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Inferences on Turkish Education Policies in the Light of International Education Policy Studies following the Compulsory Education Reform

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Policy which is defined as a process is evaluated as a concept that is regenerated and interpreted at different spaces (Veselý 2012). Policy development is a complex planning process with a certain goal. According to the traditional opinion, problem solving requires the finding of a solution based on a certain policy. It is thanks to the emerging policy that the appearance and management of effective changes may be attained (Weaver-Hightower 2008).

Education is undoubtedly one of the most important fields for which solutions to problems, as well as effective changes, are sought for via formation of policies. Education policy makers think that education serves a wide range of purposes independent of their political tendencies. Education is discussed as a concept with many different functions such as social adaptation, political stability, and economic development (Tomiak 1992). Such importance of education for countries makes it important to develop and evaluate effective education policies.

Every education system is structured around a perspective of teaching and learning as well as the organization of knowledge (Gonçalves et al. 2012). Each education system has different concrete and measurable goals as well as abstract objectives. Hence, it is quite difficult to decide whether an education policy has been successful or not (Burdett and O'Donnell 2016). Policy changes in the field of education are not only related with educational causes and outcomes, socio-political environment is also effective in this issue. Education processes are affected by social, economic, and cultural contexts. Contextual parameters such as values of a country, its economic status, and demographic characteristics may play a definitive role on education processes (Veselý 2012). Relations between the countries along with their different political, historical, and economic characteristics result in differences in the form and legibility of their education policy preferences, thus resulting in different trajectories for educational change (Johnson 2006). Even though different characteristics of countries result in different education policies, the developments that take place in our time cultivate to new and common needs. The education systems of countries go through a similar transformation process thanks to these new and common needs.

Education policies continue to change as socio-cultural needs, along with the changing needs of students, parents, and society. The efforts of countries for transforming education are shaped around national economic difficulties and the needs to adapt to the global economy. This change will not also provide a better future from a social perspective, but will also enable the formation of a more competitive economy through the development of human capital. Education policy makers strive to put into effect the inspection and intervention applications for providing a performance increase in education systems, schools, and students (Thomson, Lingard, and

Wrigley 2012). Globalization undoubtedly plays a significant role in the changing of the needs of a society and hence the needs of education systems.

The globalization, formation, and spreading of education policy are given significant importance in the field of critical education policy (Singh 2015). Globalization is considered a result of neo-liberal characteristics such as competition and market regulations. Re-culturing of education administration and schools takes place during this process by way of social and political changes. Globalization has increased the market understanding and accountability in education; political regimes that reflect neo-liberal values and desires have been included within the scope of global effects (Angus 2004). Performance in education is becoming more and more important as a result of globalization. Student performance is measured via national tests, teacher performance via administrative mechanisms, and school performances by way of inspection results or exams (Adams 2016). Such effects of globalization on education policies strengthen political interactions as well as political adaptations and borrowings among countries.

Policies are formed by different people in different spaces and they are open to change as they move among spaces (Ball 2015). It is necessary to understand how policy transfer takes place among countries in order to understand the application of policy decisions in different contexts. Cultural differences may result in misunderstandings and the missing out of certain issues during this process. There are different means for policy borrowing. The borrowing of policies is different from the learning of policies or taking them as reference. A real policy transfer is not the case in policy referencing or learning (Burdett and O'Donnell 2016). At this point, the concept of "policyscape" is used for explaining global education policies. Policyscape is a concept that has emerged as a result of studies on global education policies and applications. It can be stated that this concept is based on the concept of "ideoscape" that Appadurai (1990, 1996) uses in explaining how opinions related with education policy establish connections with other opinions as they pass from country to country. Carney (2009) defines this concept as an educational ideoscape that serves as a tool in the spreading of political ideas and pedagogic applications that contain certain key factors of globalization in different national school systems. Educational needs and education systems are becoming more and more similar due to the transfer of education policies and global education policies.

As the education policies of countries are becoming more and more similar, the first stage of evaluating a designed policy is to examine whether or not it will yield the desired results (Cobb and Jackson 2012). Hence, scientific examination of education policies is a required step for the effectiveness of policies. Scientific examination of the policy making process is quite difficult. Therefore, it is also difficult to make comparisons among countries in this field. It is easier to make a scientific analysis of the policy outcomes of countries since the outcomes of the policy making process of countries are more tangible such as laws, regulations and strategic documents (Veselý 2012). Policy related studies in journals reflect the competing tendencies in policy studies actualized in the national context as an outcome of education studies. They also unfold the prioritized topics and the on-going discussions in education policy studies. Especially the struggle between more limited studies in which rational concepts related to science are more dominant and the critical approaches with interpretative epistemological and ontological ideas puts forth the different perspectives regarding what a beneficial analysis should include (Hardy 2009). Education policy studies need powers that encompass policy decisions, new goals that set

forth the network of activities, along with theoretical sensitivities. Thus, the enclosing of the issues with dominant paradigms and political ideologies can be prevented (Fenwick and Edwards 2011).

Policy paradigm and the policy problem are related concepts. Paradigms are important mechanisms that shape policies. Paradigms determine the limitations of discussion, their direction and the parties that will be involved in this process thereby forming a driving force. These characteristics of paradigms complete traditional interest groups, rational selection or corporate statements (Mehta 2013). Therefore, scientific and bureaucratic framework should be discussed together in order to define the paradigm in the education policy of a country.

