

Emotional expressions of mothers with children in the 5-6 age group

5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifadeleri

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the emotional expressions of mothers who have children in the 5-6 age group. The study was carried out using the survey model, which is one of the quantitative research methods. The sample comprised 296 mothers with children aged 5-6 years attending pre-school education institutions, selected using the convenience sampling method. The findings revealed that the emotional expression levels of the mothers who had children in the 5-6 age group were high, and that the emotional expression levels of the mothers significantly differed in terms of the educational level variable. Specifically, mothers with higher education levels demonstrated higher emotional expression levels compared to those with secondary education. Variables such as age, number of children, employment status and status of living with the spouse were found not to significantly impact mothers' emotional expressions.

Keywords: Mother, Child, Emotion, Emotional Expression, Relationship.

Öz: Bu araştırma 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifadelerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden tarama modeli kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın örneklemini, kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme yöntemi ile belirlenen ve okul öncesi eğitim kurumuna devam eden 5-6 yaş grubu çocuğa sahip 296 anne oluşturmuştur. Araştırma verileri Duyguları İfade Etme Ölçeği ve kişisel bilgi formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifade düzeylerinin yüksek olduğu ve annelerin eğitim durumu değişkenine göre duygu ifade düzeylerinin farklılaştığı belirlenmiştir. Yükseköğretim mezunu olan annelerin duygu ifade düzeylerinin ortaöğretim mezunu annelerden daha yüksek olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Annelerin duygu ifadelerinde, yaş, sahip olunan çocuk sayısı, çalışma durumu ve eşi ile birlikte yaşama durumu değişkenlerinin istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark oluşturmadığı belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anne, Çocuk, Duygu, Duygu İfadesi, İlişki.

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ÖZET

Giriş

İnsan ilişkilerinin sağlıklı olarak devam edebilmesi bireylerin duygularının farkına varmasına ve bunları doğru şekilde ifade edebilmesine bağlıdır. Bireylerin yaşamı boyunca etkili olan duygu ifadesini etkileyen değişkenlerin belirlenmesi insan ilişkilerinin olumlu bir şekilde sürdürülmesine katkı sağlayabilir. Bu çalışmada sözel ve sözel olmayan biçimde hem kişiler arası ilişkilerde, hem de kişiler arası ilişkilerden bağımsız olarak annelerin duygularını ne kadar ifade ettiği ve duygu ifadelerini etkileyen değişkenleri belirlemek amaçlanmıştır.

Son yıllarda duyguların ve çocuklarla yetişkinler arasındaki duygusal iletişimin incelenmesinde önemli ilerlemeler kaydedilmiştir. Anneler çocukları ile ilişkilerinde duygusal ipuçlarını birincil bilgi kaynakları olarak kullanır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, çocukları ile ilk iletişim dili duygulardır ve duygusal alışverişleri anneler oluşturur (Bornstein vd., 2012). Duygusal ifadeler, çocuk ve anne arasında ki etkileşimin karşılıklı olarak düzenlemesine izin verir. Başka bir ifadeyle anne çocuk arasındaki duygusal iletişim aslında duygusal deneyimi geliştirmeye hizmet eder (Tronick, 2018). Çocuklar, sosyal çevrede ifade edilen tüm duyguları gözlemler ve ebeveynlerden kendilerinin ve başkalarının duygularıyla ilgili tepkileri alır. Çocuklar bu öğrenmeyi kendi duygusal davranışlarına dahil eder (Denham vd., 2012). Ebeveyn-çocuk etkileşimi ve annelerin çocuklarına duygularını ifade etmesi arasındaki ilişki olumlu çocuk gelişimi sonuçlarının en etkili yordayıcısı sayılabilir (Cox & Harter 2003). Anne ve çocukların duyguları ile duygusal yeterliliğine ilişkin çalışmalarda annelerin duygu ifadelerinin çocuklar için değeri ortaya çıkmaktadır (Brophy-Herb vd., 2012; Corapci vd., 2018; Eisenberg vd., 2011). Anne çocuk ilişkisinde belirleyici olan annelerin duygu ifadelerinin hangi faktörlerden etkilendiğini anlamak, anne çocuk ilişkisi ile ilgili çalışmalara katkı sağlayabilir.

