

**NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH CITIZENS'
INTERACTIONS WITH SYRIAN REFUGEES AND AN
EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAM DESIGN**

A Dissertation Presented

By

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ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
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ABSTRACT

The number of refugees is increasing rapidly all over the world. The number of Syrian refugees, in particular, reached 6.3 million. This number is equal to almost one-third of the world's total refugee population and more than 3.5 million of them live in Turkey, which makes it the largest refugee host country in the world. Refugees have to cope with social factors such as lack of social support, integration, prejudice, racism and social exclusion. As a result, they face significant mental and physical health problems. This is a globally prevalent trend mainly because of being perceived as either a burden or a security threat. This dissertation explores intergroup relations dynamics in between Turkish citizens and Syrian refugees in Turkey, and designs an evidence-based and theory-driven intervention program to reduce prejudice and intergroup conflict and to improve intergroup relations in the country.

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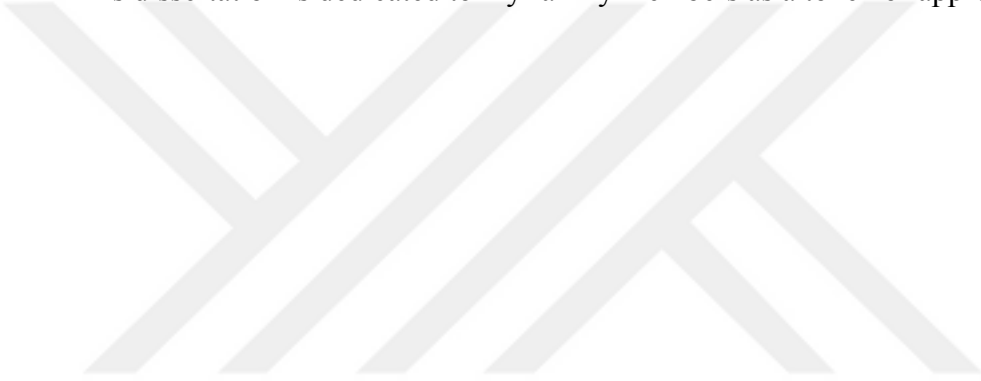
I would also like to extend my gratitude to my parents, *Esra and Mustafa Armagan*, for their unparalleled support throughout my life. They provided me with encouragement and patience and believed in my abilities. They never cared about the titles or my “career” as an academic. Instead, they gave me the passion for learning more, helping people in need and using my power to become their voice. I also gratefully acknowledge the support of my siblings: *İkbal Betul, Beyzanur, and Ahmet Meliksah*. Many thanks to them for being my best friends who always listen and provide valuable advice. I would also like to thank my in-laws, the *Bogatekin family*, for their support.

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I. INTRODUCTION

My research interests lie primarily in the intergroup relations refugees have with natives, and how these intergroup relations influence refugees' overall well-being. This dissertation focuses on the intergroup relationships between Syrian refugees in Turkey and Turkish citizens. Social support plays a vital role in people's well-being. However, Syrian refugees lost most of their social support systems as they had to move to different parts of the world, apart from their families. Besides, they lost the welcoming discourse Turks and the government had used in the first couple of years of their arrival. Even though the Turkish government used a welcoming discourse and followed an open-door policy when they first arrived, the many Turkish people perceived them as a burden and did not support this policy, especially in the areas that had the largest refugee populations (Kirişci, 2014; Lazarev & Sharma, 2017).

Lack of social support, coupled with intergroup conflict, may result in deleterious health outcomes for many Syrian refugees in Turkey. I am interested in researching the influence of prejudice on intergroup conflicts, and how it can be reduced, to improve intergroup relations and increase well-being by focusing on Syrian refugees in the Turkish context. My hope is to extract lessons from my research to help build better intergroup relations in Turkey and, ultimately, help refugees become healthier both psychologically and physically. I am especially interested in Turkish people's perceptions and how they can be motivated to build better intergroup relations since they are the majority members who hold more power in society compared to Syrian refugees.

Media, personal interactions, automatic judgments, and other people might influence how we behave and think about outgroups. I want to explore the sources of negative attitudes

toward refugees to focus on overcoming them. I also aim to focus on positive experiences to encourage and reinforce them more to build better relations. Furthermore, investigating the issue based on agency and communion themes is crucial, especially in Turkey's collectivistic culture.

Current Dissertation

This dissertation aims to address a gap in present research by examining the influence of agency and communion in intergroup relations and sources and valences of positive and negative experiences between Syrian refugees and Turkish people. Improving intergroup relations is beneficial for both local communities and refugees' health and well-being. Therefore, this research aims to investigate how Turks perceive refugees and the sources of different types of experiences they have with refugees.

The research for this dissertation is comprises three papers: The first two are based on a qualitative study, and the third is an intervention program designed on the basis of prior literature and findings from the first two papers. The qualitative study consisted of 286 narratives collected from Turkish adults who live in Turkey based on four open ended questions that were directed to them. These questions were adapted from the Life-Story Interview (McAdams, 2001). Participants narrated one positive, and one negative experience they had with Syrian refugees in Turkey. Next, they narrated a turning point and a vivid memory.

First, in Paper 1, I explore if Turkish people narrate their experiences in a more agentic or communal way. Agency refers to concepts related to the self, such as strength, power, and self-insight. Agency is also related to individualism through achievement, power and impact, and victories. Communion refers to being part of a community, and we

investigated concepts such as love, caring, helping, friendship, and unity under this theme. According to this coding scheme, the agency is about the self alone and pertained to self-assertion, achievement, power, and promoting their own interests, sometimes in expense of others. Meanwhile, communion is more related to emotional connectedness with other people and ability to get along with others while integrating and cooperating with the host community (Dufner et al., 2016).

Next, in Paper 2, I examine the sources (i.e., personal interaction, automatic judgment, media, and other people) and valences (i.e., positive, negative, bittersweet, neutral, racist) of each narrative. Finally, in Paper 3, I design an intervention program called 'Refik' to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations. Refik is based on the Intergroup Contact Theory and aimed to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations in the country through ally workshops, documentary viewing and a physical training module. The goal of these papers is to examine the dynamics of intergroup relations and conflict in Turkey. Besides, these studies explore factors that are most influential in positive and negative memories between groups. Furthermore, this dissertation demonstrates how Turkish people had turning points in their perceptions about refugees in the last nine years and what played a role in switching their thoughts. Lastly, these studies showed the increase in racism in the country and called for more efforts to prevent it from getting worse in the future.