Scientific examination of the education policy paradigms of countries and the issues included as part of these policies may enable us to form an opinion on the effectiveness of education policies. Handling education policies in a scientific manner requires the consideration of the global education policies and the education policies that countries transfer from one another. Examining the compatibility of developments in the field of education with scientific and global developments in periods following radical changes in education systems are especially important. Radical changes have taken place in the field of education in Turkey in 2012. Compulsory education has increased up to 12 years with the 4+4+4 regulation. The age for starting primary education has been decreased and an obligation has been enforced for children of 66 months to start primary school. Primary education institutions have been rearranged as primary schools, secondary schools and İmam-Hatip secondary schools (religious vocational secondary schools) and secondary education has become compulsory. A revision has been made in the curriculum of first year of primary school in order to ease the adaptation process of children since the age for starting school was decreased (SETA 2012). Increases were observed in schooling rates after the regulation. It has been observed that there has been an increase in the number of students benefiting from private education in these schooling rates (ERG 2013).

In addition to providing positive outcomes, these radical changes in the education system have also resulted in certain anxieties and focus has been made on the deficiencies and insufficiencies for yielding better results. Decreasing the age for starting school as a result of the system change has resulted in an increase in the number of students thus resulting in the necessity of enhancing the physical capacities of schools. It has been put forth that education expenses should be increased for meeting the requirements that emerged as a result of the 4+4+4 regulation. The ratio of education expenses in 2012 to GDP has increased up to 4.2 %. However, it has been put forth that the increase is not sufficient to respond to the requirements (ERG 2013). Of course, it should be stated at this point that the budget of Ministry of National Education is continuing to increase (ERG 2016). The increase in the number of students has brought forth the requirement for an increase in the teacher demand and 40 thousand teachers have been assigned in September 2012 for meeting this teacher demand (SETA 2012). The ratio of education expenses to GNP has increased starting from 2012 thus approaching the OECD average (TEDMEM 2016).

The general appearance of the developments that took place in a short while following the 4+4+4 regulation have been as such. Changes are on-going in Turkey for improving the education system and new studies are being carried out in the direction of new educational goals. Especially the decisions taken during National Education Councils and the education policies

included in the Development Plans indicate which issues are in the focus of development. Of course, when it is considered that education reforms take place in the direction of the needs of the age and society, it is expected that scientific developments shall respond to the policies that are developed following these reforms. A balanced approach with regard to theory and application may be adopted in this manner during the education policy formation process.

Taking into consideration the two-way interaction between theory and application in the field of education enables the obtaining of more effective results from education reforms. Therefore, the scientific studies carried out in the field of education policy may be considered as a reference framework for the transformation and evaluation of education systems. These scientific studies may also help the understanding of the interactions between education policies of countries and the global education policies. The issues targeted in the application dimension of education systems are determined so as to respond to the social, economic and cultural needs of countries. However, it is more desirable that application is guided by science for a more effective and efficient education system.

In this study, the general appearance of the theoretical content and development in the field of education policy have been put forth by examining the scientific studies that took place during the years of 2012 and 2016 in the field of education policy. As was stated earlier, the transfer by the countries of education policies from different countries and the formation of global education policies has resulted in education systems with similar characteristics. In this study, a limited perspective towards global education policies has also been put forth with the analysis of scientific studies in the field of education policy. The course of the development of the application goals of the Turkish education system have also been put forth in this study by examining the National Education Council and Development Plans between the years of 2012 and 2016. The characteristics of the interaction between theory and application in education policy along with their direction have been tried to be put forth by comparing the content of the scientific studies in the field of education policy during 2012 and 2016 with the content of the policy goals in the Turkish education system. Thus, the issues at the focus point of Turkish education policies have also been examined with regard to the issues that are in the agenda of global education policies.

Purpose and Problems of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the developments in Turkish education policies following the 4+4+4 education reform in 2012 in the direction of international scientific studies in the field of education policy. For this purpose, answers were sought for the following problems:

(1) What are the subjects included in the studies published in international education policy journals during the years of 2012-2016?
(2) What are the education policies in the 19th National Education Council Report as well as the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans published after 2012?
(3) How do the subjects that education policies in Turkey focused on after 2012 relate with the subjects that were at the focus of international scientific studies on education policy?

Methods

The study was carried out with the use of scoping review and intrinsic case study patterns and qualitative approach was adopted in the study. In the first section of the study, studies published in international education policy journals during the years of 2012 and 2016 were examined via scoping review. The scope and potential dimension of the related literature was evaluated in the scoping review pattern which is among the review types. The qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the literature were analyzed and then the literature was classified according to a certain characteristic. The limitations of the study were determined in the direction of time or scope limitation. The findings are presented representationally by way of tables (Grant and Booth 2009). The limitations of this study with regard to "time" were determined in the direction of studies published in international education policy journals during the years of 2012 and 2016 and qualitative and quantitative classification of the studies were made with respect to "subject". Hence, a general understanding was tried to be attained with regard to the scope of the studies in the education policy journals for the aforementioned years.

Intrinsic case study pattern was used in the second part of the study. A certain case is determined in intrinsic case studies and it is not expected that the acquired results shall have applications with regard to other case studies. It is used if more information is required for a unique case determined by the researcher. There is no objective such as theory development in actual case study; the objective is to only provide an in-depth understanding on a certain case. The case in actual case studies is chosen not for the purposes of representing other cases but towards the direction of the interest of the researcher (Stake 1995, 2003). In this study, the educational developments that were observed since the 4+4+4 education reform in 2012 were considered as a case that can be classified as a "process" and an evaluation was carried out for these developments in the light of scientific developments in the field of education policy. "Case" which is used as a unit of analysis in case studies can be an individual, a program or an organization as well as a process (Baxter and Jack 2008). The aforementioned education reform and its reflection over a period of 4 years make up this unique case. Yin (2003) put forth that documents and archive records can be used as sources of data for case studies. While the developments observed in education policies following the 4+4+4 education reform were discussed within the scope of the Council decisions and development plans in this study; the analysis of these developments in the field of education policy in the direction of scientific developments was carried out as based on studies published in international education policy journals.

