

The View of Turkish Parents of 4th and 5th Grades about the Performance Tasks

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to designate the 4th and 5th grade parents' views about the performance tasks. In accordance with this aim, a survey research model was followed. In the content of the research, a research group was formed out of parents with 4th and 5th grade students and to gather the data, a 10-item survey was prepared. In data analysis, frequency analysis was used and it is concluded that the parents take help from their neighbours and internet cafés for their children and that they provide internet as a source for their children below the age of 13.

1. Introduction

Education is seen as a system which enhances human / student behaviour in our day [1]. So as to find answer to the questions to what extent the developing student behaviours tend to develop and to what extent the student reaches the target level of development; the characteristics that we expect to develop need to be measured. At this point, different measuring approaches emerge. For a long time, with what is known as the classic measurement and evaluation approaches such as multiple-choice, short-answer, open-ended question tests and so on, the ultimate development in the student has been measured [2].

It is suggested that the most important aim of benefitting from measurement and evaluation in the school education is to designate the in-class performance of the student [3]. At schools, to serve this purpose, short-answer, multiple-choice, open-ended question tests, homework and performance tasks have been used. Short-answer, multiple-choice and open-ended question tests are generally applied at the end of the teaching process and the measured feature is to see to what extent the student reaches the objectives at the end of the process. However, while education consists of input, process and output, it is not very true to use measurement techniques intended only for the input. In order to improve education, it is necessary for process to be measure and evaluated along with the input. This need to measure the process has given birth to alternative measurement and evaluation approaches.

Alternative measurement-evaluation methods are not the ones to be used instead of the classical

methods. On the contrary, they should be used along with the classical ones. It is because of the fact that while classical methods are result-oriented, alternative methods are process-oriented. When these two methods in different groups are used together, process and result will be measured together and there will be more data gathered both about the student success and about the quality of education [3].

The performance tasks, one of the alternative measurement-evaluation methods, are the activities that present students with problem situations that they can come across in everyday life and that aim to develop students' upper level mental skills and to measure those skills. These activities can include not only the written answer the students give but also other activities with different functions such as oral speeches, painting, singing, modelling, photographing. However, at our schools, performance tasks are generally mistaken for homework. While homework aim for the repetition of what the students learn at school and for the reinforcement of the subjects, performance tasks aim for this knowledge to be used in everyday situations and for new knowledge to be reached easily [3][4][5].

At this point, it is necessary that students and teachers be informed about the alternative measurement-evaluation methods as well as the parents themselves. It is predicted that the efforts the parents with no knowledge do regarding the help to the students will decrease the efficiency of alternative measurement-evaluation methods.

2. Literature Review

In the research done about the performance tasks by Kumandaş and Kutlu [6], the factors that influence the attitude of the 5th grade students against the performance tasks were studied and one of the factors was found to be the education level of the father. This finding shows that the parents have an effect on the performance tasks even though it is indirect. In another research done by Acar and Anıl [7], the opinions of the teachers about the performance tasks were studied. However, there couldn't be found a research that studies the parents' opinions about the performance tasks in the field.

The fact that it is unknown how the parents see the performance tasks given to the students increases the need for such a study.

3. Research Rationale

3.1. Design

This research is a survey study that aims to display the parents' existing opinions about the performance tasks.

3.2. Sample

The sampling of the research, Eskişehir, was selected by using convenience sampling method from the 4th and 5th grade students' parents in Turkey. According to this, 90 parents were included to the sampling.

3.3. Instruments

In the research, a 10-item-survey which was developed by the researcher and aimed to gather the parents' opinions about the performance tasks was used and during the preparation process of the survey, the opinions of two experts were consulted.

3.4. Administration

Data was gathered from the questionnaire and from the students' parents. In this process, the questionnaire was given away to the students within the class and it was made possible that the parents got their own questionnaires. Later, the questionnaires were collected back from the students. 81 of the 90 questionnaires sent to the parents returned. Because there was not a big loss in the questionnaire number and because of the time limitations, the unreturned questionnaires were not asked from the parents.

4. Analysis of Findings

In the analysis of the findings, for each item in the questionnaire, their frequency and percentage values were calculated. According to this, the frequency analysis was carried out on Item 1 which designates *whether the parents think they have enough knowledge the performance* and on the Item 2 which designates *whether they see performance tasks with the same name as homework or same as the same content with a different name* and the results are given on Table 1:

Table 1. The frequency results of Item 1 and 2

	f	%	Valid %
Item 1.			
Yes	42	51,9	51,9
Partly	33	40,7	40,7
No	6	7,4	7,4
Overall	81	100	100
Item 2.			
Yes	20	24,7	25,3
Partly	20	24,7	25,3
No	39	48,1	49,4
Overall	79	97,5	100

When Table 1 is analysed, it is stated that although the majority of the parents think that they have enough knowledge about the performance tasks, only 49% of them stated that they are aware of distinction between homework and performance task.

