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Analysis of International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme using SWOT in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme which spreads both in Turkey and the world, using qualitative method on the opinions of students, teachers, and administrators of the sole state high school in which the programme is applied. The data has been obtained by making face-to-face meetings with teachers and administrators individually, and by making focus discussions with students. At the same time, the atmosphere both in classroom and school has been observed and field-related notes have been taken. At the end of the study, it was determined that students attended the programme because they wanted to get a better education, improve their English level, and catch the opportunity to attend a foreign university; and as for the teachers, they wanted to improve themselves. The participants stated that although it has been difficult to carry out the programme together with the national programme, they achieved enough working habit to make it real. For the strong sides of the programme, students stated that the programme raises confident individuals, cares for performance and practice, presents both freedom and originality, and the teachers said that it allows students to gain ability, and make them practice often and the programme applies education by building and living it. The weak sides of the programme for the students are using mainly English culture in studies and for the teachers its limited inspection, lack of material, having no sharing and lack of time. The opportunities and threats of the programme have also been mentioned and the suggestions have been included at the end of the study.

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Keywords:
The International Baccalaureate Diploma programme, internalization, administrator opinions, SWOT analysis

Introduction

There is an increasing number of information with the development of technology in the gradually growing world. Education has an important position within this development process. It is needed to make the education more qualified and to raise individuals who are competitive and compatible with the globalised world. "Having individuals who can use information, technology, critical thinking, and who respect cultural differences or have intellectual features, will make the adaption process to this new world easier" (Demir, 2009, p.4). In this context, the concepts of standardization of education and alternative education programme have arisen in order to achieve the desired goals.

Presently, in parallel with the Ministry of National Education (MONE), the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) is implemented in about 30 private schools and, for now, in only one state high school. Nevertheless, the importance of International Baccalaureate programme is indispensable for raising students with international standards (Demir, 2009). Moreover, it is important for programmes to have international standards for the state schools to gain "international identity" (Bunnell,

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2008). The practice of IB programme widely covers the lack of international student identity which is not within the MONE programme yet.

International Baccalaureate Programme

IB programme started with only one programme in 1968 and now it has four programmes and appeals to 3-19 aged students. The programme is being carried out in approximately 3500 schools in 147 countries; and in 45 schools in Turkey (IBO, 2014a). It aims to serve for 2.5 million of students in 15000 schools in 2020 (Bunnell, 2009). IB programme involves a two-year-process in which the students are responsible for six courses: three courses as standard and three courses as high level. The students are required to finish an extended essay with 4000 words (EE), theory of knowledge course (TOK) and 150 hours of projects of social responsibility (CAS). The content of the programme has project-based learning, laboratory activities, interdisciplinary researches, effective group studies, and presentations (IBO, 2014b). A wide variety of assessments and evaluations are found, and presentations, projects and central exams have been given place within the programme (IBO, 2014c). Opportunities which are making entering into an university easier (Brunold and Conesa, 2010), scholarship given by private universities both in Turkey and in the world and changing department in the university only with IB diploma grade (Koç,2014) attracted the attention for this programme. Studies which have been carried out for the programme, the number of which is gradually increasing and growing, has shown an increase in recent years.

The study which is for researching the efficiency of IB programme is quite essential for the educators. In this context, Willcoxon (2005) stated in his study that the IB programme students are more successful than those who are not a part of the programme. In Turkey, IB programme, the Student Selection Examination (OSS) and graduation grade has been compared in the study of Gultekin (2006) and the result of the study has shown that the students who have taken the IB programme have become more successful in OSS and have higher diploma grade of secondary education. A similar study has been carried out in U.S. The average of IB programme and diploma grade has been compared and it is found out that the relation is meaningful (Demir, 2009).