Sample and data collection. Study data were acquired via document analysis method. The international journals published in the field of education policy, 19th National Education Council Report and Ninth and Tenth Development Plans were the documents examined within the scope of this study. Criterion sampling method was used for determining the sample of the study. The criterion used for determining the journals to be included in the study were continuous publication during the years of 2012 and 2016 and the ability to have full text access to issues published during these dates. Whereas the criterion used for determining the documents on Turkish education policies was that they had to be official documents published during the years of 2012 and 2016.

Based on this criterion; "education policy" keyword was used on 11/20/2016 for determining the journals in the Gaziantep University Library Online Databases with full texts for the issues published during the years of 2012 and 2016. As a result of this query; studies published during the years of 2012 and 2016 in the related issues of *KEDI Journal of Educational Policy, International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership, Journal of Education Policy, Education Policy Analysis Archives, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Educational Research for Policy and Practice, EJEP- Ejournal of Education Policy, Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy and Policy and Practice in Education* were included in the study. As a result, the sample of the study within the scope of the scientific studies was comprised of 9 journals and a total of 1084 articles. The 19th National Education Council Report (Ministry of National Education 2014) in addition to the Ninth (2007-2013) Development Plan (Ministry of Development 2006) and Tenth (2014-2018) Development Plan (Ministry of Development 2013) were included in the sample of the study for examining the Turkish education policies during the years of 2012 and 2016.

Data analysis. Study data were analyzed via content analysis. The analyses were carried out during the dates of 11/20/2016 and 05/21/2017. Article abstracts and keywords were used for the analysis of the articles published in journals. Content analysis for the studies published in journals was carried out only at the conceptual level taking into consideration the study subjects. More than one concept representing each study emerged depending on the scope of the subject of the study. Afterwards, coding was made only at the thematic level by combining the concepts taking into consideration the similarities and differences in the concepts. Frequency analysis was carried out by taking into consideration the recurrence rate of the emerging themes and the distribution of the frequencies by year was calculated. Since each study includes more than one concept, the number at which subjects appeared in the articles published in these journals was calculated as a frequency. Therefore, the frequencies for which yearly distributions have been given in tables indicate not the number of studies but the number of repetitions of the themes in the studies as subjects.

Analyses of the 19th National Education Council in addition to the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans were carried out following the completion of journal analyses. The 19th National Education Council decisions were coded in accordance with the themes of pre-school, primary school, secondary school, high school, improving teacher quality, improving quality of education administrators, school security. Therefore, a two-level coding as theme and sub-theme was carried out. However, the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans were first coded at the conceptual level. Afterwards, coding at the thematic level was carried out by taking into consideration the relationships between the concepts. Frequency analysis was not carried out at this stage since the frequencies of the themes determined according to the council decisions and the development plans were very close to each other. However, the outstanding subjects from among the themes were indicated separately.

The themes determined as a result of the journal analysis were used as a coding list for the purpose of combining the concepts during the thematic analysis of the 19th National Education Council and the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans. Council decisions and the policies

included in the plans were first coded only at the conceptual level without any dependence on any coding list. The aforementioned coding list was used during the thematic coding process carried out based on the combination of the concepts. However, the concepts that were not in accordance with the themes in the coding list were set as a new theme.

The comparison of Turkish education policies and the scientific studies published in international education policy journals with regard to the subjects included was carried out by way of the determined themes and these comparisons have been included in the findings section. However, the comprehensive comparisons and inferences are included in the discussion and conclusion sections.

Validity and Reliability of the Study. Criterion sampling from among the purposive sampling methods was used for attaining the external validity of the study. The scope of the samples was put forth clearly by analyzing the journals published during the years of 2012-2016 with full text access at the Gaziantep University Library Online Databases. Similarly, since examined Council decisions and development plans encompassed the year of 2012 (the year of compulsory education reform) and after 2012, a criterion with regard to time interval for selection of the sample was adopted. Data acquisition and analysis processes were explained in detail for ensuring external validity (Creswell 2009). Codifications for the data set along with the acquired results were presented to the opinions of two experts in the field of Educational Administration and Policy in order to ensure internal and external reliability. The experts compared the data set with the acquired results thus carrying out the confirmation analysis for the comments made within the scope of the study (Erlandson et al. 1993); as well as the consistency analysis for the data analysis process (Patton 2002). The notes defining the codes were used during the coding process in order to prevent any changes in the meaning of the codes since the coding process lasted about 6 months (Creswell 2009). The concepts were continuously compared with each other during the coding process for ensuring that there is no deviation among the concepts with regard to meaning (Gibbs 2007). The internal reliability of the study was increased by carrying out the thematic coding with regard to the Council decisions and development plans within a theoretical framework determined as a result of the analysis of journals (LeCompte and Goetz 1982). The thematic coding process was performed independently by two experts and the ratio of agreement with regard to the thematic coding of the experts was calculated as 92 % according to the reliability formula by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Findings

Subjects Included in Studies Published in International Education Policy Journals.
As a result of the coding process, it is revealed that scientific studies published in education policy journals between 2012 and 2016 were gathered under 182 themes. Table 1 shows prominent themes which have content in common with Turkish education policies. Total frequencies of the themes and frequencies of the themes by years are presented in Table 1 as well. Determined themes were enumerated according to their total frequencies and shown with their sequence numbers.

