



COMPARISON OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN SOUTH KOREA AND TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

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Abstract

In this study; it is aimed to compare the pre-school education systems in South Korea and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus comparatively. The horizontal and descriptive approach used in comparative education studies for this purpose were used together. Using document analysis in the research; Pre-school education objectives, similarities in education system and similarities in the education system, from the Ministry of Education of South Korea and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus from the Ministry of Education, the laws of countries, official pre-school education reports, education systems, articles and online databases, data on differences, skills desired to be acquired in the curriculum and educational status of teachers working in preschool institutions were obtained.

Keywords: Preschool education, comparison, South Korea, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

1. Introduction

Today, countries can progress as much as the importance they attach to education. The aim of education is to raise a healthy society with a high level of knowledge, both individual and universal culture (Çakmak, 2008). The most general goal of education is to create a behavioral change in individuals in a desired way through life (Ertürk, 1972). Starting an educational life is seen as one of the turning points in a child's life. In this context, pre-school education covering the 0-6 age period from the day the child was born to the day she started basic education and constitutes the basis of life; it is stated that the child has an important role in shaping personality development by getting basic habits and preparing the child for primary education (Yaşar & Aral, 2010). It is emphasized in the studies that this period is one of the fastest periods of children's development and learning. Therefore; it is mentioned that the educational opportunities offered to children at this age greatly affect their future life (Oktay, 2007). According to the studies carried out; education in pre-school period contributes positively to the child's developmental areas, self-confidence and academic achievements (Adagideli & Ader, 2014; Göğebakan, 2011). With the international student assessment exams such as PISA, TIMMS and PIRLS in recent years, the importance that countries give to

education and their applications in education have contributed greatly to the shaping of the education system of countries (Oktay, 2007). At this point, the value given to education by Singapore, which is considered to be at the forefront of the education system, is stated in the studies that started with the preschool period. (Hatipoğlu & Ordu, 2019). It is stated in the researches that preschool education is not compulsory education in Singapore and that all parents pay attention to the education of their children in this period (Göğebakan, 2011).

In Korea, preschool education is given in kindergartens affiliated to the Ministry of Education and day care centers affiliated to the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Different preschool education programs are implemented in kindergartens and day nurseries. The vast majority of kindergartens are private institutions. Kindergarten teachers must be graduates of a four-year university, a two-year college or a national open university. The seniority of teachers who will work in kindergartens and day nurseries is divided into different levels and stages. There are in-service training certificates to be obtained for each stage (İpek, 2018; Haktanır, 2005).

Childcare is carried out by private organizations. Every child is at least free of charge. It is stated that he has the right to attend kindergarten for one year (Tezcan, Ada, Baysal, 2016). In the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, pre-school education covers the education of children who have not reached primary age. They can be opened as kindergartens in primary schools in public schools under the Ministry of Education or as practice classes affiliated to other relevant educational institutions, or they can be established as separate kindergartens. The enrollment rate in preschool education in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is 100% in 2008 (Erden, 2018) Countries; As a result of comparative education systems studies, they find the opportunity to make changes by revealing the deficiencies of the education systems implemented in their own countries. At this point, comparative education studies are seen as an important field of study to recognize the education systems of different countries (Aytekin & Tertemiz, 2018). At this point, it is thought that the comparison of pre-school education systems among countries will fill the gap in the literature. In this context, it is believed that the existing pre-school education systems in South Korea and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus will be compared and will contribute to the literature in identifying the similarities and differences in the education systems.

1.1. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research; It is a comparative study of existing pre-school education systems in South Korea and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. For the purpose of the research, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. What are the findings regarding the similarities and differences of preschool education system of South Korea and TRNC preschool education system?
2. What are the findings regarding the aims of preschool education in South Korea and TRNC?
3. What is the educational status of teachers working in preschool education institutions in South Korea and TRNC?

