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### Comparison of the Inspection Criteria for Turkish Preschool Institutions with International Accreditation Standards

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## Comparison of the Inspection Criteria for Turkish Preschool Institutions with International Accreditation Standards

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### Abstract

The evaluation of preschool education institutions in Turkey is conducted by two different bodies: The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and The Ministry of Family and Social Policies (MoFSP). To date, there does not appear any attempt to designate the compliance of MoNE and MoFSP evaluation criteria with international quality standards. This study takes a step forward to this direction in order to put forth the areas in need of special considerations. This study hence aims to determine the extent to which MoNE and MoFSP criteria used for the inspection of Turkish preschool institutions comply with international accreditation standards. Among the qualitative approaches, document analysis method was employed for this study. In this regard, inspection documents prepared by MoNE and MoFSP were examined with reference to Council of International Schools' (CIS) accreditation standards. The analysis suggests that the highest compliance rate was seen in the school management aspect, whereas the lowest compliance rate was seen in the school culture and partnerships for learning aspect for MoNE and management and leadership aspect for MoFSP. Further, preschool education institutions are particularly lacking in multiculturalism and internationalism dimensions in the inspection criteria. Considering the sociological conditions of Turkey with almost 3.5 million Syrian refugees, preschool institutions affiliated with MoNE and MoFSP need to incorporate internationalism/multiculturalism aspects into their philosophy and objectives.

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### Introduction

With the industrial revolution, changes in social and economic life have led to an alteration in the family life. In this period, rural-urban migration started, women became a part of business life, the ethnic diversity in developed countries increased and preschool education was considered to be a necessity (Taguma, Litjens & Makowiecki, 2012). Preschool education institutions were founded in socialist eastern European countries by favor of governments after the World War II. This was followed by the Scandinavian countries in the 60s and shortly afterwards by France and Italy (Staples New & Cochran, 2008). In principle, preschool education programs were developed in order to pave the way for culturally disadvantaged children and children with a low socioeconomic status to adapt to the society (Burlacu, 2013).

The studies compiled evidence that high-quality early childhood education had a positive impact on child development (Burchinal, Vandergrift, Pianta & Mashburn, 2010; Curby et al., 2009; Slutsky & Pistorova, 2011). The first six years that cover the preschool education is an important period when children make significant progress in social and emotional development as well as physical, cognitive, language and psychomotor development. In 1964, Bloom reported that the most rapid development occurred within the first five years of human life, whereas 17% of the success in educational life is achieved between the ages 4-6 (Burlacu, 2013). Failure to make the best of this period may lead to rejection, social exclusion, various behavioural disorders and low academic success for the individual in the future (McCabe & Almaturo, 2011, pp.513).

The quality of preschool education is approached from structural and process aspects (Pauline, Slot, Leseman, Verhagen, & Mulder, 2015). While process quality encompasses the social, emotional, physical, and instructional effects of children's daily experiences as a result of their interactions with teachers, peers, and materials, structural quality comprises school-dependent and regulable factors such as teacher-student ratio and teacher's qualifications (Howes et al., 2008; Thomason & La Paro, 2009). Crowley, Jeon and Rosenthal (2013) indicated that all institutions should be inspected periodically at least twice a year in order to attain and/or maintain the quality. This is because, with the use of appropriate assessments, institutions could design

interventions and determine the areas in need of development (McCabe & Altamura, 2011). At this point, we are faced with the concept of performance management that addresses the structural and process quality in an integrated manner.

Studies (Armstrong & Baron, 1998; Poister, 2003; Williams, 2002) provide evidence that effective performance management could serve the individuals and institutions to focus on the priorities and to perform at a level appropriate to their existing potentials. Performance management could also help institutions determine developmental needs of the staff whose job descriptions and positions might be revised accordingly. As an important step of the performance management process, performance evaluation systems can be used to improve the quality of the services. Schools also greatly benefit from the performance management in the measurement of students' academic success and in enhancement of the existing potential of employees and hence it could increase the school performance in general (Brown, 2007; Lidl, 2007).

