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Research Article

TEACHERS POINT OF VIEW ON TRAUMATIC TALES IN SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Tales as an educational material are used widely in preschools. Content and usage of tales including tale selection criteria and other related variables are analyzed in this research with the aid of a questionnaire. Also narration style and after affects of tales on children were searched. Factors promoting positive behavioral affects and message content emerged as primary selection criteria for tale books. Tales containing supernatural events and horrific characters causing trauma in children were in minority with an insignificant percent. Awareness regarding tale selection was found very high in preschool teachers.

Key Words:

Preschool teacher, Family, Tale; Child development, Preschool education

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INTRODUCTION

The first six years of life is the most important period of personality development and formation. Since children in this age period is egocentric, thinking is abstract and cannot sort out imaginary from real, education administered, determines their future and their future life. Good virtues such as honesty, patience, equality and loyalty can be thought through tales. Especially tales with happy endings induce more hopeful expectations for future in children. [Helimoğlu \(2002\)](#)

When we peruse tales written for children from educational viewpoint it was observed that some of the educational tales for preschoolers caused unfavorable effects on them. For the personality development of preschoolers tale telling is an important method. So tale telling to children is very important for their future cognitive and emotional development. Besides beneficial contributions of books sometimes improper book selection may cause adverse affects on child development. Inattention in choosing books or unawareness in this regard may cause this problem. [Weih \(2015\)](#) Training and quality of social support given to educators, affects their knowledge and stance regarding book selection. ([O'leary et al. 2010](#))

The aim of this research is to draw attention to violence containing tales and develop preschool teachers' stance regarding tales as educational material and increase awareness for more educated and selective choices for tales.

It is expected that the results of this research turn preschool teachers towards tales not containing violence but causing positive behavioral changes in children.

MATERIAL-METHOD

Upon obtaining approval of ethics committee (23.11.2015) a questionnaire targeting 58 female and 11 male preschool teachers between 25 and 60 years old were applied. 37 of these teachers were single 11 were married one of them was widowed. This research was conducted in Istanbul. Questionnaire for preschool teachers is in table 1 and 2 respectively. Researchers tried to identify teachers attitude regarding selection of tales and related factors such as institutions' stance, interest, budget allowances and multiplicity of tale books. Volunteer teachers signed an informed consent form and the questionnaire was direct thorough face to face interview at their working places or homes.

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Statistical Evaluation

For statistical evaluation STATA 14.1 program was used. For evaluation of study results besides defining statistical values such as frequency and percentage, pearson ki square, fisher exact q square and fisher-freeman-halton exact q square tests were also used. Significance was rated at P<0.01, P<0.05 ve P<0.10 levels.

RESULTS

Data gathered thorough questionnaire were analyzed as percent and frequency values with the help of statistical methods and the following results were reached.

Mean age of teachers was 27.23.89; %84.1 (n=58) women, %15.9 (n=11) male; %53.6 (n=37) married, %44.9 (n=31) single, %1.4 (n=1) widowed. Income levels are seen in (table 1). Demographic features of teachers are seen in (table 2)

Table 1 Distribution of preschool teachers’ defining characteristics

		Preschool teacher	
		n	%
Gender	Women	58	84.1
	Men	11	15.9
	Single	37	53.6
Marital status	Married	31	44.9
	Other	1	1.4
	500-1000 TL	15	21.7
Income level	1001-2000 TL	20	29.0
	2001-3500 TL	25	36.2
	>3500 TL	9	13.0
	Total	69	100.0

Table 2 Distribution of some defining characteristics of teachers

		n	%
age	<26	25	36.2
	26-35	32	46.4
	36-45	10	14.5
	46-55	2	2.9
	>55	0	0.0
number of children	None	41	59.4
	1-3	26	37.7
	>3	2	2.9
Education	High school	4	5.8
	University/2 year degree	23	33.3
	University/bachelor’s degree or other	42	60.9
	total	69	100.0