The students stated that they had a good education with the help of the international content of IB programme (Bunnell, 2009) and of the high level of knowledge it brought(Culross& Tarver, 2007; White, 2012). Brunold and Conesa (2010), on the other hand, stated in the study they have done that the IB programme is strong regarding to academics and accepted by many universities. Besides, it is proven by many researchers that it prepares students for the university with its rich content (Brunold- Conesa, 2010; Cubberley, 2009; Culross& Tarver, 2007; Demir, 2009; Paris, 2003; Tarc& Beatty, 2012; Taylor &Porath, 2006). It has been observed that the programme is preferred more than other programmes because of the prestige it presents and the convenience it provides before entering university (Paris, 2003; Sperandio, 2010). And the parents stated that they preferred IB programme due to its education of high quality (Demir, 2009).

The first scientific study of IB programme which was performed in Turkey is Demirer's (2002) master's degree thesis. He analyzed the job satisfaction of the teachers from the private schools which apply IB programme and found out that the result was quite high. As the number of the IB programme applying schools increased in Turkey, it started to become the subject matter of the PhD thesis as well. In the first PhD thesis about the IB programme, in Turkey presented by Demir (2009) the opinions of administrators, teachers, parents and students have been analyzed. According to the result of the study, the administrators and teachers said that students have grown multi-directional and they have various assessment and evaluation methods to apply within the programme. Parents and graduated students expressed that they chose this programme to get a better education. In general, all the participants agreed on the matter that the programme raises "individuals with high criticism ability". Another PhD thesis study has been carried out by Bayulgen (2012). In his study, the cognitive and affective abilities of the students who took theTurkish course of IB programme and the students who took Turkish literature of national programme have been compared. With the result of the study, it is indicated that the IB programme's students have achieved a higher level of the aimed national programme Turkish course and teachers claimed that the IB programme is more suitable to achieve these goals. In the PhD study carried out by Aktas (2013), Turkish courses in the IB programme and in the national programme have been compared with regard to the process of the critical thinking the courses provided. The result of the study was that, the aim of the national programme's Turkish

course is to grant ability of critical thinking; however it was unable to do so, because of the preparations for the university exam. As a result of the comparison, no difference has been found when it is compared to national programme although the fact that the ability of critical thinking is cared more in IB programme.

Though the efficiency of the IB programme is positive in many ways, the disadvantages of the programme should also be studied. A study about the negative effects of the IB programme has been done by Callahan (2003) in the U.S.A. and the students stated that they were under the effect of the lack of sleep, unable to socialize and lots of stress due to too much assignment given to students. The criticized sides of the programme are as the following: Heavy assignments and anxiety of grade (Culross& Tarver, 2007), being a challenge and not affording the need of the student's need (Hertberg- David & Callahan, 2008). Culross and Tarver (2007) indicated that parents are satisfied with the programme, but because of the workload, they cannot spend time with their children. According to Sen (2001) who is one of the first appliers of the programme in Turkey, it has been argued by many educators that the programme is so expensive and does not have any effect for entering into a university. It is also stated that it is wrong for schools to participate in the programme with improper reasons and commercial interest of the programme.

IB programme is known as a diploma programme which is carried out in several countries and has proven its success (Bayulgen, 2012). It has succeeded to be amongst the best 100 high schools of U.S. in a large extent (Hill, 2012).That's why, while the number of schools which implement the programme is increasing both in Turkey and worldwide, the inadequate publicity of the programme and the difficulties which are encountered in its application, make it necessary to perform academic studies. Measuring the efficiency of the programme which is generally applied to gain international dignity (Paris, 2003; Sperandio, 2010) and to render education more qualified (Culross and Tarver 2007; Demir, 2009), has a guiding role for the schools which think of applying this programme in the future. In regard to the aforementioned issues, assessing the programme and analyzing it as determining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) by the students, teachers and administrators of the only state high school in which the IB programme is applied have a great importance. This research has a role of being the first article analyzing of programme using SWOT. Therefore it will have an important contribution to the literature. In addition,for other state high schools which are about to apply for or think of applying it will provide information about the content of the programme and its reflections.

