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Social Responsibility Projects From The Perspective Of Syrian Children In Turkey: Give A Hand Project *

Türkiye'deki Suriyeli Çocukların Görüşlerine Göre Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri: Give A Hand Projesi

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ÖZ

Çalışma ile, 2011 yılından beri devam eden Suriye iç savaşından kaçarak Türkiye'ye sığınan Suriyeli çocuklara yardım edilmesi, mentorluk sağlanması, savaşın sebep olduğu sıkıntılarla alakalı dünya üzerinde bu çocuklara karşı farkındalık yaratılması için oluşturulan "Give A Hand" sosyal sorumluluk projesinden söz edilerek, göçmen çocukların bu projenin yönetimine, beklentilerine ve çıktıklarına yönelik görüşlerinin ortaya konulması amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi veri toplama araçlarından olan, odak grup görüşmesi kullanılarak 5 adet odak grup görüşmesinde, 20 Suriyeli çocuktan, betimsel içerik analizi tekniği ile veri toplanmıştır. Son yıllarda göç ve göçmen çalışmalarının literatürde artmış olmasına rağmen sosyal sorumluluk projeleri kapsamında göçmenlere yapılan desteklerin yönetsel boyutta araştırılması kısıtlı kalmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, "Suriyeli mülteci çocukların sosyal sorumluluk projeleri kapsamında mentorluktan/mentörlerinden beklentileri" ve "Suriyeli mülteci çocukların sosyal sorumluluk projelerinin yönetimi /dizaynı konusunda algıları" olmak üzere iki ana tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Çalışma ile bu alanda çalışmak isteyen akademisyenlere yol gösterici olunması ve literatüre katkı sağlanması beklenmektedir.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to present Syrian immigrant children's opinions on the management, expectations, and outcomes of the social responsibility project named "Give A Hand", which was designed to help and mentor Syrian children who fled the country and sought asylum in Turkey due to the civil war continuing since 2011, as well as to raise global awareness on the war-inflicted problems. Employing the focus group interview technique, which is a data collection tool for qualitative research methodology, this study gathered data from 20 Syrian children during 5 focus group interviews by using the descriptive content analysis technique. Although immigration and immigrant studies improved significantly in recent years, there are limited studies on the management of social responsibility-based relief efforts for immigrants. This study reveals two main themes, namely "the expectations of Syrian refugee children from mentoring/mentors within the scope of social responsibility projects" and "the perception of Syrian refugee children about the management/design of social responsibility projects". This study is expected to guide the members of the academia who want to study in this area and to contribute to the literature.

1. Introduction

The concept of social responsibility means feeling individually responsible for the improvement of the society,

voluntarily becoming a member to various non-governmental organizations, and taking part in collaborative efforts. Such efforts are recognized as indicators of awareness on social responsibility and play a major role in

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raising individual and societal awareness. While individuals fulfill their social responsibility by voluntarily participating in practices to generate social benefit, institutions also wish to take concrete steps towards creating sustainable projects in line with the changing and developing environment. Recent immigration waves due to wars, pandemics, and health issues have particularly increased people's responsiveness toward the society and the environment, and created the concept of responsibility (Knowles, 1977). The waves of immigration and the difficulties experienced by refugee children following the war in Syria have caught the attention of responsible individuals, hence various projects have been devised to support these children. The voluntary "Give A Hand" social responsibility project, which was designed to support the Syrian children in Turkey, was launched by students who felt responsible and aims to generate benefits for Syrian children and teenagers.