As seen above in table 3 allocation for tales is 100 TL for 50.7 percent of institutions. Teachers 65.2 percent are at public schools others are working at private schools. Renewal interval of books for every semester is 56.5 percent. In some schools class library books were never renewed. Feedback questions from children were reported by 66.7 percent of teachers. Behavioral changes in children after reading novels are observed by 56.5 percent of teachers. Teachers 59.4 percent updated themselves regarding preschool literature every 1-3 years. Teachers 15.9 percent (n=11) never followed recent literature. Teachers 81.2 percent had their personal criteria in choosing tales. Institutions advocation of books was not considered by 49.3 of teachers. Contemporary stories were read by 65.2 percent but classical tales were read by 34.8 percent (n=24)dir. Popular method of relaying stories was through reading 73.9 percent, puppets were used for his purpose by 8.7 percent, picture cards were another method for 17.4

percent.(n=12) Only 73.9 percent of teachers implemented tales to make children acquire useful behaviours. Impressive features of tales were rated as relayed message by 75.4 of teachers, some 21.7 percent considered heros in this regard. (table 3)

Table 3 Distribution of answers given by teachers

		n	%
What is your institution’s allocation for tales	100 TL	35	50.7
	250 TL	14	20.3
	>250 TL	20	29.0
Status of your institution	State –public	45	65.2
	Private	24	34.8
Renewal interval of books in your classroom	Every semester	39	56.5
	5-10 years	25	36.2
	Never	5	7.2
Do you get feedback questions from children after telling tales	Yes	46	66.7
	Seldom	22	31.9
Do you notice changes in the behaviours of children after reading novels?	None	1	1.4
	Yes	39	56.5
	Seldom	22	31.9
Do you follow preschool literature for children	None	8	11.6
	Every month	17	24.6
	Every 1-3 year	41	59.4
Do you have any criteria when choosing books?	Never	11	15.9
	Yes	56	81.2
	No	13	18.8
Do you use your institution associated publishers’ books?	Yes	18	26.1
	Seldom	17	24.6
	No	34	49.3
What kind of tales you read in story time for children?	Today’s tales	45	65.2
	Classical tales	24	34.8
	Reading	51	73.9
How do you narrate tales to children?	Puppets	6	8.7
	picture cards	12	17.4
	As a formality	11	15.9
	Didactic reasons	7	10.1
Why do you narrate tales to children?	To make children acquire favorable behaviours	51	73.9
	Heroes	15	21.7
What are the impressive features of tales?	Supernatural powers	2	2.9
	Message content	52	75.4
	Total	69	100.0

There is a significant difference regarding tale selection according to the preferences of institutions between private and public schools; private school teachers were in favor of their institutions selection.

Other variables did not show statistically significant differences.(table 4)

Behavioral changes observable after tales did not show a correlation with the aim of tale reading or telling.(table 5)

Likewise feedback questions after listening to tales did not show a correlation with the impressive features of tales. (table 6)

Impressive features of tales showed changes according to the age of teachers. Teachers below 25 years favored relayed message 68 percent. But in 46-55 age group of teachers supernatural powers and relayed message response was 50 percent for both of these (Table 7)

Female teachers preferred reading 82 percent while male teachers favored 54 .6 percent picture cards to relay the tales. There is a significant difference in this regard. (table 8)

Renewal interval of books is intimately related to the budgetary allocation for books and library