As can be seen in the Table 1, the subjects which have been included most in education policy

journals can be listed in order as; higher education/university, student success/academic outcome, education policy and its paradigms, teacher education, teacher performance evaluation and racial discrimination, ethnic structure and minority. When the number of inclusions in journals of the subjects of scientific studies with regard to years of publication are examined, it stands out that the subject of higher education and university has been treated increasingly in education policy journals in general (excluding the year 2014).

Table 1. Thematic coding and the frequencies of the subjects for the studies published in education policy journals between 2012 and 2016

Themes	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
1. Higher education/university	24	40	38	48	53	203
2. Student success/academic output	33	27	28	47	31	166
3. Education policy and its paradigms	23	23	18	33	28	125
4. Teacher education	29	24	16	27	21	117
5. Racial discrimination, ethnic structure and minority issues	17	20	11	24	19	91
6. Teacher performance evaluation	11	21	23	23	13	91
7. Accountability	14	11	17	18	19	79
10. Teacher quality and teacher development	17	14	21	13	12	77
11. Socio-economic factors and class	17	11	17	15	16	76
12. Curriculum policy	8	11	7	27	11	64
13. Secondary school	14	14	7	15	12	62
14. Education financing	8	14	11	11	13	57
15. Neo-liberal policies	6	12	9	15	15	57
16. Language policies	2	15	6	14	18	55
17. Teacher career	13	7	9	12	10	51
18. Decentralization policies	6	9	8	12	14	49
19. Change and innovation in education	20	6	2	12	8	48
22. Early childhood education	5	6	4	15	13	43
25. International exams and scientific research	5	7	7	7	16	42
27. Education evaluation	10	8	6	8	8	40
30. Different school types	5	5	8	7	11	36
31. Inclusive education	7	13	2	6	8	36
33. Gender difference/discrimination	7	12	6	6	5	36
34. Justice and equality in education	8	7	6	7	8	36
37. Economy and development	5	7	3	7	13	35
38. School characteristics	8	7	8	8	3	34
41. Teacher employment	10	5	6	6	6	33
43. Teaching in different disciplines	1	8	10	5	7	31
45. Information management	3	5	5	4	12	29
46. Policy discourse, its borrowing and distribution	2	8	2	11	5	28
50. School dropout and school attendance	5	3	5	4	10	27

Themes						
52. Arguments of sufficiency and equality	2	4	6	6	8	26
53. Education management	5	8	3	6	4	26
55. Student services	5	6	1	9	5	26
56. Quality assurance and accreditation	4	5	5	7	3	24
59. Factors related with family	2	6	10	1	4	23
60. Education economy	5	3	5	4	6	23
62. School-society cooperation	1	7	1	5	9	23
63. Research policy	3	6	1	6	7	23
65. Immigrants/refugees	3	4	2	3	10	22
67. Privatization	2	4	5	5	5	21

Table 1. (Continued)

Themes	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
70. Internationalization	4	5	4	3	5	21
74. Social inequality/equality	2	5	6	4	2	19
75. Candidate and new teachers	4	3	3	5	4	19
76. National examinations	3	4	2	5	5	19
82. School administrators	3	1	3	7	4	18
83. Multiculturalism	2	2	1	4	8	17
84. Market types		2	8	3	4	17
85. School discipline policies	3	4	6		4	17
86. Autonomy		1	3	13		17
88. Inspection policy		4	5	5	3	17
90. Information and communication technology	4	5	2	1	4	16
93. Education of children drifted towards crime and school crime	2	5	5		3	15
94. Professional skills	3	4	2	1	5	15
99. Labor market	4	1	1	3	5	14
100. Career guidance	5	2	2	3	2	14
108. Education standards	2	3	2	3	3	13
110. Occupational and technical education		4	3	1	4	12
112. Private schools	1	1	5	1	3	11
114. Bureaucracy	4			2	5	11
115. Primary school		3	1	4	3	11
116. Student evaluation	3	2	1	4	1	11
120. Post-secondary education		5	1	2	2	10
121. Performance at school level	1	3	3	1	2	10
127. Access to education	3	2		1	3	9
128. Lifelong learning	3	3		1	2	9
138. Ethical standards	1		1	3	3	8
140. Human capital	1		1	1	5	8
142. Educational mobility		2	1	1	3	7

144. Resource allocation in education	2	1		2	2	7
150. Education budget	1	2	1	1	2	7
152. Economic inequality		1	1		4	6
159. Ecological awareness		1	3	1	1	6
162. Entrepreneurship			3	1	1	5
173. Distance and open learning	2				2	4

Considering the dynamics of the age that we are living in, neo-liberal policies are expected to be the most emphasized subjects in scientific studies, however it is striking to see that this is not the case. A decrease was observed in the number of studies on neo-liberal policies in 2014; whereas this number remained constant in 2016. The adoption of independent codification approach in the thematic analysis processes regarding the themes of choice policies and privatization which can be related with neo-liberal policies may have been effective in this.

When the increased levels of subjects included in scientific studies during the years of 2012 and 2016 were examined; a significant increase was observed in the studies of different school types, language policies, decentralization policies, immigrants/refugees, information management, school drop-out and school attendance, multiculturalism, international exams and scientific research along with economy and development. As subjects with increased attention were examined, it was observed that subjects such as immigration which has recently been prioritized by society; along with the situations that arise due to immigration, economic growth, adaptation to the information age; were given priority.

Subjects related with the financing dimension of education economy were coded under the theme of financing; those related with budget were coded under education budget. Those related with resources were coded under the theme of resource allocation/distribution. More general issues related with education economy were coded under the theme of education economy. Even though these four themes can be coded as dependent to education economy, such a coding understanding was adopted in order to better understand the focus points of the studies. Therefore, it can be observed that the education economy is indeed among the subjects that are examined most in scientific studies when these themes are considered together.