The literature defines the term "refugee", unlike "a voluntary immigrant", as an individual who had to flee from his/her own country, cannot return or do not wish to return home (UNHCR, 2007). Since the emergence of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, approximately half of the Syrian population (around 7.65 million people) had to leave the country and seek asylum in neighboring countries. The main destination of migration was Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon (Dayıoğlu et al., 2021), and approximately 22% (1.7 million) of the Syrian refugees were children. Most of these children do not go to school (less than 3% of the child labor aged 12-17 are registered at schools), live in urban settlements, and are forced to work as child labor under exhausting/exploitative conditions (Bircan and Sunata, 2015). However, for the refugee children, the concept of education is accepted as the key to integration into the environment and as a critical aspect in enabling emotional and social welfare, as well as in recreating a feeling of routine for them. Helping these children in adapting to the sociocultural structure and offering them mentoring is as important as making sure that they continue their education (Guo et al., 2019:90). This was the motive for the social responsibility project "Give A Hand", which works in collaboration with voluntary mentors to offer mentoring to Syrian children in Turkey in their social and psychological adaptation. The purpose of the study is to evaluate "Give A Hand" that aims to provide social, psychological, educational etc. support to the Syrian refugee children in Turkey from the viewpoint of these children, and to offer more functional benefits to the children under temporary protection by guiding NGOs that want to take more responsibility in the area.

2. Literature Review

Turkey joined the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention with a "geographical limitation" and agreed only to take in people originating from Europe as "refugees". According to Article 1A (2) of the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, which is the first international convention to define the term "refugee", a "refugee" is "any person who ... owing to well-

founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country". Therefore, it is not possible to name all immigrants as "refugees"; these people are subject to foreign laws of their own countries and defined as "asylum-seekers under temporary protection". According to the UNCHR (The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), the concept of "temporary protection" was suggested to handle the sudden refugee waves from many countries (Kaya and Erdoğan, 2015, p. 322). With this agreement, Syrians seeking asylum in Turkey were given "temporary refugee" status and "temporary protection identification cards" for a limited time of 1 year, in line with the 2011 EU Directive. Thanks to these temporary protection identification cards, refugees started to benefit from opportunities such as education, employment, social support, services, healthcare, and translation. As the "temporary protection" offered by Turkey was limited to one year, at the end of this period, Turkey expanded the scope of temporary protection with the Directive 62 on 30 March 2012 and started to define asylum-seekers as "Syrian refugees". On the other hand, since only those from Europe are acknowledged as "refugees" according to the Geneva Convention, Syrians are not named as refugees either in the international landscape or in the Turkish laws (Kaya & Erdoğan, 2015: 308). The status of "refugee" is an individual one in the legal regulations and although Syrians in Turkey are called "refugees" in daily life, this is not an appropriate usage of the term. The Syrians in Turkey are neither refugees nor conditional refugees or people under secondary protection. Although the confusion about asylum-seekers' statuses continues -as also reflected in the literature-, the status of Syrians in Turkey is accepted as "temporary protection" (Şen, 2019). Therefore, Syrians face many problems as they cannot benefit from the rights of refugees (Kaya and Erdoğan, 2015: 308). These problems caused the greatest impact on children who were forced to seek asylum in foreign countries, who suffered traumas of war, who left their homes behind and had to live in camps and prefabricated settlements since the Syrian conflict that started in 2011 (Guo et al., 2019:90). The leading problem faced by the Syrian children is education. Education is the key tool in the integration of immigrants and refugees. When properly provided, it helps to erase the traces of trauma especially in children under temporary protection, to offer social mobility opportunities, and to improve social and structural integration into society (Dere, 2021:1060). Education is a must for the Syrian children living in Turkey as well. Education empowers refugees by equipping them with the knowledge and skills required to lead productive, satisfying, and independent lives. Education supports refugees in becoming self-sufficient individuals and understanding both themselves and the world around them as they try to rebuild their lives and communities (Arslan, 2021:2). Various countries develop social responsibility projects via the United Nations to provide education for