With this study, the following questions will be answered by taking into account the opinions of students, teachers and administrators about the IB programme:

1. What do they think about the content of the programme?
2. What are the reasons of students and teachers to join the programme?
3. What do they think about conducting the IB programme and national programme together?
4. Evaluation of the programme by students, teachers and administrators with the SWOT analysis:
   4.1. What are strong sides of the programme?
   4.2. What are the weak sides of the programme? How can they be fixed?
   4.3. What are the opportunities of the programme?
   4.4. What are the threats of the programme? How can they be turned into opportunities?

Method

Research Design

"Case Study" method which is defined as research design in qualitative studies was used in this research. Creswell (2007) identifies the study as reporting by elaborately using different research instruments by the observer, stating that the case study is being analyzed in a limited system. According to Tellis (1997) case studies are appropriate methods to analyze a programme. The activity of the only state school which applies the IB programme has been discussed in the study. It is important to conduct the study in a state high school which has the same conditions to set as an example for other state high schools.

Research Sample

Study group of the research consists of 12 people in total; seven of whom are students, three of whom are teachers and two administrators and "purposeful sampling" has been selected for the study.

Specific criteria are made by taking the purpose of researcher into account while selecting in purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2013). The reason why this method has been picked was because of the need for the people who have been a part of the IB programme and have experience about the IB programme. The fact that the teachers are from different branches and their experienced years was taken into consideration. As for the students; they were chosen randomly from eleventh grade who are in their first years with the IB programme. Five of these students have come from different cities (Kayseri, Bursa, Yalova, Sakarya) for the IB programme and the other two are from this school. The age average of these five girl-two boy students is 17. The administrators consist of people who brought the IB programme to the school and are now following the practice. The administrators consist of a man and a woman who have seven year experience and the age average of those is 43. The teachers are a group of two men and a woman and their average of experience years is 4. Teachers are from Mathematics, Turkish, and Geography branches and their age average is 41. Data has been collected from different groups (students, teachers and administrators) and data variation has been made, and aimed to raise the quality of the research (Yildirim, 2010). While selecting the participants, interviews were conducted in conformity with the voluntariness principle.

Research Instrument

Data of the research were obtained through interview, observation and field notes. Preventing the bias and increasing trust have been intended by making procedural variation that is more than one data collecting agent (Merriam, 2013).

"Semi – Structured Interview Form" has been used in the interviews. This form has been prepared by researchers asking experts' opinions; re-evaluated by the experts, and took its final form after making necessary adjustments. The first part of the form includes personal information, and the second part of the form includes the questions about the application of the IB programme. How, who and why questions have taken place frequently in the interview form as the necessity of the qualitative researches. The positive and negative sides of the programme have been questioned in the form with 20 questions.

The researchers have observed the school atmosphere and the practice of the IB programme, photographed and taken necessary notes with method of field notes.

Moreover, the IB programme courses have been observed as taking an observation form. The observation form has been set in compliance with the aim of the research by the researchers.

Ethics

The research has been carried out with the permit taken from Graduate School of Social Sciences of Yildiz Technical University. It was done in accordance with the consent of the participants and the school in which the study was made. It was determined that the collected data would be used solely for the research purpose and would not be shared with anybody or the names have not been used. The participants were regarded as S for students, T for teachers and A for administrators.

Research Procedure

The researchers have explained the purpose of the research by making short visits to the school in which the programme is applied and meeting with the school principal and other directors. They also had the chance to talk and discuss with the teachers in the teacher's lounge. A pre-meeting has been done with the teachers of the programme who accepted the meeting invitation. And then the meeting has been held both in canteen and office of the IB coordinator by taking voice recording and it lasted about 25 minutes. One of the administrators was uncomfortable with the recording, so the meeting was done without recording.