The themes of justice, sufficiency and equality included in scientific studies were discussed separately from economic and social perspectives. There are studies that discuss the themes of justice and equality directly in addition to studies that discuss the arguments of sufficiency and equality in a more general sense. Hence, studies that focus only on sufficiency and equality in education were coded independently. When Table 1 is examined, it is understood that the subject of social inequality/equality has been studied more in comparison with economic inequality in scientific studies. When the subjects of justice and equality are evaluated together or in other words under a single theme, it is understood that actually it is a subject which has been studied intensively from a scientific perspective.

Education Policies in the Nineteenth National Education Council Report and the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans and Evaluation of the Policies with Regard to Scientific Studies Published in Education Policy Journals. Table 2 shows the thematic

coding made with regard to the decisions given during the 19th National Education Council as a suggestion.

Table 2. Thematic coding with regard to the decisions given during the 19th National Education Council

Themes and Sub-Themes	
Theme 1: Pre-School	**Theme 2: Primary School**
- Curriculum policy - Ethical standards - Student evaluation - Teaching in different disciplines - Language policies - Education service delivery	- Education service delivery - Curriculum policy - Teaching in different disciplines - Student services - School security
Theme 3: Secondary School	**Theme 4: High School**
- Education service delivery - Curriculum policy - Teaching in different disciplines	- Curriculum policy - Inclusive education - Teaching in different disciplines - Education service delivery
Theme 5: Improving Teacher Quality	**Theme 6: School Security**
- Selection and training of candidate teachers - Law for teaching profession - Teacher quality and teacher development - Teacher education - Curriculum policy - Education service delivery - Information and communication technology - Higher education - Resource distribution in education - Teacher employment - Teacher career and career guidance - Distance learning - Research policy for teaching profession - Accreditation of faculties	- School characteristics - School-society cooperation - Family factors - Student services - Recruitment of school personnel - Inclusive education - Education budget - Ecological conscience - School discipline policies - Information and communication technologies - Gender difference/discrimination - Teacher support services - School administrator employment - Media activities - Ethical standards
Theme 7: Improving Quality of Education Administrators	
- Education administrator employment - Higher education - Education administrator quality and development - Education budget - School administrator development	- School administrator employment - Female administrators - Accreditation - Performance at the school level

When the subjects included as part of the decisions for the education levels taken at the 19th National Education Council were considered, it was observed that curriculum policy, education service delivery, and teaching subjects at different disciplines are common sub-themes. It is also striking that the subjects other than the education service delivery resemble the subjects in education policy journals. The sub-theme that stood out in the decisions towards each education level was curriculum policy.

Subjects other than the education service delivery were also similar with subjects in scientific studies for the improving of teacher quality theme. Policies that center on different sub-themes such as teacher education, teacher development and curriculum policy have been developed for improving teacher quality as part of the Council decisions. This indicates that the theme of improving teacher quality is considered from a multi-dimensional perspective. Sub-themes of teacher quality along with teacher development and teacher career have especially been emphasized more in the theme of improving teacher quality.

As illustrated in Table 2, different findings were obtained with regard to the theme of improving education administrator quality compared to the themes determined as a result of the analysis of international policy studies. Education policy journals include studies on subjects related with school administrators. However, it was observed that the subject of education administrators has been included in a more comprehensive manner in the Council decisions. The sub-themes of education administrator and school administrator employment and education administrator quality and its development especially stood out in the theme of improving the quality of education administrators.

Another important dimension of the Council decisions is focused on the theme of school security. It can be stated that school crime and school discipline policies determined as a result of the analysis of policy journals are in resemblance with the theme of school security. The sub-themes included in the theme of school security also resemble the themes determined as a result of the analysis of international policy studies. Only the sub-themes of teacher support services and school administrator employment were included as subjects different than those determined as a result of the analysis of international policy studies.

When the Council decisions for different themes were examined generally, the importance given to education economy attracts attention. Education resource distribution in the improving of teacher quality theme and education budget in the improving of education administrator quality theme and school security theme were among the emphasized subjects. This finding indicates that the improvement of education economy is a factor that is considered together with the other goals in education and that it is given significant importance.

Table 3 shows the thematic codifications for the common and different education policies included in the Ninth (2007-2013) and the Tenth (2014-2018) Development Plans. Examining Table 3, it can be observed that the policies included in the Ninth Development Plan are in accordance with the themes determined as a result of the analysis of scientific policy journals, with the exception of the theme of the education service delivery. When the education policies included in the Ninth Development Plan are analyzed as a whole, it attracts attention that the subject of higher education is among the themes that stand out in accordance with the international policy studies. However, a difference with regard to the themes that stand out draws attention other than the theme of higher education. The themes of labor market, occupational and technical education, school dropout and attendance, privatization and national examinations stand out more in the Ninth Development Plan.

Table 3. Thematic Coding for the Education Policies Included in the Ninth (2007-2013) and the Tenth (2014-2018) Development Plans

Common Themes in the Plans	Themes of the Ninth Development Plan	Themes of the Tenth Development Plan
- Labor market - Career guidance - School dropout and attendance - Privatization - Information and communication technologies - Higher education - Educational mobility - Internationalization - Pre-school education - Decentralization - Secondary education - Education service delivery - Curriculum policy - School characteristics - Teacher education - Education evaluation	- Professional skills - National examinations - Education economy - Equality in education - Performance at the school level - Primary school - Access to education - Private schools - Change and innovation in education	- Teacher career - Human capital - School types - Regional differences - Gender difference/discrimination - Inspection policy - Education budget - Entrepreneurship - Education standards - Autonomy - Accountability - Quality assurance

As can noted in Table 3, the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018) includes themes of regional differences and the education service delivery, which are different from the themes determined as a result of the analysis of scientific policy journals. When the themes that stand out in the Tenth Development Plan are examined, the themes of higher education, information and communication technologies and labor market attract attention. The theme of higher education which is determined as the most emphasized theme as a result of the analysis of scientific studies has also stood out as part of the Tenth Development Plan.