those under temporary protection (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2019:17). UNCHR was founded in 1950, following the World War II, to help millions of Europeans who had to flee or lost their homes (Uzun, 2016: 63). After more than fifty years from its establishment, UNCHR still helps millions of people in rebuilding their lives. Among these people are refugees, those under temporary protection, those returning home, stateless people, those displaced within their country, and asylum-seekers (Ekşi, 2019: 352). The fundamental goal of such social responsibility projects is providing safety, shelter, healthcare, and education, while also healing the wounded pasts of those under temporary protection and offering them a brighter future. UNCHR works to obtain more information on asylum-seekers and demands for help, in reference to the existing educational resources (Öner, 2014: 43). For those under temporary protection, adapting to a new country is as difficult for children as it is to adults (Topaloglu, 2020: 2036). Unfortunately, Syrian families do not adopt the culture of a formal education which can provide life-long opportunities for the future of children under temporary protection. However, schools provide social skills in addition to education and such knowledge and skills help everyone today and in the future. When Syrian children do not go to school, they are devoid of social skills, adaptation, and the required foundation for discipline. Preventing children under temporary protection from going to school will eventually affect the future of the receiving countries and lower the average level of education. Hence, social responsibility projects are vital for any refugee-receiving country in building a brighter future. Since non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are aware of these problems, they provide services, programs, and aid to the refugees, those under temporary protection, asylum-seekers etc. in Turkey (Turk, 2016).

“Give A Hand” social responsibility project, which was designed to support children under temporary protection in overcoming socializing and psychological problems and adapting to their new environment, aims to support self-improvement of Syrian children. It is a social responsibility project launched by Hülya Kösematoğlu and her friends at Hill School in 2015 to provide adaptation, social skills, and educational support to the Syrian children in Derbent, İstanbul. The idea of devising this project emerged upon realizing the difficulties that Syrians faced following the war in their homeland and the poverty they experience in Turkey. The purpose of “Give A Hand” is to support children in adapting to a new lifestyle, to meet their needs, and to provide material and mental aid. The interviews and mentoring are planned to take place monthly, supported with voluntary activities such as painting, reading, and yoga. “Give A Hand” project was suspended during COVID-19 and “Give A Hand” mentoring program was launched in 2021 by Damla Sayki. “Give a Hand” mentoring program is based upon one-to-one matches bringing together Turkish students of 15-23 ages as mentors and Syrian students of 7-14 ages as mentees.

“Give a Hand Mentoring Program” is designed to enable mentees to adapt to Turkey and the Turkish culture, as well as to contribute to their self-development and to guide them in the process. Before starting to work with the mentees, mentors received a training of introduction to mentoring from expert mentors in 2022. Comprising various programs, “Give a Hand” project focuses mainly on the Syrian children in Turkey as a non-profit social responsibility project that aims social benefit alone. After all, the concept and historical background of social responsibility is solely about social benefits. It is known that the origins of the concept of social responsibility date back to the very early ages when people started to live in groups. The concept of social services is based upon the idea that every individual should equally benefit from the services and opportunities in the society. This concept includes focusing on solidarity and cooperation with the aim of serving people. Social services first began with the voluntary practices of philanthropists and benevolent people who supported individuals and groups in poor regions (Ersoy and Dikici, 2018). On the other hand, the term mentoring means the relationship between an experienced mentor and a mentee who needs guidance or advice to gain certain skills or to reach predefined targets. Mentoring is used to underline social integration (e.g., for immigrants) in schools or in businesses. Mentoring within the framework of Give A Hand is used to enable social adaptation and integration of Syrian children. Within the mentoring program, the required relationship develops in time through regular meetings. The literature focuses on four major mentoring types, which are also covered in the study: (i) youth mentoring, (ii) academic mentoring, (iii) labor mentoring, and (iv) workplace mentoring (Eurostat, 2021).

Types of mentoring reflect the various stages of a lifecycle starting from the first phases of education until career development. This classification is especially in relevance to immigrants and refugee populations due to their distinctive age distribution. The mentoring style used to support Syrian children with “Give A Hand” project is youth mentoring. A substantial part of the literature on youth mentoring is related to a simple theoretical model. This model claims that the positive impact of mentoring on the youth is dependent on the strength of personal bonds with the mentor. Time is of the essence to build personal bonds, trust, empathy, and sympathy. Therefore, as Eddy et al. (2017) revealed in their studies on children under risk, time should be taken into consideration as an integration tool in mentoring. Once mentee and mentor build personal bonds, the positive development of the child can progress through three interrelated processes, each of them meeting different needs. The first process improves the child’s/teenager’s social relations and emotional wellbeing; the second improves cognitive skills through training and conversing; and the third process encourages a constructive identity development through role modelling and advocacy (DuBois and Karcher, 2005:11). Each of such conclusions is potentially relevant to young immigrants, refugees, and

people under temporary protection who wish to be integrated into the workforce market (Bagnoli and Estache, 2022:9).

