

### Participants

#### **Quantitative study**

Announcements regarding the Father Support Program (FSP) were made in İstanbul and Kocaeli, in different provinces with varying socio-economic levels. Fathers who attended the introductory meetings of the FSP in İstanbul and Kocaeli, between 2001-2002 were included in the sample of the quantitative study. Some fathers could not continue participating in the program in later weeks for various reasons. Therefore, all the fathers who filled in the attitude inventory did not complete the FSP. When the characteristics of the sample are taken into consideration, the majority of the fathers were from low- and middle-SES. The common point of all the fathers was that they all had a child aged between 2-10, in other words they all had at least one child who was either at kindergarten or who was attending grades 1-3.

Besides fathers who heard about FSP and who attended the introductory meetings at schools, there were also fathers who were junior officers and officers in the Turkish Armed Forces, in İstanbul and Kocaeli, and they were also chosen randomly. A group of teachers who had attended the meetings in Eğitim-sen syndicate branches also filled in the attitude inventory. All the fathers that filled in his inventory, which totalled up to 1379, did not complete the program. Some fathers had an interest in the program, but they could not attend for various reasons.

#### **Qualitative study**

The fathers and mothers that were interviewed in depth were selected randomly out of all the fathers that participated in this program in 2001-2002 in İstanbul and Kocaeli. All the participant fathers, from all the Father Support Groups carried out at the time of the interviews, were listed randomly. Then, a random number was selected, and the fathers corresponding to that number were identified. Mothers were chosen using the same method.

At the beginning of the interviews, the fathers and the mothers were not couples. However, the last seven interviews were carried out with couples. The mother and the father of the same family were interviewed at the same time, as the aim was to free the couples from influencing each other as well as to prevent the flow of information.





## Instruments

### **Attitude Inventory**

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of Father Support Program, a questionnaire was used both before and after the program. It was seen that this questionnaire helped to find out the change created in the fathers' knowledge. However, as FSP aimed at a change in fathers' attitude and behaviour, this questionnaire was believed to be insufficient. Therefore, in-depth interviews and attitude inventory were considered to be able to evaluate the change in fathers' behaviour.

A review of the available inventories was carried out; no inventory could be found that could measure the differences in attitude that FSP foresees. It was observed that most of the present inventories aimed at mother, and the majority of the inventories targeting families were either translations or adaptations.

Therefore, studies started for an attitude inventory that would be specific to FSP. First, a complete list of all the attitudes that are targeted within the topics of FSP was made. For each of the 15 topics, sentences expressing attitudes were formed. The expected changes in the attitudes both before and after the program were revised. Then, 122 topic based items emerged. The overlapping themes were eliminated and this number was reduced to 95. These themes were again reviewed taking their weight in the program into consideration, which resulted in 69 items. This inventory with 69 items was applied to a group of teachers and they were asked to give their comments regarding items. More specifically, their comments were sought regarding three concerns: whether all the items were clear enough and could be understood, whether there was something disturbing in the way the items were expressed, and whether the items could sufficiently measure the attitude change in fathers. A further revision was made in line with the comments and the inventory was ready for use with 65 items.

This attitude inventory was applied to 1379 people. Twenty people were chosen as the base number for each item, and thus 1300 fathers were chosen for 65 items as the lower limit. Factor analysis was made to see which items were grouped together, and it was found that the attitude inventory measured the four factors that were foreseen. The scores given to each question of the interview was added up and divided by the number of questions. These subscale scores were named as non-traditional roles, non-authoritarian attitude, non-permissive attitude and open communication. Eight items were discarded, as they did not have enough correlation with other items, which resulted in 57 items.

The first factor, non-traditional roles, consisted of 17 items, whereas the second factor, non-authoritarian attitude, had 18 items. The non-permissive attitude had 10 items, while the fourth factor, open communication, contained 12 items.

Items 5, 10, 15, 19, 25, 27, 31, 35, 39, 45, 47 and 51 were positive items, whereas all the rest were negative items. Then, reliability scores were calculated for each of the four sub scales. The Cronbach alfa for the factors were moderately high and were found to be .8528, .8069, .7343, .7659 respectively.

A Likert-type scale (see Appendix A) was administered to establish the change in fathers' attitudes. In this scale fathers were asked to respond "I totally agree", "I agree", "No opinion", "I do not agree", "I absolutely do not agree" to the items. "I totally agree" was scored as 1 point, "I agree" as 2 points, "No opinion" as 3 points, "I do not agree" as 4 points, and "I absolutely do not agree" as 5 points. Therefore, each father received an overall score for each factor: The higher the father's score, the less traditional, the less authoritarian, and the less permissive the father has become. Conversely, scoring for the positive items were reversed, that is, "I totally agree" resulted in 5 points, "I agree" resulted in 4 points, "No opinion" resulted in 3 points, "I do not agree" resulted in 2 points, and "I absolutely do not agree" resulted in 1 point. Likewise, a higher score indicated a positive change in the communication.

The correlation of factors with each other before the program was found to be high for all factors. The table for correlations of the four factors can be seen in Appendix B.



## Individual Interviews

In-depth individual interviews were the main source of data. Individual interviews were conducted both with the fathers and mothers, seven of who were the wives of the fathers interviewed.

The aim of these interviews was to focus on subject's opinions and perspectives regarding the program. Understanding the experience of subject's and obtaining more in-depth and detailed information were the concerns of the study. Besides, a framework was provided where the respondents could express their own understandings in their own terms.

A combination of an interview guide approach and standardized open-ended interview approach was used in individual interviews. The interview guide approach was used to obtain common information from each person, serving as a checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics were covered. However, the actual wording of questions was not determined in advance, which necessitated adapting the wording and the sequence of questions to each respondent during the interview. On the other hand, a set of questions were worded and arranged to ask each respondent the same questions using the same words, as it is done in the standardized open-ended interview. Systematic and thorough data were obtained from each respondent that way. This combination of the interview guide approach and standardized open-ended interview made precise wording of some basic questions possible before the interview, while allowing the interviewer to be more flexible in probing. The interview with fathers consisted of 24 questions, while that of the mothers had 26 questions. The questions asking for demographic information are excluded. The questions of the individual interviews followed some general guidelines.

The individual interviews conducted with the fathers primarily focused on the changes experienced by fathers, and mainly dealt with the following areas: relationship of the fathers with significant others in his life regarding the changes experienced, such as with their wives, children, and friends. Another point of focus was the father's perceptions and self-esteem, on how they had benefited from the program and what kind of changes had taken place. Also, there were questions about whether the program had made a difference in the child's life, being the main concern of intervention strategies, and in the family's life, such as father's child-rearing techniques and interaction between father and child. Some questions assessed whether services had addressed the family's identified needs, such as enabling the family to help their child grow, learn and develop. Finally, father's ideas about the group leader and the program were sought. Fathers were asked to talk about the contents of the program as well as the implementation of it, such as the most beneficial and the least beneficial aspects of the program.

The individual interviews conducted with the mothers mainly dealt with whether mothers have observed any changes in their husbands that could be attributed to the program. Mothers' perspectives about the changes in their husbands regarding their children, themselves and friends were sought. The aim of these interviews with the mothers was to validate fathers' statements.

The interviews with the fathers were mainly conducted in their work places and in coffee houses on a one-to-one basis. Seldom, there were cases where the interview was conducted at the home of the father. The interviews with the mothers were mainly conducted at their homes on a one-to-one basis. Seven mothers and fathers were husband and wife, and they were interviewed at the same time but in different places. On average, it took about 55-70 minutes for fathers to go through the questions, whereas for mothers, it was about 45-60 minutes. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the fathers and mothers, which ensured the accuracy of the data and enabled the interviewer to focus on attentive listening and questioning. Worthwhile comments could be reproduced verbatim through the use of a recorder. The recordings of the individual interview answers were transcribed right after the interviews.



### Procedures

All the participant fathers were listed randomly. Then, a number was selected, and the fathers corresponding to that number were called and an interview appointment was arranged. In case when a person did not wish to give an interview, a new number was selected and another person was chosen. In order to reduce this possibility, it was mentioned in every group that interviews would be made with participants and that they could receive phone calls related with this matter.

A question outline for the individual interviews was prepared and was tested twice with fathers who have participated in the program.



## RESULTS

The results of this report will be presented in two main sections. The first part will cover the results of the quantitative analysis of the attitude inventory. The second section will display the qualitative evaluation of the individual, semi-structured interviews carried out both with the fathers and the mothers. In each part, demographic description of the sample will be given.

### QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

#### Demographic characteristics of the sample

The attitude inventory was given to 1379 fathers. The fathers' age range was 20-50, while the majority (60,3 %) of the fathers were between the 30-39 age range.

**Table 1**

Education level of fathers

Education level	%
Left primary school	1,7
Primary school	28,3
Secondary school	13,6
High school	26,9
University	29,5

The majority of their wives (51,3%) had primary school education, whereas 27,5% were high school graduates. 22,1% of the mothers were university graduates.

As to the work status of the fathers, 29,6% were qualified workers, 21,8% were civil servants, 16,2% owned their own small business, 9,5% were unqualified workers. 8,3% of the fathers were managers in private sector, while 6,1% worked in that sector. 3,6% of the fathers were retired and 1,2% were unemployed.

The majority (72,5%) of the wives were housewives, with 13,5% working as a civil servant, and 5,1% working in the private sector.

#### Results of the Attitude Inventory

Significant differences were found in all the subscale scores, which were named as non-traditional roles, non-authoritarian attitude, non-permissive attitude and open communication, after the implementation of the program.

The attitude inventory was given to fathers both before the program and after the program. The results that are presented here are the comparison of these two attitude inventories, filled in by the fathers.