By attending the IB programme courses, class environment has been observed and analyzed during the study. The projects, presentations, programmes, and publications of students have been examined. Besides social sides of the students both in classroom and school has been observed. The meeting with the students has been carried out with the participation of the ones who wanted to contribute to this research. After clarifying the purpose of the research, 15 students out of 20 have volunteered and finally seven people were selected randomly and made focus discussion. The study has been made in the canteen and finished approximately in one hour at the lunch time. The opinions have been obtained by voice recording and

during this process the researchers recorded the facial expressions, the excitement and the mimics of the students while answering the questions by taking notes. To prevent the bias during the interview the positive and negative sides of the programme have also been questioned and the commenting on the answers has been avoided. Collecting the data have been done in different days and after every interview the transcription of the recording has been made so that the piling up and accordingly possible mistakes would be avoided and the controls have been done. The interview and observations have been performed in April and May.

Data Analysis

The data obtained using semi-structured interview form has been transformed to text from recording and applied content analyzing method. First, themes were procured by encoding the data in this method. Written texts and field notes have been examined and the words which were emphasized by the participants were encoded by coloring. The themes have been specified according to these words which were used intensively. These themes have been compared with sub-themes, confirmed by the researchers during field notes, and supported. Also both researchers have analyzed this data and obtained the themes. All in all, the common themes composed based on opinion of three researchers and the purpose of the research have been explained adding quotations from the opinion of the participants. By showing it in the Figure 1, it is provided that this process can easily be inspected.

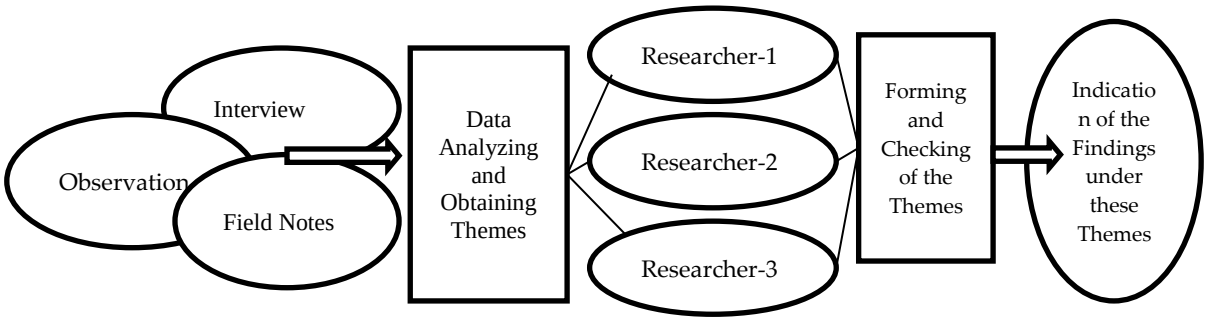


Figure 1. Data analyzing process

Restrictions of the Research

This study has been done with a small group as it was a case study. The research consists of a limited number of participants, and interviews and observations within a limited period of time. Not including the parents and graduated students in the research may be counted as another restriction. Besides, the students who attended to the interview are from eleventh grade, and about to finish the first year of the IB programme. Interviewing second year students and students who are not a part of the programme could not be done because of the limited period of time.

Findings

It was seen at the end of the research which was carried out to assess the IB programme, that the opinions of the participants about the programme were positive. It was understood from the facial expressions of the students who has accomplished the first year of the IB programme that they were happy, excited and satisfied about the programme. The opinions collected by data analyzing at the end of the research have gathered under four themes as of course content of the IB programme, reasons to join the programme, conducting the programme together with the national programme, and assessing the IB programme with SWOT.