Future Directions

This research provides a good foundation to consider the influence of the agentic versus communal approach and the impact of media, other people, personal interactions, and automatic judgments in intergroup relations. It is essential to understand the components that optimize the circumstances these two groups interact in. In addition, given that the prejudice

against refugees is increasing, future research and work should discover ways to improve Turkey's intergroup relations. While it is essential to understand the perceptions of the majority group, there needs to be an effort to understand refugees' perceptions and increase intergroup contact. These efforts should be on individual, organizational, community and policy levels.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: STUDY ONE

The number of refugees worldwide reached an unprecedented level after Syrian people started fleeing to neighboring countries in 2011. Turkey accepted the largest number of refugees and eventually became the world's largest refugee host country. The UNHCR figures in 2013 estimated that the number of Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey reached over a quarter of a million. In 2018, the number of registered refugees in Turkey was more than 3.5 million, and it was nearly one million in Lebanon, while it was more than a half million in Jordan (İçduygu and Nimer, 2020).

It has been 10 years since refugees started fleeing, and significant flows like this might result in profound societal changes and create intergroup conflict (Safak-Ayvazoglu et al., 2021). Turkish government adopted an encampment policy and a welcoming discourse in the early years of refugees' arrival as they thought that refugees' stay was temporary. However, as the number increased significantly and the stay got longer, the country could not accommodate them all in the camp settings in a humanitarian manner.

In the early years, Turkey perceived the flows as a humanitarian issue and the official

discourse surrounding it centered around “guests”, and “ansar”. Islamic culture has a special term “ansar” (Arabic: الأنصار al-Anṣār, "The Helpers"), used for local community members of Medina who hosted and shared their homes and jobs with Islamic Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his followers (called “Muhajirun”) when they had to flee from Mecca due to the pressure and violence at that time. This welcoming nature of “ansar” conduct formed and shaped the fundamental understanding of the status of “refugees” in Islamic culture. Today, in Turkey, most political leaders do not term Syrians as “multeci” (refugee). Instead, they intentionally prefer more embracing terms and use the “ansar” discourse. Thus, this understanding might be a significant factor that will potentially reduce the probability of racism and discrimination against Syrian refugees in Turkey in the years to come. It might also help coping with acculturative stress (Thomas et al., 2006). However, as the time passed, the public rhetoric got worse and discrimination and xenophobia increased. Therefore, refugees started to be perceived as a burden and even a competitor for the limited resources in the country (İçduygu and Nimer, 2020). Research shows that policy-makers have the tendency to meet the demands of the public, especially about immigration related situations (Morales et al., 2015). Thus, officials in Turkey also started bringing up the return discourse after 2016.

The goal of this study was to investigate the sense of self and community Turkish people experience after a large flow of Syrian refugees arrived in Turkey. We also aim to explore how the shift in political discourse and public opinion has changed people’s perceptions. The current project collected and analyzed narratives from Turkish people to understand their perceptions about Syrian refugees and how these two groups have been interacting in the last 10 years since refugees started fleeing to Turkey. We asked participants

to narrate one positive memory with regard to their experiences with Syrian refugees, one negative memory, one turning point and a vivid memory, in addition to the demographics questions. We coded themes of agency and communion from online qualitative interviews to understand Turkish citizens' perceptions of Syrian refugees. We aimed to understand how Turkish citizens give meaning to these experiences, in order to improve intergroup relations and ultimately improve Syrian refugees' health and well-being by reducing prejudice and becoming a social support source.

Agency and Communion Analysis

A coding scheme adapted by McAdams (2001) is used in the current study to analyze narratives for agentic versus communal responses. Agency refers to individualism through achievement, power and impact, self-insight and victories. The focus of communion is on being part of a larger community through caring, helping, unity, love and friendship (McAdams, 2001). Bakan (1966) proposed these two modalities of human existence and suggested that agency-oriented people value individual achievements while communion-oriented people care more about their sense of belonging. Agency and communion are also linked to the theories of self-concept formation (Diehl et al., 2004). Therefore, the cultural embeddedness of people's self-concept leads Western cultures to develop an independent and agentic view of self. In contrast, those from Asian and African cultures promote an interdependent and communal perception of self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). These different conceptualizations impact people's functioning in different layers, such as emotional and cognitive functioning (Diehl et al., 2004). Therefore, the present study will be careful in assessing such cultural differences as Turkey is known as a collectivistic culture. The codebook and the coding scheme are adapted accordingly.

According to the coding scheme adapted by McAdams (2001), agency pertain to self alone and is related to self-assertion, achievement, power, and promoting their own interests, sometimes in expense of others. Meanwhile, communion is more related to emotional connectedness with other people and a capacity for getting along with others while integrating themselves into a larger community and cooperating with them (Dufner et al., 2016). An agency and communion approach is helpful for exploring intergroup relations between Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens in terms of individualism and emotional connectedness to other groups in the country. This distinction between agency and communion also has a cultural aspect to take into consideration.

Sato (1998) argued there are cultural differences in how people function in general and how they influence people's sense of agency and communion. Therefore, there is a distinction between the Westernized, individualistic approach which values a sense of agency and the non-Western, collectivistic approach that emphasizes the sense of communion in deriving their sense of well-being. Most research on narrative analysis has been done with European and European North American participants. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature about cross-cultural studies of life narratives (McCabe and Dinh, 2016). The current project will address this gap by interviewing Turkish people in Turkey and exploring agency and communion themes in their narrations about Syrian refugees. Due to the collectivistic nature of Turkish population, we predicted that our sample would score significantly higher on communion when compared to agency. This agency and communion approach was selected to analyze the data as our aim was to explore intergroup relations and eventually find ways to improve those. In the current project, we hypothesized that agency would be positively correlated with communion. We further hypothesized that age and

education would be correlated with agency and communion.

The narratives were coded according to McAdams's (2001) subthemes of agency and communion. All four themes and their subthemes were tallied for analysis, and a codebook was written based on McAdams (2001). We calculated scores based on McAdams (2001), as we scored each subtheme once per episode. There were four episodes per participant, and each participant could score a maximum of 16 for all subthemes. As McAdams suggested, a subtheme of agency or communion was scored only once per episode. We also included ineffectiveness for lack or loss of agency; alienation for lack or loss of communion, based on McCabe and Dinh (2016). As there are four episodes per participant, each participant could score a maximum of 48 for agency, communion, ineffectiveness, and alienation (with four subthemes each). We predicted that agency scores would be positively correlated with communion scores (and opposites).