Table 2

Mean values and standard deviation of the four factors before and after the program

Factors	Before the program			After the program		
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N
Non-traditional Roles	3,0838	,61236	400	3,5479	,66914	400
Non-authoritarian Attitude	3,9456	,44109	396	4,2295	,49450	396
Non-permissive Attitude	3,2024	,56188	412	3,4364	,57852	412
Open communication	3,4679	,86351	402	3,5373	,1,02162	402

When the results between pre-test and post-test are taken into consideration, the general trend displays an increase in all four factors. Due to the nature of the items and scoring, an increase in the scores for factors non-traditional roles, non-authoritarian attitude and the non-permissive attitude means that there has been a decrease in the attitude of the fathers in all three of the factors. However, the increase in the open communication factor reveals that there has been a positive change in the communication between the father and the child. All these factors reveal an attitude change and all the mean values are significantly different. The mean scores of all the factors for before and after the program are highly correlated with each other at the 0.01 level.

The increase in the score of non-traditional roles ( $t = -18,650$ ;  $p = ,000$ ;  $df. (1-399)$ ) means that fathers have become less traditional in their attitudes in the family. Besides, a decrease in the use of non-authoritarian attitude ( $t = -13,142$ ;  $p = ,000$ ;  $df. (1-395)$ ) and non-permissive attitude ( $t = -8,967$ ;  $p = ,000$ ;  $df. (1-411)$ ) in fathering can be seen. The increase in the open communication factor ( $t = -3,011$ ;  $p = ,003$ ;  $df. (1-401)$ ) supports the presence of a positive change in father-child communication.

When the aims of the program and in relation to the aims, the topics covered throughout the program, are taken into consideration, these results show that the program was highly influential in the acquisition of attitudes that are targeted at through the implementation of the program.

## QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

### Demographic characteristics of the sample

When the ages of the 14 mothers interviewed were taken into consideration, their ages ranged between 28-41, while this number was 32-46 for the 18 fathers interviewed.

The majority of the mothers in the sample were primary school graduates, whereas fathers mainly graduated from high school (See Table 3 and 4).





**Table 3**

Education level of mothers

Education level	N	%
Primary school	9	64,3
Secondary school	1	7,1
High school	2	14,3
University	2	14,3
TOTAL	14	100

**Table 4**

Education level of fathers

Education level	N	%
Primary school	3	16,7
Secondary school	4	22,2
High school	6	33,3
University	3	16,7
Unknown	2	11,1
TOTAL	18	100

Only three of the mothers (21.4%) were working, while all the fathers were employed. Of the three mothers who were working, two of them were civil servants and one of them was a worker. Six fathers (37,50) were workers, five (31,25) were civil servants, and six fathers owned their own business such as a bookshop, textile, and traffic counsellor.

When the years of marriage is taken into consideration, both mothers and fathers have been married for an average of 11,5 years. The majority of both mothers and fathers had two children. All the interviewed mothers and fathers had at least one child aged 2-10. The number of children that FSP reaches indirectly through their fathers was 44, and their ages ranged between 0-23.



## Fathers Reporting

When the interviews made with the fathers are examined, it is possible to group the answers under two headings:

1. Fathers' ideas, evaluations and suggestions about the program
2. Self-reports of fathers regarding the effects of the program

Firstly, in this section the ideas and suggestions of the fathers regarding the implementation of the program will be covered. Then, in the next section, self-reports of the fathers will be presented.

### Fathers' ideas, evaluations and suggestions about the program

The fathers mainly had a positive idea about how the topics were covered, the way the information was conveyed. The fact that they could discuss about topics in the group and that nothing was dictated onto them in the form of teaching something was what appealed to them the most.

- After each session, fathers left feeling relieved. People could internalise more what has been learned as they teach you by making you experience and feel things. (F 9)
- The program showed us the way rather than make us change. I was not a father beating my child anyway. The program taught me some basic, technical knowledge. The program provided us with methods. It enabled me to implement my ideas better. (F 2)
- Other fathers and I expected short-term solutions, especially advice about practical methods concerning a problem. The program does not contain these; it brings solutions about developing the relationship in the long term. (F 3)
- This program might be videotaped in the form of a theatre play, which would help remembering more. (F 6)

Besides, some said that they perceived the program differently because they believed that the leader of the group was an expert.

- Controlling oneself is really necessary in life. Everyone knows that. When this is mentioned in a program like this, it is perceived differently. Learning this from an educator creates a different effect. I pay attention to myself accordingly. (F 4)

Fathers had different ideas about the group leader. Some fathers believed that their group leader was efficient.

- Our teacher was very tolerant and he knew his subject well. He made us listen to him, he was explaining in a way that everybody could understand. We used to implement something first without knowing what would happen and he would explain us the reasons later. (F 14)
- The atmosphere during the meetings was very warm and the leader provided this warmth. He was very sincere. Everybody could tell his ideas frankly. Our leader used to listen to us well. His seriousness while listening to us was reflected onto other fathers. (F 2)
- It was as if we have known our leader for a long time. He was like a friend. If we had a teacher-student relationship during the meetings, I am sure that I would not be satisfied and I would not have learned the topics this well. His way of expressing himself, his ability to understand the other person quite soon and the fact that he had an answer for everything were the best qualities of our leader. He was quite comfortable with everyone,



regardless of his age. For example, I cannot be at ease with people elder than me whereas I can be more comfortable with people of my age or younger. (F 1)

On the other hand, some fathers had the idea that their group leader was not very efficient.

- I believe that the leaders were insufficient, may be because they were inexperienced. There were two leaders sometimes. They kept asking what needed to be done to each other. When I consider the parents, after a certain point in time, the program became a burden, we decreased in number; attendance was not voluntary and sincere. This shows that the necessity of the program has not been well expressed. The teachers should organize a getting to know meeting beforehand. The leader did not know the topics well. And they were not fathers. To be able to unite with other fathers and to be able to understand their problems better, I believe that being a father is an advantage. (F 3)

Fathers mainly had positive ideas regarding their group experience. They stated that they benefitted from this.

- I will always remember this group experience, and in the future under certain conditions, I will try to remember the things we learned in the group. I will make use of the knowledge we learned. (F 8)
- There were really conscious fathers in the group; sometimes we had groups of 5-6 fathers to share ideas. They were very logical. On the other hand, there was a father who did not speak a word. (F 14)
- We happen to meet often with other fathers who have participated in this program and we talk about those topics discussed during the meetings. We got each other's phone numbers before the program was over, and sometimes at religious holidays we call each other. (F 7)
- Listening to what other people live through with their children helped me broaden my vision about how I should behave when faced with a similar situation. (F 8)

However, being a group did not appeal to all the fathers.

- One thing that disturbed me during the program was the fact that some people talked for too long. They talked nonsense. (F 2)

There was also suggestions as to the inclusion of more topics.

- I wish the program dealt with the issue of how a father, having economic difficulties should behave towards his child. The child will ask for things, how should the father behave when he cannot meet the child's demands? (F 13)
- At the beginning of the program, for one or two sessions, I wish we talked about the personality of the father, how the father had been raised, how his relationship with his family was and whether he has a problem. In short, there could be a week about the past lives of the fathers. (F 1)

Furthermore, fathers expressed their wishes that the program lasted longer.

- The program could have been longer or the topics could have been in more detail. (F 14)
- The program was very short for me. There were lots of things that I wanted to talk about. I could not talk. People did not have all the same opportunity to speak. The meetings could be two times a week. Besides, a meeting place that would be uniquely for fathers can be created. (F 1)



Most of the fathers shared the belief that there has to be a program for mothers as well.

- All the members should implement the topics of the program within the family. I was disturbed that this education was given to the fathers only. (F 7)
- I believe that the mother should undergo a similar education in order to have more positive consequences on the relationship. (F 8)
- If the wives participated in such a program as well, things would be different. However, wives should talk about the same topics but other than the father's group. Fathers and mothers together in a group would not work. Men behave differently when they are with their wives than they are with other men. (F 15)

Besides, fathers talked about the need for more publicity. They stated that the existence of this program was not well known to many people.

- We hear about these types of educational programs some way but there are a lot of families who would like to participate in such programs if they knew. The press could be used to inform families. (F 8)
- Many people do not know the program. When I said that I would attend, people made fun of me. You could make it public through the media. Your public relations department is not working efficiently. The program should be more widespread. (F 2)

As the program is not well known, fathers believed that it could be useful to prepare the fathers well before the program starts.

- The population that the program targets here is not receptive. They are very strict and do not want to think about their children, their children's education. This cannot be denied. These people must be prepared for such a program beforehand. The teachers, especially the class teachers, could prepare the parents for such a program at school. (F 3)
- When I consider the parents, after a certain point in time, the program became a burden, we decreased in number; attendance was not voluntary, sincere. This shows that the necessity of the program has not been well expressed. The teachers should organize a getting to know meeting beforehand. (F 13)

Some of the fathers believed that the timing of the program did not suit their needs.

- I wish the program were more widespread. I wish we participated in this program years ago, but nothing is lost. I know that the biggest investment is the one done to a human being. All my efforts are for my children, for them to be good. (F 4)
- Some topics did not interest me because of the age group; my daughter is 10 years old now. Especially about teaching certain behaviour, it was for much younger children. The topics might be enlarged accordingly. (F 3)

Some fathers mentioned that the effects of the program faded over time.

- I really found answers to my expectations at the beginning while the program continued. However, when the program was over, the effect continued for about a month and then we started to forget things. That's why in order for its effects to continue, the topics of the program should be implemented within the family, by all the members. I was disturbed that this education was given to the fathers only. (F 7)



Some fathers complained about the group size.

- The class was a bit crowded. We started with 30-33 people, and then the number dropped. It would have been much better if we had been smaller group learning together with the kids. (F 8)

### Self-reports of fathers regarding the effects of the program

In this section, the effects of the program on fathers will be presented. Self-reports of fathers revealed that they experienced changes regarding themselves, their relationship with their wives and their children. These reported changes can also be classified as changes in the perception of the father and changes in the behaviour of the father. Table 5 displays these changes.