Upon examination of both development plans, it was observed that themes such as curriculum policy, teacher education and employment, secondary education, pre-school education, education economy and financing stood out in scientific studies in the field of international education policy. These themes that do not reflect a certain periodical characteristic were subjects emphasized in both international scientific policy studies and development plans.

Discussion

The epistemological, sociological, and anthropological dimensions of all education systems have a systematic output and thus education systems gain meaning with regard to time and space (Gonçalves et al. 2012). Therefore, every education system has its own unique characteristics and the scientific studies carried out in a country carry traces of the education system of that country. When it is considered that scientific studies have been carried out in different countries, the difficulty of evaluating different education policies stands out. Even though comparative

education is a traditional field that has been studied for a long time, we still do not have a sufficient conceptual framework for comparing different education policies and analyze their effects. Theories on education policy processes generally focus on certain factors and do not give sufficient attention to the relationships between these factors. As a result, comparative data regarding education outputs and policies are evaluated together without taking into consideration the functions in education processes. The fact that only easily measurable factors are included in the studies leads to easy explanations regarding the differences in education (Veselý 2012). Hence, there is a need for more theoretical and applied studies for the comparison of the education policies of countries or the evaluation of the education policies of countries within the framework of international education policies. Even though a single country has not been taken as reference in this study, it is thought that a significant contribution will have been made by comparing the international scientific studies in the field of education policy with the Turkish education policies. Some policy analysts argue that a policy can be valid only at a local or national context and that it will not have a statistically significant impact on other policies or institutions. Whereas the ecological opinion puts forth the existence of a complex structure that suggests the formation of all connections in the policy making and application process. It is also important to understand the characteristics of the society as well as the culture that the policy encompasses (Weaver-Hightower 2008). Critical theories that affect the education theory at the end of the twentieth century have examined the relationship between policy and culture (Gonçalves et al. 2012). Hence, examination of the education policies of a country from an ecological perspective shall be of help in acquiring more effective education results.

According to the results of this study, subjects of policy discourse, its borrowing and distribution are included among the subjects included as part of the international studies in the field of education policy. Similarly, this study also examined the goals and policies for the Turkish education system in the direction of education policy studies with different contexts thereby trying to shed light as to what extent the policy discourses can be borrowed. "Policy borrowing" (Dale 1999) or "travelling policies" (Jones 2001) concepts are used for explaining similar applications in countries. There is a need for defining, mapping and analysis for especially their meanings in the field of education rather than explaining the contents of the borrowed policies (Angus 2004). The inclusion of the subject of policy borrowing in international scientific studies helps countries to carry out their policy transfers in a more conscious manner. It is also observed that Turkey also has a tendency to monitor the education policies and applications of other countries from time to time. However, there are no application policies with regard to how policy borrowing will take place in the field of education policy. There are scientific studies which give importance to the establishment of connections between the local and the global in education policy analyses and in this regard the discovery of education studies. It is stated that the accountabilities with regard to time and space networks of different actors that take part at different levels have been formed and that these actors have shaped the policy elements in accordance with their own social dependence, institutional limitations and interests (Hamilton 2011). Education policy solutions take place more and more as borrowing or copying in order to reach the results acquired by successful education systems (Morris 2012; Auld and Morris 2014). The policies of successful countries are monitored from time to time for the development of the education system in Turkey. However, Oates (2010) emphasizes the importance of the contextual factors when explaining the success of the education systems. The importance of the contextual factors indicates the difficulty of developing policies for policy borrowing.

There are direct studies on neo-liberal policies among education policy studies as well as studies that include concepts related with neo-liberal policies. Critical policy analysis points out the shift in education policies from social democratic understanding to a dominant neo-liberal education agenda (Singh 2015). Pressure for the digitization of neo-liberal emphases and outputs affect the context of the studies along with studies on policies. Greater importance is being given to performance measurement (Hardy 2009). Neo-liberalism is based on the assumption that public institutions are ineffective and that market understanding enables the attaining of a high performance by increasing motivation, profitability and competition. It is put forth in the critical post-structural opinion that policies have many shareholders and hence they are multi-dimensional. It is pointed out that policies cannot be applied easily and that they have both desired as well as undesired results. In this perspective, it is asserted that the policies are also loaded with values and that they are related with other policies and institutions (Taylor et al. 1997). Neo-liberal policies that are shaped around these understandings have resulted in the emergence of many different administration and education applications. These applications that develop around this liberal understanding framework have been included in scientific studies as well as Turkish education policies.