Theme 1: Course Content of the IB Programme

Both teachers and students emphasize frequently on the course content of the IB programme and stated that it was the part of the field which they were affected mostly. They also indicated that courses are mainly for practice and emphasizing on discussion and questioning and, students also stated that they were not bored during the classes. Having no memorizing and caring for practice have had the students love the

programme. S5 stated this situation as "IB programme grants us a different point of view for the questions as it is mainly for the practice and allows us to look from different points. It enables us to think more on the questions". S4 indicated that "the logic of the IB programme is that instead of memorizing names of 1000 books, it lets us read 10 books seriously, analyze them and think over them and present a different essay about it. It makes us understand what the author wants to say, what his message is by studying it within that period. That is the literature we need but it is very different in national programme. And this is not only for the Literature but also for History, Sociology and Mathematics". Discussing and sharing the opinions about a subject can be seen more during a course of the IB programme than any other courses and this may be shown as the proof of it. Using a calculator with during Mathematics class shows the importance of understanding and commenting, not that of calculating. Students said that they understood this difference clearly and summarized it as the following: S7 "In the Mathematics exam of the national programme you have to memorize all the formula while in the IB programme the formula has already been given at the last page so all you have to know where to use the necessary formula".

Interdisciplinary approach has been adopted during the courses. S4 stated this situation as: "... interdisciplinary education grants us various different points of view." The role of a teacher differentiates within the programme. While S5 explained that the perspective of the teachers of the IB programme should have developed beforehand, the teachers indicated that they had the role of guide. The teachers expressed it as the following: T1 ''... the purpose of this programme is already student-oriented, all we need to do is to lead them a little bit and leave the rest to the students", T2 "We do everything together in IB programme; teachers are positioned as the leader here", T3 "... there are specific sources in the current curriculum that's why teacher are more active but in the IB programme children are more active. Children have no choice other than researching," and added that the programme has a full content.

Theme 2: Reasons for participating in IB Programme

The programme is a two-year programme which is implemented in 11th and 12th grades. As a participation requirement for this programme, it was determined by the school that the score points should be at least four for English, two for mathematics and 3 for Turkish and that there shouldn't be any make-up exams. Any social sciences high-school student who meets these criteria may come to school to participate in this programme. Every year, there are students coming to school for that purpose. Amongst the participants, there are students who come from outside of the city for this programme. Students stated that the reason for the participation to IB programme is "to study abroad, advantages of the programme and to enhance their English," and the teachers stated that they participated "via their school." Despite the fact that the students consider that they will develop their English knowledge, an administrator indicates that it might be wrong to participate in the programme in order to learn English. The programme requires advanced English knowledge, as well as the ability of interpretation and critical thinking in English lessons. It is also stated that some students do not participate in the programme because of their concern for "not being able to understand English." Administrators emphasize that students participate "for a good education" and that the decision should be made by the student. A2 explained this situation as "… because this is a responsibility issue. If the child does not decide on her/his own, s/he won't want to take that responsibility." As being the first people to implement this programme in the school, the administrators believe that the programme is successful and will be more successful. As for the teachers, they took part in this programme owing to the fact that it is a different programme, that they teach new subjects, that they make point of the skills regarding debate, interpretation and writing in social classes and that this process is pleasant even from their perspective. T2 emphasized that the programme is beneficial even for the educators by summarizing that "it is pretty motivating in the sense of enjoying our profession, because you learn new subjects every day and improve yourselves; it is not a static programme."

Theme 3: Conducting IB Programme together with National Programme

The section which probably is the hardest for students is that two programmes are carried out together. The fact that the students who rank in the first degrees in university examinations are at the same time the students of IB programme comes to mean that both programmes can jointly and successfully be carried out. Students stated that they attribute this situation to planned study. However, the students complain about this in general terms. S4 stated that "If I don't study for university examinations and orient