Bu araştırma 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifadelerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmada:

- 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifade düzeyleri nedir?
- 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifadeleri; annenin yaşı, eğitim durumu, çalışma durumu, sahip olunan çocuk sayısı ve eşi ile birlikte yaşama durumu değişkenlerine göre farklılık göstermekte midir? sorularına yanıt aranmıştır.

Yöntem

5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifadelerini incelemeyi amaçlayan bu araştırma nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden tarama modeli kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada tarama modeli ile annelerin duygu ifadelerinin çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini, kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilen ve okul öncesi eğitim kurumuna devam eden 5-6 yaş grubu çocuğa sahip 296 anne oluşturmuştur. Araştırma verileri Duyguları İfade Etme Ölçeği kullanılarak toplanmıştır.

Araştırmanın bağımsız değişkenleri olan yaş, eğitim durumu, çalışma durumu, sahip olunan çocuk sayısı ve eşle birlikte yaşama durumuna ilişkin veriler kişisel bilgi formu aracılığıyla elde edilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde öncelikle kayıp veriler incelenmiş ve 296 ölçek formu değerlendirmeye alınmıştır. Elde edilen veriler SPSS 22 paket programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada verilerin dağılımlarını incelemek için basıklık (kurtosis) ve çarpıklık (skewness) değerlerine bakılmış ve verilerin normal dağıldığı belirlenmiştir. Araştırmada annelerin duygu ifade düzeylerini betimlemek amacıyla ortalama ve standart sapma değerleri hesaplanmıştır. Katılımcıların ölçeklerden aldıkları puanların çalışma ve eşi ile birlikte yaşama durumu değişkenine göre farklılaşp farklılaşmadığını belirlemek için t testi kullanılmıştır. Yaş, eğitim durumu ve sahip oldukları çocuk sayısı değişkenine göre duygu ifade düzeylerini belirlemek için tek yönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA) uygulanmıştır. Verilerin yorumlanmasında anlamlılık düzeyi olarak .05 kabul edilmiştir.

Bulgular

Araştırma sonucunda, 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifade düzeylerinin yüksek olduğu ve annelerin eğitim durumu değişkenine göre duygu ifade düzeylerinin farklılaştığı belirlenmiştir. Anlamlı farklılığın hangi ikili gruplar arasında olduğunu belirlemek için yapılan Scheffe testi sonucuna göre anlamlı farkın ortaöğretim ile yükseköğretim durumuna sahip anneler arasında olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Yükseköğretim mezunu olan annelerin duygu ifade düzeylerinin ortaöğretim mezunu annelerden daha yüksek olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Annelerin duygu ifadelerinde, yaş, sahip olunan çocuk sayısı, çalışma durumu ve eşi ile birlikte yaşama durumu değişkenlerinin istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark oluşturmadığı belirlenmiştir.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Anne çocuk ilişkisi yaşam boyu devam edecek olan insan ilişkilerinin temelini oluşturur. Çocukların yaşamında rol model olan annelerin duygu ifadeleri, hem anne hem çocuk hem de aile ilişkileri açısından değerlidir. Annelerin duygu ifadelerini etkileyen değişkenlerin belirlenmesi annelerin iyi oluşu ile ilgili çalışmalara ışık tutabilir. Aynı zamanda anne çocuk ilişkilerini değerlendirmede yol gösterici olabilir. Bu araştırmada 5-6 yaş grubunda çocuğu olan annelerin duygu ifadelerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarına devam eden 5-6 yaş grubu çocuğa sahip annelerden elde edilen verilerle sınırlıdır.