2. Method

In the study, firstly, it was aimed to examine South Korea and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Education Systems in terms of the variables comparatively. A comparative education approach was used for this purpose. When we look at the literature, comparative education is considered as a methodology and it has different approaches such as horizontal, vertical,

problem solving, case study, descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative (Ültanır, 2000; Çubukçu, Yılmaz & İnci, 2016). Horizontal and diagnostic approach were used together in the study. While the horizontal approach is defined as an approach where the dimensions in the education systems are addressed one by one and all the variables belonging to that period are tried to be identified (Demirel, 2000), in the descriptive approach, the related literature is analyzed and the similarities and differences are compared in relation to the subject to be studied (Ültanır, 2000). In this study, the similarities and differences. The document review technique involves the analysis of written materials that contain information about the phenomenon or cases intended to be investigated (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). In qualitative research, in cases where direct observation and interview are not possible, written and visual materials and materials related to the problem of the research are included in the research. Therefore, document review can be a research method alone or it can be used as a source of additional information in cases where other qualitative methods (interview or observation) are used (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005).

2.1. Data Collection and Analysis

Document analysis method was first used in the research. Document analysis involves the analysis of written materials that contain information about the cases targeted for research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Using document analysis; Pre-school education objectives, similarities in education system and similarities in the education system, from the Ministry of Education of South Korea and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus from the Ministry of Education, the laws of countries, official pre-school education reports, education systems, articles and online databases data on differences, skills desired to be acquired in the curriculum and educational status of teachers working in preschool institutions were obtained. Variables such as compulsory primary school starting age, success criteria, schooling rate in pre-school education are examined. The data obtained were categorized within the framework of the determined variables, and tables about the countries compared were created and the findings obtained were written.

3. Findings

In this section, the findings of the countries in the study group related to the compared topics in the analysis of the documents for the research are shown in tables and interpreted.

1 Findings Related to Similarities and Differences of Preschool Education Systems of South Korea and TRNC.

In the first sub-purpose of the research, "What are the findings regarding the similarities and differences of the preschool education system of South Korea and TRNC?" The answer to the question was sought.

Findings regarding the purpose and similarities of preschool education systems of South Korea and TRNC are given in table 1.

Table 1.

COUNTRIES	COMPULSORY EDUCATION PROCESS	PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROCESS	PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION TYPE	COUNTRIES	PRESCHOOL EDUCATION FINANCE SOURCE
SOUTH KOREA	It is not included in the compulsory education process.	Preschool education is provided for children covering the age range of 3-6.	It can be opened in public or private institutions	Ministry of Education	
TRNC	Not included in the compulsory education process	It covers the education given to children who have not reached the age of primary education.	It can be opened in public or private institutions	Ministry of Education and Culture	

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that pre-school education process is not included in compulsory education, only 6 years old groups in TRNC. South Korea, one year before starting primary education after Early Childhood and Care services. In addition, it is observed that pre-school education while in TRNC, pre-school education covers children who have not reached the age of primary education. It has been determined that there are similarities in South Korea and TRNC as pre-school institutions. In all two countries, it is seen that there are public and private schools as pre-school institutions. In addition, in South Korea and TRNC, where pre-school funding sources are similar.

As a result; Preschool education is not included in compulsory education in all of the countries included in the sample of the research; When it is examined as the process of pre-school education, it is seen that it covers the education of children who have not reached the age of primary education in TRNC, the education given in the age range of 3-6 in South Korea. It is observed that preschool education in South Korea and TRNC is provided in both public and private institutions. In South Korea and the TRNC, the institutions working as pre-school financing sources are the Ministry of Education.

Findings on the Aims of Preschool Education in South Korea and TRNC In the second sub-aim of the research, "What are the findings regarding the aims of pre-school education in South Korea and TRNC?" The answer to the question was sought.

Findings regarding the aims of preschool education in South Korea and TRNC are given in Table 2.

Table 2.