Agency

McAdams (2001) defined agency as a wide range of psychological and motivational ideas, including concepts such as strength, power, dominance, autonomy, separation, and independence. Therefore, it might include achieving a goal, feeling proud, having a substantial impact on something/someone, as well as attaining a higher status (see Table 3 for further details). The four subthemes under agency are as follow:

- 1) Achievement/Responsibility (AR) – This theme includes whether the participants seek accomplishment, success, achieve goals, take on new responsibilities to do new things, or overcome obstacles. Some examples of it were as follows: *"Thinks that it is Turks' responsibility to take care of them," "Thinks Turkey did what it was supposed*

to do," and talks about how successful Turkey was during the migration process. This sub-theme was located under agency instead of communion as the individual narrates their own opinions and do not mention and type of friendship, love or unity with Syrians.

- 2) Power/Impact (PI) – This theme refers to the participants when they enact influence, impact, or empowerment. McAdams (2001) considered the empowering force to be a highly influential figure of authority or a role-model. PI was coded if the participant mentioned how well the refugee situation was handled or having a personal impact on a refugee's life.
- 3) Self-Insight (SI) – McAdams (2001) considered this theme as a way of perfecting the self. Even though self-control was also included in McAdams (2001), it was not used in this study since self-insight aligned better with the current project's idea. SI meant insightful reflection on the self, self-identification, or identity. Research assistants were trained to code this if the person describes that she has anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts (describes issues with mental health, per McAdams). Alternatively, starting a sentence with *"I know, I think, I feel..."* followed by an insight about themselves was also coded under this theme. This theme also included turning points and realizations.
- 4) Status/Victory (SV) – This sub-theme was about prestige, winning, or high status. If the participant feels higher status over refugees because they helped them or becomes a role model in the Turkish society, this was coded as SV. Also, success stories of refugees were included under this code (see Table 3 for a summary and ineffectiveness examples from our data of this coding system).

Communion

Communion is related to love, friendship, intimacy, sharing, belonging, affiliation, union, and nurturance (McAdams, 2006). Communion includes different individuals coming together in supportive, sincere, caring, and communicative relationships, making them feel like a part of a group. Therefore, communion includes enhanced love or friendship, communication, or dialogue with another individual. Also, providing or receiving care, assistance, and support to increase another person's well-being can be considered under communion. Thus, our codebook included Love/Friendship (LF), Dialogue (DG), Caring/Help (CH), and Unity/Togetherness (UT) as subthemes under communion:

- 1) Love-Friendship (LF) – LF is coded when the participant mentioned a personal relationship with one or more refugees. This theme includes talking positively about a Syrian friend, neighbor, or an incident where they grew emotionally closer to each other after spending time together.
- 2) Dialogue (DG) – The subtheme refers to dialogue that takes place within the narration. This theme involves both direct and indirect communication.
- 3) Caring and Help (CH) – CH is coded when there is a sign of helping or caring for refugees by volunteering or personally providing help. This theme also involves empathy, even if it is not acted upon. McAdams (2001) only included providing care and help to others. Thus, we excluded narratives that mention receiving help or care from a Syrian refugee.
- 4) Unity and Togetherness (UT) – This sub-theme is about being part of a larger group/team and experiencing harmony and solidarity with them (McAdams, 2001). If the participant says Syrians are “*our brothers/sisters*” or talks about Islamic

brotherhood, *Ansar*, or *Muhajirun* concepts, that was coded as UT. In this code, the emphasis is on the group's closeness rather than developing any particular love affair or friendship. If there are examples of being accepted, cherished, or affirmed by friendship, family, or other social groups or if the participant says something such as *"Human being should be treated as individuals. There are always going to be good ones and bad ones among each nation "*, that was coded under UT as well. (see Table 3 for a summary and alienation examples from our data of this coding system).

Ineffectiveness

This category is created as the opposite of agency and includes times when narrators report feeling negative about a substantial failure that makes them feel weak or ineffective. Feeling like a victim, lowered self-esteem, or status can also be considered under this theme.

- 1) Negative Achievement/Responsibility (NAR) – This subtheme encompasses wrong or damaging decisions, actions and, lacking achievement. Some examples of that are a feeling of betrayal, understanding that initial positive feelings were wrong, showing no reaction (as a bystander) to racism even if they wanted to.
- 2) Negative Power/Impact (NPI) – NPI was coded when narrators report feeling weak or impotent about the system's substantial failure or the possibility of refugees' future detrimental impact. Victimization/abuse or an in-group member getting injured or hurt financially by a refugee were coded under this subtheme. In addition, it was coded if the participant mentions some disturbance or annoyance, such as Syrian refugees staring at them (elevator eyes) or being too loud in a public place.

- 3) Negative Self-Insight (NSI) – NSI refers to lack of self-insight, feeling lost or negative identity. Research assistants were trained to code this if the person describes some type of negative view of themselves or starts a sentence with "*I know, I think, I feel...*" which was followed by some type of negative insight about themselves. Also, expressing lowered self-esteem or undesirability was coded under NSA.
- 4) Negative Status/Victory (NSV) – This subtheme was coded when narrators mentioned any reduction in status, feeling disliked or defeated in a competition. This code might include talking about how refugees “steal jobs” in the country or how they get more assistance and help than poor Turkish people do.

Alienation

This category was created as the opposite of communion, and it encompasses feeling isolated or lonely and losing someone. Furthermore, feeling hatred or hostility towards another person or feeling neglected are coded under this theme. Racism, discrimination, and language barriers are also specific areas we focused on under this current study theme.

- 1) Negative Love/Friendship (NLF) – This subtheme encompasses a lack of personal relationships with refugees, trust issues, and hatred. If the participant mentions that they are happy about Syria's current situation and how they will never accept refugees into society, that narrative was coded under the negative love and friendship subtheme.
- 2) Negative Dialogue (NDG) – Lack of communication with refugees as well as any mention of a language barrier is coded under this theme. Any hostile conversation or confrontation regarding refugees is considered under this topic.

- 3) Negative Caring/Helping (NCH) – Lack of caring and any mention of neglect of Turkish people in need by institutions that should have protected/supported them are coded under NCH. This neglect might have resulted in trust issues with an authority figure.
- 4) Negative Unity/Togetherness (NUT) – Lack of support and disintegration of relationships with refugees is a part of NUT. If the participant mentions an idea about not accepting refugees or explicitly states that they disagree with the idea of unity or Islamic brotherhood, coders coded that narration as NUT. Any incident of discrimination and racism was considered as negative unity and togetherness and therefore coded as such.