Bu çalışma, annelerin duygu ifadelerine odaklanarak duygu ifadesine ilişkin önceki araştırmaları genişletmektedir. Sonuçlar bir bütün olarak ele alındığında, anneye ait değişkenlerin annelerin duygu ifadeleri üzerindeki etkilerinin incelenmesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Araştırma sonuçları doğrultusunda hem kişiler arası ilişkilerde hem de kişiler arası ilişkilerden bağımsız olarak annelerin duyguları ifade etme konusunda desteklenmesi, kendi duygularının farkında olarak bu duyguları doğru zamanda doğru kişiye doğru şekilde ifade edebilmeleri için iyi uygulamaların geliştirilmesi teşvik edilebilir. Kadınların eğitimi konusunda yapılan uygulamaların genişletilmesi sağlanabilir. Bundan sonra yapılacak araştırmalarda babaların duygu ifadeleri ve çocukların duygu ifadelerini ortaya koyan karşılaştırmalı çalışmalar yapılabilir.

INTRODUCTION

The healthy continuation of human relationships depends on individuals being aware of their emotions and being able to express them correctly. Identifying the variables that affect emotional expression, which remains effective throughout individuals' lives, can positively contribute to the continuation of human relationships. This study aimed to assess how much mothers express their emotions verbally and non-verbally, both within interpersonal interactions and independently, and to identify the variables influencing their emotional expressions.

Emotions form the basis of human relationships and social communication. Humans are emotional by nature, and they experience the world and other beings emotionally (Bornstein, 2009). Emotions, defined as reactions to events or objects (Roseman & Smith, 2001; Ortony et al., 1990), have a structure that shapes goals and actions (Jasper, 1998). Emotions are signs that people can use to learn how to behave in a new social environment (Hareli et al., 2015). Emotions persistently influence various aspects of life by guiding behavior, prompting change, facilitating learning, and fulfilling fundamental social roles (Gross, 1999). Emotions emerging from social interactions shape human relations by directly shaping thoughts and behaviors.

A person's self-evaluation, readiness to think and act, and their impact on others are closely tied to emotional expression. Emotional expression encompasses behavioral changes accompanying emotions, such as facial expressions, voice modulation, posture, and body movements (Gross & John, 1995; 1997). It serves a critical role in conveying social information such as emotional states and behavioral intentions (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2017), thus playing a fundamental role in both personal happiness and interpersonal relationships (King, 1993). Research indicates cultural and gender differences in emotional expression, with women generally expressing emotions more than men, underscoring the importance of individual differences in this regard (Davis et al., 2012; Gross & John, 2003; Hareli et al., 2015). Differences in emotional expression have been the subject of various studies as positive emotions, emotions expressing intimacy, and negative emotions (Çarkit & Yalçın, 2018; Güler & Tuncay, 2021; King & Emmons, 1990; Şipit, 2019).

Positive emotions are fundamental to human behavior and harmony. These emotions guide behaviors such as establishing relationships with other people, setting goals, solving problems, and promoting resilience by protecting health (Pekrun et al., 2002). Positive emotions are critical for fostering positive life outcomes, including creativity, prosocial behaviors, positive self-esteem, and positive thoughts about others (Jacobs Bao & Lyubomirsky, 2012). Positive emotions serve to create physical, intellectual, social and psychological personal experiences by expanding people's

thought-action repertoire (Fredrickson, 2001). Cameron and Overall (2018) found that when individuals are more emotionally expressive during daily interactions, they experience greater acceptance, reduced alienation, and higher relationship satisfaction. While studies generally highlight the benefits of experiencing and expressing positive emotion (Gruber et al., 2011), it is essential that positive emotions are expressed appropriately, considering the context and the recipients involved (Greenaway & Kalokerinos, 2017).