As has been stated above, neo-liberal education policies have focused on high performance which resulted in making evaluation and academic success in education a topic of priority. Subjects of student evaluation, education evaluation, performance at the school level and teacher performance are included as part of the scientific policy studies and Turkish education policies. Therefore, it was observed that the importance given to the subject of evaluation is common to scientific studies as well as Turkish education policies. The importance given to evaluation in education and academic success has resulted in making national and international examinations to remain on the agenda. National examinations have recently been started to be evaluated with regard to their rather adverse results instead of their contributions to the education system which has resulted in a search for alternative solutions. Education policies shaped in accordance with examination results have started to be criticized and discussions have been on-going on the disadvantages of policy formation in accordance with examination results. Policy formation in congruence with examination results requires the continuous comparison of results yearly at school, classroom and student level which leads to the use of the same demographic map for the whole country (Knoester and Parkison 2017). Learning outcomes play important roles with regard to strengthening the comparisons and competition in education policy changes. Examination results regarding student success which enable comparisons come to mind first for learning outcome (Prøitz 2015). Examinations with important outcomes contribute to acquiring higher skills by improving the education degrees and levels. However; these examinations also have undesired results such as measuring low knowledge level, prioritizing parent characteristics by popularizing private sector in school selection and preventing students to spend social time outside of schools (Rindermann and Ceci 2009). Focusing on national examinations in both international studies in the field of education policy as well as in Turkish education policies indicates a common tendency for eliminating these negativities in this field.

The facts that national examinations remain on the agenda and that these examination results have been considered as criteria for success for many years have speeded up studies for determining standards in education. It has been considered that complying with the same

standards in education as criteria for success will result in the acquisition of successful examination results. The subject of education standards has been examined in scientific education policy studies and has also been included in the Tenth Development Plan of Turkey. Standards in education help in making education processes compatible at the national level by ensuring that a projection of the expected curriculum and the expected outcomes are known. However, adhering strictly to these expected outcomes and thinking that there is only one method for acquiring these outcomes result in forcing policies into a deadlock. Standard based reform has formed the basis for changes such as taking into consideration the economic importance of schooling, whereas the understanding of the use of standards and accountability has displayed compatibility with this new paradigm (Mehta 2013). There are many examples for standardization not operating in the desired manner depending on the change in population and the misunderstanding of the complexities in population (Scott 1998). The fact that determining standards in education lead to various undesired results such as national examinations has led to the formation of new goals and ideas on education standards in Turkish education policies as well as scientific studies.

As was put forth earlier, the formation of education systems focused on performances as a result of neo-liberal policies resulted in giving more importance to international examinations. When the studies on education policy were examined, an increase can be observed in the number of scientific studies on international examinations. However, when Turkish education policies were examined, it is striking that there are no goals for this subject in both the Council decisions as well as the Development Plans. Significant differences are observed among the nations with regard to cognitive competencies in examinations carried out for measuring student success. Six different paradigms of "culture, genes, wealth, policies, geography and education" are used for explaining the differences at the international level (Rindermann and Ceci 2009, 554). The differences between countries with regard to these paradigms result in differentiation in the acquired examination results. However, many countries undergo administrative and educational changes for acquiring better results in these examinations with expectations of high performance. Especially the PISA examination among international examinations has made a significant impact on the education systems of countries. Some countries have made various attempts such as carrying out education activities within the scope of the PISA test, determining the goals based on the gains from this examination and making changes in the curriculum (Thomson, Lingard, and Wrigley 2012). International examination results have recently been a topic of discussion in Turkey as well and discussions are on-going with regard to what can be done to be ranked higher in these examinations. However, despite the greater importance given to international examinations in education policy studies, subjects related with international examinations are included more in the agenda of the media and the public rather than being included as part of Turkish education policies. It can be stated that there are goals for factors that might result in success in international examinations in Turkish education policies rather than direct goals for these international examinations.

One of the most important outcomes of the fact that neo-liberal policies continue to shape education systems more and more has been the increase observed in the privatization of education. Whereas private schools and the issues of privatization are included as part of international education policy studies; they have been part of the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans and have stood out especially in the Ninth Development Plan. The recent political changes

have resulted in the emergence of different school types that take into consideration the different needs and skills of students which has led to the formation of the opportunity for making a choice among different schools. All these developments have paved the way to strengthening of the private sector (Tomiak 1992). Economic aid is provided in Turkey from pre-school period to secondary education level within the scope of incentive policies for increasing the number of students enrolled at private schools. Education support amounts provided according to levels were as follows for the year 2016: pre-school education institutions 2860 Turkish Liras (TL), primary school 3440 TL, secondary school 4000 TL, high school 4000 TL and basic high school 3440 TL. However, this support is not provided to all who apply. The number of students to receive support for the first time was determined as 75.000 for the year 2016 (Official Gazette 2016). The importance given to privatization in education has resulted in giving more emphasis to labor market in education processes. Even though labor market and market types do not stand out in scientific studies on education policy, they are among the studied issues. Adapting to the characteristics of the labor market has been among the concepts that were especially emphasized in the Ninth and Tenth Development Plans. Market principles have started to be incorporated in the center of education as the education systems in countries adapted the principles of efficacy, performance and standard. In this process, the objective is to train the labor force with the quality required by the economy or the outputs of schooling are determined (Adams 2016). The necessity of having the skills required by the labor market make it important to have access to a good education (Murnane 2012). This aspect paves the way for the increase in the number of private schools in Turkey as well as in the global scale.

According to the analysis results of the study; racial discrimination, ethnic structure and minority are among the topics that stand out in education policy studies. The policy for ending racial discrimination also indicates how income distribution is being reshaped in metropolitan regions. Therefore, these topics are actually critical for examining the sociological impacts of education policies. It is important to take into consideration the more comprehensive socio-political dimensions of schools in order to understand their transforming effects. A greater number of sociological studies are required with regard to the role that schools play in shaping the demographic, structural and social characteristics of cities. Schools have various ecological impacts and these are of course not limited only with settlement preferences (Johnson Jr. 2017). Hence, the topic of multiculturalism is included more and more in scientific studies. The only "single culture education, multicultural education, antiracist education and single culture repair act with regard to standardization" emphasizing school efficacy and effective school studies are the four basic approaches used in the education of students with different race and cultures (Skerrett 2008, 267). The increase in the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey as a result of the Syrian crisis has led to giving more importance to multi-cultural education. According to 2016 data, 40 % of Syrian refugee children do not go to school. About 500.000 Syrian children have been enrolled in Turkish schools and Temporary Education Centers. A total of 160.000 Syrian refugee children are continuing Turkish schools (UNHCR 2017). When these numbers are taken into consideration, it is understood that a multi-cultural education environment has started to be formed in Turkish school. Therefore, there is a greater need for the development of multi-cultural education policies.