No Memory

We had an additional code, No Memory (NM). While coding the narratives, we recognized that many participants started their narration by stating that they do not have a vivid memory to tell, then they started narrating their episode. That was an interesting phenomenon to investigate. Thus, we decided to code it as NM to see why it might have occurred and in which coding section (positive agency/communion or negative agency/communion) it happened more.

The Present Study

We predicted that Turkish participants' scores on agency would be significantly correlated with communion scores, and that ineffectiveness scores would be significantly correlated with alienation. Therefore, we examined a) the prominence of agency, communion, ineffectiveness, and alienation; b) the relationship between these four dimensions and their relationships to age, sex and education level. Furthermore, we examined the scores on the question level and determined the distribution of agency, communion, ineffectiveness, and alienation scores among four questions that ask a positive memory, a negative memory, a turning point, and a vivid memory. We aimed to understand whether one domain dominates others in the Turkish context and how frequent it is to elaborate the refugee situation on an individual or community level.

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants were Turkish citizens born and raised in Turkey who were at least 18 years old. Participants were from more than 60 cities (out of 81) in Turkey. This study reached out to 2,112 participants in total. We excluded the participants that did not respond to all nine questions, including demographic questions. Then, we used the first 37 participants for training purposes of the 323 participants that were left and excluded those from the analysis. Therefore, the analysis was conducted with 286 participants from 49 cities who responded to all nine questions. The age range was 40, and participants were 18-58 years old (Table 1). It is important to note that the extreme gender imbalance, which is a limitation in this study, was not found in original sample of 2,112.

Table 1. Participant Demographics (N=286)

Measure	<i>n</i>	%
Sex		
Male	27	9
Female	259	91
Education		
Primary School	13	5
High school diploma	67	23
Undergraduate degree	158	55
Graduate degree	27	9
Other	21	7
Age		
18-24	55	19
25-34	171	60
35-44	50	17
45+	10	3

Materials and Procedure

In the survey, participants first responded to demographics questions, which included

age, sex, education level and city-neighborhood (Table 1). Secondly, we adapted McAdams' (1993) life-story interview, a semi-structured interview protocol that includes questions to probe important episodes in an individual's life. By adapting this template, we asked participants to narrate one positive, one negative, one turning point and one vivid memory (Table 2).

Table 2. Interview Questions

<i>Question</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Turkish</i>
Positive Memory	Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in the last nine years that stands out as an especially positive experience about Syrian refugees. Please describe that experience in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Why do you think this particular experience was so good and what moment might say about who you are as a person?	Lütfen son 9 yıl içinde Suriyeli mülteciler hakkında özellikle olumlu bir deneyim olarak öne çıkan bir sahne, olay veya anıyı anlatın. Lütfen bu deneyimi ayrıntılı açıklayın. Ne oldu, ne zaman ve nerede oldu, kim dahil oldu, ne düşünüyordunuz ve ne hissettiniz? Hatırladığınız kişisel deneyiminizin neden bu kadar iyi olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz ve bu anı sizinle ilgili ne anlatıyor?
Negative Memory	The second scene is the opposite of the first. Think about your personal memories in the last 9 years. Please identify a scene that stands out as a negative experience about Syrian refugees in Turkey. Even though this event is unpleasant, I would appreciate your providing as much detail as you can about it. What happened in the event, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so bad and what the scene may say about you or your life.	İkinci sahne birincinin tersidir. Son 9 yıldaki kişisel anılarınızı düşünün. Lütfen Türkiye'deki Suriyeli mülteciler hakkında olumsuz bir deneyim olarak öne çıkan bir anıyı anlatın. Bu olay tatsız olsa da, bu konuda olabildiğince fazla ayrıntı vermenizi rica ediyoruz. Ne oldu, nerede ve ne zaman oldu, kim dahil oldu, ne düşünüyordunuz ve ne hissettiniz? Ayrıca, bu deneyiminizin neden bu kadar kötü olduğu hakkında bir iki kelime söyleyin. Bu anıdan yola çıkarak siz veya hayatınız hakkında ne söyleyebilirsiniz?
Turning Point	In looking back over the last 9 years, it may be possible to identify certain key moments that stand out as turning points --	Son 9 yıla baktığımızda, kafanızdaki Suriyeli mülteci imajında önemli bir değişikliğe sebep olan olaylar oldu mu?

	episodes that marked an important change in the image of a Syrian refugee in your mind. Please identify a particular episode that led you to change your opinion about Syrian refugees (either from positive to negative, or negative to positive). Again, for this event, please describe what happened, where and when, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, please say a word or two about what you think this event says about you as a person or about your life.	Dönüm noktası olabilecek bu önemli anları tanımlamak için lütfen Suriyeli mülteciler hakkındaki düşüncelerinizi değiştirmenize yol açan belirli bir olay anlatın (pozitif bir izlenimden negatife veya negatif izlenimden pozitif). Yine, bu olay için lütfen neler olduğunu, nerede ve ne zaman, kimin dahil olduğunu, ne düşündüğünüzü ve hissettiğinizi açıklayın. Ayrıca, lütfen bu olaydan yola çıkarak siz veya hayatınız hakkında bir iki kelime söyleyin.
Vivid Memory	Please identify one scene that you have not already described in this section (in other words, do not repeat your high point, low point, or turning point scene) that stands out as especially vivid or meaningful. This would be an especially memorable, vivid, or important scene, positive or negative about your experiences with Syrian refugees in Turkey. Please describe this scene in detail, tell what happened, when and where, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, what does this memory say about you or your life?	Lütfen bu bölümde daha önceki sorularda tasvir etmediginiz bir sahneyi/anıyı özellikle canlı veya anlamlı bir anı belirleyin. Bu an Türkiye'deki Suriyeli mültecilerle olan deneyimlerinize ilgili olumlu veya olumsuz, özellikle unutulmaz, canlı veya önemli bir anı olacaktır. Lütfen bu anıyı ayrıntılı olarak anlatın, ne olduğunu, ne zaman, nerede, kimlerin dahil olduğunu, ne düşündüğünüzü ve hissettiğinizi söyleyin. Ayrıca, bu anı siz veya hayatınız hakkında ne anlatıyor?

We adapted this interview to an online setting and asked participants to type their responses on a Qualtrics survey, Interviews were in Turkish, as participants were Turkish citizens born and raised in Turkey, and interview questions were based on our research questions.