Building close relationships is a basic human instinct. Expressions of emotion play a central role in developing and maintaining emotional bonds in close relationships. These bonds can affect both individual and interpersonal emotional dynamics over time. Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive effects of expressing emotions on human life (Ariğ, 2019; Dumlupınar et al., 2012; Koçak, 2005; Serim et al., 2015). Research findings revealing the effect of emotional expression and especially expressions of intimacy on marriage and spouses (Frye et al., 2020; Mazzuca et al., 2019; Yedirir & Hamarta, 2015) also underscore the importance of emotional expressions in enhancing family life and relationship quality. Furthermore, noticing and distinguishing negative emotions is associated with well-being, and this awareness facilitates emotion regulation (Kashdan et al., 2015). Studies indicate that when individuals suppress their negative emotions, they are more affected by personal problems such as depressed mood, fatigue, low self-esteem and low life satisfaction, and they feel reduced relationship satisfaction (Cameron & Overall, 2018). It can be said that emotional expressions are used to manage emotions in social relationships and work effectively in shaping personal well-being and relationships.

In recent years, significant progress has been made in the study of emotions and emotional communication between children and adults. Mothers use emotional cues as primary sources of information in their relationships with their children. From this point of view, emotions constitute the primary language of communication between mothers and their children, shaping the exchanges between them (Bornstein et al., 2012). Emotional expressions facilitate reciprocal regulation of interaction between child and mother, thereby fostering the development of emotional experiences (Tronick, 2018). Children observe all emotions expressed in the social environment and receive reactions from parents regarding their own and others' emotions. Children incorporate this learning into their own emotional behavior (Denham et al., 2012). The quality of parent-child interactions and the extent to which mothers express their emotions are crucial predictors of positive child development outcomes (Cox & Harter 2003). Research focusing on maternal emotional expressions and emotional competence underscores their significant impact on children (Brophy-Herb et al., 2012; Corapci et al., 2018; Eisenberg et al., 2011). Understanding

the factors affecting the emotional expressions of mothers, which are pivotal in the mother-child relationship, may contribute to studies on the mother-child relationship.

The aim of this research is to investigate the emotional expressions of mothers who have children in the 5-6 age group. The study seeks answers to the following questions:

- What are the emotional expression levels of mothers who have children in the 5-6 age group?
- Do the emotional expression levels of mothers who have children in the 5-6 age group differ significantly according to the variables of the mother's age, educational level, employment status, number of children, and status of living with the spouse?

METHOD

In this part of the study, information about the research model, sampling method, data collection tools, data collection process and data analysis are included.

Research Model

This study, which aims to investigate the emotional expressions of mothers with children in the 5-6 age group, was carried out using the survey research design, which is one of the quantitative research methods. The survey model involves gathering opinions from multiple participants and testing hypotheses formulated by measuring several variables (Neuman, 2014). This study aims to investigate the emotional expressions of mothers across various variables using the survey research model.

Study Group

The sample of the study consisted of 296 mothers with children aged 5-6 years attending pre-school education institutions, selected using the convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling involves selecting readily accessible participants within the target population (Patton, 2005). In this study, the mothers of children attending easily accessible preschool education institutions were chosen. The demographic information regarding the research sample is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Demographic information regarding the research sample

Variable	Group	n	%
Age	20-25	13	4.4

	26-30	69	23.3
	31-35	125	42.2
	36-40	68	23
	41+	21	7.1
Educational level	Primary	17	5.7
	Secondary	89	30.1
	Higher	190	64.2
Employment status	Working	129	43.6
	Not working	167	56.4
Number of children	1 child	74	25
	2 children	165	55.7
	3 children	46	15.5
	4 or more children	11	3.7
Status of living with spouse	Living together	278	93.9
	Living separately	18	6.1

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that according to the age variable, 13 participants (4.4%) were 20-25 years old, 69 participants (23.3%) were 26-30 years old, 125 participants (42.2%) were 31-35 years old, 68 participants (23%) were 36-40 years old and 21 participants (7.1%) were aged 41 and over. Regarding educational attainment, 17 participants (5.7%) had primary education, 89 participants (30.1%) had secondary education, and 190 participants (64.2%) had higher education. In terms of employment status, 129 participants (43.6%) were working, while 167 participants (56.4%) were not working. Regarding the variable of number of children, 74 participants (25%) had 1 child, 165 participants (55.7%) had 2 children, 46 participants (15.5%) had 3 children, and 11 participants (3.7%) had 4 or more children. Additionally, 278 participants (93.9%) in the study lived with their spouses and 18 participants (6.1%) lived separately from their spouses.

