



“Research Article”

Parental Perceptions about Children’s Authentic Assessment and the Work Sampling System’s implementation

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Abstract

The authentic assessment process in preschool education gains the confidence of the practices which are used today, as an innovative educational policy in the interest of everyone who’s involved in early childhood education: children, teachers and parents. The purpose of this study was to explore parents’ perceptions upon the significance of child’s assessment, their engagement in this assessment and the impact of the implementation of alternative forms of assessment such as the Work Sampling System at the kindergarten. A survey research design was utilized in order to achieve the objectives of the study, where a small-scale questionnaire was given to a convenience sample of 18 parents whose children were enrolled in a public all-day kindergarten in Chania, Greece. Findings show that the majority of the parents either acknowledge children’s authentic assessment as a real breakthrough or they are satisfied on a large scale with the implementation of alternative forms of assessment in the classroom. In conclusion, the child’s authentic assessment has been recognized widely as it is advantageous to the educational settings of the modern pedagogy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In most early childhood programs, early childhood educators use a variety of kindergarten assessment instruments aiming to give an accurate picture of children’s development and learning throughout the school year. Decades of research on the assessment of the child have evidenced that alternative forms of assessment are the most powerful tools as authentic exhibits of improved developmental pathways and learning outcomes of preschool children in all areas of learning

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suggested by the kindergarten curriculum (Gullo, 2005; Bagnato, 2007; Snow & Van Hemel, 2008; Losardo & Notari-Syverson, 2011; Fiore, 2012; Frey, Schmitt, & Allen, 2012).

In the early years, as research has shown, authentic measures are emphasized more than traditional forms (Bergen, 1993; Grisham-Brown, Hallam, & Brookshire, 2006; Bagnato, 2007). According to numerous research studies, authentic assessment is deemed a significant tool of the teaching and learning process. In the light of pedagogical science, authentic assessment can be defined as a systematic procedure of collecting and analyzing important information and evidence that teachers use to understand holistically children's progress in all domains of development in natural classroom contexts (Henderson & Karr-Kidwell, 1998; Wortham, 2008; Losardo & Notari-Syverson, 2011; Swaffield, 2011). Authentic assessment can include some of the following: teacher observations and records, portfolios, rubrics, self and peer assessments, performance-based assessment, naturalistic assessment, play-based assessment (Gullo, 2005; Doliopoulou & Gourgiotou, 2008; Brodie, 2013). With respect to evaluation methods which are used in education, authentic assessment is more appropriate than traditional assessment in the kindergarten because it reflects children's learning and achievement on classroom activities taking into account the significance of real-life contexts and the natural learning environment of the child in the preschool setting.

The assessment of young children in preschool environment, according to several studies, contains three important and specific elements: (a) documentation process, (b) evaluation, and (c) partnership and communication with children's parents (Johnson, 1993; Hannon, 1997; Carr, 2001; Lam, 2008). Acknowledging the fact that assessment is an ongoing procedure, the use of different methods of documentation constitutes a concrete way of tracking children's progress in all domains of learning. Additionally, applying assessment strategies that are developmentally appropriate and child-centered for preschoolers is undeniably the key to significant positive ramifications and changes on students' performance and on teachers' instructional and learning strategies (Shepard, 1994; Brookhart, 2004; Wortham, 2008; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Also, bridging the potential gap between parents and school, and engaging parents as partners in children's education can become effective in tutoring and in facilitating each child's growth, development and acquisition of knowledge since home-school collaboration can give significant information to both enmeshed sides (Work & Stafford, 1987; Gelfer, 1991; Billman, Geddes, & Hedges, 2005; Peters, Seeds, Goldstein, & Coleman, 2008).

According to the research, the personal school experiences and the bias of parents affect their perceptions about assessment methods in the school community. Quite a few parents are suspicious and show hesitancy towards authentic assessments (Shepard & Bliem, 1995). Understanding the parents' perceptions about children's assessment is an important issue for a number of reasons. These reasons include: (a) the misconceptions among parents about assessment in kindergarten or the lack of education of what child's assessment refers to, (b) to provide valuable insights into design of the assessment measures used in the kindergarten or program quality improvement plans, (c) to give multiple valid perspectives to parents that will inform them about the quality and the significance of the children's assessment, (d) to increase parents' understanding of the appropriate assessment practices used in the context of the preschool setting and the reasons they are implemented, (e) to enhance teacher's instructional practices and decisions for children's benefit and, (f) to involve parents and teachers in a collaborative context that will support and promote the child's development and will make children's thinking and learning visible.

To meet the appropriate standards for a successful assessment and try to acquire a balance among the above-mentioned factors, it is important to discern parents' views and convictions on child's assessment as parenthood is considered crucial at this stage of child development. A number of authors have pointed out that parents should be provided with teachers' evaluations on children's progress with profound updates, involved in school conferences and considered as a valued source of assessment information (Shepard & Bliem, 1995; Culbertson & Jalongo, 1999; Finello, 2011; Orillosa & Magno, 2013; Birbili & Tzioga, 2014). Early childhood practitioners and parents have the right to be conversant with the strengths and needs of children in order to provide effective support and learning opportunities either in the school setting or within the family environment (Brink, 2002; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Clinton & Guilar, 2016).

Taking into account the significance of children's assessment in kindergarten, an attempt is made by the present study to explore and look into parental perceptions about: (a) the children's assessment in the kindergarten in general, (b) their engagement in children's assessment and (c) the impact of the implementation of WSS, as an authentic assessment tool, in particular in the following parts.

1.1. The Challenge of Supporting Authentic Assessment in Preschool Education

The issue of authentic assessment in kindergarten has been identified by the researchers to a considerable extent as a significant procedure used for varied purposes. When referring to kindergarten community, assessment in the first school years is essential as it consists a key component to understand children's development in the early years. Taking into account that previous studies acknowledge the importance of parental involvement in children's learning (Hill & Taylor, 2004; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012), authentic assessment constitutes the appropriate context for the stakeholders to collaborate. Indeed, this type of evaluation involves children, educators and parents in an active way and promotes positive outcomes for everyone (Brink, 2002; Palm, 2008; Swaffield, 2011). In particular, authentic assessment is referred to as a systematic approach that collects data and useful information from children, teachers and parents reflecting and emphasizing on children's learning, achievement, real-life competencies in everyday routines over time and in real conditions (Hart, 1994; Bagnato, 2007; Doliopoulou & Gourgiotou, 2008; Riley, Miller, & Sorenson, 2016). Getting to the heart of authentic assessment, the literature highlights the importance of using alternative forms of assessment in any educational procedure (Dennis, Rueter, & Simpson, 2013). Authentic assessment approach recognizes the active role children play in acquisition of knowledge in natural settings or in pointed realistic tasks (Brassard & Boehm, 2007).