COUNTRY	OBJECTIVES OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION
SOUTH KOREA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give children the habits that will be necessary in daily life, • To ensure the physical development of children, • To give children the habit of living and working together, • To ensure that children socialize and gain the ability to speak properly, • To teach children about folk tales and reveal their painting skills.
TRNC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that children develop in terms of body, mind and emotions, and gain good habits and useful skills, • To prepare children for primary education in all aspects, • Creating a suitable habitat for children from unfavorable environments and conditions, • To ensure that Turkish is spoken correctly and beautifully.

As seen in Table 2; Preschool education objectives of South Korea and TRNC countries are included. When Table 2 is analyzed, it is determined that the common goals of the South Korea and TRNC education program are to ensure the mental and physical development of children, to use the mother tongue correctly and beautifully. It has been determined that South Korea has aims such as gaining necessary habits in daily life, improving the ability of speaking properly and painting. TRNC is to prepare the children for primary education and to provide equal opportunities in education. Unlike South Korea and TRNC, children South Korea; Unlike TRNC, it aims to give children information about folk tales and reveal their detailed painting skills.

Findings on the Educational Status of Teachers Working in Preschool Education Institutions in South Korea and TRNC

In the fourth sub-aim of the research, "What are the findings regarding the educational status of teachers working in preschool education institutions in South Korea and TRNC?" The answer to the question was sought.

Findings regarding the educational status of teachers working in preschool education institutions in South Korea and TRNC are given in table 3.

Table 3.

COUNTRIES	Educational Status of Teachers Working in Preschool Education Institutions
SOUTH KOREA	2-4 Years University
TRNC	4 Years Teacher College- 4 Years Undergraduate

When Table 3 is examined; 4-year undergraduate education of teachers working in preschool education institutions in TRNC, as well as teachers working in public institutions in TRNC to receive education in teacher college for 4 years, teachers in South Korea receive university education between 2 and 4 years of university education.

As a result; when countries are compared according to the educational status of teachers working in South Korea and TRNC preschool education institutions, it is seen that teacher education is generally 4 years in all two countries. In the TRNC, it was found that the education institutions where teachers working in public and private institutions are different.

4. Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

In this study, preschool education systems of South Korea which are members of OECD, and TRNC preschool it is aimed to evaluate the education system comparatively. South Korea and TRNC preschool education process is not included in compulsory education, but; In the TRNC 6 age groups are included in the scope of compulsory education. South Korea, 2 years before the compulsory education period and for children who have not reached the primary age in TRNC. It is observed that the education provided includes pre-school education and there are differences in the education period of each country (Erden, 2018; İpek, 2018). In the studies conducted, although the preschool education process varies in every country and is not compulsory, it is observed that the enrollment rate in pre-school education is quite high in the countries in the sample of the study. Aktan and Akkutay (2014); enrollment rate in pre-school education is 86% in South Korea and 96% . The education that preschool children will receive during this period will enable the child to develop their social and academic skills, be prepared for the next education periods and be more successful during the education periods. For this reason, preschool education is a critical period in the life of the individual, and it is emphasized in the studies conducted that the education received in this period has an important place in terms of affecting the whole life of the individual (Aktan & Akkutay, 2014; Kazu & Yılmaz, 2018).

It is observed that there are public and private schools as pre-school institutions in South Korea and TRNC (Erden, 2018; İpek, 2018). According to İpek (2018); In South Korea, 4/5 of preschool students study in private kindergartens. The reason for this is that while public schools in South Korea provide education for the 3-6 age group, private nurseries cover younger age groups so that their working parents have to give their children a special kindergarten.