Data Collection Tools

Research data were collected using the Emotional Expression Questionnaire. Data on mothers' age, educational level, employment status, number of children, and status of living with their spouse, which were the independent variables of the study, were obtained through the personal information form.

Emotional Expression Questionnaire

The scale developed by King and Emmons (1990) was adapted into Turkish by Kuzucu (2011). This scale comprises 16 items divided into 3 sub-dimensions—positive emotions, negative emotions, and intimacy—which assess the degree to which these emotions are expressed. It uses a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7). Scores are calculated by summing the responses to each item, with higher scores indicating greater emotional expression. Two items, the 6th and 14th, are reverse-scored. The overall Cronbach's alpha

coefficient for the scale was determined to be .85, and the internal consistency coefficients were .68 for intimacy, .70 for positive emotions, and .64 for negative emotions (Kuzucu, 2011). In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as .61 for the whole scale. It was found to be .58 for the positive emotion sub-dimension, .34 for the intimacy sub-dimension, and .51 for the negative emotion sub-dimension. To assess construct validity, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) sampling adequacy coefficient was .64 and the Bartlett sphericity test was significant ($\chi^2 = 589.401$, $p < .001$).

The personal information form and the Emotional Expression Questionnaire used in the study were administered online with the voluntary participation of the mothers. Participants were briefed on the significance of the research, its contributions to the field, and the importance of honest responses in influencing research outcomes. Additionally, the participants were informed about the confidentiality of personal information. The study was carried out by obtaining the necessary permissions for the research.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data, firstly the missing data were examined and 296 questionnaire forms were evaluated. The obtained data were analyzed using the SPSS 22 software package. Normality of data distribution was assessed using kurtosis (Ky) and skewness (Bs) values, confirming that the data followed a normal distribution. Mean and standard deviation values were calculated to describe the emotional expression levels of the mothers. T-test was conducted to determine whether the scores obtained by the participants from the scales differed in terms of the variables of mothers' employment status and status of living with their spouse. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to assess mothers' emotional expression levels according to age, educational levels, and the number of children they had. The level of significance was accepted as .05 in the interpretation of the data.

RESULTS

In this section, the findings obtained from the analysis of the research data are included. Descriptive statistics on the mothers' emotional expressions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics on mothers' emotional expressions

	Variables	n	\bar{X}	ss	Med	Mod	Ky	SE (Ky)	Bs	SE (Bs)
Emotional Expression	Emotional Expression	296	4.80	.60	4.80	5.20	.282	.282	-.319	.142
	Positive Emotion	296	4.44	.88	4.40	5	-.651	.282	-.236	.142
	Expression of Intimacy	296	4.99	.75	5	4.67	.170	.282	-.092	.142
	Negative Emotion	296	4.94	1.04	5	5	.497	.282	-.688	.142

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the mean emotional expression score of the mothers is $\bar{X}=4.80$, indicating high levels of emotional expression. Analysis of the sub-dimensions of the emotional expressiveness scale reveals mean scores of $\bar{X} = 4.44$ for positive emotion, $\bar{X} = 4.99$ for intimacy, and $\bar{X} = 4.94$ for negative emotional expression, suggesting high emotional expression levels across these dimensions as well. Upon examining the descriptive statistics of the emotional expressiveness scale, the skewness value was found to be .282 and the kurtosis value was found to be -.319. The kurtosis and skewness values within the acceptable range (± 1) indicate a normal distribution of the data (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2014). Therefore, it was concluded that the data obtained from the emotional expressiveness scale are normally distributed. Table 3 below presents the findings regarding the analysis of mothers' emotional expressions by age, educational levels, and the number of children they have.