Assessment practices may be implemented through the use of various techniques and strategies that can be adapted for different situations in order to track children's progress in all areas of learning. According to Losardo and Notari-Syverson (2011), gaining insights into children's learning, needs, strengths and interests can be accomplished by observing children and documenting their work, considering them as the most common and appropriate ways in the context of children's evaluation. In the above context of this alternative assessment method, evaluation of the child is a shared responsibility of those who are involved in the educational process. In the authentic assessment environment, teachers and children can act effectively in the school community and set targets to improve the quality of teaching and learning process. Educators need to combine authentic assessment techniques with daily practice interpreting assessment as a part of effective planning of teaching and learning and not as an isolated event in

the daily school routine (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Downs & Strand, 2006; Bagnato, 2007; Wortham, 2008).

The challenge of supporting and utilizing alternative assessment approaches in early childhood education can contribute positively to teaching and learning. What research studies have shown over the last three decades is that authentic assessment constitutes an integral element of educational practice and is deemed necessary in order to: (a) specify the children's strengths, interests and needs, (b) identify and document children's achievement over time, (c) diagnose children who may be in need of specialized training, (d) support each child's self-confidence and self-esteem, (e) help children comprehend their personal learning advancement through critical thinking, reflection and feedback, (f) aid towards making appropriate instructional decisions or future instructions suited to the context of classroom (g) improve the educational program and its desired outcomes in a qualitative way and (h) give information to parents or other teachers of primary education (Epstein, Schweinhart, Debruin, & Robin, 2004; Grisham-Brown et al., 2006; Doliopoulou & Gourgiotou, 2008; Bagnato, McLean, Macy, & Neisworth, 2011; Dennis, Rueter, & Simpson, 2013).

As described earlier, it is clear and quite obvious that authentic assessment serves plenty of pedagogical purposes in the context of early childhood education as it is considered essential by policy makers, teachers, children and parents.

1.2. What Parents Know About Children's Assessment?

Another key feature of authenticity relevant to early childhood assessment is communication with family. Family involvement in preschool education can strengthen and support to a great extent children's well-being in social, cognitive and emotional level in a variety of appropriate ways. There is clear evidence that early childhood educational programs, curriculum standards, policies, school community, taking into account and responding effectively to the learning needs of all children encourage and emphasize strongly on building collaboration and partnership programs among parents and educators (Work & Stafford, 1987; Billman et al., 2005; Doliopoulou & Gourgiotou, 2008; Murray, Curran, & Zellers, 2008). Many aspects of effective authentic assessment require collaboration with families and kindergarten teachers. Parents have the right to be informed about how their children are doing in kindergarten and get an accurate picture of their school learning and improvement (Engel, 1993; Olmscheid, 1999). By showing simple examples of the daily kindergarten routine to parents, they are enabled to personally assess their children's growth and progress. Since parents have the right to access information about children's progress, this fact itself is a principal characteristic of education policies that give value to the practices which facilitate and promote authentic assessment tools in preschool practice (Dafermou, Koulouri, & Basagianni, 2006; NAEYC, 2009; Hall, Rutland, & Grisham-Brown, 2011).

In the light of the survey findings, children's learning and personal development constitute a shared responsibility for both teachers and parents (Becher, 1984; Baum & McMurray-Schwarz, 2004). It is particularly important to take into account parents' views on kindergarten assessment practices because they are considered as a significant factor in the whole school system. Research background indicates that parental perceptions about children's authentic assessment is an important issue that has been an ongoing concern for the researchers over the last decades but unfortunately the majority of these studies mainly sampled primary school parents and not kindergarten parents that often. Most parents, as data research indicates, support the use of authentic assessment in kindergarten (Shepard & Bliem, 1995; Hannon, 1997; Culbertson &

Jalongo, 1999; Osburn, Stegman, Suitt, & Ritter, 2004). Patricia Atkinson (2003) highlighted in her action research the importance of classroom assessment and the parental reports concerning useful information about the child's progress and not just summative types of assessment. Talking with families about children's assessment is a positive way to establish constructive home-school interactions, relationships or information exchange for the benefit of all children.

The trend to use alternative approaches of assessment and reporting is supported strongly in Meisels, Xue, Bickel, Nicholson, and Atkins-Burnett's (2010) study. The forenamed researchers have found that parents are supportive to performance assessment under the two following circumstances: (a) when school communities use systematically these assessments and (b) when school implements consistent informal communications between parents and educators.

In conclusion, this short literature review indicated that over the last three decades there has been an important change in assessment in early childhood education moving from formal testing to alternative forms of assessment.

1.3. The Structure of Work Sampling System: A General Overview

Work Sampling System (WSS) constitutes an instructional assessment tool that uses: (a) guidelines and checklists: a set of observational criteria to assist teachers focus on observation and evaluate student performance, (b) portfolios: unique collections of children's work and progress, and (c) summary reports: written informational reports on student performance and progress based on teachers' observations and documentation, checklist ratings and portfolio work (Dichtelmiller, Jablon, Dorfman, Marsden, & Meisels, 2001).

WSS contributes to monitoring children's self-growth by teachers across seven developmental domains: personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts and, physical development, health, and safety. Teachers make ratings three times per year at the end of each data collection period (autumn, winter, spring) using WSS Developmental Guidelines, creating in this way the profile of children's personal progress and the real duties they have to perform in different developmental areas. The process of collecting information systematically on what children have done or learned, and the evaluation of this information constitute two significant steps for WSS that teachers must follow when applying it in the classroom (Meisels, 1993).