**Table 5**  
**Changes in Fathers' Behaviour and Perception Regarding Their Children, Wives and Themselves**

	REGARDING CHILDREN	REGARDING WIVES	REGARDING THEMSELVES
<b>BEHAVIOUR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Decreased using negative discipline methods</li> <li>-Started talking and explaining to the child</li> <li>-Started listening to the child</li> <li>-Started to show more affection to the child</li> <li>-Started spending more time with the child</li> <li>-Have become more tolerant</li> <li>-Have become closer to the child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Started warning, talking and explaining to the mother</li> <li>-More tolerant</li> <li>-Better communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Talking and explaining to others about the contents of the program</li> <li>-Has become more social and has better communication with others</li> </ul>
<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Started considering his child as an individual</li> <li>-More careful about keeping his promises</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Has become more knowledgeable and gained a new perspective regarding child development</li> <li>-Is proud of himself</li> <li>-More flexible</li> </ul>

### **Changes in father's behaviour regarding the child**

Fathers reported a decrease in their use of negative methods of discipline. As a substitute, they said they referred to alternative methods of discipline (See Table 5).

- They watch too much television and from too close. I bought my 5-year-old son crayons. We are trying to distract his attention. This way we are trying not to put pressure on him. (F 13)
- I would get angry and shout at her to turn down the television, but in this program I understood that behaving like that was wrong. I learned how I should behave, other ways to manage. (F 15)





- I established a routine for watching television, I did this according to their sleep and school times. I also arranged the eating hours, I told them to be ready at these hours for lunch and dinner. Besides, I told them to make a list for their needs. (F 7)
- I used to get angry and shout at him; sometimes I even beat him. It had many negative consequences. He learned to read at an older age. He was really afraid of me. I do not have similar problems anymore, even if I shout that happens quite rarely. (F 1)
- When I shouted at them to get lost, they used to go to another room but after some time would be bored and would come back. I created a different environment for them to play, an environment where neither the neighbours, nor me would be disturbed. I put a mattress on the floor for them to jump. I sometimes went to play with them. They are not like me, they have energy building up inside. I did not think like that before the program. So I could watch the football match on television in peace. (F 4)

Most of the fathers mentioned that they started explaining to their child in case of a problem, and talked about the positive reflections on the child.

- When we cannot buy something that he wants while shopping, he will not get angry. He can understand easily when I tell him that we do not have money to buy it now, but may be we can buy it later. Before he used to get angry but now we explain him the reasons for not buying, he is more mature and understands now. (F 13)
- He was ill recently and did not want to take medicine. But when we explained that he would recover sooner if he took the medicine, he did though it had a strong taste. (F 13)
- When my daughter wanted pocket money, I used to say "I do not have money, don't you understand, are you stupid". But after I had participated in the program, I learned to explain. I now tell her that I do not have enough money left, that I will have money when I receive my salary. Besides, my children do not have much appetite. I used to force them to eat; they were not allowed to leave the table before finishing their plate. They would even cry. Then, I explained them that if they ate without enjoying it, it would do no good. It helped and they now eat if they want. (F 6)
- When there was a problem, when she was not supposed to do something, I was not angry shouting. I waited for some time. Then, I talked to her, tried to explain her fault. I started now even though she is not old enough to understand it all. I make her sit on my lap and explain her why we say no. Before we leave the house, I explain her where we are going and tell her the things that I do not want her to do there. (F 2)

The majority of the fathers stated that they started listening and talking to their child, as well as explaining.

- Now that I can think him more as an individual, as a person, I can talk to him; I can listen to him. (F 9)
- Now I can talk to him like I talk to an adult. He can use his rights and I will use mine. (F 5)
- Before the program, when we told her not to do something, we had to repeat 4-5 times. Now when we talk to her in the way that she can understand, things are different. She behaves in accordance with our way of behaving. (F 15)
- Before the program, I used to shut her up, sometimes even told her that she talked too much. She talked about her friends, a program on television. These did not interest me at all. Now when she is telling me something, I feel that I need to listen to her. (F 3)
- This program enabled me to talk to my child more. I realized that I had always talked to my child while I was standing. The program taught me that. I talk to him a lot instead of getting angry and shouting as I used to have done. We are now listening and can see the positive consequences. I did not know about effective listening. I have never listened to my child. (F 1)



Fathers said that they started to show more affection to their child, as well as being more tolerant.

- I am trying to be more affectionate towards her. My father was said to have loved me a lot but I have not experienced it. He caressed my head once when I was 9 years old; I still remember it. That's why I try to reflect this love and affection onto our relationship. (F 8)
- My wife tells me that she notices changes in me after the program. I was angry at times towards children. This has changed to some extent after starting the program. Even my elder son noticed it and told me that the program was useful. (F 13)
- I was quite intolerant when she cried; I used to get angry easily. I was not very involved in her. While listening to the topics discussed each week, I could understand my mistakes more clearly. I was more tolerant, behaved more logically when I remembered the program. (F 8)
- I am more tolerant. He is just a child; of course he will play, run, jump or make noise. I used to react when he did what a normal child would do, but now I am more tolerant and accepting. (F 5)

Becoming more knowledgeable, fathers stopped comparing their child to others and started giving more freedom.

- I used to compare my son to other children but I have not thought and realized that it was wrong. (F 1)
- I used to think and decide about something and make him apply it. Now I do not. He does not do what I want; he can voice his opinion. We try to reach a consensus. We both believe that we can find the right solution that way. (F 5)

Fathers also mentioned that they started spending more time with their children.

- I now spend more time with her. I try to be with her at weekends, we go out; we play. I take her to theatre. I had taken her skating before but she was afraid. I try to take her to such activities more. Before I used to think that I would take her if she wanted, now I changed my mind, I try to encourage her. (F 14)
- Before the program I tried to spend some time with him but now I make even more sacrifice and be with him more. I spent all my holiday with him. We swam, we walked around, and we were together all the time. We found the time to read books. (F 5)
- I used to play with her less. Now, we play more, I spend more time with her. I take her to parks more often. Cutting papers, reading books, painting are also the things that I do with her. We pay visits to our relatives. I once took her to cinema, to a child movie. I will start taking her to theatres. (F 2)
- I used to go to the coffee house once or twice a week, but when I realized that it had no meaning in life, I stopped even that. This program changed even my social life. I did this because I was thinking about my child, thinking that he could go around with his parents and see some places. (F 1)

Some fathers said that they changed their behaviours when they learned that it was not in the interest of the child. They stated having become more knowledgeable about child development.

- I used to study with him when he asked me something. Now I do not. I say if you have this as homework, you must be able to find it in your books. Go and search for it. Come back to ask me if you cannot find it in your books. Now he searches all by himself and struggles. Otherwise I felt that he was being lazy and exploited me. I do not think that was good. I decided to do this as a result of the program. (F 5)



- I used to buy whatever my children wanted; they did not have problems with me. But in this program, I learned not to do everything that they wanted. It is not right to do whatever they want as well as not do. When they grow up, they will keep on asking and will not have satisfaction. (F 6)
- My son, being an only child, he was favoured by everyone and by me. I was too tolerant. During the program, I learned that for the healthy development of a child, continuous favouring and too much tolerance was not good, that the child could abuse it. Now it is over, there is a balance. Everyone can defend his/her right, can voice his/her opinion and knows his/her responsibilities. (F 5)

### **Change in father's perception regarding the child**

Fathers reported a change in their perception regarding the child. The most important one was that fathers started accepting the individuality of their children. In other words, they realized that their children are individuals with their own rights, ideas, likes and dislikes (See Table 5).

- Now that I can think him more as an individual, as a person, I can talk to him; I can listen to him. (F 9)
- I realized that he is also a person. Our attitude towards his problems changed definitively. (F 13)
- I had behaved differently thinking that she is a child and I am older. I started behaving in a more respectful way to my daughter. (F 15)
- Before the program, I thought differently. There were times when I did not value his ideas. We wanted things to be our way. However, after the program, we learned that being in individual himself, we should respect his ideas, that we should listen to him. And we do. For example, I want to watch something on television and he wants to watch something else, we reach a consensus. (F 7)

Some fathers said that they were more careful about keeping their promises.

- In this program, I realized the importance of talking and listening to the child instead of beating, keeping my promise. When I promised something like: "if you are a good girl, I will take you to some place", I started being more careful about keeping my promise. (F 15)

### **Change in father's behaviour regarding mother**

Fathers reported that they talk and explain to the mother more as a result of the program and when necessary, they said they warned the mother concerning children.

- Regarding the relationship of our child with his mother, I believe her work got easier. I remind her from time to time about how she should behave towards the children. When she got angry and attempted to beat them, I stopped her. There were times when we talked alone. I told her that the way she behaved disturbed me. (F 13)
- Before the program I was getting furious without any explanation. Now I tell my wife the bad effects of a behaviour, how and when she should behave. I told her about what we had learned in the program. I had to make explanations to her. If she had participated in the program, she would have thought differently. (F 15)
- I read my notes to her every week. I told her after each meeting what we did, what we talked about in the group. (F 5)



Fathers also reported having become more tolerant to their wives.

- I am now more tolerant towards her. I think I understand her better. In the same way, I believe I can express myself better. She changed as a result of the change in me. (F 4)

These changes gave way to a better relationship between the couple.

- When there was a problem, the pitch of her voice would increase. This decreased after the program. We get along better and we talk more easily. (F 7)
- I shared everything that we talked about during the meetings with my wife and children. We are implementing them all together. (F 7)

### **Changes in father's perception regarding himself**

Fathers reported being proud of themselves as a result of participation in the program. They believed they were more knowledgeable and gained a new perspective.