Table 3. Mothers' emotional expression levels according to the variables of age, educational level and number of children

Variable	Source of variance	Sum of squares	Sd	Mean squares	F	p
Age	Total	108.838	295			
	Between groups	.285	4	.071	191	.943
	Within groups	108.838	291	.373		
Education level	Total	108.838	295			
	Between groups	2.996	2	1.498	4.146	.017*
	Within groups	105.843	293	.361		
Number of children	Total	108.838	295			
	Between groups	1.033	3	.344	.933	.425
	Within groups	107.805	292	.369		

* $p < .05$

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that there is no significant difference between mothers' emotional expression levels according to the age [$F_{(4, 291)}=.191$, $p > .05$] variable. However, it was

determined that there is a significant difference in the emotional expression levels of the mothers with regard to the educational level [$F_{(2, 293)}=4.146, p<.05$] variable. The results of the Scheffe test, conducted to determine between which pairs the significant difference occurs, revealed that the significant difference is between mothers with secondary and higher educational levels. The emotional expressions of the mothers who graduated from higher education are higher than those of mothers who graduated from secondary education. In the study, it was determined that the level of emotional expression does not differ significantly according to the variable of the number of children [$F_{(3, 292)}=.933, p>.05$]. It can be said that the emotional expression levels of the mothers do not differ significantly with regard to the age and the number of children they have. Table 4 below presents the findings regarding the analysis of the mothers' emotional expressions in terms of the variables of employment status and status of living with their spouses.

Table 4. Emotional expression levels of mothers by employment status and status of living with their spouses

Variable	Group	n	\bar{X}	ss	df	t	p
Employment status	Working	129	4.86	.57	294	1.511	.132
	Not working	167	4.75	.62			
Status of living with spouse	Living together	278	4.80	.59	294	-.249	.804
	Living separately	18	4.83	.74			

* $p>.05$

When Table 4 was examined, it was determined that the emotional expression levels of the mothers do not differ significantly according to the variable of employment status [$t_{(294)}=1.511, p>.05$]. Also, it is seen that the emotional expression levels of the mothers do not differ significantly in regard to the variable of status of living with their spouses [$t_{(294)}=-.249, p>.05$]. In this case, it can be said that the emotional expression levels of the mothers do not differ in terms of their employment status and status of living with their spouses.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The mother-child relationship forms the basis of human relationships that will continue throughout life. The emotional expressions of mothers, who are role models in the lives of children, are valuable in terms of mother, child and family relations. Determining the variables that affect mothers' emotional expressions can shed light on studies on mothers' well-being. At the same time, it can serve as a guide in evaluating mother-child relationships. The aim of this research is to

investigate the emotional expressions of mothers who have children in the 5-6 age group. The study is limited to the data obtained from mothers with children aged 5-6 years attending pre-school education institutions.

When the findings regarding the determination of the emotional expression levels of the mothers in the study were examined, it was found that the emotional expression levels of the mothers who had children in the 5-6 age group were high. It can be said that mothers are aware of their own feelings and express their feelings easily. It can be considered a positive result that mothers see themselves as sufficient in expressing their emotions and that they can express their feelings about different emotional states. Expressing positive feelings is very valuable for the mother-child relationship. Studies revealing the relationships between mothers' emotional expressions and children's emotional expressions show that mothers are a direct model for appropriate emotional expressions (Behrendt et al., 2019; Denham et al., 1997; Hajal & Paley, 2020). Positive emotions, which come to the forefront in the expression of emotion, can create an effect that enriches the physical, intellectual, and social networks of children by expanding their repertoire of thoughts and actions (Fredrickson, 2004). Similarly, mothers' views on negative emotions may be reflected in negative emotional expressions. Mothers' reactions to negative emotions can be explained by mothers' beliefs about emotions (Nelson et al., 2012). Fosco and Grych (2007) stated that children whose parents express more negative emotions and less positive emotions are more likely to blame themselves for the conflict in their relationships with their parents. When the positive, intimacy and negative emotional expressions of mothers are evaluated in terms of both mothers and children, it can be said that they are effective on the lives of individuals.