Table 4 Distribution of responses in public and private institutions

		Public schools		Private schools		
		n	%	N	%	
What is your institution's allocation for tales	100 TL	26	57.8	9	37.5	P=0.122
	250 TL	6	13.3	8	33.3	
	>250 TL	13	28.9	7	29.2	
Renewal interval of books in your classroom	Every semester	26	57.8	13	54.2	P=0.624
	Every 5-10 years	15	33.3	10	41.7	
	Never	4	8.9	1	4.2	
Do you get feedback questions from children after telling tales	yes	30	66.7	16	66.7	P=0.999
	Seldom	14	31.1	8	33.3	
	None	1	2.2	0	0.0	
Do you notice changes in the behaviours of children after reading novels?	Yes	29	64.4	10	41.7	P=0.152
	Seldom	11	24.4	11	45.8	
	None	5	11.1	3	12.5	
Do you follow preschool literature for children	Every month	12	26.7	5	20.8	P=0.640
	Every 1-3 years	25	55.6	16	66.7	
	Never	8	17.8	3	12.5	
Do you have any criteria when choosing books?	Yes	39	86.7	17	70.8	P=0.194
	No	6	13.3	7	29.2	
	Yes	9	20.0	9	37.5	
Do you use your institution associated publishers'books?	Seldom	9	20.0	8	33.3	P=0.050*
	No	27	60.0	7	29.2	
	Yes	9	20.0	9	37.5	
What kind of tales you read in story time for children	Today's	29	64.4	16	66.7	P=0.854
	Classical	16	35.6	8	33.3	
	Reading	31	68.9	20	83.3	
How do you narrate tales to children?	Puppets	6	13.3	0	0.0	P=0.156
	Picture cards	8	17.8	4	16.7	
	As a formality	8	17.8	3	12.5	
Why do you narrate tales to children?	For their didactic content	5	11.1	2	8.3	P=0.772
	Acquisition of favorable behaviours	32	71.1	19	79.2	
	Heroes	10	22.2	5	20.8	
What are the impressive features of tales?	Supernatural powers	1	2.2	1	4.2	P=0.999
	Message content	34	75.6	18	75.0	
	Toplam	45	100.0	24	100.0	

Pearson Ki-Kare testi, Fisher exact test, Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *: P<0.10.

Table 5 Distribution of behavioral changes according to the aims in tale telling

		Do you notice any behavioral changes in children after tales					
		Yes		Seldom		Never	
		n	%	N	%	n	%
Why do you narrate tales?	As a mere formality	5	12.8	4	18.2	2	25.0
	For didactic reasons	4	10.3	2	9.1	1	12.5
	To promote positive behaviors	30	76.9	16	72.7	5	62.5
	Toplam	39	100.0	22	100.0	8	100.0

Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, P=0.937

Table 6 Distribution of frequency of questions according to impressive features of tales.

		Do you get feedback questions from children after reading tales?					
		yes		Seldom		None	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
What are the impressive features of tales?	Heroes	11	23.9	4	18.2	0	0.0
	Supernatural powers	1	2.2	1	4.5	0	0.0
	Message content	34	73.9	17	77.3	1	100.0
	Toplam	46	100.0	22	100.0	1	100.0

Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, P=0.919

Budgetary allocation for library also showed a positive correlation with the observable behavioral changes in children Behavioral changes observed after tales were 80 percent in institutions allocating more than 250 Turkish Lira (TL) for library. Likewise follow up of recent literary books by teachers were in higher proportion in institutions with ample allowance for books. (table 9)

Feedback questions from children showed a positive correlation with decreased interval of book renewal; more contemporary "today's books" ignited more questions. Children gave feed back with a percent of 82.1 in classes which books were renewed every semester but this rate was 60 percent if classic books were repeatedly narrated. Likewise continuous renewal of books increased positive behaviours favorably in a significant way.(table10)

Observation of higher behavioral changes in children showed a positive correlation with increased feedback questions from them. Children who asked question after listening tales showed behavioral changes with 65.2 percent; but in children who seldom asked any questions this rate was 39.1 percent.

Frequency of observed changes in behaviours was also intimately related with the incentive of the teacher. If teachers implemented tales to make children acquire positive behavioral characteristics children showed an increased interest with questions. Cursory tale telling gave a feedback ratio of 17.4 percent otherwise this rate was 78.3 percent(table11) If teachers showed an increased interest in new books continuously this promoted positive behavioral changes in children.