While pre-school funding sources are similar in South Korea and TRNC. According to researches; in some countries, central resources are focused on financing, while in some countries regional or local resources are emphasized. Local resources have an important place in South Korea. In the TRNC, the Ministry of National Education is responsible as the central source for education financing (Güngör & Göksu, 2013). While pre-school funding sources are similar in South Korea and TRNC. According to researches; in some countries, central

resources are focused on financing, while in some countries regional or local resources are emphasized. Local resources have an important place in South Korea. In the TRNC, the Ministry of National Education is responsible as the central source for education financing (Güngör & Göksu, 2013). The amount of financial resources devoted to education and how they are used is important for success. It is stated that there is a positive correlation between the average scores of OECD countries and the amount of expenditure per student (). In the OECD training reports, he states that the successful relationship between increasing spending in countries where education expenditure from 6 to 15 years old per student is below \$ 55,000. It appears as a remarkable threshold of \$ 55,000. As the money rate increases until it reaches the 55.000 dollar limit, both the allocated resources and the socio-cultural variables accessed by the societies that can produce such resources develop success in a proportional manner. It can be said that as the spending in educational institutions increases, the average scores of the countries will increase (Taş, Arıcı, Ozarkan & Özgür, 2016).

While the education period they received from teachers working in preschool education institutions in South Korea and TRNC is generally 4 years; it is observed that universities that train teachers for private and public pre-primary education institutions in the TRNC are different institutions (Erden, 2018).

When countries are compared according to the educational status of teachers working in South Korea and TRNC preschool education institutions, it is seen that teacher education is generally 4 years in all two countries. In the TRNC, it is seen that the education institutions where teachers working in public and private institutions are different. Although the teacher training process is sufficient but this period is sufficient, it is also important to design the teaching process efficiently. However, although the education process devoted to have the skills required by the teaching profession is sufficient, it is also important how efficient and quality this process is presented (Güngör & Göksu, 2013). The new approach, developed to evaluate the quality of teacher education, requires that the qualities of "output" be taken as the basis of "education" rather than "input" as it was in the past. According to the new understanding, the most important quality of the new graduate teacher, who is the "output" of teacher education programs, is "what he knows" and "what he can do". Preservice teachers should demonstrate their knowledge and skills related to the profession by applying and displaying them. Prospective teachers should gain knowledge, skills and behaviors determined according to the vision and goals of the institution and the standards of the profession, and should be evaluated based on their performance in real environments. In South Korea, it is a profession with high teaching status, respected in the society and popular among young people. The main reason for this is high status, respectability, job guarantee and high salary (Arabacı & Aksoy, 2005; Kim, 2007).

As mentioned in the studies conducted, the fact that children of preschool education age undergo this process efficiently will bring with them the quality of the skills they will gain throughout life, their readiness for the next semester, and their success in social and school life (Arabacı & Aksoy 2005). In order to obtain more general and detailed results in the research, more comprehensive results and suggestions can be found in mixed studies in which qualitative and quantitative studies are handled together. In the mixed studies to be carried out quantitatively, the rate of enrollment in pre-school pre-school education, the number of students per teacher, per capita expenditure, sources of funding, it can also be supported by data such as the ratio of education within the budget. While South Korea which are included in the sample of the study, are members of OECD, it is seen that TRNC is not included in the PISA ranking. The main aim of PISA is to measure the competence of students to use the knowledge and skills they learned in school in daily life (Döş & Atalmış 2016). At this point,

the importance of pre-school education becomes clear. In this context, the following suggestions can be included in order for preschool education to reach a more efficient level;

- Improving the financing budget allocated for preschool education,
- Before opening the in-service training courses for teachers, the Ministry of National Education should conduct a needs analysis and courses to meet the needs of teachers should be opened.
- To allocate financing resources for education to local administrations, not in a single center,
- Recognizing the child's own personality and continuing the activities,
- There are institutions in the state that provide education for ages younger than 3 years old,
- In the process of teacher training; it is important to design more efficiently by adding more practice lessons to the teaching process to have the skills required by the teaching profession.
- In addition, in comparative education studies to be carried out from now on, it can be prepared by using quantitative methods, and mixed studies can be prepared, or teachers' opinions can be included and richer studies can be made in terms of data.

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