In the study, the emotional expression levels of the mothers differed significantly in terms of the educational level variable. It was determined that the emotional expressions of the mothers who graduated from higher education were higher than those of mothers who graduated from secondary education. It can be said that educational level is determinant in the expression of emotions and that mothers who completed higher education express their feelings more easily. When the literature is examined, it is seen that educational level makes a difference in favor of mothers with higher educational levels (Degotardi & Torr, 2007; Denham et al., 2015). It was determined that as the educational level of mothers increased, the emotion recognition skills of children increased (Cantekin & Akduman, 2020; Liman, 2020). It can be thought that the education of the mother has a strong effect on supporting the development of children. In the study, it was found that the emotional expression levels of the mothers did not differ statistically in terms of the variables of age and number of children. The social roles of individuals and the identities they assume are

determinative of their emotions (Collier, 2014). The role of motherhood and this identity of women can be effective on emotional expression. In the study conducted by Aznar and Tenenbaum (2015), it was revealed that mothers used emotional expression more than fathers and that emotional expression differed according to the age and gender of the children. In another study, it was revealed that the emotional expression levels of mothers were higher than their children's, and that the mother's emotional expression affected the child's emotional expression (Işık-Uslu & Turan, 2021). Parents are the ones who shape the emotional development of children through various emotions and their reflections in family relationships (Lunkenheimer et al., 2020; Meyer et al., 2014). In this respect, it can be said that the mother's expression of emotion is highly valuable in the context of the family, where children learn the rules of emotional expression.

The emotional expression levels of the mothers did not differ significantly in terms of the employment status and the status of living with their spouses. Greater involvement of mothers in working life may increase their self-confidence and make them feel comfortable in expressing their feelings. Greater emotional expression in daily life predicts improvement in self-esteem and relationship satisfaction over time (Cameron & Overall, 2018). The relationship between individuals in the family, which is the basis of society, is closely related to the emotional intimacy of the spouses and the expression of their feelings (Asadi et al., 2020; Özdemir-Kemahlı, 2019). This situation reflects positively on family relations, especially on mother-child communication. Parents' awareness of their children's emotions and supportive responses that help children cope with emotions can help children successfully regulate their emotional expression. The role of parents' emotional expression in the socialization of children has been demonstrated by various studies (Brownell et al., 2013; Denham et al., 2010; Jenkins et al., 2003). It can be said that mothers' emotional expressions affect child development and family relations.

When the results obtained in the study were examined, it was determined that the emotional expression levels of the mothers who had children in the 5-6 age group were high and that the emotional expression levels of the mothers significantly differed in terms of the educational level variable. The emotional expression levels of mothers who completed higher education were higher than mothers who completed secondary education. It was found that the variables of age, number of children, employment status and status of living with their spouse did not make a significant difference in the emotional expressions of the mothers. This study extends previous research on emotional expression by focusing on mothers' expression of emotion. The results emphasize the importance of examining the effects of maternal variables on mothers' emotional expressions. In line with the research results, it may be suggested that mothers should be supported in expressing

emotions both in interpersonal relations and independent of interpersonal relations. The development of good practices can be encouraged so that mothers can be aware of their own feelings and express these feelings correctly to the right person at the right time. The practices related to the education of women can be expanded. In future studies, comparative research can be conducted to reveal the emotional expressions of fathers and the emotional expressions of children.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

The research was conducted by obtaining the necessary permission for the research (Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University Ethics Committee, 2021.04.126.).

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