myself only to IB, I can do better than the things I do. I can attend many conferences and debates; but I cannot, because I am to study for university examinations as well." S7, another student, indicated the difficulty of this situation by stating "that is to say, as they try to give us a wider choice, they restrict us. They offer a programme, but they don't let us completely live it. Well, we compulsorily are obliged to carry Student Selection Examination (*for university*) with it. It is required for us to graduate from this in order to obtain a high-school diploma for us to be accepted in here." The obligation to also graduate from the national programme in order to be a high-school graduate in Turkey, makes it impossible to completely concentrate the students to one programme. What is wanted is to successfully complete IB programme and to be accepted from foreign or domestic universities with obtained points. While good universities around the world accept students with IB programme, it is stated that this situation is not at a sufficient level in Turkey. That is the reason why the students who don't think about abroad education are required to be successful in university examination and to successfully complete the national programme. Besides, it is stated that this is not a too hard situation and that they acquired the habit to study over time. Teachers and administrators think that both programmes go well together because of successful and self disciplined students. T1 expressed that "the students who got a good rank at the school and university entrance exam are also IB students". On the other hand Turkish literature and geography teachers have stated that different content of the programmes makes hard to instruct both programmes. T2 stated that "in Turkish literature it is very difficult to do both but we have to do it, while national programme is briefer, IB programme is deeper".

Theme 4: Evaluation of IB Programme using SWOT

Programme's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were analyzed by using SWOT analysis method. Students' and teachers' opinions were given in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1. Student opinions

Strengths: • Confident individuals • Importance to productivity and application • Freedom and individuality	**Weaknesses:** • It only bases on English culture
Opportunities: • Contact with different people • Personal development opportunities	**Threats:** • Sate school opportunities restrict the implementation of the programme • Presence of university examinations

According to Table 1, strengths can be summarized as confident individuals, presence of implementations and individuality with freedom. About the development of confidence, S1 expressed that "When I first entered into the programme, I used to deliver presentations excitingly and with my voice quavering; but now, I can comfortably speak in front of the crowd, which, I think, is the most important thing that IB made me gain. S4, other student, explained that it helps improve the confidence within an individual by stating that "… getting accustomed to the study order and being awake at nights are too hard for people, but we already are getting used to it at IB. Since we established that sort of order, focusing additionally on YGS (*transition to higher education examination*) won't be that hard. IB is very useful for a person to establish self-discipline." While students explain these, their confidence leaps to the eye. The fact that IB classes are full after the holiday although general presence in school is low and that everyone is occupied with something although the class is idle, can be a proof of spending the time effectively and of establishing the self-discipline. Reputation which was granted thanks to being at IB is furthermore perceived. It is seen that the children who are in the programme are in contact with each other and that they share information amongst them.

Weaknesses of the programme were indicated as the fact that the homework, projects and presentations are chosen from English culture and that the teachers direct students that way. Students desire to study in the fields in which they are interested. Students expressed that they cannot realize their desire

because of the fact that their teachers focus on western literature. S4 expresses this situation: "… IB programme is a non-objective programme in reality. You have to study English culture or similar things in English philosophy lessons. For example, when I say that I want to compare Chinese and Turkish culture, the teacher always says that it has to be English culture."

The subject of opportunities was generally identified as personal development and bringing the potential out. S4 stated that "… It says to a person that if you study, you achieve many things. Let's say that you might not be accepted by universities such as Harvard or MIT with IB diploma, but you might carry another university to other levels by entering into that university which can lead you a better place. It brings out that potential in you. It teaches this to the people".

Students did not commented on the subject of threats. Positive side of the programme outweighs. In the meantime, they indicated that the fact that the programme is performed in state schools and the physical difficulties which are brought by this, leads them to not being able to sufficiently benefit from the programme. As a result of library and laboratory examinations, it was seen that these places are not at desired quality, that it is required to ameliorate these places and provide more resources and materials in order to encourage students to frequently use these places. S5:

Especially in biology laboratory, I wish that each one had a microscope so that we can conduct our own experiments. We don't want to carry out an experiment incompletely and write a report. While performing velocity-time formula in mathematics, I want to learn by executing and experiencing it. Why wouldn't we have something like this? We learn history, okay, it is based on application, but this does not show that it is completely good. Okay… Good system, but why not better?