The purpose of these three elements of WSS is to help educators document and assess children's academic skills, learning level, behaviors and school performance during their schooling from kindergarten to primary school in an appropriate way (Meisels, 2011). The worthiness of WSS is based on its use as an innovative systematic approach of children's learning progress during the school year. It is mainly based on the compilation of children's work and teachers' observations and documents collected from everyday experiences, routines, free and organized activities implemented in an authentic learning environment. It involves children, teachers and parents in the learning and assessment procedure, providing and sustaining meaningful feedback for the stakeholders (Meisels, 1997).

1.4. A Brief Critical Review of Work Sampling System

As it is mentioned above, Work Sampling System (WSS) emphasizes on the teacher's observations and on the processes that children utilize in order to acquire knowledge through authentic situations such as the classroom setting. According to Meisels (1997), the plurality of data and information emerged using teacher's observations, portfolios, developmental checklists

and summary reports, strengthens the learning and teaching process and outlines in detail each student's profile.

Meisels, Liaw, Dorfman and Nelson (1995) emphasize that the WSS implementation, as an alternative assessment tool, is a reliable and valid approach for assessing the learning progress of kindergarten children. In the study mentioned above, findings show that WSS can yield valid and adequate results as compared to traditional forms of assessment. Subsequent surveys with a larger sample of children ranged in age from 5 years to 10 years, confirmed and expanded the previous findings concerning the reliability, the validity and the consistency of teacher observations through the WSS implementation (Meisels, Bickel, Nicholson, Xue, & Atkins-Burnett, 2001; Meisels et al., 2010).

Also, the parental involvement in the children's assessment is an important aspect which is directly linked to the WSS philosophy. The mentioned assessment tool improves the cooperation among teachers and parents and fosters family involvement in the educational process. On account of this, teachers' meetings with parents at school are considered essential, as they are informed about children's performance and progress throughout the school year. Relevant findings are presented by the study of Meisels et al. (2001), in which parents have a positive attitude towards the information they receive and the benefits of the WSS implementation to their children.

The WSS is not offered free of charge, as it consists a commercial product available in paper and online. Nevertheless, the current research acknowledges the importance of children's assessment in preschool education by presenting the WSS assessment tool as an example of alternative practices in the assessment of young children. Public kindergartens and preschool educators could implement an authentic assessment based on the structure and the principles of the WSS assessment tool. It is recommended that kindergarten teachers find authentic forms of assessing their children and adapt or design an appropriate assessment tool, keeping in mind the principles and the purposes of assessment, the adequacy of the assessment techniques, the learning styles of each child and the inclusion of families.

2. METHOD

The concept of children's assessment in kindergarten nowadays is considered to be a significant issue that has been of great concern to the educational community. Many researchers reveal the value of children's assessment from preschool years and recognize its importance generally to the educational process in the classroom (Appl, 2000; Epstein et al., 2004; Sakellariou, 2006; Doliopoulou & Gourgiotou, 2008; Kazela & Kakana, 2009). The absence of an identifiable systematic research in Greece on this thematic unit directed the researchers to the survey as a first attempt to map the current situation. The present research was deemed essential as a part of gaining an understanding of the needs and concerns of parents with regard to children's assessment in Greek preschool education. The significance of early childhood assessment, the parents' perspectives in early childhood assessment and the implementation of innovative assessment practices play a vital role in the early years as they constitute co-dependent parameters of the educational process.

Based on the needs of relevant literature, the purpose of this study is to investigate parents' perceptions towards the role and the function of the child's authentic assessment in preschool education, the impact of the application of alternative forms of assessment such as the Work Sampling System implementation and how parents respond to and perceive those evaluation

methods. The understanding and knowledge gained from this study will benefit teachers, families and communities, advancing educational practices and policies in the context of early childhood education.

2.1. Research Questions

In order to specify the parental perceptions on child's assessment in kindergarten, the following research questions guided this study:

1. What are parent's perceptions of the assessment implementation and its significance in the kindergarten classroom?
2. How do parents react to WSS—the performance assessment in use—overall?
3. Which specific factors affect parents' overall perceptions to WSS?
4. To what extent is the role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in preschool education related to the role of the portfolio, the children's developmental checklists and the kindergarten teacher's summary reports?
5. What are parents' perceptions about their engagement in children's assessment?

2.2. Study design

A research survey was designed and implemented by the researchers in order to explore and answer the research questions. While conducting a research survey it becomes clear that there are many benefits such as reliability and flexibility, high representativeness, low cost, convenient data gathering (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2008; Tuckman & Harper, 2012). Additionally, the research followed the principles of case study, as it was implemented in a public all-day kindergarten. The design of the present study is quantitative and it was conducted as an exploratory case study.

There are several categories of case study. Yin (1994) notes three categories, namely exploratory, descriptive and explanatory case studies. First, exploratory case studies set to explore any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher. For instance, a researcher conducting an exploratory case study on individual's reading process may ask general questions, such as, "Does a student use any strategies when he reads a text?" and "if so, how often?". These general questions are meant to open up the door for further examination of the phenomenon observed. In this case study, also, prior fieldwork and small-scale data collection may be conducted before the research questions and hypotheses are proposed. As a prelude, this initial work helps prepare a framework of the study. A pilot study is considered an example of an exploratory case study (Yin, 1984; McDonough & McDonough, 1997) and is crucial in determining the protocol that will be used. By using the case study method, researchers can explore, examine and explicate data in real-life context. This type of approach can be exploratory, constructive or confirmatory when there is a need to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, event or phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2012; Bryman, 2016).

2.3. Research Process

The study was conducted during the school year 2015-2016 in a public all-day kindergarten in the prefecture of Chania in Greece by the kindergarten teacher himself. The parents whose children were enrolled in this kindergarten participated in this study (n=18). The WSS test was translated in Greek according to the developmental directions of the Greek Cross-Thematic Curriculum Framework and the Kindergarten Teachers' Guide. Permission was given by the authors to translate and use the assessment tools. The translation process was carried out according

to the study published by Beaton, Bombardier, Guillemin and Ferraz (2000) as follows: (i) Translation into Greek: the WSS was translated by two native-speaking Greek translators, resulting in translations T1 and T2. (ii) Analysis: both translations were analyzed to reach a consensus on a single translation (T12). (iii) Back translation to English: native-speaking English translators, who were unaware of the process carried out, translated T12 into two new English versions (RT1 and RT2). (iv) Revision by an expert committee: the committee was comprised of four occupational therapists, two translators, and two researchers familiar with the tool. After analyzing all the versions (T1, T2, T12, RT1, and RT2), a pre-final Greek version was chosen. (v) Pilot testing of the pre-final version: in this phase, the pre-final version was used on a sample of 20 children, 18 parents and two kindergarten teachers, who were subsequently interviewed regarding any difficulties they had in understanding the meaning of the questions and the responses. Incidents of non-completed and repeated replies were also analyzed (i.e., when all participants provide the same response to a specific question). (vi) Use of the tool: the present pilot WSS was designed and the tool was administered to 40 people, including two teachers, 20 children and 18 parents. (vii) Conclusions: errors and typing mistakes which derived in the final version of the WSS were checked. This version was then sent to the authors of the original WSS.