In order to express an opinion about the quality of education in general and about the quality of teaching-learning processes in particular, there definitely needs to be global, acceptable and valid standards with defined limits (Göksoy, 2014). In the process of performance evaluation, both qualitative and quantitative observations should be performed (Li, 2010) and the evaluation should focus on the process rather than the outcome (Tobin, 2005, pp. 434). Furthermore, the question of who will conduct the performance evaluation also constitutes an important issue. Whether the evaluation should be performed with internal or external auditors is a long-debated issue (Atkin, 1978). In an inspection conducted by external auditors, accreditation is a globally accepted practice.

### **Accreditation**

Accreditation is a process to investigate whether or not education programs satisfy the defined quality standards (<http://www.abet.org/accreditation/>). This process encompasses an external audit conducted by authorized bodies (Greenfield, Pawsey & Braithwaite, 2011). Institutions that seek accreditation are exposed to a series of evaluation, reporting and recommendation stages, where they voluntarily perform self-evaluation according to the standards (Pomey et al., 2010). Accreditation, whether it be voluntary or mandatory, is a power that will bring quality and change and create high social impact even in the most complex systems (Cooper, Parkes & Blewitt, 2014; Zorek & Raehl, 2013). Although accreditation is not an audit system that imposes sanctions, it is a system that ensures self-inspection in institutions, describes the extent of compliance with the existing standards and helps build an organizational culture so as to guarantee sustained quality. This is because an accredited institution has to repeat all stages in the accreditation process periodically in specified time intervals in order to maintain the existing conditions.

### **Accreditation of Preschool Education Institutions**

Accreditation is also a widely accepted quality indicator for preschool institutions. By means of accreditation processes, institutions are provided with suggestions in order to meet international quality standards regarding their structure and processes (Winterbottom & Piasta, 2015). It is possible to see the effects of accreditation on attaining quality in terms of human resources as well as physical facilities of preschool institutions. In accredited institutions, the school environment is organized in a manner that supports learning. In schools that implement different employment models, well-educated employees that have improved working conditions can be more sensitive and beneficial in their interactions with children (McDonnell, Brownell & Mark, 1997; Whitebook, 1996).

The first preschool accreditation process in the world started in 1986 (Bredekamp, 1986a) and 4500 programs out of 80.000 were accredited within the first 10 years (Bredekamp & Glowacki, 1996). Apart from the studies addressing quality indicators and enhancing quality of preschool education institutions (Hu & Li, 2012; Li, 2010; Mashburn et al., 2008; Tobin, 2005) there are also studies concerning especially the contributions of accreditation to preschool institutions (Bredekamp, 1986b; Bredekamp & Glowacki, 1996; McDonnell et al. 1997; Whitebook, 1996; Winterbottom & Piasta, 2015; Zan; 2005, Zorek & Raehl, 2013). There are many accreditation institutions and organizations in the preschool education field such as APPLE (Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment), AMS (American Montessori Society), ACSI (Association of Christian School International), COA (Council on Accreditation), NAC (National Accreditation Commission), NAEYC (National Association for Education of Young Children Academy for Early Childhood), NAFCC (National Association for Family Child Care), NECPA (National Early Childhood Programme Accreditation)

and ECIS (European Council of International Schools). However, accreditation activities of these bodies are often limited to national levels or their operations focus only on certain institutions functioning in particular areas. One exception is ECIS/CIS which operates at an international level for accreditation of preschool education institutions around the world without discrimination. Therefore, this study is based on the ECIS accreditation body (<https://www.cois.org/page.cfm?p=1884>), which has accredited 15 preschool education institutions across Turkey. ECIS was founded in 1965 and it is the largest non-profit association that operates on a membership basis regarding international schools and has continued its activities under the name of Council of International Schools (CIS) since 2003.