3. Methodology

Through qualitative research method and an inductive approach, the study tries to depict incidents/facts in natural environments, to understand the perspective of participants (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006), and especially to reflect the contributor's role resulting from the past work and communication of one of the researchers. The reason for adopting the qualitative research method is the intention to grasp deeper meanings of human life and to include not only statistical data on Syrian children, but also their perception of life, emotions, and thoughts. Phenomenological design is used as the qualitative research design so as to focus on facts that are somehow known, but not understood in depth and detail. On the other hand, the study gathered data from the sample group via the focus group technique, which is defined as a carefully planned discussion in an environment of free speech (Krueger, 1994). Focus group interview can be defined as a qualitative data collection technique based upon predefined instructions and in compliance with the logic of the method. This technique gives priority to individual subjectivity of interviewees and pays attention to discourse and the social context of this discourse. Another reason for employing the focus group technique to collect data is that this technique is a qualitative method to get information on conscious, semi-conscious or unconscious behaviors, as well as psychological and sociocultural qualities of groups and subgroups (Kroll et al., 2007). Although the literature does not reveal any widely accepted opinions on the number of participants, the ideal number varies between 4 and 10 (Tozkoparan and Vatansever, 2011:98). Based upon this perspective, we can say that the study reached the ideal number in groups. Every focus group interview lasted for a maximum time period of 45 minutes and before the interviews, participants were informed on the reason of the study and warm-up questions were asked to make sure that everyone speaks freely. The interview questions were designed clearly to make sure that participants could easily understand them. Focus group interview questions were finalized after getting feedback from two academics in the area and making the necessary corrections accordingly. During data collection process, online interviews were made via Zoom and these interviews were not recorded to make sure that the Syrian children in Turkey could reply more freely. Instead of recording, one of the researchers took notes during the interviews. In addition, ethical approval was obtained for the study from the ethics committee of Istanbul Kultur University (decision dated 17.11.2022 and numbered 2022/153).

The universe of the study is built upon refugee children who immigrated to Turkey from Syria. The study uses criterion sampling, which is a purposeful sampling technique. The criterion for the study group was designated as volunteering "refugee children in the Derbent (Sarıyer) District of

İstanbul". Five focus group interviews were held with a total of 20 Syrian children (8 males and 12 females) who live in Derbent, İstanbul and who participated in Give A Hand.

During the data analysis stage, the data gathered in focus group interviews were transcribed and documented. The resulting data set was analyzed by using descriptive content analysis technique, which is a type of data analytics used in qualitative research methodology. Content analysis is "a systematic, repeatable technique in which some words in a text are summarized with smaller content categories by using codes based upon certain rules" (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013: 250). "The basic process in content analysis is to combine similar data around certain concepts and themes, and to organize and interpret them in a way that readers can understand." (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006: 227). The data were evaluated in accordance with the stages of descriptive content analysis method. Content analysis is performed through the stages of coding, classifying, and identifying the gathered data (Glesne, 2012).

Experts were consulted in all stages of the study to ensure validity and reliability. In addition, data sets derived after concluding the study were reported to the interviewees and their families to ensure internal validity (credibility). In order to ensure external validity (transmissibility), the method of purposeful sampling was selected to identify the interviewees and detailed depictions and quotations were used during the study and while establishing the findings. Special attention was paid to implement every step of the study, including data collection and analysis, in line with the purpose of the study so as to ensure internal (consistency) and external reliability (verifiability). Resulting data sets were first analyzed separately by researchers, then the resulting themes and categories were cross-checked, explained, and data analysis was finalized. Again, for the purposes of preventing subjective bias and mitigating the specific deficiencies of working with a single researcher, two researchers were employed and thanks to this variation of researchers, the validity of the study was enhanced.