Table 7 Distribution of some answers of teachers according to their ages

Age interval:	25 and lower		26 - 35		36 - 45		46 - 55		
What kind of tales do you read in story time?									
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Today's classical	15	60.0	20	62.5	8	80.0	2	100.0	P=0.505
	10	40.0	12	37.5	2	20.0	0	0.0	
How do you narrate tales to children?									
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
By reading	16	64.0	25	78.1	9	90.0	1	50.0	P=0.330
With puppets	2	8.0	4	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	
With picture cards	7	28.0	3	9.4	1	10.0	1	50.0	
Why do you narrate tales to children?									
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
As a mere formality	7	28.0	4	12.5	0	0.0	0	0	P=0.279
For didactic reasons	3	12.0	2	6.3	2	20.0	0	0.0	
To promote behaviour	15	60.0	26	81.3	8	80.0	2	100.0	
What are the impressive features of tales?									
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Heroes	8	32.0	4	12.5	3	30.0	0	0.0	P=0.021*
Supernatural powers	0	0.0	1	3.1	0	0.0	1	50.0	
Message content	17	68.0	27	84.4	7	70.0	1	50.0	
Total	25	100.0	32	100.0	10	100.0	2	100.0	

Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *: 0.05 yanilma düzeyinde anlamlı (P<0.05).

Table 8 Distribution of some questions according to the gender of teachers

		Woman		man		
		n	%	n	%	
How do you narrate tales to children?	By reading	48	82.8	3	27.3	P=0.001**
	With puppets	4	6.9	2	18.2	
	With Picture cards	6	10.3	6	54.5	
	As mere formality	8	13.8	3	27.3	
Why do you tell tales to children?	Didactic qualities	4	6.9	3	27.3	P=0.031*
	To promote behaviour	46	79.3	5	45.5	
What are the impressive features of tales?	Heroes	11	19.0	6	54.5	P=0.021*
	Message content	47	81.0	5	45.5	
	Total	58	100.0	11	100.0	

Fisher exact testi, Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *: P<0.05, **: P<0.01

Table 9 Distribution of some variables according to the budget allocated by institutions for books

		Your institution's budget for library						
		100 TL		250 TL		>250 TL		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	
What is the renewal frequency of the books in you library?	Every semester	18	51.4	5	35.7	16	80.0	P=0.026*
	Every 5-10	13	37.1	9	64.3	3	15.0	
	Never	4	11.4	0	0.0	1	5.0	
Do you notice any change in the behaviour of children after tales?	Evet	19	54.3	4	28.6	16	80.0	P=0.037*
	Nadiren	13	37.1	7	50.0	2	10.0	
Do you follow preschool literature ?	Hiç	3	8.6	3	21.4	2	10.0	P=0.033*
	Every month	5	14.3	3	21.4	9	45.0	
	Every 1-3 years	23	65.7	7	50.0	11	55.0	
	None	7	20.0	4	28.6	0	0.0	
TOPLAM		35	100.0	14	100.0	20	100.0	

Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *: P<0.05

In this group positive behavioral changes was observed in 35.9 percent of children. Teachers who in no way followed new books created seldom positive behavioral changes in children. 36.4 percent of teachers were in this group.(table12) If teachers have some criteria in choosing books this increased in a statistically significant way their book "hunting" behaviour.

Table 10 Distribution of some variables according to renewal interval of books

		What is the renewal interval of the books in your class?						
		Every semester		5-10 years		never		
		N	%	n	%	n	%	
Do children give feedback with questions after tales?	yes	32	82.1	11	44.0	3	60.0	P=0.007**
	seldom	7	17.9	14	56.0	2	40.0	
Do you notice any change in the behavior of children after tales?	yes	26	66.7	11	44.0	2	40.0	P=0.072*
	seldom	11	28.2	8	32.0	3	60.0	
	none	2	5.1	6	24.0	0	0.0	
	Total	39	100.0	25	100.0	5	100.0	

Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *: P<0.10, **: P<0.01

Table 11 Distribution of feedback frequency after tales according to some variables.