- I believe that I had some deficits and I was not a good father before the program. However, with the knowledge we received, I believe I educated myself better as well as my wife and my children. (F 7)
- I feel myself more mature. And I was appreciated, to my surprise, because of the fact that I attended the program. Now I have pride in telling that I had participated in this program. In my daughter's class, when she told that I was attending the program, whole class was said to applause and I really liked it. (F 3)
- My ideas, way of seeing things in life changed to some extent, whether it is with friends or work place. (F 4)

Some fathers reported being more flexible.

- I used to have prejudices, like I do it this way; this has to be like this. There can be no other way. But now I believe that if there is a problem, we can solve it some way. After talking, I try to see the positive side of the situation. (F 14)

One father reported that the program helped him develop internal control.

- I used to pass sometimes at midnights when the lights were red, but now I do not. This is an example of internal control. (F 15)

### **Changes in the child's behaviour regarding the father**

Fathers also reported changes in their children, which they attributed to the program, such as expressing himself/herself better.

- When my ideas, my way of approaching to them, my love, respect and understanding changed, I observed the reflection in the children. They became more open towards me. They show with their behaviour that I am a good father, their love and respect towards me. For example, his toy was broken. Before the program, he would not have told me, but now he can. He can say today what he had done. (F 4)
- I believe that my talking with my child was influential in overcoming his shyness and starting to express himself, he can tell me all his problems. He can talk to me about his wishes and problems without hesitation, so he can talk the same way to others as well. Seeing my behaviour, he has become more expressive. (F 6)
- He explains me more about what has happened in school that day, about his friends. (F 1)



Fathers talked about instances where their children expressed their pride.

- She saw that I had an effort for her. She liked it and her love and respect for me increased. (F 3)

The change in the father, his talking and explaining, has resulted in the child obeying more and being more mature.

- She saw that I had an effort for her. She liked it and her love and respect for me increased. Because she thought that I am thinking on these topics, she also started controlling her behaviour. She is not objecting as much as she used to have. (F 3)
- I can say sincerely that it has been a long time since he did something that we did not approve of. He used to play with everyone in the street. After I had participated in this course, I started talking to him about his friends. Now I can see that he chooses among his friends. For example, he told me that he had obeyed my suggestion of not going far away. He said that he had friends going to places that I had not approved of and added that he did not follow them. (F 1)

Fathers reported that children have become more responsible and social.

- They can make their bed, prepare their school bags and fulfil their responsibilities. (F 4)
- Considering the education I had during the program, I realized that my child was very shy and introvert and that she should have a dialogue with other people as well. I try to create situations for that, and I have been successful so far. She goes to the neighbour's house alone and drinks tea with the elder children. (F 8)
- Two of my children have become more active and social. They have more self-control. They understand the value of time we spend together.

Children were also observed to have better relationship with friends and were happier.

- His relationship with his friends changed for the better as well as his relationship with his mother. He used to abuse them as well. (F 5)
- He learned to share and to behave in a more loving manner to everyone, to family members, to friends. (F 7)
- We observed that she is happier. When she sees her aunt, uncle or grandmother, she tells them about what we have done with happiness and delight. (F 2)
- He is happier now. He asks me to go around now before I suggest him to. He used to be introvert; he used to act like a grown-up. (F 1)

### **Change in mother-child relationship**

Mothers also started talking and explaining to the child, possibly after being influenced by the change in the father.

- Their mother used to behave negatively towards children. She would get angry with the children because every wish and demand was fulfilled. For example, I learned that she was beating them when I was not home. She was shouting at them not to want something from me, as I did not have money. She learned to explain the child now, at least. (F 6)



Fathers reported a closer relationship between the mother and the child.

- There are some differences in how I behave my son and how my wife behaves towards him. Therefore, his behaviour towards me is quite different; he displays more severe reactions to his mother, whereas he does not show any reaction to me. (F 5)
- My participation in this program certainly affected my son's relationship with his mother. His relationship with me is warmer and naturally his relationship with his mother is affected positively. We have a peaceful environment in the house. (F 5)
- He would obey his mother only when I was home, as he was afraid of my presence. Now, he listens to and obeys his mother even when I am not around. (F 1)

### **Father affecting other fathers**

As well as affecting the nuclear family members, some fathers talked about instances where they had an influence on friends and relatives.

- During a recent home visit, the father of the house beat the child. I felt so bad. Later I told him that beating the child was wrong. I told him that he could talk with his child instead of beating. (F 13)
- A friend of mine mentioned that he had experienced a situation similar to the one mentioned in the book 'Televizyoncu Ali'. Another's son would not eat well. They behaved the child taking into consideration the books they read and the information I passed on, and the child started eating. (F 8)

### **Change in father's relationship with others**

Fathers reported a positive change in their relationship with others as well. They mentioned being calmer, more social and having better communication with others.

- The program affected my relationship not only with the child, but with other people as well. Before the program, I was more stressed and aggressive, now I feel more relaxed. (F 9)
- Learning to be a democrat, accepting the other person as an individual, and therefore learning to listen to him helped me overcome the problems. (F 9)
- While talking to others, it is more meaningful to look into their eyes while talking. I realized changes in my behaviour to the third parties. (F 15)
- I try to use I language at work. My work involves children and it is easier to use I language with children than adults. And it works. (F 3)
- At work, I shared the ideas of the program with my friends. When I shared what we had talked about in the meeting, they were also influenced; they decided that what I was doing was good. My friends told me that during the period that I attended the program, I behaved differently towards my children, my friends, at work, that I have become more loving, sharing more things. (F 7)
- I have become more social. My ideas, way of seeing things in life changed to some extent, whether it is with friends or work place. (F 4)

All these changes in the perception and the behaviour of the father, which were attributed to the program, have led to a closer father-child relationship.

- Our relationship got better; he is more courageous towards me. He knows that his father will not get angry no matter what happens. (F 13)





- Last year my daughter had to stay home with me in the mornings and I could spend more time with her. I had the chance to implement what I had learned. If I had not had the methods taught, we could have had many disputes. However, we did not have any. (F 3)
- When my ideas, my way of approaching to them, my love, respect and understanding changed, I observed the reflection in the children. They became more open towards me. They show with their behaviour that I am a good father, their love and respect towards me. For example, his toy was broken. Before the program, he would not have told me, but now he can. He can say today what he had done. (F 4)
- When I came home in the evenings, she used to say hello while continuing watching television. Now she meets me at the door, she is very happy that I am more involved. I am happy as well. (F 15)

The change in the father has had positive influences on the relationship within the family as well.

- My space increased within the triadic relationship in the family. Mother's load got lesser. My relationship got warmer. (F 3)
- Before the program, I sometimes reacted negatively to my wife. I defended my son in case of a problem; it was for his healthy development. During the program, I realized that when one parent got angry and punished the child whereas the other defended and awarded the child, this was wrong and created a contradiction. It did not contribute to the child's development. Now when I say something, my wife says the same thing. We do not talk about a problem in the heat of it. We leave things to time and later we talk about it and try to solve the problem. (F 5)
- When the children have a problem or a dispute with their mother, my son tells my wife to take me as a model. (F 6)

One father summed up the effects of the program on him as follows:

- The program changed my ideas regarding life, my work, my life and my house. I can now say that this program was not for children only. Our leader was interested in problems of us other than those mentioned in the program. A lot of things have changed in my life. (F 1)



## MOTHERS REPORTING

The interviews conducted with mothers revealed topics similar to those of the fathers'. In this section, first suggestions and ideas of mothers regarding the program will be presented. Then, mothers' ideas about the change in family members created as a result of the program will be covered.

### Suggestions of the mothers regarding the program

Mothers had suggestions regarding the scope of the program They suggested inclusion of some topics and organization of a program for mothers as well.

- The scope of the program could be expanded, handouts given to my husband or the topics discussed, for example. I think the program could have been longer. I wonder whether it could be more beneficial if fathers participated in the program more frequently, like 3 times a week. (M 11)
- I wish there were a program for mothers too so that I could participate. I read all the handouts given and I sort of went over all the topics. There is nothing actually that we do not know, but implementation is not easy. No matter how much patience we try to display, it sort of bursts out. The meetings could be organized in the evenings during the week or weekends so that the husbands could be available to look after the kids. Besides, being there all together, sharing that environment would be nice. One could learn a lot of things from all those people. (M 11)
- I wish there were a topic about the sexual identity of children. I would like to have a contact with a pedagogue to learn about what she might be thinking. Children watch everything on television; no matter how

Mothers also talked about the handouts distributed to fathers. Some read them every week; some have not read them at all. The mothers who reported that they had read the handouts expressed that they benefited from that material.

- I have not missed a week to read the handouts. I used to read them and make my friend read them too. It influenced my behaviour as well. (M 5)
- I have never read the handouts and we have not spoken with my husband regarding these handouts. (M 10)
- He wanted me to read the handouts as well. When I read them, I could not believe my eyes, as the examples were a replica of what we experienced with our children. Then, my husband would ask me whether I understood what I was doing was right or wrong. I really used some of the things I read. However, one day I had a misunderstanding about one handout. There was a question about what husbands regretted, and I believed that it was about our marriage. I immediately tore the paper and told my husband not to go to those meetings again. Later, he told me that what he regretted the most was his fight with a male friend and understanding my fault, I felt very sorry. (M 9)
- I have not read all of the handouts but I read them whenever I had the time. Reading them has enabled me change my ideas regarding my daughter. I now understand her better. (M 12)

### Self-reports of mothers regarding the effects of the program

Mothers reported changes that they have observed in their husband's, which were changes regarding children and wives. These changes can be grouped under two headings: changes in the behaviour of fathers and changes in the perception of the fathers. Besides, mothers talked



about changes in their children and themselves; changes both in behaviour and in perception again. We will first look at the change in father's behaviour regarding children.