### **Inspection of Preschool Education Institutions in Turkey**

The evaluation of preschool education institutions in Turkey is conducted by two different bodies: The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and The Ministry of Family and Social Policies (MoFSP). MoNE carries out the inspection of public and private preschool education institutions (Institutions providing services for children between the ages of 3-6) affiliated with the Ministry (Manual on Guidance and Inspection for Preschool Education Institutions, 2014). On the other hand, MoFSP carries out the inspection of private nurseries (Institution providing services for 0-36 months old children) and day-care centres (Institutions providing services for 37-66 months old children) (Regulation on the Establishment and Functioning Principles for Private Creches, Daycare Centers and Private Children's Clubs, 2015). Inspection areas and evaluation criteria of these two institutions are different from each other. Evaluating the institutions providing services under the roof of preschool education by different professionals according to different inspection criteria causes a serious drawback in terms of attaining and improving quality. In addition, the compliance of these evaluation criteria with international standards is another issue that needs emphasizing.

Within the Turkish education system, preschool education has not still reached at a level defined in basic policy documents. The enrolment rate at the age of 5 in 2016-2017 is 58% (MoNE, 2017). This rate is expected to rise in the 2017-2018 school year, after 54-months old children become obligated to receive preschool education (<http://www.meb.gov.tr/o/haber/9796/tr>). In order to respond to the increasing enrolment rate, a substantial number of new schools have been founded across Turkey. This, to an important extent, solves the quantitative problems and hence founding new schools is not a prior goal anymore; yet qualitative problems such as quality of the preschool education are still in existence. As mentioned above, the fact that there are different inspection criteria for preschool education institutions and the lack of validation with respect to the international quality standards are considered problematic.

### **The Present Study**

The object of this study is to determine the extent to which MoNE (Ministry of National Education) and MoFSP (Ministry of Family and Social Policies) evaluation criteria used in inspecting the preschool institutions in Turkey are complied with international accreditation standards. To this end, the study seeks answers to the following question: How well do MoNE and MoFSP criteria used in inspecting the preschool institutions in Turkey comply with CIS accreditation standards? To answer this question, the study compares and contrasts the CSI accreditation criteria with those of MoNE and/or MoFSP criteria.

### **Method**

In order to answer the research question, this study employed a document analysis method. Three different data sets were used within the scope of the study. The first data set consists of the accreditation criteria identified by CIS and obtained from the official website of the institution (<http://www.cois.org>). In total 36 CSI criteria in 7 different areas constituted the main categorical frame of the study. Since there are no preschool educational institutions that provide boarding services in Turkey, article F4 (Boarding services effectively support the school's Guiding Statements, and serve the well-being of all boarding students and staff) of CIS criteria is excluded from the analysis. The second data set consists of 226 evaluation criteria that are included in the "Manual on Guidance and Inspection for Preschool Education Institutions" prepared by MoNE and took effect on 26 July 2014. Among these, 106 criteria are related to education-training processes, 90 are related to the governance and 30 are related to financial processes. The third and last data set consists of 95 inspection criteria that are included in the "Regulation on the Establishment and Functioning Principles for Private Nurseries, Day-care Centres and Private Children's Clubs" that was prepared by MoFSP and has been in use since 30 April

2015. This inspection form includes five main dimensions: governance and staff, education, fees, physical conditions and security status.

These three data sets were analysed comparatively with MoNE and MoFSP criteria, based on CIS standards. CIS criteria were compared first with MoNE and then MoFSP criteria, in terms of meaning and compliance. While some of the MoNE and MoFSP criteria were in compliance with more than one CIS criteria, some others were not directly related. Instead of looking for one-to-one compliance between the criteria, the equivalents of basic aspects in Turkish education system with international criteria were considered in data analysis. For example, the fourth article of CIS in philosophy and objectives aspect is as follows: “The school’s admission policies and practices shall ensure there is alignment between school’s guiding statements, programs, and the students’ admission to and remaining at the school. “With respect to this article, MoNE has the following article “Performance of admission procedures to preschool education institutions (MoNE, 2014, pp: 23 art.:1) and MoFSP has the following three articles; “Is child admission in line with the age group and capacity indicated in the opening approval? (article: 14)”, “Are the necessary documents for admission to the institution submitted? (article: 19)”, and “Is grouping performed according to children’s general development, based on their age? (article: 30)”. These CIS, MoNE and MoFSP articles do not have a one-to-one match. However, it was concluded that MoNE and MoFSP inspection criteria regarding student admission were in compliance with the corresponding CIS criteria.