		Do children give feedback questions after tales?				
		yes		seldom		
		n	%	n	%	
Do you notice any change in the behaviour of children after tales?	Yes	30	65.2	9	39.1	P=0.014**
	Seldom	14	30.4	8	34.8	
Why do you tell tales to children?	Never	2	4.3	6	26.1	P=0.096*
	As a mere formality	8	17.4	3	13.0	
	Didactic value	2	4.3	5	21.7	
	To promote behaviours	36	78.3	15	65.2	
Total		46	100.0	23	100.0	

Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *: P<0.10, **: P<0.05

Teachers who are regularly following books every month have book choosing criteria with a 94.1 percent; this ratio is 45.5 percent in teachers who never follows current literature.

Incentives behind telling tales are correlated with follow up frequency of recent literature as this frequency diminishes the incentives weaken in teachers.(table 13)

Table 12 observation of frequency changes in behaviors of children after tales according to frequency of following preschool literature publications

		Do you observe any change in he behaviour of children after tales?					
		yes		Seldom		none	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Do you follow preschool books?	Everymonth	14	35.9	2	9.1	1	12.5
	every1-3 years	23	59.0	12	54.5	6	75.0
	Never	2	5.1	8	36.4	1	12.5
Total		39	100.0	22	100.0	8	100.0

*Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact test, *: P<0.01*

Table 13 Distribution of the frequency of follow up of preschool literature publications according to some variables

		Do you follow preschool books?					
		Every month		Every 1-3 years		never	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Do you have any criteria when choosing books?	yes	16	94.1	34	82.9	6	54.5
	no	1	5.9	7	17.1	5	45.5
Why do you tell tales to children?	As a mere formality	1	5.9	5	12.2	5	45.5
	For their didactic value	1	5.9	5	12.2	1	9.1
	To promote behaviours	15	88.2	31	75.6	5	45.5
Total		17	100.0	41	100.0	11	100.0

*Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact test, *: P<0.05*

Teachers who have some criteria in choosing books (%55) do not favor books coming from institution’s backed publishers. Teachers who do not use any criteria in this regard read books coming from publishers backed by their institutions. (%53.8'i)

Book choosing criteria is strongly correlated with the impressive features of talebooks. Great majority of teachers (%80.4) who have book choosing criteria of some kind emphasize message content as the most impressive feature of the books. If teachers do not discriminate when choosing books, values “message content” 53.8 percent and “heroes” 46.2 percent.(table14)

Table 14 Presence and absence of book choosing criteria according to some variables

		Do you have any book choosing criteria?			
		yes		no	
		n	%	n	%
Do you generally follow institution associated publishings?	Yes	11	19.6	7	53.8
	Seldom	14	25.0	3	23.1
	No	31	55.4	3	23.1
What are the impressive features of tales?	Heroes	11	19.6	6	46.2
	Message content	45	80.4	7	53.8
	Total	56	100.0	13	100.0

*Fisher exact test, Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact test, *:P<0.10, **: P<0.05*

There is a statistically significant difference between narration method of tales and follow up of publications backed by the institutions of teachers.

Teachers who do not implement institutions sponsored publications relayed tales by reading (%52.9) also 66.7 percent of teachers who use puppets did not favor institutions publications. 41 percent of teachers, narrating tales with the help of picture cards used institutions’ publications.