The frequency analysis was carried out on the Item 3 which designates *whether the parents help their children with performance tasks* and on the Item 4 which designates *in what nature this help is* and the results are given in Table 2:

Table 2. The frequency analysis results for Item 3 and 4

	f	%	Valid %
Item 3.			
Yes	52	64,2	64,2
Partly	24	29,6	29,6
No	5	6,2	6,2
Overall	81	100	100
Item 4.			
Guiding him/her about what s/he can do.	42	51,9	53,2
Completing the task when s/he gets stuck.	11	13,6	13,9
Only presenting my child with sources s/he can benefit from.	26	32,1	32,9
Doing the performance task by myself.	-	-	-
Overall	79	97,5	100

According to Table 2, while the majority of the parents stated that they help their children, they also stated that this help occurred in the form of guidance and presenting their children with sources.

The frequency analysis was carried out on the data gathered from the Item 5 and 6 which designate *whether the parents make somebody else complete the performance tasks for their children* and the results are given on Table 3.

Table 3. The frequency analysis results for Item 5 and 6

	f	%	Valid %
Item 5.			
Yes	30	37,0	37,5
Partly	28	34,6	35,0
No	22	27,2	27,5
Overall	80	98,8	100
Item 6.			
From acquaintances who go to high school or university (neighbour, relative, etc.).	22	27,2	33,3
From internet cafes.	31	38,3	47,0
From teacher acquaintances (neighbour, relative etc.).	8	9,9	12,1
Other	5	6,2	7,6
Overall	66	81,5	100

As can be seen in Table 3, only 27.5% of the parents stated that they don't have help from others. Along with this, it is seen that the majority of the parents seek help from their acquaintances who go to high school and university as well as from the internet cafes.

The frequency analysis was carried out on the data gathered from the Item 7 which designates *the appropriateness of the performance tasks with students' level* and from the Item 8 which designates *the sufficiency of the feedback from the teacher* and results are given in Table 4.

According to Table 4, while parents see performance tasks suitable to their children's level, it is seen that the rate of the parents who think that teacher's feedback is enough is %54.

The frequency analysis was carried out on the data gathered from the Item 9 in the survey which aims to designate *what kind of sources the parents present their children with during the completion process of performance tasks* and the results are given in Table 5.

As can be seen in Table 5, the majority of parents present their children with internet as a source.

The frequency analysis was carried out on the data gathered from the Item 10 in the survey that aims to designate the parents' opinions about *whether the performance tasks are beneficent for the student success* and the results are given on Table 6.

Table 6 shows that the majority of the parents see the performance tasks as beneficent for their children's success.

Table 4. The frequency analysis results for Item 7 and 8

	f	%	Valid %
Item 7.			
Tasks are much above my child's level.	5	6,2	6,2
Tasks are above my child's level.	20	24,7	24,7
Tasks are suitable to my child's level.	56	69,1	69,1
Tasks are below my child's level.	-	-	-
Tasks are much below my child's level.	-	-	-
Overall	81	100	100
Item 8.			
The teacher does not give any feedback to my child or to me.	27	33,3	35,5
Teacher finds students who make somebody else complete their performance tasks more successful.	3	3,7	3,9
Teacher does not warn the students who make somebody else complete their performance tasks about completing the tasks themselves.	5	6,2	6,6
The feedback the teacher gives to me and to my child is enough.	41	50,6	53,9
Overall	76	93,8	100

Table 5. The frequency analysis results for the Item 9

	F	%	Valid %
Encyclopaedia	3	3,7	3,8
Related Books	8	9,9	10,1
Internet	67	82,7	84,8
Other	1	1,2	1,3
Overall	79	97,5	100

Table 6. The frequency analysis results for the Item 10

	F	%	Geçerli %
Finding efficient	63	77,8	78,8
Not finding efficient	8	9,9	10,0
Indecisive	9	11,1	11,3
Overall	80	98,8	100

5. Conclusions

The results of the research show that a great number of parents think that they have enough knowledge about the performance tasks. Along with this, it is seen that the number of parents who think that performance tasks and homework are two different things is high. While majority of the parents think that they should be helping their children with the performance tasks, they have stated that they have helped in accordance with guidance and leading the way for their children.

While the number of parents who completely or part think that their children should be getting external help is pretty high, they have stated that they are getting this help from students of either high school or university, or from internet cafes. While parents think that the help should come either from them or from another external source, they also think that the performance tasks are appropriate to the level of their children. While 25% of the parents find the teacher feedback insufficient, 50% of them think that their feedbacks are sufficient.

82% of the parents have stated that they are providing their children with internet service to help them complete the performance tasks. However, it should not be ignored that it is harmful for 4th and 5th grade students to contact with internet before they are 13 years old. 78% of the parents see the performance tasks effective for their children's development.

When we analyse the results, it can be suggested that there is a need to inform the parents about the performance tasks. Parents who have better knowledge about the performance tasks may be better supports for their children. Used as an assessment approach, performance tasks can be used to reflect the performance of the students. As can be seen in the research results, it is understood that performance tasks do not only belong to the students but also the helping neighbours, internet cafes etc.

6. References

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