In order to ensure the reliability, the data sets in the study were analysed separately by both researchers in this manner. Analysis was repeated after three months. These analyses were compared; evaluation criteria and relevant regulations were reassessed for conflicting articles. The data analysis process was finalized after evaluation by a third field expert. The analysis results were compared in tables in order to clarify the findings.

## Findings and Discussion

In this section, data compiled after reviewing available documents were evaluated and interpreted according to the differences and similarities between CIS standards and MoNE and MoFSP criteria. First of all, the criteria in the school guiding statement aspect were compared with the MoNE and MoFSP criteria.

Table 1. Comparison of the school guiding statements

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
A. School guiding statements	A1. The school shall be guided by clear and broadly accepted Guiding Statements of vision, mission, and educational objectives (or the equivalent using the school’s chosen nomenclature and format) for students.	+	-
	A.2. The school’s Guiding Statements shall clearly demonstrate a commitment to internationalism/ interculturalism in education, and this shall be reflected throughout the life of the institution.	-	-
	A3. The school’s Vision for Students (or similar) shall demonstrate a clear commitment to fostering desirable traits related to internationalism/interculturalism, and this shall impact upon all students.	-	-
	A4. The school's admissions policies and practices shall ensure there is alignment between its Guiding Statements, its programmes, and the students admitted to and remaining at the school.	+	+

As seen in Table 1, admission requirements are common across all three documents. This indicates that the clarity of enrolment process to school is considered important. Furthermore, MoNE has been conducting studies on the planning stage, which was in line with A1 criterion. However, neither did MoNE nor MoFSP criteria include articles regarding interculturalism/internationalism in the philosophy and objectives aspect. Turkey experienced a significant refugee influx after the incidents in the Middle East towards the end of 2010. Particularly, the number of Syrian refugees, who escaped from the civil war in Syria, is reach to an enormous amount of 3.424.237 (see <http://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyedeki-suriyeli-sayisi/>). The ratio of the population in the cities close to the Syrian border, e.g. Kilis (100%), Hatay (29%), Şanlıurfa (24%), Gaziantep (17%) is particularly high. This situation necessitates taking measures to facilitate the inclusion of Syrian refugees into Turkish education system so that they could adapt to social life. Within the frame of international legal regulations such as the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child and national grounds such as the Basic Law of National Education numbered 1739, internationalism aspect needs to be reconsidered and reworked in all stages of education in Turkey. Preschool teachers should undertake critical responsibilities in this period of

change. The teachers, in order to effectively respond to the demands, show empathy with a social, entrepreneurial, flexible and open personality in order to ensure the cultural adaptation of their students (Popescu et al., 2014). In order to expand children's awareness regarding global matters and to strengthen cultural awareness in the preschool period (Garcia, 2009), preschool institutions affiliated with MoNE and MoFSP need to incorporate these concepts into their philosophy and objectives and introduce new regulations to their inspection criteria.

Table 2 provides a comparison of the criteria regarding the second aspect of CIS, i.e. teaching and learning, with MoNE and MoFSP criteria.