Conclusion and Suggestions

When the study results are evaluated in general, the richness of the scientific studies in the field of education policy attracts attention. Of course, when it is considered that these studies reflect the education policies in different countries, this aforementioned variety is expected. Therefore, the issues that are located at the center of Turkish education policies cannot display the same variety. A similarity with regard to the basic topics included was observed when scientific studies in the field of education policy and the Turkish education policies were examined comparatively. Turkish education policies after the 4+4+4 education reform were in accordance with the issues that stood out in scientific studies in the field of education policies. Of course, social and cultural differences have resulted in certain basic differences in the education policies that gained prominence.

It can be understood that Turkish education policies are based on a foundation that gives importance to scientific studies as well as the social and economic characteristics of the country. When it is considered that international scientific education policy studies reflect global education policies and global developments, it can be said that Turkish education policies are generally formed in the direction of both local and global developments. However, there is a need for giving more importance to issues that are starting to receive greater attention at the global scale. The synthesis in education policies of issues that are important at both the national and the global scale will be able to provide the required variation as well as the comprehensiveness for Turkish education policies as is the case for scientific studies. It can be stated that giving importance to national characteristics in addition to taking scientific studies as the foundation form the potential for providing the sustainability of educational development. In this age when globalization has become effective on education systems as in all areas of life, national education policies which do not include global education policies will be ineffective on providing sustainable development. The lack of sustainable development in education can cripple social and economic developments as well. Therefore, developing national education policies arising from both contextual characteristics and global requirements is an important necessity.

In the study, themes of education policy serving for gaining better understanding with regard to evaluation of contextual and global characteristics together and also separately were determined within the scope of Turkish education policies. It attracts attention that the Turkish education policies following the education reform give more importance to issues such as the education service delivery, school dropout, information and communication technologies along with occupational and technical education which give importance to the bond between education and economy differently from the standing out themes in scientific studies. When emphasis is given to the legibility of these issues, it is understood that there are plans and implementations for providing development in the social and economic areas in Turkey by way of education. Accordingly, the fact that Turkish education policies reflect global education policies more depends on reaching intended social and economic development level. Since education is accepted as the most effective tool of social mobility, it can be also considered as the reason of discussing education policies and economic policies together in this respect. In conclusion, desired socio-economic levels of countries can pave the way for the policies ensuing from globalization in order to shape education systems more comprehensively.

The driving force of education in providing economic and social development is observable in different geographies naturally. Neo-liberal policies have made the effect of globalization visible

in every area and geography gradually. Neo-liberal policies have especially distinguished themselves in the issues such as higher education and privatization which can be related to economic development in education systems. It can be understood from the study that neo-liberal policies have impacts on scientific studies as well as Turkish education policies. The importance given to issues such as higher education, education and economy in both scientific studies and Turkish education policies is an indication of the fact that education is considered as a social and economic tool for development at the global scale.

Education administrators-oriented policy is another example indicating that contextual characteristics of Turkey affect education policies as much as globalization. The fact that the issue of raising education administrators has received greater importance in Turkish education policies in comparison with scientific studies may be due to the fact that the issues of educating and assigning administrators is a matter of debate in the country. The fact that there is no obligatory education for education administrators results in many problems with regard to the appointment of administrators as well as the quality of the administrators. Therefore, the development of policies for education administrators is actually an indication of the need for improvement in this field.

Curriculum policies came to the forefront in both scientific studies and Turkish education policies. Curriculum policy is a typical indicator suggesting that education policies in Turkey are affected by both global developments and local requirements since it is at the center of national education policies. The fact that curriculum policies stand out more in Turkish education policies indicates the search for a program that may serve the education of a labor force required by our age. The content of national central examinations which has been a significant matter of debate in recent years stimulates curriculum debates. The search for different models for examinations carried out at both middle school and secondary education levels makes up the public agenda. Hence, the curriculum policies and national examinations should be evaluated simultaneously within the context of Turkey. When considered from this point of view, it is concluded that education policies can be developed at the point of intersection between global and local developments and requirements.

In the study, it is concluded that another area in which policies can be developed by taking intersecting local and global developments into consideration is socio-economic factors/class and multiculturalism. Different than Turkish education policies, scientific studies in the field of education policy have focused on socio-economic factors/class and multiculturalism. Actually, the mention of regional differences in Turkish Development Plans indicates the need for a greater importance given to socio-economic factors. In addition, the increase in the number of both refugee and foreign students in Turkey is also an indication that greater importance should be given to multi-cultural education and socio-economic factors/class issues in Turkey. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a need for developing education policies for these issues in Turkey in the light of scientific studies.

In line with the results obtained in the study, it can be said that desired outcomes in education can be attained in time through the structure of Turkish education policies following 4+4+4 compulsory education reform which generally reflects international scientific developments and local requirements together. Taking no account of global developments after a reform which is

aimed at improving the quality of education and the potential of manpower will be contrary to the facts of quality and competition emphasized by globalization. Competitive capacity in economic and social areas depends on structuring effective and successful education systems in the age of globalization. In order to have this kind of education system, global developments should be followed and global developments and local requirements should be melted in the same pot in the national education policy development process.

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