At the start of the school year 2015-2016, parents were informed in detail about the assessment tool, in order to create a positive framework for cooperation and to point out the significance of the use of authentic assessment in kindergarten.

In the first phase, the kindergarten teachers informed the parents generally about the use of alternative forms of assessment in kindergarten and presented, in particular, the WSS assessment tool and its components. Instructions about its use were given and clarification questions were answered in order to highlight the effectiveness of a reliable and valid assessment tool in preschool children such as the Work Sampling System (WSS). After presentation, the parents signed the consent form for participation in the research, according to the instructions of the Greek Institute of Educational Policy (IEP).

In the second phase, the kindergarten teachers informed the children about the use of WSS in classroom. Each child had his own folder which included: (a) the WSS checklist, (b) a portfolio folder, and (c) Summary Reports of kindergarten teachers about child's development. Near the end of the first term, teachers used the WSS Developmental Guidelines book to rate children based on their observations and the documents in the children's portfolios. Completed checklists and summary reports were announced in meetings with parents three times per year in order to provide useful information about children's performance, skills, knowledge and behaviors. Checklists and summary reports were also used in order to plan developmentally appropriate classroom experiences throughout the school year by the teachers. At the end of each term, each family kept the WSS evaluation tool at home for a week helping the family feedback and reflected on child's achievements.

At the end of the school year 2015-2016, the kindergarten teachers organized a meeting with parents and discussed the benefits of children's assessment in kindergarten. The kindergarten teachers and parents discussed their aspirations and the center philosophy of children's assessment together. All participants were asked to look back over the year at their children's progress in order to share understanding and knowledge about children's assessment, their perceptions and final reports about the implementation of WSS during the school year and their views about future goals. Parents had a meaningful and productive discussion as they expressed their viewpoints and concerns realizing the positive outcomes of assessment at the preschool setting.

2.4. Sample - Participants

The sample of the research consisted of 18 parents, whose children were enrolled in a public all-day kindergarten in the prefecture of Chania during the school year 2015-2016. The demographic characteristics of the sample are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	5	27.8
	Female	13	72.2
SUM		18	100.0
Age	23-33	5	27.8
	34-44	13	72.2
Employment status	Civil servant	5	27.8
	Private employee	8	44.4
	Self-employed	4	22.2
	Else	1	5.6
Educational level	Compulsory Secondary Education	1	5.6
	Post-Compulsory Secondary Education	12	66.7
	University education/Technical Educational Institute	5	27.8
Household composition	Two people	2	11.1
	Three people	2	11.1
	Four people	9	50.0
	Five people	4	22.2
	More than five people	1	5.6
Marital status	Married	17	94.4
	Divorced	1	5.6

Specifically, it seems that 94.4% of the sample are married and females form the majority of the sample. Furthermore, the majority of the sample belongs to the age group of 34-44 and as far as the employment status of parents is concerned, 44.4% are private-employees and 27.8% are civil servants. Moreover, 66.7% of the sample are graduates of the Post-Compulsory Secondary Education and 27.8% of the sample are graduates of the University Education. Furthermore, half of the participants (50.0%) said that their household consisted of four people.

2.5. Data Collection Tool

Data collection in this study consisted of one questionnaire which was developed by the researchers and was divided into three parts. The first part comprised closed-ended questions about the demographic characteristics of the sample. The second part consisted of a closed-ended question about the significance of the implementation of children's assessment in preschool education. The third part comprised: (a) closed-ended questions about the importance of portfolio assessment, developmental checklists and summary reports of WSS in the kindergarten, (b) open-

ended questions regarding the benefits and the drawbacks of the WSS application in kindergarten during the school year, the presence of parental involvement or not in the children's evaluation process and additional opinions relevant to the child's assessment. The questions of the second part were designed on a 5-point Likert scale (not at all, a little, enough, a lot, very much) and the questions of the third part on a 5-semantic differential scale (1=minimum, 2, 3, 4, 5=maximum). All the questionnaires were accompanied by a letter explaining the purpose of the research study, ensuring the participants' anonymity and the non-disclosure of personal data.

In the present study, internal consistency of the questionnaire was calculated by Cronbach's Alpha, as the most important and common measure of scale reliability (Field, 2009). The following table showed that the three scales have high internal consistency (0.923) with a range between 0.728 and 0.923, indicating that the researchers' instrument has a good degree of reliability and confirming its use for data collection.

Table 2. Reliability analysis of measurement scales (Cronbach's Alpha)

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
The role of the implementation of the children's evaluation in preschool education	0.845	7
The role of the portfolio as an assessment tool in kindergarten	0.728	6
The role of the children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers' summary reports	0.923	7

2.6. Data Analysis

Data analyses included: (a) a descriptive analysis to calculate the median, range, frequencies, percentages of parental views, (b) a reliability analysis to examine the reliability of a part of the questionnaire, and (c) a Spearman Rank Correlation to measure relationships. After the surveys were returned, data were encoded and responses were registered on the computer for statistical analysis. The data analysis was performed by using SPSS 21.0, statistical software for Windows.

3. FINDINGS

In the first part of the questionnaire reference was made to the demographic characteristics of the research sample. The second part of the questionnaire included a question concerning the parents' views about the significance of the implementation of children's assessment in preschool education. Table 3 presents the level of agreement of the participants regarding the implementation of the children's assessment in preschool education.