Table 2. Comparison of the teaching and learning aspects

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
B. Teaching and learning	B1. The curriculum, in its content, design, implementation, assessment and review, shall reflect the school's mission, learning objectives, and policies and shall foster global citizenship and student achievement.	+	-
	B2. Students shall have access to a curriculum that provides challenge but also supports varied developmental, academic, social, physical and emotional needs and fosters the development of skills and abilities that prepare students for lifelong learning.	+	-
	B3. Teaching and learning shall be guided by comprehensive curriculum documentation that reflects horizontal and vertical articulation as a means of providing students with meaningful connections among and between disciplines and continuity within disciplines.	+	-
	B4. Students shall benefit from a curriculum and related activities that shall be enhanced by the cultural diversity of both the host country and the school community, hence contributing to the development of global citizenship in students.	-	-
	B5. The school shall provide ongoing professional development that improves the design, implementation, and assessment of the curriculum, reflects the needs of the faculty, and benefits student learning.	-	-
	B6 Teaching practices shall reflect an understanding of the different ways in which students learn, and this is evidenced by student engagement and performance.	+	-
	B7. The school shall provide appropriate support and resources to implement the curriculum and allow access and full participation by all students.	+	-
	B8. The school shall have formal procedures and defined criteria to effectively and regularly assess the impact of teaching strategies and the level of student performance.	+	+
	B9. Curriculum review and revisions shall be completed at periodic intervals, and changes shall reflect the school's mission, current educational practice, and the results of student assessment, with the goal of enhancing student participation and performance.	+	-
	B10. The school shall have formal processes for recording, analysing, and reporting evidence of both school-wide achievement and individual student performance to parents and other appropriate members of the school community as a means of measuring success in meeting stated goals.	+	-

The studies demonstrate that curricula encompassing the early childhood period prepared in a consistent and deliberative manner affect the future school success of children and increase the instructional quality (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013). Besides, accredited curricula tend to create positive relationships between teachers and students along with a balanced classroom environment (Bredcamp, 1986b). This study showed that there was 80% compliance between CIS criteria in teaching and learning aspect and MoNE criteria. One of the two articles that had no compliance between MoNE inspection criteria and CIS criteria, i.e. article B4, is about cultural diversity and global citizenship.

While the article "takes cultural and universal values into consideration" (MoNE, 2013) was included in the preschool curriculum applied in the period when this study was being conducted, it was not included in the inspection criteria. This shows that the inspection criterion is not only noncompliant with CIS standards but also

with its own national curriculum. The second article (B5) that constituted no compliance between CIS and MoNE criteria is about the design, improvement and assessment of the curriculum. In the Turkish education system, curricula documents are centrally prepared by the MoNE and expected to be practiced in all schools. Therefore, the curriculum aspect is not included in the inspection criteria since schools do not prepare their own documents. There is only one CIS criterion (i.e. B8) in compliance with MoFSP in the teaching and learning aspect. This shows that preschool education institutions affiliated with MoFSP are not evaluated in terms of programs. This suggests, to us, that whether MoFSP affiliated preschools' programs support the academic, social and personal development of the students goes unscrutinised. Ural and Ramazan (2007) express in their study that preschool education institutions not affiliated with MoNE do not have a standard curriculum and they mainly perform the activities developed by teachers. Similarly, Gülay and Ekici (2010) state that the difference between the MoNE and MoFSP affiliated preschools' curricula created a problem of standard. As is seen, MoFSP inspection criteria have significant drawbacks in the curriculum aspect both at the national and international level. The comparison table regarding governance and leadership aspect is given below.

Table 3. Comparison of the governance and leadership

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
C. Governance and leadership	C1. The governing body shall be so constituted, with regard to membership and organization, as to provide the school with sound direction, continuity of leadership, and effective support in the current and long term life of the school.	+	-
	C2. There shall be a co-operative and effective working relationship between the governing body and the head of school so as to establish and sustain high morale, quality relationships, and a positive climate for teaching, learning, and student well-being throughout the school.	-	-
	C3. The head of school, while accountable to a higher authority, shall be the responsible leader to ensure that teaching, learning, and student well-being are supported and that the school's mission is achieved.	-	-
	C4. The governing body shall have clearly formulated written policies and practices, which are applied to bring consistency and clarity to school operations.	-	-
	C5. The school shall have educational and financial plans for the near and long term that ensure school viability, are supportive of the mission and are explained to the school community.	+	-

Governance and leadership practices are the main elements that show the distinctive features of an institution. The most remarkable finding concerning this aspect is the fact that MoFSP inspection guidelines do not contain any articles in line with CIS criteria.