Change in father's behaviour regarding children:

Mothers reported that fathers have become more interested in matters related with their children, and as a result started spending more time with them.

- Before the program, my husband used to send our daughter to me in case of a problem. He did not use to take care of her himself, or he would directly find solutions. Now, he is taking care of her more, sharing more things with her, and preparing her for bed. (M 1)
- He started paying more attention. It still is not to a satisfactory degree for me, but it is much better. He would not listen to the child. He would come home and watch television. He expected the child to be quiet. He would come home after the children had slept, sometimes it would be two days before they saw each other. But now my child and I enjoy his coming to the ceremony at school. He behaved as if fathers should not take care of their children. I can say he now got over that barrier. He would not talk about his love. Now he can appreciate the children, for example after the ceremony in school, he congratulated our daughter by saying she performed well. When our daughter shows him a picture she has made, he now says he likes it. Before the program, while watching the news on television, if she showed a picture, he would not listen and he would get angry for disturbing him. After the program, he could give priority to children. (M 2)
- When our son had a problem, when he was sad, I used to take care of him. Now, his father also takes care. (M 3)
- When my elder daughter wants to go out with friends, she asks my permission. I would tell her to talk it all together and if her father thinks it is all right, she could go. Before the program, my husband would ask me to talk to her about these matters, but now he also tells his decision without referring her to me. (M 7)
- He is now more eager to spend more time with her. They started going around together or playing in bed. When they would go out, he would visit the places that our daughter prefers, or he would buy favourite food of our daughter. Once he bought a fruit out of its season because he remembered that our daughter had asked for it. When I told him that he had spent so much on that fruit, he told me that her happiness could not be bought. (M 1)
- My husband has started spending more time with our daughter. It was not like that before the program. He was not at all interested in her care. I used to take care of everything, from her health to her lessons. He used to go to work, and coming home, he used to spend all his time in front of the television set. Now he starts playing with her when he understands that she is bored. He takes her out to make her happy. He hugs her; they talk about her lessons, about how she is. (M 12)

Mothers also mentioned that fathers have become more tolerant, and stopped using negative methods of discipline.

- People see life in different colours, I believe. Some see it white, some black. I believe that the colours in my husband's life increased. He had already known those, but now there is red and blue as well. My husband has become more flexible. (M 7)
- He used to be quite angry. The program helped a lot in that respect. His way of approaching the children has changed. (M 8)
- He used to get angry and beat the children because our elder son is jealous of his brother, but now he stopped. He talks to them instead and tries to explain them. (M 10)
- He used to beat the children before the program. Now, he tries his best not to until the last moment but when our son really insists and does not obey, and when he gets really angry, he hits him. (M 13)



Mothers reported that fathers started listening and talking to their children more, trying to explain them more.

- I could call my husband a perfect father in many respects, but I believed that his listening to our child could improve after attending to such a program. I was right. He is now listening to the child by being in the same height and by maintaining eye contact. He now pays more attention when talking to our child. (M 11)
- He used to have everything done by getting angry, but now he is listening to the kids with interest. He talks with our son about school. He listens more attentively about something that has happened. (M 13)
- He knows how to explain. When he wants to go out, he talks with him and explains him the rules he must obey. (M 3)
- Before the program, when kids made noise while my husband was sleeping, there was always violence, and children would hide some place. Now, I am happy to see that this has changed. When my husband is not sleeping and if the children are making noise, he explains them that he is tired or has a headache. Then the kids warn each other and are quiet. My son was very interested in his father's shaving set. Before the program, he would tell our son that he should never touch his set. Now, he explains him that it is not something for his age, if he shaves now, he will have facial hair very soon and so on. (M 5)

Furthermore, mothers stated that fathers have become more aware of developmental stages and have become more knowledgeable about child development. As a result, they started giving more responsibility and freedom to choose to their children.

- I sometimes tell my husband that he is spoiling the kids. He tells me that it is better this way. Before the program, he would get angry and shout or, even hit. When our son went out without finishing his homework one day, I was complaining and he told me that he must have been bored, that he had been studying for two hours. I wanted him to continue studying while I had the time to be with him, but my husband told me that our son could not bear it any more. He lets our son stop for some time and makes him study again. (M 5)
- He is giving responsibilities to our daughter. We have a house in a village. My husband bought flowers there and said that the responsibility of watering and looking after the flowers was our daughter's. He wants her to overcome the problems herself. In case of lessons and grades, he tells her that she is capable of doing anything, and adds that her grades are not important for us, but will help build her future. (M 6)

Some mothers perceived father's giving responsibility and freedom to the child as a negative consequence.

- Now my son comes home later in the evenings. He goes to a friend's house to play with the computer. He takes my permission but when I am not home, he tells me later. Until about one year ago, I did not use to let my son go out like that, now I get angry with my husband that he sort of encourages him to go out. When he went to change computer cds to a place that was 2-3 stops away, I would always send his father to follow him. He would tell me to let him go. When I wanted to go after him, my husband would stop me. He would tell me that our son should learn to handle things by himself. I would complain to my husband that he was not controlling the kids anymore. Once, my son went to a friend's house and did not inform me before going, I was angry but my husband said he must have called me. He talked to him alone and my son explained him that he had called home from the friend's house and that I was not home. He told me that if I had left a note to inform him about my whereabouts, he could have called me from that place. (M 5)

Finally, there were mothers who stated that they have not observed any changes in their husbands' behaviour.



- He would always depend on me in case of a problem both before and after the program. For example there was a problem with my daughter last year, she started to wet her bed at nights, and I was suffering. It lasted the whole summer. I took her to the doctors'. He did not think that was necessary, he was not paying attention; he was not helping me. He is a different kind of person. Maybe if this program continued for 10 years, he would become a desirable father. I wish men participated in such a program before getting married. (M 2)
- My husband does not care whether our daughter sleeps at a certain time or not. I always take care of children. He is not involved. (M 4)

### **Change in father's perception regarding children**

Mothers reported that fathers have started to see the child as an individual as a result of the program.

- His attitude and way of talking to us changed. Realizing that she is a person, he started to consider her more, not as a child but as a member of our family. (M 1)

The second category that emerges is the change in father's behaviour regarding the mother.

### **Change in father's behaviour regarding mother**

Mothers reported that fathers have become calmer and more understanding towards their wives.

- He is more understanding and calmer not only towards the child but towards me as well. He tells me that he is understanding towards me and expects me to do the same. That's why he wants me to participate in that program as well. (M 4)
- If there were my friends at our house when he came home, he would tell me to see them during the week and he wanted me to spend the weekends with him. This has been like that for years. However, after this program, he started telling me to invite a friend over. We like to play cards with friends and before he came, we would stop it. Now, we play cards and my husband serves us. Our friends visit us more frequently now. Before the program, he was against inviting friends over. Now, he asks us to arrange for something. Now with the families of my younger daughter's friends, we come together as families, husbands are included. We go all together and are very happy. (M 7)

As well as being more understanding, fathers also started to help mother with the housework.

- He thinks a lot about what other people might say about him. Once I had flu and had to stay in bed. One night I heard noises coming from the kitchen and I thought it must be a thief. Then, I saw my husband washing the dishes; I could not believe it. We have been married for 9 years and it was the first time, I was very happy. (M 9)
- Before the program, after dinner, nobody would say it was nice and thanked me. My husband used to say that they did not need to say so as it was my duty to cook. I told him not to say so and said that he was not teaching good things to children. I wanted them to be kind and thoughtful. Now my husband tells the kids that he works outside and I work at home and that I do not have to. He continues that if we hired someone to do the housework, we would have to pay this much. Before the program, he used to say that I was obliged to do all this. (M 5)

Besides, mothers reported that their husbands now ask for their opinion.

- He did not use to ask my opinion beforehand. He decided for everything, I would do this and it is none of your business, he would say. Now, he asks my opinion before doing something. I wanted a sofa and he said that he would buy me the one that I liked when our debts are finished. Before the program, he told me to leave the house with my sofa.



So, I went to my parent's house and stayed there for 15 days. It was just before he started school and afterwards we did not have any problems like that. (M 9)

- I now have a ring, which is a real success for my part. My husband was against buying jewellery, not that he did not have the means in fact. For my birthday, he said that I had wanted something for years and that we should go out and buy it. (M 7)

Another statement is that fathers are now warning mothers in issues related with children, in line with what they have talked about during the program.

- I used to get angry with my son while studying and my husband warned me at those times. He used to tell me that I could not be helpful to the child when my mind is occupied, that I should stop for some time to calm down and continue afterwards. He convinced me not to behave that way to the children. He suggested me to try another way. We talked about these a lot. It really helped. (M 8)
- He would tell me about the meetings. He told me not to shout at the kids but talk to them instead. He also told me not to force them and to behave them well. (M 10)

As a result of all these changes in father's behaviour towards his wife, mothers reported an improvement in their communication as a couple.

- He now pays more attention to how he talks with me, or what to say and what not to say when our daughter is around. He now listens to me differently. Maybe his way of expressing himself is better. When there was a problem, he would not share it with me. I would ask questions, made effort to make him speak. Now he starts talking and sharing himself. He also talks to me in a low pitch tone. (M 11)
- Before the program, when we had problems, he would scorn me even when my daughter was around. Now that he has learned about child psychology, he tries not to do that. We do not have discussions when our daughter is with us. (M 12)

Some mothers mentioned that there has been no change in their relationship after the program.

- There has been no change in our relationship. He is very authoritarian. Certain things would not change even if he participated in this program for 10 years. I want more attention from him and I know I will be never able to find it. The change in him towards children is enough for me. His starting the program was something for me; I was surprised to see that he accepted. (M 2)

This might be because some fathers were not sharing much about the program. When fathers shared about what happened during that week, mothers were happier, there was something to talk and share about between the couple.