Teachers' and administrators' opinions about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the programme are offered as summary in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers' and administrators' opinions

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
• It gives skill to student • It focuses on discovering • It frequently includes applications • Learning through making and living	• Weakness in supervision • Lack of material and sharing • Insufficient time
Opportunities:	**Threats:**
• Finding out and removing students' deficiencies • Abroad opportunities • Self-development opportunities • Getting ready for university	• It is not in line with university examination, anxiety of exam • Lack of confidence in supervision • It is of foreign origin.

As emphasized by the students in the programme, the fact that it is "focused on application" is determined as the most important strength of it. For instance, T1 explained that "… it is good that there are applications within the programme, it is good that there is no memorizing and it is really good that they give formulas." The weaknesses showed up as being related to the supervision. While T3 states that "There are so many training courses. I can go to those courses and get my thesis done at those courses," about this matter, T1 says that "students can get their work done by someone else. Others have it too. There will be the same thing for this. Who can say anything if a student gets her/his work done by a university professor?"

Even though teachers and administrators do not much recommend doing bachelor's degree in foreign country, they see this as an opportunity. They also think that this is a programme which improves themselves and the students. Teachers and administrators stated that they are constantly in touch with abroad, which is contrary to the past where they were not accustomed to communicate with each other via mail. Additionally, they improved their skills of reading and interpreting classical works and writing critical

reviews and blog. The notion of the fact that the programme prepares students for university was frequently emphasized. In this respect, T5 stated that "… I had written a thesis when I was at the university. Children experience it while they are in high-school. Besides, we lend more assistance. In university, professors have meeting hours. Students meet the professors within those times. We don't have something like that." The threats of the programme show up since the students are not able to sufficiently prepare for the university examination and since it is of foreign origin. The fact that the assessment and evaluation are not oriented at university examinations and that students cannot adequately allocate time for the examinations because of this, constitute a threat. It was seen that this concern shows up especially in social lessons. Participants deem the "supervisions subject" as a weakness and a threat. It was indicated that the students have possibility to easily get their homework done by others. That the programme is of foreign origin and the concern of alienating the education was seen as other threats. It was stated that similar programmes should be made even though the programme is fully equipped. T2 mentioned the concern of alienating the education by stating that "… in fact, a similar programme can be made in Turkey as well. It can be made in our schools."

Discussion and Conclusion

It is understood that one of the themes which leap to the eye in IB programme is that it has a quality of rich lesson content, which satisfies the student. The fact that there is an atmosphere in which the teachers learn with students, introduces a constructive educational notion. The fact that there are various measurements and evaluations, that applications were given place and that there are interdisciplinary and student-focused studies as well in parallel with the results of Demir's (2009) qualitative researches, present that the programme is rich in the sense of equipment. That is why the students have chosen to be involved in the programme for a good education. In addition to this, just as the findings of Culross and Tarver (2007), it was chosen because of the reason that it is a convenience to enter into foreign universities. The result regarding the fact that the students found an opportunity to improve themselves thanks to the rich content and that in this way they prepared for the university in a much better way according to survey which Taylor and Porath (2006) performed with students who were graduated from 2000 IB, is pretty similar with the result of this work which composes of the opinions of the student who only just completed their first year in IB programme. It is important for the students to improve their social skills since they aim at the professions such as law, international relations, radio and television where these abilities are much more needed. For this reason, the participants emphasized that they try to remove and improve their deficiencies in this manner thanks to the programme. Activities performed in school, that the debate activities are much more preferred and that the students conveniently share their opinions with confidence show that their social skills improve. Students, who are aware of the fact that IB programme improved them in this regard, relatively adopt the programme. Partners consider that the students are different from other students with their mentioned specialty and that they bring prestige to the school. The fact that the school is recognized and chosen by many other schools might be the reason of the successful implementation of IB programme. Similarly, Bayulgen (2012) and Demir (2009), in their researches, stated that the IB programme is more successful than the national programme in the sense of bringing advanced level of thinking and verbal skills to the students.