There are a limited number of studies regarding effective leadership and management practices in preschool education institutions (Cheng, 2013; Talan, Bloom & Kelton, 2014). In preschool institutions, the success of managers in foreseeing the objectives, ensuring the unity of purpose, making program development a norm and motivating employees (Bloom, 2004) plays a key role in meeting accreditation criteria. Hujala et al. (2016) classified the managerial tasks in preschool education in two groups as pedagogical and human resources management. The board of directors and the school principal are responsible for executing these tasks as per the accreditation criteria. McCrea (2015) indicated that leadership in preschool institutions is ensured by influencing people with professional and ethical practices. Among the accreditation criteria in the leadership aspect, the second (C2) is directly associated with this definition; however, MoNE criteria do not include an aspect concerning this issue. This deficiency raises questions as to the establishment of effective relationships between the board of directors and the school principal. The reasons for the differences between the desired and actual teaching-learning environments were expressed as ambiguous communication, failure to comply with the defined mission and vision of the school and the variability of expectations (Carr, Johnson & Corkwell, 2009; Kiley & Jensen, 2003).

Schools having a shared mission and vision, which is also included in MoNE inspection criteria, is guaranteed under the law numbered 5018 which took effect in 2003 (Public Finance Management and Control Law, 2003). According to the law, MoNE and affiliates have to create strategic plans using collaborative methods in order to create their mission and vision within the frame of relevant regulations and adopted fundamental principles, to set strategic and measurable goals, to measure their performance in accordance with the predefined indicators and to perform the monitoring and evaluation of this process. However, as mentioned in C3 and C4, the fact that

the school principals do not have high authority and that schools do not have consistent and clear policies is closely related to the central administration structure of the Turkish education system. Similarly, Waniganayake (2014) associated the leadership in preschool institutions with possessed powers in decision-making and with organizational structure. This reveals that changing only the inspection standards in Turkey will not suffice and it is also necessary to review the administrative structure.

Table 4 shows the comparison of MoNE and MoFSP criteria with CIS criteria from the faculty and support staff aspect.

Table 4. Comparison of the faculty and support staff

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
D. Faculty and support staff	D1. The school shall have faculty and support staff that are sufficient in numbers and with the qualifications, competencies and sound moral character necessary to carry out the school's programmes, services, and activities, to support fulfilment of the mission and objectives, and to ensure student protection and well-being.	+	+
	D2. Faculty and support staff shall embrace the school's Guiding Statements and act professionally and ethically in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, inspiring excellence and students' best efforts.	-	-
	D3. All personnel shall be employed under a written contract or employment agreement which states the principal terms of agreement between the employee and the school, and which provides for salaries and other benefits that are appropriate to the position and to the school's location.	+	+
	D4. Written personnel policies and guidelines shall establish expectations for the performance of faculty and support staff, which shall be consistently and effectively applied.	+	-
	D5. There shall be a clearly defined and implemented appraisal system for faculty and support staff based on pre-determined, explicit criteria and supported by a programme of professional development and/or training, which is linked to appraisal outcomes and other school priorities for student learning.	+	-

Undoubtedly, well-educated and well-trained staff plays a key role in increasing structural quality, learning and development, especially in preschool education (Ho, Lee, & Teng, 2016). Studies on employees and enhancing quality mostly focus on teacher-student ratio (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Goelman, 2006; Rao, Koong, Kwong, & Wong 2003) and teacher salaries (Barnett, 2003; OECD, 2005, 2006; Slutsky & Pistorova, 2011; Whitebook, 2013). The aspects regarding faculty and support staff on which all MoFSP criteria and the majority of MoNE criteria showed compliance with CIS accreditation criteria were mainly about quantitative issues such as the number and salary of employees.

As is the case with the leadership and management aspect, MoNE and MoFSP evaluations did not include qualitative criteria of this aspect such as employees' embracement of the guiding statements, acting professionally and ethically and being guides for student development. Robinson and Timperley (2007) stated that staff members could be motivated to reach the goals by leaders including them in the decision making process. This situation sufficiently explains the similar outcomes of C2 and D2 articles. In other words, aspects that are not addressed in the management and leadership naturally remain underemphasized in the employee aspect. Comparisons regarding student services are provided in Table 5.