- I was wondering what they had shared in the meetings and he would not share much. I heard some of the things they did from a neighbour's husband. He never told me in detail what they had done, but when I forced and prompted him, he would tell me one or two things. (M 1)
- I used to ask him all the time about what had happened that day in the group. I wish he started explaining without my questioning. One night I decided not to look into his bag to see whether he would start talking, but till late, he did not mention anything. I gave up and started asking him. We never read the handouts together. We read them together only at times, when he was already reading them and if I went to sit next to him. (M 11)
- I also tried to learn during the program. For example, every time he came, I would ask him what they had learned. We would talk after our son had slept. He would tell me what they had talked about, the topics they had covered. We were exchanging ideas. I sort of feel no need to attend the program in a way. (M 3)





- I was very happy to observe his joy after each meeting. He used to share everything with me, what they did, and we would talk and discuss about those topics during the week. I knew everything done, every example as if I was present at the meetings. Seeing his joy, I decided to support him. (M 6)

In addition to the change reported in fathers, mothers stated that they observed changes in themselves as well. The changes in the mother could also be classified as changes in the behaviour and perception.

### **Change in mother's behaviour regarding children**

Mothers reported that they have become calmer, and as a result they are now shouting less to their children.

- I used to shout at the kids, especially at my daughter. Now, I do not. One day, when I came home she messed up the house after getting angry because of failing to run the computer. I sorted things out by talking and my neighbours were surprised. They were suggesting ways to punish the child. After our talk, she stopped doing that behaviour. I do not yell at them any more and they are happy about it. (M 5)
- I also benefited from the program. I am now calmer. I was very aggressive, being bothered by my younger son. I used to hit my hands so as not to harm the children. My husband convinced me regarding these issues. He told me not to behave that way and suggested that I should try a different way. We always talked about these. My attitude towards children changed. I take my husband as the role model. (M 8)

In addition, mothers expressed having stopped using negative methods of discipline.

- I used to beat my child sometimes but I stopped now. I may now speak harshly but I do not beat him any more. (M 14)
- I learned from this program that beating and aggression were not good. However, at some point, when my child insists on doing something despite warnings, I beat him. I try not to though because then, I am filled with remorse. (M 13)

A considerable change was reported in the importance given to talking, explaining and listening to the child.

- One day, when I came home she messed up the house after getting angry because of failing to run the computer. I sorted things out by talking and my neighbours were surprised. They were suggesting ways to punish the child. After our talk, she stopped doing that behaviour. (M 5)
- I did not attend the program but it affected me as well. I can listen and understand them better now. Before, when I was doing something, and when she wanted to talk, I would not look at her and listen to her. The examples in the handouts influenced me. Now, I stop doing my work, I sit down and listen to her. (M 12)

Furthermore, mothers reported that they have become more playful.

- I try to play with them more. When there is something that my daughter does not want to do, I try to turn it into a play. (M 6)

All these might have been made possible by the fact that mothers believe they have become more knowledgeable about child education, through reading the handouts and/or through discussions with their husbands.

- I really benefited from reading the handouts, they were about child psychology, and every parent should read them. We try to learn what to do when our child becomes ill but I did



not know how to behave in the face of a problem. There are lots of things to be learned, whether I should punish or reward the child. Now I know how to behave. I could organize the studying and television viewing hours. We talked about the bad effects of television with my daughter. (M 2)

- Our knowledge increased. We want to be more influential on our children; we want to educate our children in a better way. (M 14)

### **Change in mother's perception regarding children**

Mothers also stated that they felt fewer burdens about child rearing as a consequence of father's taking more responsibility.

- My children have been very close to me but after the program, they became closer to their father, which makes me feel less of a burden. (M 3)
- Before the program, because of the stress resulting from my husband's work, I used to carry the entire burden. I had to take her to bed or make her less quiet or talk to her in case of a problem. Now when there is a problem he talks to our daughter, explains why she has to go to bed early or why he does not want her to make any noise. (M 6)

In addition to feeling fewer burdens, mothers also expressed their feelings that they now have more power and prestige in the family.

- I was sort of under his command. It was as if I did not know anything if he had not told me. He would tell me what to do and I would do it. Now he accepts me as the woman of the house, he believes that I can also do certain things without his telling me. (M 5)

Finally, mothers reported that they started to see the child as an individual, as a person with his/her own rights, ideas and feelings.

- Before the program, I was focused on her not making her father angry. I used to tell her to apologize, that she was a child and younger, and that fathers should not be bothered. There should not be any discussion with fathers was my idea as we were brought up with that way. Whenever we tried to start a discussion with our father, my mother would stop us. (M 6)

There were mothers who said that they have not benefited from the program in any way.

- I could not benefit myself from the program because I am still a controlling and ruling mother and wife. If there had been a group for us as well, I might have been more flexible. I believe that during the program, I behaved that way but later would return to my normal self. (M 7)

### **Change in mother's behaviour regarding husband**

Mothers reported an improved communication with their husbands, which led to a better relationship.

- I also changed thanks to him. I stopped insisting; I have learned to leave things to happen within their own pace. We listen and try to understand each other. (M 9)
- Whenever we had a discussion, I used to show bad temper. I used to be angry and would not talk to him. Now he smiles and tries to repair the harm after a fight, so I am happy about this change. (M 9)



Some mothers talked about their support and encouragement to the father's participation in the program.

- I would not expect my husband to participate in such a program. When he told me that he was thinking about participating, I said that this was essential, as he did not have any knowledge about father-child relationship. He did not object. (M 2)
- He did not want to attend the program in the first place. My son and I wanted him to participate; we thought he might have things to learn there. (M 13)

### **Change in child's behaviour**

Alongside with the changes observed in fathers, mothers reported changes in their children's behaviour and perception. This was possible through the change in fathers, which was attributed to the program.

The first reported change is that the child started expressing himself/herself better in the family. Mothers added that children felt closer to their father.

- The program affected and changed our way of addressing to our child and our attitude. One example is that last night we were in bed with my daughter and my husband closed the door. My daughter got up to drink water and told her father that she did not like him closing the door. She could express herself, like the way she sees and experiences with us. (M 1)
- Now she hugs her father, she asks for more attention. She is more comfortable now in expressing what she wants, in telling about the events of the day. She knows that her father will play with her when she is bored. Before the program, she was afraid of her father and did not dare tell him anything, as he did not talk much and as he was very serious. His looking only was enough for my daughter to behave. When she wanted new shoes, for example, she would ask me to tell her father. (M 12)
- Children are now more oriented towards their father because they say that after participating in the program, he tries to fulfil their wishes more, such as doing or buying something. (M 13)

The child has also become calmer, and started behaving better, paying attention to manners such as thanking and apologizing.

- The kids are now more cautious and adaptive. My son used to be very aggressive when I said no to something, he was complaining about our continuously telling him do something. His father talked to him a lot and could convince him. He has become more mature. (M 8)
- My son did not use to wash his face and hands, especially before eating. Now, when his father looks at him once, he understands that he has to wash his hands. (M 5)
- He did not use to say thank you when we were at a friend's house, or when he saw the neighbours in the morning, he would not say good morning. Now, he does. Before leaving home, he did not use to say goodbye, just like his father. (M 5)
- My son did not have a habit of apologizing beforehand. I was trying to teach him but without success. Now when he has some problems at school and if he has disappointed a friend, he calls the friend and tells him he is sorry. (M 5)

Due to the change in the father-child relationship, children have become more responsible about their duties.

- They do not have the fear that their father would beat them anymore but now they are more conscious. They know that they should study and go to bed at a certain hour. They have become more responsible. They say when my father comes home he will ask us



many questions and they think about how they would answer. When they do something wrong, they do not lie to their father, they talk and explain to him. (M 5)

- My son now makes his bed. When he came from school, he would throw things every place, now he does not. (M 5)

### **Change in child's perception**

As an example to the change in the child's perception, mothers stated that their child was proud of his/her father because of the fact that he was attending a "school" and doing something for his children.

- My son likes the new relationship with his father. While they are studying, his father speaks for a long time without my son getting bored. Then, my son tells me in the absence of his father that his father is a super father, that he would not change him for anybody else. He adds that he observes other fathers as well and sees that those fathers do not help their children with their lessons. (M 5)
- He talks a lot with his father and I think that helps. He does not listen to what I say; maybe he regards his father as having received more education and me as uneducated. When I want to help him with his lessons, although I can, he tells me that I would not understand. My husband tells him that I went to school in Germany and that there are things I know as well. However, he says: if I had problems with German I could ask her, but this is maths and mom is not very good at maths. (M 5)
- My soon was proud of his father. He liked the idea that his father would be going to school and receiving a certificate. I understood from their speech that they have complete trust in their father. They would say, "My father can do that too, my father is like that". (M 9)

On the other hand, there were some mothers who stated that they did not observe any change in their child.

- There is no change in children's behaviour before and after the program. (M 2)
- We could not influence our children. They still behave the same way. (M 14)

All these reported changes had an impact on father-child relationship, as well as on mother-child relationship. There was an improvement in father-child relationship.

### **Change in father-child relationship:**

- When my daughter had something new and wanted to show it to her father, he would not pay attention whether that suited her or not. Now he can recognize the child's joy and can share it. He can look and say that it suits her well whereas before the program, he would continue watching television without turning his head. Both the child and I would be sad. When she received more attention, she also started to be close to her father, to talk to him more, expressing herself. She can express her wish to go to some place. She is now demanding to go to the children's park together. He did not know anything about father-child relationship as he was raised that way. He loved his children but could not show it. Now, he can. When I buy something as a gift for him, my daughter wants to give it. She becomes very happy. My husband is also happy. (M 2)
- Our son has never demanded something from his father, he would always ask me. Before the program he used to ask me for money, he used to ask me whether he should talk to his father. I used to say that I had had enough, that he should talk to his father. Now, he can talk it out with his father. At least, they learned to talk to each other face to face. They can tell each other about their problems. (M 3)



### Change in mother-child relationship:

Mother-child relationship was also influenced by the change in father-child relationship and by what the mothers have learned through their husbands participation in the program.