Table 3. The role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in preschool education

Assessment in preschool education	Not at all	A little	Enough	A lot	Very much	Median	Range
Assessment helps the kindergarten teacher to understand the level of knowledge and skills gained by children.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	2 (11.1)	15 (83.3)	5.0	2.0
Assessment in kindergarten helps the teacher make instructional design decisions.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	6 (33.3)	11 (61.1)	5.0	2.0
Assessment enables the kindergarten teacher to assess the performance and the progress of young children.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	1 (5.6)	16 (88.9)	5.0	2.0
Assessment in kindergarten assists to record the children's learning development during the school year.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	16 (88.9)	5.0	1.0
Assessment in kindergarten facilitates the actual learning of young children.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	2 (11.1)	14 (77.8)	5.0	2.0
Assessment aids the teacher to identify children with learning difficulties or behavioral problems.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	2 (11.1)	14 (77.8)	5.0	2.0
Assessment in kindergarten facilitates briefing of the family.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	1 (5.6)	16 (88.9)	5.0	2.0

In the third part of the questionnaire, two questions were included about the importance of portfolio assessment, developmental checklists and summary reports of WSS in the kindergarten and three questions regarding the benefits and the drawbacks of the WSS application in kindergarten, the presence of parental involvement in the children's assessment and additional opinions relevant to the child's assessment. Table 4 presents the percentage of parents' ratings regarding the role of the children's portfolio as an assessment tool. Also, information is provided about the median and the range of their viewpoints.

Table 4. The role of the portfolio as an assessment tool in kindergarten

Portfolio assessment	Lower degree				Higher degree	Median	Range
	1	2	3	4	5		
Helps the children to be involved actively in daily kindergarten learning procedures.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (22.2)	14 (77.8)	5.0	1.0
Helps the children to self-assessment procedure and observe their progress.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	5 (27.8)	11 (61.1)	5.0	2.0
Helps the children to rethink and reflect on how they did their work or how they acquired knowledge.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	2 (11.1)	14 (77.8)	5.0	2.0
Helps the children to develop feelings of autonomy, self-esteem, individual choices and pride.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	4 (22.2)	12 (66.7)	5.0	2.0
Urges the children to express their personal interests, needs and abilities.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (38.9)	11 (61.1)	5.0	1.0
Helps the children, the kindergarten teachers and the parents to assess potential and possible weaknesses.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	3 (16.7)	14 (77.8)	5.0	2.0

As Table 4 shows, the majority of the parents (77.8 %) seems to perceive the significance of the portfolio as it helps the children largely to be involved actively in daily kindergarten learning procedures. At the same time, the view that portfolio helps the children to rethink and reflect on how they did their work or how they acquired knowledge is supported by the 77.8 % of the sample. Ultimately, in a few cases the portfolio assessment is motivational as it urges children to express their personal interests, needs and abilities.

The value of the use of children’s checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports is the upcoming research question. Table 5 presents the median and the range of parental views regarding the value of the use of children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports.

Table 5. The value of the use of developmental checklists and summary reports

Children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports help parents to understand	Lower degree				Higher degree	Median	Range
	1	2	3	4	5		
The way children think and develop	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	1 (5.6)	2 (11.1)	14 (77.8)	5.0	3.0
The learning process of each child individually in every period of the school year	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	5 (27.8)	12 (66.7)	5.0	2.0
Children’s potential weaknesses	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	4 (22.2)	12 (66.7)	5.0	2.0
Children’s progress in accordance with the principles and objectives of the kindergarten curriculum	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	5 (27.8)	12 (66.7)	5.0	2.0
The level of knowledge, skills or attitudes children have acquired	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	5 (27.8)	12 (66.7)	5.0	2.0
The potential behavioral problems or learning difficulties of each child.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (16.7)	3 (16.7)	12 (66.7)	5.0	2.0
The kindergarten daily program and the cognitive learning areas.	0 (0.0)	1 (5.6)	1 (5.6)	4 (22.2)	12 (66.7)	5.0	3.0
Percentage (%)							

According to Table 5, it seems that the use of children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports offers an important advantage to parents. They gain an understanding of the multiple ways their children think and develop. Finally, in many instances it is evident that children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports provide parents with considerable information regarding the learning progress, the potential weaknesses of their children and the function of the kindergarten in relation with the principles of the curriculum.

The following research question concerns the benefits and the drawbacks of the WSS application in kindergarten during the school year. Table 6 shows the frequencies and the percentages of parents’ ratings concerning the benefits of the WSS assessment tool.

Table 6. The benefits of the use of Work Sampling System

	Frequency	Percent
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development, according to the kindergarten curriculum.	6	33.3
Children are actively involved in a continuous procedure of development and the learning process is enhanced.	1	5.6
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development according to the kindergarten curriculum, an understanding of their potential, weaknesses and knowledge level and a diagnostic means of possible learning-behavioral problems.	2	11.1
It is an understanding of the children's knowledge level, a frequent parental briefing and an indicator of the children's active involvement in the learning process.	1	5.6
It is an understanding of the children's knowledge level and a means of assisting the child's self-assessment.	1	5.6
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development according to the kindergarten curriculum and an understanding of the children's potential, weaknesses and knowledge level by teachers and parents.	3	16.7
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development according to the kindergarten curriculum, an understanding of the children's knowledge level, an indicator of the active involvement of the children in a continuous procedure of development and an indicator of the enhancement of the learning process.	1	5.6
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development according to the kindergarten curriculum, an understanding of the children's potential, weaknesses and knowledge level by teachers and parents, an indicator of the active involvement of the children in a continuous procedure of development and an indicator of the enhancement of the learning process.	1	5.6
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development according to the kindergarten curriculum and a pedagogical documentation of children's learning experiences.	1	5.6
It is an integrated recording of the child's progress and development according to the kindergarten curriculum, an understanding of the children's knowledge level, an understanding of the children's potential, weaknesses and knowledge level by teachers and parents and a means that encourages children to express their needs, interests and efforts.	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

As it can be seen in Table 6, it is clear that the most important advantage of WSS implementation in preschool classroom is that the assessment tool is considered as an integral recording of child's progress and development, according to the basic principles of the kindergarten curriculum. Meanwhile, an average percentage of the respondents (16.7%) consider the use of WSS significant because they gain a better understanding of their children's potential, weaknesses and knowledge level both by teachers and parents.