Between tale narrating methods and impressive features in tales there is a statistically significant difference. Great majority of teachers who narrate by reading or with the help of puppets valued message content (%80.4 and %83.3 respectively) but for teachers who use picture cards the important feature of tales were their heroes (%50) and messages(%50).(Table15)

Table 15 distribution of tale telling methods of teachers according to some variables

		How do you narrate tales to children?					
		reading		Puppet		picture cards	
		N	%	n	%	n	%
Do you use your institution’s associated publications?	yes	12	23.5	1	16.7	5	41.7
	seldom	12	23.5	4	66.7	1	8.3
	no	27	52.9	1	16.7	6	50.0
What are impressive features of tales?	Heroes	10	19.6	1	16.7	6	50.0
	Message content	41	80.4	5	83.3	6	50.0
	Total	51	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0

*Fisher exact test, Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact testi, *:P<0.10*

DISCUSSION

As an educational material using tales in teaching offers numerous advantages to learners and teachers (Cahan and Cohen, 1989) Compared to lecturing alone, health education in class can benefit from tales and psychodrama (Moyano et al. 1988) "Tales, fiction, and horror" can be used in psychotherapy as well. A therapeutic technique called "mythodrama" was used in Switzerland for crisis intervention in children with behavioral problems and juveniles whose families were going through divorce. Guggenbühl (1992) Traditional fairy tales continue to arise suspicions among parents and child professionals regarding their adverse effects upon younger children (Turley and Derdeyn, 1990)

In this research primarily tale selection criteria was searched, especially tales causing unfavorable behaviours were investigated with questions directed to teachers. Some teachers’ tale selection included tales containing supernatural powers which can adversely affect children in a mere 2.9 percent. The great majority of teachers with a 75.4 percent take into consideration the message content of tales. When tales were narrated to promote positive behaviours 76.9 percent of children showed favorable behaviours as expected.

When we look into environmental and administrative influences upon selection of books structure and management of the schools and other staff members and forces outside school effected book choosing behaviour of teachers. (Lin et al. 2003). In this research in terms of social and structural environment of facilities there is no difference between private and public schools.

When we look into selection criteria and narration style of tales, teachers between ages 26 and 35 primarily valued the message content of tales 85 percent. A similar study that was undertaken by Cukurova University detected significant

differences in selection of books between age group 31-49 and above 49 year age group. In this research gender of teachers affected tale narration characteristics. Male teachers used picture cards 54 percent but female teachers chose reading 82 percent.

In choosing books developmental level of children is strongly considered. Primarily history books are chosen as reading activity in lessons followed by tale books. Sahin (2011) This research showed that male teachers valued heros in the tales but message content was more important for female teachers. Similar results were seen between in a postgraduate thesis of Cukurova University. Educational value of tales are prominent in tale selection in studies.

In a research it was found that awareness among teachers was very high when choosing books regarding physical characteristics and suitability in terms of the developmental level of children. (Yükselen et al. 2016)

The objective behind reading literary books is investing in education of children besides entertaining them. To evoke thoughts, build cultural gathering, to give a logical thought, current tales targeting children are beneficial texts. Child creates an allegorical similarity between tale and his/her present day living. Literary material targeting children in preschool years consists of tales. Tales are imaginary anonomus oral material reflecting a nation's culture custom and tradition. (Yükselen et al. 2016, Yılmaz 2012.)

As budgetary allowances and renewal rate of books increased researchers identified a higher rate of behavioral changes in a positive constructive way. This seems as a major determinant to ensure behavioral development. Active participation of children during narration of tales followed by a statistically increased rate of positive behaviours.

An ample archive of books seems to promote child education according to the results of this research. Similar finding are reported; According to a research 60.3 percent of teachers consider tales as an educational materile. (Arici and Bayindir 2015). Frequency of tale reading is limited between once a week and once a month in the aforesaid research. (Arici and Bayindir 2015) In this research the frequency of tale reading is once a week. Selection of tales is important from educational point of view. Tale books containing violence with characters impossible to identify; impairing cognitive system of children and causing deep rooted fears is worrisome. (Dağlıoğlu and, Çakmak 2009). In the light of this study as first teachers of children, parents should be briefed about choosing tales.

The current study, justified by the researchers' observation proves that there isn't sufficient evidence-based research on the subject, to bring insight and elaborate on the habits and behaviors of parents and educators in choosing tales.

Implications

As an implementation of the present research and a former research of Cukurova University, the need of reeducation of older age group of teachers comes out.

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