- My husband's participation in the program affected my relationship with my daughter as well. I learned a lot of things while reading the handouts. My daughter used to watch television till late and I could not get her to sleep. We liked the book titled "Televizyoncu Ali" a lot. When she insisted on staying up late, I would start reading that book to her. Now, that habit of hers is broken. (M 11)
- My husband's participation to the program created a change in my relationship with my children. After having read all those handouts, I now think before I act. I now think about how I should behave even when I get angry. (M 9)

Another point that mothers brought up was the reactions of other people. Some mothers expressed that they received support and encouragement from friends and relatives, whereas some received negative feedback.

- My friends all congratulated me. They would tell me that these should be the things that he knew, that my husband was not a very bad father and asked me why I made him attend these meetings after coming from work, tired. I used to tell them that I was not forcing him, that he also wanted to go. (M 11)
- There is no beating now at home and that attracts the attention of the people around. They envy our children seeing them grow up. They envy our children's success. (M 5)
- Some people liked the idea that he participated in this program, whereas others did not understand the need for it. They asked whether he did not know how to raise his children, said it was a waste of time and that they did not need it. There are people of course who educate their children by beating them. (M 5)
- Our friends and relatives did not approve his participation to the program. (M 14)

Mothers also reported that their husbands tried to influence their friends and relatives by telling about what they had covered during the program.

- My husband recommends this program to his friends, talks about what he has learned, and tells them to behave in certain ways. When friends come over for tea, he tells them that he has learned something useful and explains them. (M 5)
- He tells the other fathers to talk to their children instead of shouting at them. When children have a fight, he talks to them, sorts it out, make them apologize. Before he would say "hit the person who hits you". We tell others that disciplining the child by beating is no good. Friends get angry to us that we do not beat our children. (M 5)
- My husband cannot implement all the things that he has learned but he is good at giving advice. He told me that he had a friend in the group who would not listen to his wife, who would not care about what his wife wanted and they were about to divorce. He told that friend to listen to his wife more and some other things as well. (M 9)

As well as influencing other adults, mothers reported that their husbands had an impact on children other than theirs.

- Talking really makes a difference. He also talks with the children in the neighbourhood. There was one kid who was very poor at maths, he talked and explained him, and then one day his mother came to thank my husband. She was surprised to see the change in her son. (M 5)



Mothers also mentioned about the effects of the program on the whole family. They reported a change in fathers, which they believed was created through the program. Then, this change in fathers was reflected onto the family.

- We made a step forward. We try to go even further. We try to guide our children and teach them good things. (M 14)
- Parents try to educate their children the same way as their parents had educated them. However, after attending this program, they have different ideas. If these programs had not existed, people would have used old knowledge, old way to raise their children. My husband and I did not think that we are not good parents because we are attending this program. We participated in this program in order to learn different things, in order to learn what else we could do. (M 13)
- He used to go to the coffee house very often but now thanks God he stopped. Our relationship within the family improved. We now go to visit our relatives more frequently. Before, he was not home so when there were guests, I was alone and he was at the coffee house. (M 9)
- My husband used to be harsh and after a discussion, when I went to some corner and started crying silently, my daughter would understand that it was because of her father's behaviour. She used to be sad, would ask me not to cry and would not leave me. Now, she does not experience such an environment. I am sure she is aware of that and she must be happy about it. His behaviour after the program makes me happy and it is reflected onto the home environment. We have a peaceful, happy medium at home. He tries to make us happy. (M 12)

However, there are some mothers who reported that the effects of the program are fading, especially after the program has come to an end. Besides, there are some mothers who believed that they experienced negative effects of the program. They complained that their children have become spoiled; they did not obey their parents as they used to and they were not afraid of them any more. Some mothers also complained about the father's new approach to children, his being patient, more tolerant and friendlier.

- His relationship with the kids was better when he was still a participant. After the program had ended, he sort of returned to his old self. However, he tries to be more cautious regarding the kids, especially because he remembers the talks at the meetings, I believe. (M 13)
- The children have become spoiled throughout the program. They do not listen to me and when I threaten them to have a complaint to their father, they do not care. My husband did not use to beat them but they were afraid of him, but now they are like friends. When I complain about them to my husband, he ignores. Before he used to shout at them for making me sad and angry. Now he does not, thinking that they would be afraid and draw back. (M 9)
- He is now more tolerant and I get angry. When he behaves with patience under certain circumstances, I get angry. I tell him that he could have been more severe at some points. Children try to abuse this. Children got used to their father's tolerance; this is good for the kids of course. (M 13)

### **Causal Model Observed as a Result of the Program**

When the effects and changes created as a result of the program are taken into consideration, a certain interaction is seen between the father, the child and the mother, which could be attributed to the program. As it is illustrated in Figure 1, the program affected the father directly. The father then reflected this change onto his child and his wife, from whom he also received different feedback. The mother started behaving differently in the family both because she had noticed the change in the father and because of what the father had been telling her. The mother also changed throughout the program both towards her husband and child, which made it easier for

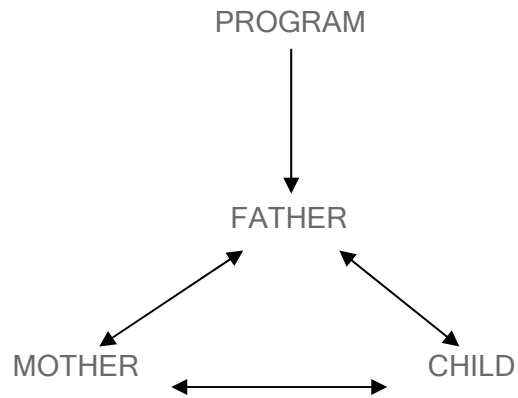




the child to change as well. Therefore, through father's application of what he had learned in the program to other members of the family, the atmosphere at home changed positively.

**Figure 1**

**The Interaction Created as a result of the Program**





## DISCUSSION

This report aims to have a closer look at what fathers experienced through their participation in Father Support Program. The purpose is to provide an in-depth understanding through revealing the personal experience of fathers as well as to see whether this reported change in fathers was also reflected in their attitude and behaviour. Fathers were given an opportunity to talk about this experience using their own words through the interviews. On the other hand, the attitude inventory provided more objective evaluation of the reported change in behaviour and perception of the father.

There has been a change in the scope of the intervention programs, which resulted from various theoretical interpretations, and supporting both the child and the family has become the target (Upshur, 1990). Therefore, intervention programs have started considering parental knowledge of developmental stages and child rearing or parent-child interaction as significant signs of the effectiveness of a program, in addition to child outcomes (Bekman, 1998). Parallel to this understanding, this report is interested in the changes that have taken place in the father's understanding of child rearing and developmental stages in addition to the parent-child interaction to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

The review of literature revealed the fact that fathers play a significant and irreplaceable role in their children's well-being. In other words, father's role is independent from that of the mothers, and has a unique contribution to child development. Mother-Child Education Foundation has recognized the importance of fathers in child development and evaluated the lack of support available to fathers. Establishment of this fact led to the start of Father Support Program as a pilot study in 1996.

This report is the first evaluation of the Father Support Program, which had the purpose of creating an awareness in fathers regarding their importance in child care as well as informing and supporting them about child development.

The evaluation of the program was realized through quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative evaluation was carried out through the attitude inventory while the qualitative evaluation was made through the interviews conducted with both the fathers and the mothers.

The results of this report will be discussed in three parts in this section. First, the self-reports of the fathers regarding the effects of the program will be touched. Next, self-reports of the mothers will follow. Finally, whether the results of the interviews support the results of the attitude inventory will be the concern.

The results of the interviews with the fathers revealed that there are changes in father's attitudes, perceptions and behaviours, which could be attributed to the program. Fathers responses were evaluated under two headings: Fathers' ideas, evaluations and suggestions about the program, and self-report of fathers regarding the effects of the program. The first part revealed that fathers mainly had a positive idea about the way the topics were covered and the way the information was conveyed. The majority of the fathers reported that they benefited from the group experience. Some fathers expressed their wish that more topics were included in the program, whereas some fathers wished the program lasted longer. Almost all the fathers agreed that there should be a similar program for mothers, for their wives as well, preferably at the same time that they attended the program. Some fathers stated that the timing of the program did not suit their need, as their children were either older or younger. Another point reported was that more publicity was needed for the program to be better known.

The second part consists of self-reports of the fathers regarding the effects of the program. Fathers talked about changes in their behaviour and perception regarding their children, their wives and themselves.

Fathers reported a change in their perception regarding children. Fathers reported that they started considering the child as an individual, as well as being more tolerant and more careful about keeping promises. Regarding the change in behaviour of fathers towards their children, they stated that they started explaining, talking and listening to the child, as well as spending more time with them and showing more affection, and added that they could see positive



reflections of this change onto their children. Fathers also reported that they now use alternative methods of discipline instead of punishing and/or beating their children. These changes in the father has led to a positive change in father's relationship with his child, they have become closer.

Fathers also reported changes in their behaviour regarding their wives. They have become more tolerant and they started talking, explaining and warning their wives. These changes all led to better communication between the couple.

Fathers reported a change in their perception regarding themselves. They have become more knowledgeable about child development, have gained a new perspective and have become more flexible. Besides, they are more proud of themselves as they have done something useful for their children.

Regarding changes in fathers' behaviour, fathers reported changes in their relationship with other people outside the family. They reported instances where they tried to explain about what they had learned in the program, trying to affect other fathers' behaviour. They said they have now better communication with others and have become more social.

Fathers also talked about the changes they have observed in their children's behaviour. Children are reported to be able to express themselves better and obey more as the father talks and explains more. Children also said that they were proud of their fathers as they feel that fathers make an effort for them by going to school/the program. Fathers also reported that children have become more responsible, more social (having better relationships with friends), and happier.