In addition, Table 7 shows the frequencies and the percentages of parents' ratings concerning the drawbacks of the WSS assessment tool.

Table 7. The drawbacks of the use of Work Sampling System

	Frequency	Percent
As an autonomous assessment tool (WSS) cannot function well, unless kindergarten teachers organize briefings with parents simultaneously.	1	5.6
The incorrect reading and interpretation of WSS by parents can cause real angst or create high expectations from the children.	1	5.6
The absence of a numerical scale does not always help the interpretation and understanding of the child's progress.	1	5.6
It's a time-consuming process for the kindergarten teacher to collect, analyze and interpret the related data concerning the assessment of each child.	4	22.2
There is a possibility of failing to record everything which takes place in the classroom by the teachers.	2	11.1
As an autonomous assessment tool (WSS) cannot function well, unless kindergarten teachers organize briefings with parents simultaneously, it is necessary all three components of WSS be used in parallel otherwise the WSS assessment tool will not be realized to its full extent.	1	5.6
No disadvantages found.	8	44.4
Total	18	100.0

In particular, the majority of parents (44.4%) did not mention any drawbacks of the WSS use in the classroom while a small percentage of the sample (22.2%) held the view that kindergarten teachers procrastinate when they collect, analyze and interpret each child's assessment data.

The presence of parental engagement in the children's assessment at kindergarten is the next research question. Table 8 shows the frequency and the percentage of parents preferring to be engaged in children's assessment at kindergarten.

Table 8. Parental engagement in children's assessment

	Frequency	Percent
Parents want to get engaged in children's assessment	10	55.6
Parents do not want to get engaged in children's assessment	8	44.4
Total	18	100.0

The penultimate research question was designed to explore the views of parents about the reasons why parents should be engaged in the child's assessment or why they should not be engaged. 16.7% of the sample stated that parental engagement in assessment procedures help them be informed about their child's learning development or weaknesses. Also, their engagement urges them to collaborate with kindergarten teachers to solve any problems. Moreover, a small

percentage (5.6%) claims that parents could provide a comprehensive view of their children through home observations, and thus could contribute to the whole process of evaluation. However, 16.7% of the sample is of the opinion that children's assessment implemented by kindergarten teachers is adequately comprehensive and carefully organized. Therefore, parents need not be engaged. Besides, in a few cases (11.2 %), parents do not consider their engagement in children's assessment necessary because either they lack adequate knowledge to evaluate their children or they cannot judge their children objectively.

Finally, regarding parents' views about assessment procedures in kindergarten, the 83.3% of the sample didn't make any statements.

3.1. Correlations Between Subscales

The correlation between children's assessment, portfolio assessment, children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers' summary reports was checked by Spearman Rank Correlation (ρ). The analysis findings are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. Correlations between subscales

	The role of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten	The role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports
The role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in preschool education	0.663 ($p = 0.003$)	0.763 ($p < 0.001$)
The role of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten	–	0.737 ($p < 0.001$)

As Table 9 shows, it seems that the role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in preschool education is positively correlated with both the role of the portfolio (Spearman's $r = 0.663$; $p = 0.003$) and the role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports (Spearman's $r = 0.763$; $p < 0.001$). Also, the role of the portfolio, as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten, is positively correlated with the role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports (Spearman's $r = 0.737$; $p < 0.001$).

3.2. Correlations Between Parental Perceptions and their Demographic Factors

The impact of gender, employment status, educational level and household composition on parents' reactions to children's authentic assessment is presented in Tables 10, 11, 12 and 13.

Table 10. The impact of gender on parents' reactions

		N	Mean	SD	p-value
The role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in early childhood education	Male	5	33.60	1.673	0.999
	Female	13	33.08	3.252	
The role of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten	Male	5	28.00	2.550	0.878
	Female	13	27.77	2.421	
The role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports	Male	5	33.20	2.490	0.683
	Female	13	31.54	4.701	

Table 11. The impact of employment status on parents' reactions

		N	Mean	SD	p-value
The role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in early childhood education	Civil servant	5	31.40	4.980	0.608
	Private employee	8	33.88	1.356	
	Self-employed	4	34.25	0.957	
The role of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten	Civil servant	5	27.00	2.450	0.415
	Private employee	8	28.00	2.564	
	Self-employed	4	28.75	2.500	
The role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports	Civil servant	5	30.60	6.427	0.927
	Private employee	8	32.38	3.292	
	Self-employed	4	32.75	3.862	

Table 12. The impact of educational level on parents' reactions

		N	Mean	SD	p-value
The role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in early childhood education	Post-Compulsory Secondary Education	12	34.00	1.207	0.317
	University education/Technical Educational Institute	5	31.00	4.690	
The role of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten	Post-Compulsory Secondary Education	12	28.42	2.275	0.382
	University education/Technical Educational Institute	5	26.00	1.871	
The role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports	Post-Compulsory Secondary Education	12	33.17	2.480	0.322
	University education/Technical Educational Institute	5	28.60	6.107	

Table 13. The impact of household composition on parents' reactions

	Family members	N	Mean	SD	p-value
The role of the implementation of the child's evaluation in early childhood education	Two people	2	34.50	0.707	0.628
	Three people	2	33.50	0.707	
	Four people	9	33.78	1.716	
	Five people	4	31.25	5.560	
The role of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in the kindergarten	Two people	2	30.00	0.000	0.325
	Three people	2	29.50	0.707	
	Four people	9	27.22	2.729	
	Five people	4	28.00	1.828	
The role of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teacher's summary reports	Two people	2	33.00	2.828	0.875
	Three people	2	34.00	0.000	
	Four people	9	32.56	3.468	
	Five people	4	30.50	7.048	

According to Tables 10, 11, 12 and 13, there is no correlation between the demographic characteristics of the respondents (gender, employment status, educational level and household composition) and the parental reactions to children's assessment in kindergarten.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The aim of the present study was to explore the parents' perceptions upon: (a) the significance of child's assessment in preschool education, and (b) the impact of the implementation of the Work Sampling System as an assessment tool on the kindergarten. The majority of the findings of the present study reflect a great parental admission of the significance of children's assessment in preschool education through the use of alternative forms as well as positive attitudes towards the Work Sampling System.