The study procedure was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the authors'

university. We recruited participants through social media (Twitter and Instagram) by distributing flyers online. Participants indicated consent on Qualtrics before filling out the survey. Data collection occurred online on Qualtrics between March 6 – April 2. Two thousand, one hundred and fifteen participants participated in the present study. Following informed consent, participants responded to the demographics questionnaire and the four open-ended questions about their experiences with refugees. The duration of an individual subject's participation in the study was 20 minutes.

Analytical Approach

Only the participants who answered all nine questions, including demographics (age, city, neighborhood, sex, and education), were included in the analysis. Participants' primary language was Turkish, and three Turkish RAs were trained for data analysis as they know the local study site, culture, society, and language. The doctoral student and RAs are native Turkish speakers, which helped them in knowing local customs, practices, and religion. Table 3 shows the themes and explanations of each theme.

Table 3. Codebook

Code	Explanation
AGENCY	
Achievement/Responsibility: AR Seek success; achieve goals; take on responsibility	• Thinks that it is Turks' responsibility to take care of refugees • Thinks Turkey did what it was supposed to do • Talks about how successful Turkey was
Power/Impact: PI Enact influence, impact, Empowerment	• Talks about how powerful Turkey is • Thinks refugees will contribute to society and will be powerful • Has a personal impact on a refugee's life, empowerment of Turkish citizens vis-à-vis refugees

Self-Insight: SI

Insightful reflection on the self, self-identification, identity

- Person describes that she has anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, etc. (describes issues with mental health, per McAdams)
- I know, I think, I feel... [followed by some type of insight about themselves]
- Or self-insight implying how they felt or realization (without explicitly saying I know, I think, I feel)

Status/Victory: SV

Prestige, winning, high status

- Feeling higher status over refugees because of helping them
- Becomes a role model in the Turkish society
- Success stories of refugees

COMMUNION**Love/Friendship: LF**

Positive relationships w/ others, enhancements of relationships

- Talks positively about a Syrian friend, neighbor etc.
- Grow emotionally closer to each other after spending time together

Dialogue: DG

Speaking between individuals in the narrative that is not instrumental

- Direct and indirect quotes
- Reports telling someone about it (specifically reports what she, herself, said).

Caring/Help: CH

Care for others

- Volunteering in an organization
- Personally helps a refugee (or talks about a Turkish person helping them in-person)
- Reports that they provide care, assistance, nurturance, help, aid, support, or therapy for a refugee, providing for the physical, material, social, or emotional welfare or well-being of them
- Being helped by refugees does not count
- Developing empathy for other people, even if it is not acted upon in a given event

Unity/Togetherness: UT

Being part of a larger group/team

- Says Syrians are “our brothers/sisters”
- Talks about Islamic brotherhood, ansar or muhajirun concepts
- The emphasis is on the closeness to the group
- Examples of being accepted, cherished, or

affirmed

- *"Human being should be treated as individuals. There are always going to be good ones and bad ones among each nation "*

INEFFECTIVENESS

Negative

Achievement/Responsibility: NAR

Faulty or negative decisions, actions; lacking achievement

- Initial positive feelings were wrong “.. *I helped once but felt betrayed*”
- No reaction to racism even though they wanted to
- Times when narrators report feeling negatively about a substantial failure of system or report participating in situations, events, or experiences that have a detrimental effect on future outcomes (e.g., (possibility of) refugees committing a crime and hurting others);

Negative Power/Impact: NPI

Victimization/abuse; did not assert one's self (lacked in this area), getting physically injured by another

- Seeing or hearing a Syrian refugee hurting others or themselves either physically or financially
- Instances when narrators try and fail to assert themselves in a powerful way, have no impact on others and feel weak, impotent, or ineffective or when narrators report having been the powerless victim of abuse
- Disturbed by refugees' elevator eyes (harassment) and other annoyances (*'they were so loud'* etc.)

Negative Self-Insight: NSI

Lack of self-insight, questioning/hating one's self, negative identity, feeling lost, experiencing confusion

- I know, I think, I feel... [followed by a *negative* insight about themselves]
- Negative view of themselves (Participant)
- Person does not want to be something (e.g., labeled as racist)
- Narrators report a significant negative insight (expressing lowered self-esteem or high- level feelings of undesirability)

Negative Status/Victory: NSV
Lower/lacking status, feeling disliked;
defeat in competition

- Any kind of reduction in status
- *“They are stealing our jobs”*
- *“They receive more help than we do as Turks”*
- Times when narrators report lowered status or prestige among peers.

ALIENATION

Negative Love/Friendship: NLF
Lack of relationships, loneliness; loss;
being hated/hating others; separation
from friends/loved ones

- Person feeling hatred, dislike towards a refugee
- Happy that Syria is in a war, will never accept them in the society, etc.
- Did not have any personal relationship with refugees
- Trust issues
- Confrontation/discussion person had with someone or mentions something hostile someone said to themselves
- Experienced language barrier with one or more refugees or have not communicated because of this fear
- Said/heard something/conversation that was negative about refugees

Negative Dialogue: NDG
Lack of talking/communication;
difficult to talk; negative or hostile
conversing between people

- The neglect of Turkish people by institutions that should have protected/supported them first
- No longer trust authority figure, e.g., government, medical professionals
- Mind-reading and referring to refugees’ intention/actions: they knew what they did was wrong

Negative Caring/Helping: NCH
Lack of caring; neglect

- The neglect of Turkish people by institutions that should have protected/supported them first
- No longer trust authority figure, e.g., government, medical professionals
- Mind-reading and referring to refugees’ intention/actions: they knew what they did was wrong

Negative Unity/Togetherness: NUT
Being on one’s own, lack of support;
disintegration of relationships

- Not accepting refugees
- Disagrees with the idea of Islamic brotherhood, ansar, muhajirun concepts
- Wants them to go back or not believing that refugees are victims
- Discrimination, racism etc.

IV. RESULTS

To ensure coding reliability, all narratives were independently coded by three coders. Coders practice coded the first 37 interviews to confirm understanding each theme. In the current study, themes were coded based on subthemes once per episode in each interview. Pearson correlation coefficients were above 0.7, $p < 0.01$, in all domains and so considered an acceptable agreement between the raters. Communion and No Memory had coefficients above 0.8 and these are considered good agreements. All three coders were reliable in all five domains (Table 4).