4. The Problematics of the Study

This study gives information on the social responsibility project "Give A Hand", which was designed to help and mentor Syrian children who fled the country and sought asylum in Turkey due to the civil war continuing since 2011, as well as to raise global awareness on the war-inflicted problems, while also aiming to reveal the opinions of Syrian immigrant children under temporary protection on the management, expectations, and outcomes of the project. The problematics of the study are identified as follows:

- What do the refugee children taking part in social responsibility projects think about such projects (What are their opinions on project management / What do they expect?)

- What conclusions do immigrant children taking part in social responsibility projects reach? / What are the problems they face (if any)?

5. Findings

Within the scope of the study, focus group interviews were made with the Syrian children by using semi-structured questionnaires, responses were collected, repetitive expressions were identified and coded (some codes were used *-in-vivo-* as direct quotations), similar codes were combined under subthemes and interpreted. In this section of the study, firstly demographic data were charted, then subthemes of the study were supported by the responses of interviewees and coded.

Table 1. Demographic Data

Interviewee No	Gender	Age	Year of Immigration	Household Population	Number of Working People
G1	F	11	2012	5	1
G2	M	13	2016	5	2
G3	F	12	2014	6	2
G4	M	13	2012	6	1
G5	M	12	2012	6	2
G6	F	10	2014	5	1
G7	F	13	2012	5	1
G8	F	11	2015	5	1
G9	F	14	2015	5	1
G10	F	10	2013	6	1
G11	M	14	2014	5	2
G12	M	12	2014	7	2
G13	M	13	2014	6	1
G14	M	15	2014	6	2
G15	F	14	2015	5	1
G16	F	13	2015	5	2
G17	F	13	2015	5	1
G18	F	14	2013	6	1
G19	M	12	2014	8	1
G20	F	14	2014	7	2

Interviews with the Syrian children living in Turkey revealed the demographic data given in Table 1. Participants to the study were children in the age group 10-14, and 8 male and 12 female children were interviewed.

Table 2. Themes Based Upon the Opinions of Interviewed Syrian Refugee Children on Social Responsibility Projects

Theme 1. The Expectations of Syrian Refugee Children from Mentoring/Mentors within the Scope of Social Responsibility Projects

Theme 2. The Perception of Syrian Refugee Children About the Management/Design of Social Responsibility Projects

Icagasioglu, Çoban and Tursucu (2018: 90) identify social adaptation as a concept that reveals how the relationship between locals and immigrants are to be structured and mention an adaptation process in which immigrants live in compliance with the sociocultural norms adopted by the locals. Accordingly, "Give A Hand" social responsibility project aims to improve communication skills of Syrian children and to enable their social adaptation to Turkey and the Turkish Culture through mentoring.

Below are the exact (in-vivo) quotations from interviewees regarding the "self-development support" subtheme given in Table 3 above.

"We study, do homework, and check it." g2

"I needed a fun sister, I needed her to teach me well, and I wanted to converse and tell everything to my teacher." g6

"Thanks to my mentor sister, I learned adjectives, days, and months." g7

"My mentor who supported me helped me to adjust to my school, explained the words I couldn't understand talked a lot with me..." g19

As seen in the (most frequent) responses of the interviewees above, the expectation of Syrian refugee children from mentoring/mentors is to get help in school courses (8 interviewees). Below are the responses regarding the repeating (code) expressions of "mitigating negative impacts of language barriers" under the self-development support subtheme given in Table 3.

"I am not very good at reading in Turkish and we are working on that. My mentor helps me a lot. Previously, I feared the Turkish language, but now I have no concerns." g10

"Thanks to them, I got a lot more used to Turkey and the Turkish language. Maybe it wouldn't be so easy without my elder brother." g13

"I had worries about speaking, because I thought I would make mistakes and people would laugh ... My elder sister, I mean my mentor, said 'Hey, I make mistakes when I try to speak your language, too.' We laughed hard ... She helped me get used to it." g20

Another topic that the interviewed Syrian refugee children expect from mentorship/mentoring under the subtheme of Self-Development Support was "entertainment-going out".