The results of the study revealed that parents acknowledge the function of assessment in kindergarten as an important tool for preschool teachers in order to evaluate the performance and progress of young children. Moreover, most parents find it important to communicate with kindergarten teachers and get feedback regarding their children's progress and learning development. Based on parents' answers, it is obvious that parents identify the major role of authentic assessment in kindergarten and they think it is positive to implement authentic assessment practices in the kindergarten. Similar findings are presented by Rutland and Hall (2013) and Ozturk (2013). Besides, our finding confirms an existing gap in parental views concerning young children's assessment as almost the whole research evidence focuses mostly on the educators' perspectives of the children's assessment, thus setting aside the parental involvement.

Considering the parent's views about the contribution of Work Sampling System portfolio assessment, approximately two thirds of the parents agree that: (a) it helps children to participate energetically and to a great extent in their learning process and reflect on how they acquired knowledge, and (b) it assists teachers, parents and children become aware of their potential or weaknesses in the context of kindergarten setting. Similar findings are also presented and confirmed by the research of Meisels et al. (2010), as parents' ratings indicated the portfolio as an important assessment tool with benefits for everyone who is involved in the evaluation process. Besides, many research studies agree with our finding regarding the meaningful role of using portfolios as an alternative method with preschool children for various pedagogical purposes (Engel, 1993; Gilkerson & Hanson, 2000; Peters, Hartley, Rogers, Smith, & Carr, 2009; Rekalidou, Zantali, & Sofianidou, 2010; Chen & Cheng, 2011; Alacam & Olgan, 2015).

Also, most of the respondents pointed out the importance of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers' summary reports. More specifically, parents concede that both assessment tools that is children's developmental checklists and teachers' summary reports, helped them comprehend the way children think and develop in the kindergarten context. As findings show, nearly 66.7% of parents stated that the WSS tools (except portfolio) are helpful in many ways, considering that: (a) they provide valuable feedback pertaining to the learning process, the level of knowledge, skills or attitudes, potential and possible weaknesses of each child individually in every term and in accordance with the principles and objectives of the kindergarten curriculum, (b) they enlighten possible behavioral problems or learning difficulties of each child, and (c) they give more straightforward information about the kindergarten daily program in general and its cognitive learning areas in particular.

In conclusion, the impact of the implementation of children's developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers' summary reports seems very clear in parents' views. These results are consistent with the findings of relevant surveys that were conducted in the relevant literature (Diffily, 1994; Hannon, 1997; Meisels et al., 2010). It is worth mentioning that the parents paid plenty of attention to those two assessment tools as most of them commented positively on the detailed information they gathered. Parents thought that the new assessment system was especially important to them when it was presented thoroughly in the first term and acknowledged its value, considering it as an appropriate and a valid assessment tool for their children. In the Greek kindergarten, parents are used to informal briefing by kindergarten teachers or parent-teacher group meetings overlooking children's portfolios.

With regard to the advantages of the WSS implementation in the kindergarten, there is a variety of positive opinions in parents' written responses and remarks. The parents observed many benefits in the use of WSS in the kindergarten. The integrated recording of child's progress and development, according to Greek kindergarten curriculum, is recorded as the most common positive advantage. Many individual responses from parents consider the WSS essential in the kindergarten for the following reasons: (a) it involves children in a continuous procedure of development and enhancement of learning process, being at the same time a pedagogical documentation of their learning experiences, (b) it provides a holistic understanding of children's potential, weaknesses and knowledge level and is a diagnostic means of possible learning-behavioral problems, (c) it gives plenty sources of information to parents, and (d) it supports children's self-assessment and encourages them to highlight their needs, interests and efforts in kindergarten everyday activities.

The majority of these positive opinions of parents are justified because children made progress that was noticed through the school year by them as kindergarten teachers used portfolio assessment in the specific kindergarten in the last school year as an alternative method of evaluation. The same findings are presented by the study of Meisels et al. (2010), in which a large percentage of parents (80%) gave high ratings to the use of WSS as well, confirming the benefits for their children.

In order to fully explore parents' views on the drawbacks of the WSS use in kindergarten, responses from four parents indicated that it is a time-consuming process for the kindergarten teacher to collect, analyze and interpret the related data concerning the assessment of each child. Parents strongly realize that collecting the necessary amount of evidence for early learning of children's progress takes a lot of time and is a difficult task for many kindergarten teachers. This result is supported by several studies which identified children's assessment as a complex issue for teachers because they have to provide a valuable profile and document the progress of students investing a lot of time in this significant pedagogical procedure (Appl, 2000; Epstein et al., 2004).

The results also showed that WSS cannot be implemented in kindergarten as an autonomous and an independent assessment tool unless kindergarten teachers organize briefings with parents simultaneously. The implementation of the WSS helps families understand: (a) what assessment is, (b) what the goal of child's assessment is, (c) what kind of alternative assessment methods are used in kindergarten, and (d) what the assessment information means to their child's learning progress and development (Brink, 2002). It is necessary that the portfolio, the developmental checklists and the kindergarten teachers' summary reports - the three main interrelated elements - to function as a whole. Otherwise, the WSS assessment tool cannot be realized to its full extent (Dichtelmiller et al., 2001). Parents need not only an extensive understanding of children's

learning development but also comprehensive knowledge of assessment tools which are appropriate for their children. Thus, this finding confirms other research findings that communication and briefing among educators and parents can be beneficial (Culbertson & Jalongo, 1999; Billman et al., 2005; Murray et al., 2008).

The concept of parental engagement in child's assessment and its role in the overall assessment approach was indicated positively by the respondents. Analyzing the term "parental engagement" in the present study and according to the ratings of the sample, it includes: (a) comprehension of children's learning development, (b) communication with kindergarten teachers, (c) gathering home-based information about children's progress, and (d) collaboration between teachers-parents, which can sort out problems. Similar findings are also presented by Atkinson (2003), Grisham-Brown et al. (2006), and Birbili and Tzioga (2014).

