


Chapter 5

Interior Design That Changes According to the Approaches Used in Preschool Education

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ABSTRACT

Preschool education programs jointly focus on supporting the child's physical, mental, emotional, and social development; and helping them know themselves by gaining self-control. The preschool period is also the beginning of the process in which children aged 0-6 begin to socialize with other children and adults. How this socialization and knowledge transfer will occur varies according to the approaches used in preschool education. The division of the learning environment into functions and the provision of the environment need to be expected from each function, with furniture and other elements become as important as the learning approach. The interior and furniture needs, which change according to the focus of the educational approach, form the essence of this study. Within the scope of the study, four different educational approaches and educational environment expectations were examined. These approaches were determined as Montessori, Reggio Emilia, HighScope, and Waldorf, and the educational philosophy of each approach and the changing spaces and furniture were evaluated.

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INTRODUCTION

The first environment in which the child begins to learn is the family environment. Preschool education is an education level covering the 0-6 age range, where the child receives education between the family environment and the primary school period. The necessity for children to receive preschool education is an accepted fact all over the world (Ögelman & Karakuzu, 2016). This necessity arises with understanding the importance of early childhood in child development. Because in this period, in parallel with personality development, the cognitive, emotional, social, language, and academic development of the child is completed to a large extent. (Kol, 2011). This importance has led to the emergence of different approaches to preschool education. One of the common points of these approaches is the emphasis that early childhood education is essential for the child's physical, mental, emotional, and social development.

A strictly coded room program is seen in the first examples of preschool education institutions. Each group, separated by age, had a comfortable adult-sized sofa, a large rug, a child-sized bookcase and cushions, and accessible storage shelves. Each group room had a toilet and a sleeping room with small mattresses. It is seen that the primary determinant of the spatial setup is the age-related group needs. Since the curriculum strictly defines the setting of the space, it tends to limit the learning scope rather than expand or open it. The focus is on adult needs such as safety and security rather than the child's needs. It is thought that the potential for creativity and imagination can be hidden in this program, in which children's needs, such as discovery and support, are ignored (Dudek, 2007). The efforts to develop the first programs, which were found to be lacking in supporting creativity and discovery, in line with the principles of child development, led to the emergence of new approaches in the field.

It is seen that contemporary child education approaches put the child at the center, and teachers and auxiliary staff are the guides for the child. While the earlier approaches aim to support the child's physical, mental, emotional, and social development, it has emerged that the institutions that provide this education should be designed in a spatially appropriate structure for these purposes (Boyer & Mitgang, 1996). While designing this setup, it is essential that it supports the chosen curriculum and responds to the pedagogical needs of educators. The spatial setup of each approach should be made by interpreting the needs of unique learning methods (Dudek 2012). The space setup becomes at least as important as the education, as the space setup in question is independent of the education philosophy. It will negatively affect the quality of the education given. While the classrooms, dining areas, sleeping areas, and outdoor spaces are functionalized according to the educational philosophy, the

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