Students and administrators stated that the programme is sufficient in respect of job satisfaction and content. It was observed that the teachers and administrators which take parts in the programme give enough importance to the programme and that they are motivated with the opportunity to improve themselves, even if their overwork does not turn into an income. This result is similar with the finding of Bora's (2008) work. Culross and Tarver (2007) stated that there is a difference between a student who is in the IB programme and a student who is not. According to this study, it is a proof for this result that the students who are in IB programme are less absent from the school than the other students, that they try to complete their work in the class even if it is break time and that IB teachers generally spend their time with their students.

According to opinions of the students, teachers and administrators, the programme was found powerful with respect to the fact that application, exploring and freedom take place in the classes, that the students grow in a confident way and that it brings skills to the students. Time constraint, the fact that the lack of material occurs in some classes, that the supervision is not sufficient and that the homework

generally depend on English culture, can be summarized as its weaknesses. Especially in social classes, it was emphasized that the communication with other schools is important. Findings such as the intensity of homework and the fact that the programme is challenging (Taylor and Porath, 2007) that the content does not meet the needs of students (Hertberg-Davis & Callahan, 2008), are the ones among its weaknesses. The reason why these results do not bear any resemblance to the ones in Turkey, may be that the national programme is challenging enough and that out students are accustomed to this challenging programme. As to the opportunities which the programme offers, it was determined that the programme offers opportunities for personal development, it prepares the students for university (Brunold-Conesa, 2010; Cubberley, 2009; Culross& Tarver, 2007; Demir, 2009; Paris, 2003; Tarc& Beatty, 2012; Taylor&Porath, 2006), it offers communication with different people and it demonstrates and removes the deficiencies of students. And the threats can be summarized as the lack of confidence in supervision, its foreign origin, the concern for university examination and the inadequacy of school's opportunities. It does not coincide with the programme because of the fact that there are university examinations in Turkey and that they mainly depend on the skills of doing tests. Therefore, the fact that the programme is not in line with the university examinations and the concern for failing to sufficiently prepare for the exams, constitute a threat for students. Gultekin (2006) has compared the results of university examinations with IB programme points and determined that the results are meaningful. The fact that the students in this school, who are successful in university examinations, are at the same time the students of IB programme supports this result. It can be said that the students successfully complete both programmes thanks to the gained study habits, even if they are worried.

To sum up, students and teachers emphasized that the programme is beneficial for them, though some arrangementsare required. Teachers and administrators emphasized on the weakness of supervision, while the fact that maintaining both the programmes together is heavy and that they cannot sufficiently prepare for the university examinations, constitute a concern for the students. That the internal evaluations and supervisions which are performed within the programme are not sufficient creates a concern about not getting marks trustworthily. In the event that students are allowed to enter into the universities with their IB programme points in the future, this security gap might become more dangerous. It is required to provide more technical support and supervision. In the future studies, weaknesses of the programme can be focused on and studies can be researched for the programme to be integrated into national programme in a much better way. Additionally, national programme can be improved and evaluated by taking the strengths of IB programme into consideration.

The following suggestions have been made in general according to the result of the programme:

- There should be changes in the national programme and like the IB programme there should be more practicing, researching, talking and writing studies.
- The assessment and evaluation of the national programme should be varied and grading system should be arranged accordingly.
- There should be questions with open-endings in the university exams. Also there should be exams by which different abilities could be questioned according to departments.
- Usage of computer technologies in Mathematics and Science classes should be emphasized and encourage.
- Inspection part of the IB programme should be strengthened.
- The content of the programme should have different cultures and moreover this should be encouraged.
- Schools should not apply the IB programme without having enough physical and equipment means (library, laboratories, teachers who know English).

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