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations and Correlation Coefficients of Key Measures (N=286)

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interrater Reliability (r)</i>
Agency	1.14	1.17	0.75**
Communion	2.11	1.77	0.85**
Ineffectiveness	2.07	1.56	0.79**
Alienation	1.04	1.12	0.71**
No Memory	0.24	0.49	0.86**

** *significance level 0.01*

Our results showed that agency and communion had the highest scores in the positive memory question, while ineffectiveness and alienation received the highest score in the negative memory question. Also, on the question level, the most repeated code in the positive memory question was communion which encompasses sub-codes such as love and friendship, dialogue, caring and help, and unity and togetherness. The most prominent code in the negative memory question was ineffectiveness, including negative achievement and responsibility, negative power and impact, negative self-insight and negative status, and victory (Table 5).

As we reviewed the dataset, we recognized an interesting pattern in responses. Some

participants started narrating their experiences by stating that they do not have a memory with refugees, then they started narrating their experiences. We coded those narratives under a new code called "No Memory" This is an intriguing phenomenon, and it was mostly repeated in response to the negative memory question which shows us the impact of automatic judgments (see Paper 2).

Table 5. The Prominence of Each Code Among Four Questions

	Positive Memory	Negative Memory	Turning Point	Vivid Memory	Total
Agency	184	38	101	77	400
Communion	299	82	145	160	686
Ineffectiveness	74	258	197	153	682
Alienation	37	123	79	102	341
No Memory	16	35	18	12	81

Secondly, we investigated correlations between items to investigate the relationship between them. We also aimed to explore how these four codes relate to age, sex, and education level (See Table 6). Cohen (1988) proposed cutoffs to classify correlations and referred to .1 as small, .3 as medium, and .5 as large/strong correlations.

A correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between communion and age (Table 6). There was a weak negative correlation between those two variables. Age was also negatively correlated with education. In addition, results demonstrated that agency is positively correlated with education. Third, we analyzed the relationship between four codes, and agency and communion were found to have a medium positive correlation. Also, ineffectiveness and alienation are positively correlated.

Table 6. Bivariate Correlations Matrix for Key Variables for Agency and Communion,
(N=286)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Education	-						
2. Sex	-.016	-					
3. Age	-.127*	.053	-				
4. Agency	.118*	-.048	-.085	-			
5. Communion	.008	.040	-.165**	.358**	-		
6. Ineffectiveness	.043	-.074	-.035	.006	.075	-	
7. Alienation	.007	-.090	.080	.123*	.014	.224**	-

* $p < .05$ (two-tailed). ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore intergroup relations between Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens in Turkey. In the present study, our focus was on understanding how Turkish people perceive Syrian refugees in Turkey and how these two groups interact daily. We used an adaptation of McAdams' (2006) life story interview. We asked participants some questions about Syrian refugees in the Turkish context. Using this open-ended, qualitative interviewing technique has allowed us to investigate the intergroup relations in Turkey and what shapes Turkish citizens' perceptions about refugees. We conducted a narrative analysis based on agency and communion themes.

Interview responses were very high in communal responses. Even though communion responses were more prevalent than agency, they were almost equal to the number of ineffectiveness responses. A balance of agency and communion (non-existence of extreme agentic and communal orientations) is optimal for health and well-being (Bakan, 1966). Unmitigated agency is related to poor social relationships and interpersonal difficulties as the focus is on the self (Helgeson and Frits, 2000). Unmitigated agency is also associated with dominant behaviors, manipulation, selfishness, ordering others and refusing requests (Buss, 1990). Unmitigated communion might sound like the best approach for good social relationships since the focus is on the others and their needs. However, Helgeson and Frits (2000) suggested that unmitigated communion might be perceived as overprotective and intrusive. Also, those who are high on unmitigated communion might look for reciprocation but find others' support attempts as inadequate. Therefore, a balance of agency and communion is found to be the best for social relationships.

As noted, if there is no balance between the two and one becomes unmitigated, a

person's concern for the self can result in hostility or arrogance. An example of that from the narratives we collected was as follows:

On the one hand, I pity them for their country and for what they experience; on the other hand, their ingratitude and criticism about my country makes me angry. I feel sorry for the children, and then I get angry because they will liken children to themselves and disrupt our country's moral and social structure, which we want to progress for better. I do not want them to die, but I definitely do not want to live together. I get even angrier because racism contradicts my religion, and they instigate it. Thanks to them, I faced the fact that I was actually a racist.

This narrative shows the struggle some Turks experience and how their feelings clash with their values. Even though the participant did not mention anything negative they experienced in person, they were still angry and talked about a negative self-insight by stating that they recognized “the racist” in themselves. Feeling stuck between feeling of guilt and hostility was repeated in many other instances in our study and one participant called this dichotomy “an exam” for the Turkish people.

This type of hostility sometimes resulted in dehumanization, which is defined as the denial of full human potential to a person or a social group. Research supports the idea that agency is related to human dignity and respect; therefore, it might play a role in dehumanization. Historical examples of dehumanization happened to low agency groups such as refugees (Formanowicz et al., 2018). Thus, there were some instances of dehumanization in our dataset as well.

For instance, one participant responded to the negative memory question as follows and this narrative was coded under the Negative Unity and Togetherness sub-code of alienation: *“They breed like a head louse in every green area people find tranquility in.”* Another participant stated in the turning point question: *“I am annoyed because the word ‘Syrian’ has become a label in the country. Syrians do not disturb me. On the contrary, I am*

disturbed because of those who treat them like insects.” The word “insect” was used by another participant in the negative memory question: *“They (Syrians) escaped from their country like insects.”* This implies that while those who are on the negative end of the spectrum dehumanize refugees, those who are on the positive end detect this behavior and condemn that.

Among the narratives, there were many stereotypes repeated, which were coded as "Negative Power and Impact" under the Ineffectiveness code. Most repeated stereotypes were about being loud, being ungrateful, caring about personal care (make-up etc.), and having many children despite their dire circumstances. For instance, one participant responded to the negative memory question as follows, and it is also an excellent example of the ‘No Memory’ code:

I have not experienced anything negative, but the most disturbing thing I recognized is the fact that they open stores everywhere. Sometimes I get worried walking on the streets because Syrians surround me. I feel like a foreigner. They are so full of life. I mean, I wonder if we were to flee from war and find refuge in another country, would we be like them? Especially their women. They never sacrifice from their fun, fanciness, and personal care. Syrians I see every day are like this. I have eight Syrian neighbors; therefore, they are almost more than us. This sometimes disturbs me.

Even though there was not an actual threat or even a negative memory, the participant mentioned many different negative ideas in their response. These factors such as ‘being full of life’ do not have a negative impact on Turks’ daily lives (could even have a positive influence), yet still bothers participants who have unmitigated agency.