Another reported change was in the mother-child relationship. Mothers also started explaining to their children, which led to a closer relationship.

When the self-reports of the mothers are evaluated, similar statements are observed. Regarding the change in fathers' behaviour and perception towards children, mothers support fathers' reports. Mothers stated that fathers have become more interested in matters related with children and as a result started spending more time with their children. Mothers added that fathers have become more tolerant and decreased using negative methods of discipline. Instead, they started talking, listening and explaining to the child more than they used to do. Besides, mothers said fathers have started considering their child as an individual person, and therefore grant him/her more rights and freedom.

Regarding the change in fathers towards their wives, mothers reported that their husbands have become calmer and more understanding. In addition, fathers started to help with the housework as well as asking for the wife's opinion. These changes are reported to result in an improvement in the communication of the couple.

Mothers also reported changes they have observed in themselves regarding children and these are also in line with fathers' statements. Mothers have also become calmer; have stopped using negative methods of discipline. As it was the case with fathers, they also started talking, listening and explaining to their children more than they used to.

One difference in the self-reports of the mothers can be seen in the change mothers have experienced in their perception. Mothers reported feeling fewer burdens as the father also shared responsibilities regarding childcare and education. Besides, they talked about having more power and prestige in the family.

Finally, mothers confirmed that children felt closer to their father as well as being proud of him, and there was a much better father-child relationship.

All these reported changes are supported by the results of the attitude inventory. The results of the attitude inventory revealed that there has been a change in the attitudes of fathers who have attended the program. All the four factors, non-traditional roles, non-authoritarian attitude, non-permissive attitude and open communication changed significantly. Fathers have become less traditional, less authoritarian and less permissive in their fathering role. Besides, the communication between the father and the child improved.



The results of this report demonstrated that when the experiences provided to the child changed as a result of the change in the father and the mother, the child also displayed some change. Fathers stated that the program was effective and appropriate in making a difference in their own lives as well as the lives of the child and the family. The effectiveness of including the family in the intervention programs was evident in that the family was seen to have influenced the child and in turn was influenced by the child throughout the program. As can be seen from the self-reports of the fathers that led to the causal model, the father changed in the first place as a result of the program and reflected this change onto his child and his wife. In turn, the child and the wife, who were provided with new experience, also changed. The mother felt fewer burdens as a result of active involvement of the father in the child's daily activities and as a result of his occasional help and understanding even in the housework. This relief in the mother was also reflected onto the mother-child relationship, and there was a better relationship supported with the flow of knowledge from the father to the mother. As a result, the indirect influence was seen on the child, who was also reported to have changed positively.

These results support the findings that this program fulfilled its aim in creating an awareness and consciousness in fathers regarding child development and education. Participant fathers were from different socio-economic levels and this fact further stresses the positive influence of the program on fathers, regardless of their education or income level. The topics of the FSP enabled the fathers to realize their own importance in child education as well as becoming more knowledgeable. The topic of "Positive methods of discipline" helped for the prevention of child abuse, by providing a decrease in father's use of negative discipline methods. Besides, fathers learned democratic methods that they could use with their wives and children. On the other hand, fathers learned new skills, for example communication and problem solving skills, through the discussion of topics each week. The results revealed that they used these skills not only with their wives and children, but with other relationships as well.

Furthermore, review of literature also reveals that being satisfied and feeling adequate as a father had positive effects on family relationships. As Lamb (1997) puts it, family context is now accepted to be more influential than individual relationships. The broader context of the family should be considered for the positive influence of the father to occur. A supportive father-child relationship is essential but is not enough in its own sense. Father's relationship with his wife and with other children in the family is constituents of a positive familial context. "The absence of familial hostility is the most consistent correlate of child adjustment, whereas marital conflict is the most consistent and reliable correlate of child maladjustment" (Lamb, 1997, p. 13).

The group context of the training used in this program was reported to have been socio-emotionally supportive for the fathers. The majority of the fathers stated that they had the opportunity to meet new people and hear different points of view. Besides, contrary to many women, men do not have much opportunity in the Turkish culture to share their concerns about home and family. The FSP program and the group context used gave fathers the opportunity to talk about these concerns. Fathers reported the positive influence of this factor by saying that they mostly felt relieved after the meetings. This socio-emotional support was quite important for the success of the program and it was essential in ensuring the continuation of the effects in Turkish culture where there are close-knit human relations (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997).



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APPENDIX A  
FATHER SUPPORT PROGRAM  
ATTITUDE INVENTORY

ADI, SOYADI:					
EĞİTİMCİ, YER:					
<b>BADEP TUTUM ENVANTERİ</b> Bu form, Baba Destek Programı katılımcılarının istek, beklenti ya da gereksinimlerini daha iyi karşılamada sizlerden yardım almak amacıyla hazırlanmıştır. Lütfen aşağıdaki cümleleri dikkatle okuyunuz. Tamamen katılıyorum, katılıyorum, kararsızım, katılmıyorum, hiç katılmıyorum seçeneklerinden size en yakın gelenini işaretleyiniz. Burada doğru ya da yan yoktur. Önemli olan sizin kendi düşüncelerinizdir. Katkılarınız için teşekkür ederiz.	Tamamen Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Hiç Katılmıyorum
1 Çocuğu azarlamadan sözümüzü dinletmek zordur.					
2 Aramızın iyi olması için çocuğun istediğini yaparım.					
3 Çocuklara ev işi yaptırılmaz.					
4 Çocuğumun bir dediğini iki etmem.					
5 Sorunlar dinleyerek çözülür.					
6 Çocuğun oyun oynaması boşa harcanan zamandır.					
7 Çocuğun nasıl giyineceğine anne baba karar verir.					
8 Evde son sözü baba söyler.					
9 Korktuğumu çocuğumdan saklarım.					
10 Çocuğun benimle tartışması susmasından iyidir.					
11 Takdir edilmek çocuğu şımartır.					
12 En iyi baba, çocuğuna en çok zaman ayırandır.					
13 Her çocuk adam olamaz.					
14 Kızların oyuncağı ayrı, erkeklerin ayrıdır.					
15 Kızdığım zaman bunu belli ederim.					
16 Çocuk babadan biraz korkmalıdır.					
17 Çocuklar boş şeylere üzülür, ağlar.					
18 Çocuk iyi bir şey yaptıysa ona istedikleri satın almalıdır.					
19 Çocuklar büyükler kadar ciddiye alınmalıdır.					
20 Çocuğuma en erken yaşta, en fazla şeyi öğretmem gerekir.					



21	Çocuğun aklını geliştirmek okulun işidir.				
22	Terbiyeli çocuk anne babasının sözünden çıkmaz.				
23	Sağlıklı bir ilişkide çatışma olmaz.				
24	Çocuğun yaptıklarına kızılmaz.				
25	Bir çocuğun iyi yetişmesi için sıkı disiplin gerekmez.				
26	Çocuktan çok şey beklemek onu geliştirir.				
27	Yaşanan zorluklar çocukla paylaşılabilir.				
28	Çocuğumu dövüyorsam, onun iyiliği içindir.				
29	Çocuğun asıl sorumlusu annedir.				
30	Evin kurallarını anne baba belirler.				
31	Babalık öğrenilecek bir iştir.				
32	Çocukla oyun oynamak boşa harcanan zamandır.				
33	Başkalarıyla kıyaslanmak çocuğun başarısını artırır.				
34	İdeal anne babalar çocukları için yaşar.				
35	Çocuğum cinsel konularda benimle konuşabilir.				
36	Ders dışı uğraşlar, zaman kaybıdır.				
37	Evde tartışma çıkınca çeker giderim.				
38	Kız çocuğun sorunlarıyla anne, erkek çocuğunkiyle baba ilgilenmelidir.				
39	Ben çocuğumu dinlemezsem o da beni dinlemez.				
40	Babalar az ve öz konuşmalıdır.				
41	Çocuk durduk yerde sorun çıkarır.				
42	Hoşlanmasam da çocuk ısrar ederse istediğini yaparım.				
43	Annenin işi evi idare etmektir.				
44	Çocuktan af dilemem.				
45	Çocuğumun hata yapmasından korkmam.				
46	Cinsel konularda çocuklarımla konuşmam.				
47	Babalık keyifli birşeydir.				
48	Babayla herşey konuşulmaz.				
49	Eşim istediğinde çocuğumu cezalandırırım.				
50	Bizi anne babamız nasıl büyüttü ise, bizim çocuklar da öyle büyür.				



51	Başaramayacak çocuk yoktur.					
52	Baba olmak güçlü olmak demektir.					
53	Her çatışmanın bir kazananı, bir de kaybedeni vardır.					
54	Evdeki ufak tefek şeyler için baba rahatsız edilmemelidir.					
55	Babanın temel görevi, çocuğun yanlışlarını düzeltmektir.					
56	Büyükler söyler, küçükler dinler.					
57	Kabahat işleyen çocuk cezalandırılmalıdır.					





APPENDIX B

TABLE FOR  
CORRELATIONS OF FOUR FACTORS

Table 1

Correlations of four factors

		FACTOR1N	FACTOR2N	FACTOR3N	FACTOR4N
FACTOR1N	Pearson Correlation	1	,653	,604	,071
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,000	,000	,018
	N	1233	1097	1146	1120
FACTOR2N	Pearson Correlation	,653	1	,469	,176
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,	,000	,000
	N	1097	1217	1136	1126
FACTOR3N	Pearson Correlation	,604	,469	1	,088
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,	,003
	N	1146	1136	1274	1151
FACTOR4N	Pearson Correlation	,071	,176	,088	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,018	,000	,003	,
	N	1120	1126	1151	1243
FACTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	,801	,758	,750	,521
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	969	969	969	969