Not surprisingly, parents also describe children's assessment implemented by kindergarten teachers as adequately comprehensive and carefully organized. Therefore, it is not necessary for them to get involved. Parents seemed to be comfortable and satisfied to a great extent with teacher's judgment on child's learning as they became more aware of the children's skills and abilities through the assessment procedure. The same findings are presented in research studies conducted by Meisels et al. (2001) and Shumow (2001). In contrast, slightly less than a third of parents (11.2%) stated that they do not consider their involvement in children's assessment substantial because either they lack adequate knowledge to assess children or they cannot be objective judging their children. In this way, parents affirmed that they have confidence in the kindergarten teacher's role as an assessor. Ultimately, the parental reactions to children's assessment do not vary due to demographics as the findings did not show any positive correlation between them.

5. CONCLUSION

Fostering the use of authentic assessment in preschool education is a demanding and at the same time an essential process beneficial for everyone who is involved in this meaningful procedure. What is clear is that all three involved parts namely the child, the teachers and the parents should interact as a useful model and as an integral part of the educational process in early childhood education. This research paper pointed out the views of parents regarding the significance of the child's assessment and the impact of the implementation of the Work Sampling System in a Greek kindergarten.

In this research, the parents considered the implementation of child's assessment useful for everyone who is involved in children's learning and development. The parents seem supportive and satisfied with the forms and functions of the assessment procedure, as they value the children's outcomes throughout the school year. Authentic assessment in kindergarten is equally important as the parents get useful information about children's performance and progress.

The clear message is that assessment in preschool education generally and the implementation of authentic assessment tools more specifically, such as WSS, may well be substantial. The greatest value in authentic assessment lies in children, teachers and parents making use of partnerships to enhance the educational process. Engaging in this type of assessment environment, children, teachers and parents collaborate in an ongoing process that will lead to a greater student learning and personal development.

5.1. Limitations and Future Directions

Although this research has reached its aims and yielded some findings, there were some unavoidable limitations. The main limitation of this study is the use of a small number of participants as it does not allow the generalization of the research results and findings. The small population size of the kindergarten and the parental availability, as the whole of them are employees, directed the researchers to implement quantitative research methodology. The implementation of qualitative methods, such as semi-structured group and individual interviews with parents, or a mixed methods research could provide an in-depth analysis and invaluable information of the parental perceptions upon the children's assessment in preschool education. Nevertheless, the present study aims to point out the significance of young children's evaluation in preschool education in general and the parental views in this procedure in particular. Future research and further studies are needed to understand the possible existing gap between parents' beliefs and viewpoints regarding children's authentic assessment in kindergartens. A larger sample would allow for more analyses to determine parents' ratings concerning this particular issue. The views of parents should serve as a starting point for new changes and innovations in assessment of young children in preschool education.

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Supplementary

Parents' perceptions towards the role and the function of the child's authentic assessment in preschool education and the impact of the application of alternative forms of assessment such as the Work Sampling System implementation

Parents' questionnaire

PART I

1.1 Please tick [√] the appropriate box:

- 1. Gender:** Male Female

- 2. Age:** 19 – 22 23 – 33 34 – 44 45 – 55

- 3. Employment status:** Civil servant Private employee
 Self-employed Unemployed Else

- 4. Highest educational level:** Primary Education Compulsory Secondary Education
 Post-Compulsory Secondary Education
 University education/Technical Educational Institute
 Master's degree Doctorate degree

- 5. Household composition:** 1 2 3 4 5 > 5

- 6. Marital status:** Never married Married Divorced Widowed
 Cohabitation agreement Separated

PART II

2.1 The implementation of children’s assessment in preschool education.

In this section, indicate the degree to which you agree the statement is important for you. Rate each statement by circling a number between 1 and 5 where the numbers mean the following:

1= not at all, 2= a little, 3= enough, 4= a lot and 5= very much

The implementation of children’s assessment in preschool education	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	ENOUGH	A LOT	VERY MUCH
1. Assessment helps the kindergarten teacher to understand the level of knowledge and skills conquered by children.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Assessment in kindergarten helps the teacher make instructional design decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Assessment enables the kindergarten teacher to assess the performance and the progress of young children.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assessment in kindergarten assists to record the children’s learning development during the school year.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Assessment in kindergarten facilitates the actual learning of young children.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Assessment aids the teacher to identify children with learning difficulties or behavioral problems.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Assessment in kindergarten facilitates briefing of the family.	1	2	3	4	5

PART III

3.1 The methods and the techniques of children’s authentic assessment using the Work Sampling System.

3.1.1 Portfolio assessment

In this section, indicate the degree to which you agree the statement is true for you. Rate each statement by circling a number between 1 and 5 where the numbers mean the following:

1= minimum and 5= maximum

Minimum

1	2	3	4	5
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Maximum

Portfolio assessment					
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Helps the children to be involved actively in daily kindergarten learning procedures.					
2. Helps the children to self-assessment procedure and observe their progress.					
3. Helps the children to rethink and reflect on how they did their work or how they acquired knowledge.					
4. Helps the children to develop feelings of autonomy, self-esteem, individual choices and pride.					
5. Urges the children to express their personal interests, needs and abilities.					
6. Helps the children, the kindergarten teachers and the parents to assess potential and possible weaknesses.					

3.1.2 Children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports.

In this section, indicate the degree to which you agree the statement is true for you concerning the importance of the children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports. Rate each statement by circling a number between 1 and 5 where the numbers mean the following:

1= minimum and 5= maximum

Minimum

Maximum

1	2	3	4	5
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Children’s developmental checklists and kindergarten teachers’ summary reports help parents to understand					
1. The way children think and develop.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The learning process of each child individually in every period of the school year.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Children’s potential and possible weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Children’s progress in accordance with the principles and objectives of the kindergarten curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The level of knowledge, skills or attitudes children have acquired.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The potential behavioral problems or learning difficulties of each child.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The kindergarten daily program and the cognitive learning areas.	1	2	3	4	5

3.2 An overall evaluation of Work Sampling System as an assessment tool for children.

3.2.1 Please mention two benefits and two drawbacks of the WSS application in kindergarten this school year.

Benefits

- 1.....
.....
.....
- 2.....
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.....

Drawbacks

- 1.....
.....
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- 2.....
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3.2.2 Do you think that parents should be engaged in the assessment process of their children? If yes, how? If not, why?

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3.2.3 If you have additional opinion or remark concerning the process of kindergarten assessment that has not been reported, please mention:

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Thank you very much for your participation and cooperation.