In contrast, if communion becomes unmitigated, it can place others' needs before their own (McCabe and Dinh, 2016). This was also reflected as a feeling of guilt by another participant even though they were not fully responsible for refugees’ situation:

A Syrian brother told us about the war, how they came to Turkey and felt excluded here. Allah will keep us responsible for this. It is not right for anyone to look down on anyone. It was unforgettable for me that they come from a tough life and have difficulties here. As a Muslim, I felt horrible when I saw the moments when people were eating leaves, and their stomach ache with hunger. I felt like I fell behind in helping them as a Muslim myself.

Another participant said:

Some racist looks in my community hurt my conscience. I feel unbelievably sad. This is not us. Our people who follow the slightest provocation make me afraid about our future. If they were to put themselves in refugees' shoes, I am sure they would understand.

These two quotes show the conscientiousness and empathy some participants had but still did not go beyond a humanitarian approach. Empathizing with refugees like the participants above sometimes did go beyond a positive attitude toward this group and led to friendships on an individual level thanks to intergroup contact. This was evident in the Love and Friendship (LF) sub-code under communion in the following narrative:

A young man approached and pointed to the pita maker standing near us and said, "Brother, I do not want money; I am very hungry. Can you buy me a lahmacun here?" Then he asked if we could grab a tea as well... "Tea is free here (why don't you join me?) ... if you happen to have time," he said. Think about the point humanity has come to. This child's face is beautiful like a rose, and yet, how excluded he is from society (...) I usually do not like tea, but I drank like crazy that day so that he would be comfortable. I learned that he was a national boxer and a talented tower jumper in Syria. (...) Of course, we are now friends with him (...) I recognized with this question that I neglected him recently. I already texted him to meet today.

Even though some participants narrate their experiences sympathetically, their experiences do not go beyond humane aid or donation. This narrative explicitly describes the start of an intergroup friendship that stemmed from a simple donation. One factor that contributed things going beyond simply paying for a meal was refugees' ability to speak Turkish. Even though some refugees like the one mentioned above can communicate fluently

in Turkish, others struggle with the language barrier. Dialogue under communion is coded when people simply engage each other in reciprocal and non-instrumental dialogue of different types, even in small talks (McAdams et al., 1996). So, another dialogue and friendship has started in a market despite the language barrier, and this narrative was coded under communion based on McAdams and their colleagues (1996):

(...) They (Syrian women) did not want to accept my gift, but I insisted on giving it and left the market. They came to my car and invited me to their home for tea and coffee. We went to their house (...) Then the other lady came with treats, and she said that they wanted to learn Turkish. We chatted for half an hour; they asked me if I could teach them Turkish (...) They did not want to leave me, and it was hard for me to leave. People who are left longing for just a greeting ... People who are left alone in cold houses struggling with poverty ... People who are employed but are not given their rights ... People who are grateful even to those who say hi (...) May Allah grant the consciousness of being an ummah to the whole ummah...

This participant also went beyond a gift and communicated with refugees despite a language barrier. Still, it did not evolve to a friendship, most probably due to the language barrier. Another point we would like to emphasize in this narrative was the Islamic terms participants used. An example of that would be the participant above as they used the term ‘ummah,’ which means ‘Muslim community’ in Arabic and used in Turkish as well. Other embracing Islamic terms such as ‘ansar’ (host community) and ‘muhajirun’ (refugees) were also repeatedly used and coded under the Unity and Togetherness of communion theme. Word “ansar” was repeated 34 times while it was 35 for “muhajirun”. The word “Muslim” was repeated 33 times, while participants used the word “sibling” to imply Islamic brotherhood for 87 times.

Another participant implied that Islamic understanding should be cultivated to raise awareness: *‘Those who try to support refugees need to be more careful, and it is crucial to increase Islamic awareness on this issue and give people an Islamic perspective.’* These

narrations give the hint to use mutual identity between Syrians and Turks (the Muslim identity) to improve intergroup relations in the country. In line with that, another participant responded to the turning point question as follows:

Yes, there has been a change. There has been a change from positive to more positive. That is to say, my interest in the events that took place in the first periods of Islam increased. I thought more about the immigrants and ansar at the time. I think everyone cannot be an ansar or behave like an ansar. May my Lord grant us the ability to be and stay ansar in every positive or negative event.

Aside from religion, nationality also came up frequently in the narratives we collected. Many participants stated that Turkey's and Turks' responsibility was to accept refugees into the country and take care of them. The word “Turk” was repeated 284 times and 83 of them were “Turkey”. An example narrative to that is as follows:

There was no incident. We cannot extend personal matters to the general public. We cannot attribute someone's fault to others. They are a great burden to our country, but we Turks are here for this. We are the servants of all the oppressed.

It is an interesting phenomenon as people take pride in being Turkish. Yet, they use this pride to take care of out-groups rather than discriminating against them. These types of instances were coded as achievement and responsibility. The theme of achievement/responsibility manifests itself in narratives that the participant feels proud, accomplished, or successful in meeting significant challenges or taking on major responsibilities for others. This also includes assuming roles that require the person to be in charge of things or people (McAdams et al., 1996).

There were many different perspectives and experiences about refugees in the country like the ones discussed above. These narratives were investigated from four different aspects (agency, communion, ineffectiveness and alienation) which has 16 branches in total. We

gathered a large dataset to investigate those experiences but still, there were some limitations in this study.

Limitations

There were some limitations with this study due to several reasons. First, we could only access people who had a device connected to the internet as we collected data online. Online data collection was less costly and time-consuming than traditional paper-and-pencil methods. We collected data from a large set of diverse participants in a short time without having to visit institutions or doing fieldwork during the coronavirus pandemic. Even though there are many benefits to collecting data online as people participate at their convenience, some limitations still come with it. Our survey was shared by one Instagram influencer account with over 150K followers and one Twitter celebrity account with more than 365K followers to compensate for this limitation to reach out to a more diverse set of participants. After they shared the link to the survey, we used the snowball sampling technique. Accessing a large set of participants helped our study with generalizability. We reached out to more than 500 thousand people in Turkey, and about 2K of them decided to participate in the study.