Table 3. Subthemes and Codes Related to the Theme “The Expectations of Syrian Refugee Children from Mentoring/Mentors within the Scope of Social Responsibility Projects”

Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Subtheme 3
Self-Development Support	Social-Cultural Adaptation Support	Emotional Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Helping with school courses</i> ▪ <i>Mitigating negative impacts of language barriers</i> ▪ <i>Entertainment-Going out</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Support against ethnicity-related issues</i> ▪ <i>Improving communication skills</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Support as elder sisters-brothers</i> ▪ <i>Hearing-understanding</i>

Considering the difficulties that these Syrian refugee children faced in the country they sought asylum in after being forced to leave their country, their need for outing and entertainment is hardly surprising. As can be seen in their responses, there were some children who saw the sea for the first time ever thanks to the event organized for the mentoring program within the scope of “Give A Hand”.

“We were on a boat once, that was when I first saw the sea ... We went to the university campus for many activities, we played football and basketball, we ate together.” g1

“We went out, we had fun, I was happy.” g15

“We traveled very well with my sister, she took me to a beautiful park” g3

Table 4. Subthemes and Codes Related to The Expectations and Perceptions of Syrian Refugee Children From The Management of Social Responsibility Projects

Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Subtheme 3
Financial Support	More Entertainment / Activities / Sightseeing	Project Management (Give a Hand)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational material support ▪ Financial support to the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going out ▪ Matches/sports activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No managers/just children ▪ No rules- flexibility

As seen in Table 4 above, the expectations and perceptions of interviewed Syrian refugee children on the management of “Give A Hand” mentoring program were collected through semi-structured questions posed to them and the responses were organized in three subthemes: financial support, more entertainment/activities/sightseeing, and project management.

According to subtheme 1, the expectations of interviewed Syrian refugee children were revealed in their responses to questions such as “How would you run this project?” and the most frequent response was educational material support. The next most frequent response was financial support to their families. Shortly after the responses were collected from interviewed children, “Give A Hand” distributed free tablets to children so that they can follow their school courses and meet their mentors online.

“Yes, I would like material support. When I grow up, I will also organize such projects, I will be rich and give money to children so that they can buy whatever they want.” g11

“I wish my father could buy me a computer, then I could study with it. I would also love to have fancy notebooks etc. My school friends have such things.” g9

“If the project had given us money, then we would have bought new shoes for me and I could have played ball comfortably”. g4

Theme 2 of “more entertainment/activities/sightseeing” based upon the responses from interviewed Syrian refugee children revealed the codes of going out (the most frequent expression) and “matches/sports activities”. It is understood that the expectation of children from projects such as “Give A Hand” is to fulfill their needs for going out, having fun, going to sports matches etc. Since they cannot meet these needs through their own means, they have great expectations from projects. This perspective is in line with the expression of the interviewee g14: “I have gone to a sports match for the first time ever. I am so glad this project exists. My father could have never taken me to a match.”

As a result of the interviews made for the sake of this study, the opinions of Syrian children in Turkey on the management aspect of “Give A Hand” project revealed the codes of “no managers/just children” (the most frequent expression) and “no rules/flexibility”. The most distinctive responses to the interviews are given below:

“I would let children manage it all.” g12.

“I wouldn’t have any rules.” g14.

“Let’s do what we want no one interferes with us”. g5

"I don't think they should say do that don't that, sisters and brothers should meet with us whenever they want to meet with us. Let everyone do what they want, if there are not too many rules, we will be comfortable, maybe we will always play games with my sister". g8

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Voluntary mentoring programs that are implemented within the scope of social responsibility projects are very much promising in terms of social integration/adaptation and reintegration of Syrian children who had to migrate to Turkey as these children are personally, socially or physically disadvantaged compared to peers (in the local population), have adverse childhood experiences, face academic and social problems at school, have trouble in struggling against stress factors, and experience problems in adapting to the Turkish culture and language. Performed within the framework of the social responsibility project "Give A Hand", this study aimed to support personal and emotional development as well as sociocultural adaptation of Syrian children located in Sariyer, Derbent district through mentoring.