Among these articles, neither MoNE nor MoFSP criteria include effective language support programs. This lack of emphasis can be interpreted in conjunction with multiculturalism/internationalism, which, as noted above, is lacking in the first and second aspects of CIS. In fact, it can be said that preschool education programs offered to children are effective in their preparation for school and their language skills, and this in turn directly impacts the concept acquisition performance of children. As Toran (2016) mentions the disadvantages due to cultural differences could be eliminated during years of preschool education, though partially. Offering language support programs to children with difficulties of acquisition as well as providing arts and game exercises contributes positively to children's self-expression and communication skills as well as to the formation of a cultural identity (Skolverket, 2011).



Table 5. Comparison of the access to teaching and learning

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
E. Access to teaching and learning	E1. There shall be effective procedures for identifying the learning needs of students, both at admission and while enrolled, to ensure that students in the school can benefit from the school's programmes.	+	-
	E2. Children with learning differences or specific needs who are admitted into the school shall be given support to access and enhance participation in the learning environment through appropriate and effective programmes that are delivered by suitably qualified personnel.	+	-
	E3. Effective language support programmes shall assist learners to access the school's formal curriculum and other activities.	-	-
	E4. The school shall ensure that students have access to advice and counsel on academic, personal, career and tertiary education matters to effectively support their current and future development and achievement.	+	+
	E5. The school shall provide appropriate health care and promote the practices of healthy living to serve student well-being and enhance access to learning opportunities.	+	-

It is promising that MoNE criteria include articles regarding students in need of special education. However, these students need to be grouped according to their social, cognitive and physical attributes (Didenko & Frantseva, 2016), and goal setting and evaluations in this area should be performed considering the age, disability and area of development of the child (Rakap, 2015). Lastly, students can have access to teaching and learning only if they are provided with a healthy environment. Nutrition, physical activity and sleeping habits especially in the early childhood period (Määttä et al., 2015) increase the possibility of healthy living and learning in the future. From this viewpoint, the inclusion of the health aspect as well as the academic success in MoNE inspection criteria is a positive indicator, whereas the non-inclusion of the health aspect in MoFSP criteria is an issue that requires a serious reconsideration from the policy-makers.

Table 6 provides the compliance of MoNE and MoFSP criteria with CIS criteria regarding school culture and education partners out of school.

Table 6. Comparison of the school culture and partnerships for learning

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
F. School culture and partnerships for learning	F1. A school climate characterized by fairness, trust, and mutual respect shall support student learning and well-being.	-	-
	F2. Effective communication processes shall foster a productive home-school partnership and a positive learning community.	+	+
	F3. The school shall offer effective programmes and activities which complement the formal curriculum in supporting the school's Guiding Statements.	-	-

In the sixth aspect which addresses school culture and partnerships, the only article that MoNE and MoFSP criteria complied with is about school-family cooperation. School-family cooperation on pedagogical and non-pedagogical issues in preschool institutions is a factor that directly affects the quality of education (Ritchie & Willer, 2008). However, at this point, the roles of the parents and teachers should be accurately defined and a parent-teacher relationship structured by defining the roles of the parties according to their field of expertise (Rouse & O'Brien, 2017) should be established during the cooperation period.

The studies (Dennis & O'Connor, 2013; Hur, Jeon & Buettner, 2016; Kiley & Jensen, 2003) on school climate, which is included in CIS criteria, conducted in relevant preschool institutions, reveal that when a healthy and strong organizational culture is established in terms of, for example, professional development, transparency, reward system, goal setting, and distribution of duties, the quality of classroom practices is also increased. Ignoring the culture which regulates the internal and external relationships, and which especially enables staff members to do their duties passionately from the organizational commitment aspect is a factor that will negatively affect the quality of preschool education institutions. Therefore, this aspect needs to be addressed primarily in preschool institutions affiliated with MoNE and MoFSP and in the inspection criteria.

Finally, Table 7 provides comparisons associated with the operational system aspect.