Similar to the study, Thomas, (2016); Oberoi, (2016); Özdemir (2017); stated that Syrian children can integrate into the culture of the country they settled in more easily by supporting their education to overcome language problems. In this context, the findings of the study showed parallelism with the literature, and it was stated that mentoring programs could support immigrant and refugee young people's integration into society, and it was important for young people to access social support networks. The primary objective of the study was to improve and revise such mentoring programs as well as to make them more functional through identifying expectations and perceptions of children (especially in terms of management) with a focus on Syrian children, even though mentoring programs are voluntary-based initiatives that sometimes do not have a systematic structure. One of the findings of the study, the Syrian children's "not asking for a systematic structure" from the mentoring program management can be accepted as a different result from the literature. Because in the studies in which mentoring programs are examined in the literature, it is stated that a systematic structure of the mentoring system in terms of management is desired/advantaged by the program participants and program managers (DuBois and Karcher, 2014; Karcher and Hansen, 2014). However, it is known that this situation may change according to the content, type, structure, and needs of the program participants (Kram, 1988; Zachary and Fain, 2022).

Employing phenomenological pattern, the study used semi-structured questionnaires in line with the focus group technique, which is a qualitative research method, and performed descriptive content analysis. This article also handles the problematic of refugees with a different

perspective compared to the literature (mentoring for children) to reach meaningful outcomes of the expectations from management of mentoring programs.

As a result of the interviews with Syrian children under temporary protection, the study revealed two main themes that cover the children's expectations and perceptions of mentoring/mentors and management of social responsibility projects. Within the framework of subthemes that were also revealed though the study, the qualities of the youth mentoring program used as a social integration model for Syrian refugee children are as follows:

- Mentees (Syrian refugee children) learn to establish positive relationships thanks to their bonds with mentors and experience relation-based existence based upon this model, thus creating a safe space for shaping their future. The opportunity of building healthy and safe bonds (without marginalizing them) provided to these children through mentoring programs helps them to improve their social networks and to build safe and healthy relations with the Turkish people without destroying their self-confidence. This helps to relieve mentees' troubles and offers healing in the psychosocial sense.
- The findings of the interviews made during the study reveal that Syrian children are marginalized in their schools and social environments. Educational models based upon social responsibility projects and mentoring programs can benefit from social activities to be held by mentors to support these children's integration in the society by equipping them with skills such as self-awareness, self-confidence, taking initiatives, managing anger and anxiety, communication, language acquisition, and easy adaptation.
- The youth mentoring program within the social responsibility project "Give A Hand" can create awareness and increase the number of similar social responsibility projects for the benefit of disadvantaged groups and contribute to them through character-building trainings such as benevolence without any personal gains.
- Identifying a flexibility-based management style and building a management team that is suitable to the demographics of the target audience of the program (especially age factor and peer management) without any written rules can be beneficial for future studies in the area (Syrian refugee children or disadvantaged groups). The reason for this conclusion is that the children expressed their expectations simply as "*children should run the program, no rules*", which can be interpreted as their potential discomfort especially in communication when faced with rules.
- Especially in mentoring programs designed for disadvantaged groups, it would be appropriate to analyze the needs of the target audience in advance and

build programs that are suitable to the expectations of mentees (e.g., children's expectations of financial and educational material support).

This study recommends members of the academia who want to work in this area to examine the strategical structure of mentoring programs by performing comparative survey together with children under temporary protection/refugee children, their families, and mentors.

Annex 1

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- 1-What, in your opinion, does immigrant/refugee mean? What comes to mind when we say immigrant/refugee?
- 2-What were your expectations before joining this social responsibility project? What changes did you observe in yourself after mentoring? (self-development)
- 3-What role did your mentor play in your education, entertainment, and self-development? Do you like your mentor?
- 4-How did you learn about this social responsibility project?
- 5-If you owned this project, how would you run it? Have you experienced any problems during the project?

Source: Zulu,2021

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