Table 7. Comparison of the school management aspect

Section	CIS standards	MoNE	MoFSP
G. Operational systems	G1. The management of school finances shall be consistent with best financial practices in international schools, in accordance with the legal requirements of the host country, and shall support the effective delivery of the school's programmes.	+	+
	G2. Grounds, buildings, technical installations, basic furnishings, and equipment shall effectively support delivery of the programmes required to put the school's Guiding Statements into practice.	+	+
	G3. The school shall ensure that its grounds, buildings, technical installations, basic furnishings, equipment and systems provide for the health and safety of students, personnel and visitors.	+	+
	G4. The school shall provide or arrange for auxiliary services as required to support its declared objectives and programmes, and shall ensure that such services meet acceptable standards of safety, efficiency and comfort.	+	+

It was seen that all four articles in the school management aspect, i.e. the last CIS criterion, were in a complete alignment with both MoNE and MoFSP criteria. Especially the majority of MoFSP criteria, which could not exhibit such a high compliance in any aspect previously, is about school management. This indicates that MoFSP criteria are more focused on the measurable quality aspects such as financial management, technical installation and security measures. Vygotsky (1986) stated that the physical environment is a forcing factor in terms of the child's learning and development of higher-order thinking skills. Similarly, Malaguzzi (1998) defined environment as the third teacher of the child. Factors such as the size, layout and privacy of physical environment, its provision of an opportunity to do various activities, its capability to be modified, and its technical design (Mythri, Rajalakshmi & Suresh, 2016) play a role in cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. Crowley, Jeon and Rosenthal (2013) divided the health and security aspect into seven categories under the titles indoor and outdoor security, indoor health, child and staff documentation, emergency preparedness, infant-toddler (younger than 3 years) indoor health and infant-toddler indoor security. The reason these categories constitute the majority of MoFSP criteria can be stated as the fact that institutions affiliated with MoFSP include day-care centres that provide services to 0-36 months old babies (toddlers and infants), and that health and security aspects appear to be placed on the top of the list in these institutions. The presence of many scales in this field such as Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, ECERS-R), NAEYC accreditation procedures and The new Children's Physical Environments Rating Scale (CPERS) draws attention to the importance of the issue also in the international arena.

## Final Remarks

Inspection, which is an important part of management processes, is a tool for improving and sustaining the quality of education-training services provided by schools. The debate on who should conduct the inspection of preschool institutions in Turkey has been on the agenda for a long time (Turan, 2004). Beyond the question of who should conduct the inspection, this study aims to clarify the inspection criteria that need to be set in order to attain and sustain quality, and the extent to which the inspection criteria specified by MoNE and MoFSP include the aspects considered in the international arena such as those of CIS standards.

It is seen that there are initiatives that emphasize in-school evaluation in the amendments of the inspection system in Turkey performed 2014 (MoNE, 2014). This is inspiring from the viewpoint that accreditation criteria can be used in school inspections. This is because accreditation emphasizes continuous evaluation and self-inspection. However, empowering an official (out-of-school) authority to perform a mandatory inspection is against the spirit of accreditation. Therefore, aligning the criteria used in school inspection with the accreditation criteria and making the necessary changes seem to be the right starting point. This is because studies show that high quality preschool education is possible when all partners focus on common objectives and work in a coordinated manner at all levels (Sheridan & Pramling Samuelsson, 2013).

An educational institution meeting the accreditation standards is a valuable step in terms of having an education-training programme, staff members acting with the understanding of sustained development, self-evaluation

becoming a culture and enabling institutions to make comparisons between equivalent educational institutions. Although increasing the number of accredited schools throughout the country is not an attainable goal in the short-term, it is a valuable and viable aim to strive for. Therefore, extending the study to all education levels from preschool to higher education may constitute the agenda of different studies. Furthermore, considering the amount of external migration to Turkey, multiculturalism, internationalism and global citizenship issues should be included in the curricula and inspection criteria for all levels of education starting from preschool. Finally, considering the low compliance especially in the aspect of creating a school culture, internal and external stakeholders should be given as much responsibility as the school principal in creating a school culture, and their responsibilities should be extended and inspected.

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