Secondly, according to Mann (2003), volunteer study participants tend to discuss more positive experiences, and those who had negative experiences volunteer less frequently. However, our results showed that negative experiences exceeded positive experiences and narratives participants have shared. One participant also stated: *'I wrote a lot to this survey because I felt like I have been waiting for someone to ask me how I feel about refugees in my country. It has been nine years, and nobody even bothered to ask us how we feel.'*

Lastly, no significant sex differences emerged in the present study. However, it might be related to the number of female participants as it exceeded male participants. This was not the case with the participant pool we initially had, including more than two thousand participants. This might imply that women participants were more likely to finish the survey from start to end as we only coded the participants who responded to all nine questions we directed them. This limitation might make it harder to make a comparison based on sex but, research also shows that sex does not play a significant role in agency and communion analysis (McAdams et al. 1996). Previous literature shows that higher communal scores among women might correspond with gender stereotypes. Helgeson (1994) suggests that agency and masculinity are linked, just like communion and femininity. Therefore, it is suggested that these relations are associated with specific physical and mental health problems. For example, men have higher mortality rates while women have higher rates of internalizing disorders and morbidity (Diehl et al., 2004). However, current research implies that these stereotypes are transforming, and topical studies do not demonstrate similar results about the difference between genders (Nikitopoulos, 2020).

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, using open-ended questions in this study has allowed us to investigate how Turks perceive Syrian refugees based on agency and communion themes. Even though these were weak correlations, age was negatively correlated with communion, whereas education was positively correlated with the agency. Even though there is a body of literature that used the same methodology, some found no association between agency and communion (McCabe and Dinh, 2016). Still, Also, agency and communion were these two constructs were positively correlated in the present study. Furthermore, ineffectiveness and alienation were positively correlated in the current study. McCabe and Dinh (2016) initially used these two constructs, and their results also showed a significant correlation between alienation and ineffectiveness. Thus, lack of agency and lack of communion are positively correlated in the present study. This result indicates that failure of the system, feeling weak and ineffective for Turkish people might be related to the racism and discrimination in the country. This could be related to the fact that our participants came from a collectivistic culture (McCabe and Dinh, 2016).

Lastly, age and education were negatively correlated in the present study. This finding suggests that the older our participants were, the lower their education level was. This could be related to the ruling party's policy about opening a university in each city in Turkey. Between 2003 and 2018, the number of universities in Turkey rose from 77 to 206 (Gundogdu, 2020). Therefore, younger generations have wider opportunities to get an education when compared to older generations.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Current study results demonstrate that narrative methodology can help gather important information about the experiences of ingroup with outgroup members. In the future, we would like to collect data from Syrian refugees by asking them the same questions to see how they perceive Turks, what shapes their perceptions about them, and make a comparison. We also would like to expand our research idea to other minority groups in Turkey to understand differences in stereotypical representations of different groups. Besides, we would like to add quantitative methodologies and conduct a longitudinal study to examine changes over the years since the Civil War in Syria continues in its 10th year (in 2021).

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IX. LITERATURE REVIEW: STUDY TWO

The number of refugees reached an unprecedented level after the Civil War in Syria started in 2011. This ample flow resulted in the issue rising to the global political agenda. Involuntary migration is one of the most significant risks to the world economy and collective health security (Khan et al., 2016). One way to overcome this problem is to have refugees feel welcomed and protect them against stigmatization or prejudice. Doing so would eventually lead to better social integration and help refugees become healthier individuals even though they arrived in the country in feeble health due to the deprivation of essential healthcare in Syria.

Therefore, the goal of the present study is to explore and eventually improve intergroup relations between Syrians and Turks in Turkey. Using narratives of Turkish citizens, we specifically investigated the sources and valences of narratives to dig deeper into the roots of negative attitudes toward Syrian refugees. First, *personal interactions* provided insight into intergroup contact's implications from the Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954). Second, we coded for *automatic judgments*. Even though we explicitly asked for personal memories, our results showed that most narratives we collected stemmed from a Syrian refugee's stereotypical image and automatic judgments toward them. Third, we analyzed how *other people* around us shape our perceptions toward outgroups. In a collectivistic culture like Turkey, we expected to see family and friends' impact on shaping attitudes. Lastly, we coded for *media*, which includes both news media and social media. This approach enabled us to understand what kind of sources shape 1) negative, 2) positive, 3) bittersweet, 4) neutral, and 5) racist memories among Turkish citizens. The goal of this study is to inform evidence-based intervention program to build better relations and reduce

prejudice in the country. Achieving that goal would eventually result in better public health and more outstanding contribution to the local and global economy.

Source and Valence Analysis

Sources of Narration

We investigated each narration's sources under four different codes: Personal interaction, automatic judgment, other people, and media. We were specifically interested in this information because we aimed to understand where people's perceptions stem from and which causes more negative attitudes.

Personal Interaction

Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954) suggests that merely interacting with an outgroup member could reduce prejudice towards that group. A comprehensive body of literature showed that majority-minority contact under the right conditions has positive implications for intergroup relations (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). Personal interactions are likely to be advantageous for several reasons, such as friendship formation, reduction of intergroup anxiety, and information transmission from one group member to another (Tip et al., 2018). However, the language barrier becomes an obstacle for many refugees to build this kind of relationship. They cannot interact with a majority member as their native language is Arabic, whereas Turks' mother tongue is Turkish. Increasing contact between native and refugee groups through community events could support the well-being of refugees. For this reason, we wanted to understand how Turkish people interact with Syrian refugees and how those interactions shaped their attitudes toward them.

Automatic Judgment

Automatic judgment refers to the narratives that included personal observations or opinions about refugees without interacting with them in person. We investigated how people evaluate outgroup members based solely on observation, opinion, and automatically activate representations. According to Fiske and Neuberg (1987), individuals who receive information about the target person would use their formal mental category, unconsciously, to judge them. People retrieve those judgments automatically without effort or intention. Bargh (2006) suggested that even weak attitudes can automatically activate and bias information about the target. Furthermore, the dual-process model of stereotyping posits that salient stereotypes about a group of individuals are automatically activated when perceiving a member of that group. Those representations guide human behavior if there is no further effort, cognition, intention, or motivation to change that. Therefore, investigating such representations and where they stem from is crucial to understand intergroup dynamics in Turkey.

Other People

People around us shape how we think. Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954) suggests that simply knowing that an in-group member has an outgroup member friend might reduce prejudice under optimal conditions. Therefore, social norms become an essential part of intergroup relations.

People search for cues in the environment to understand social norms. Prejudiced ideas are most likely to be heard if the perceived social acceptability of expressing prejudice and hate speech rises and becomes socially permissible. One study found that hate speech toward refugees rose after terrorist attacks only when participants observed previous hate comments (Alvarez-Benjumea and Winter, 2020). Therefore, we should focus on social

norms to prevent prejudicial statements and hateful speech from becoming normalized in society because social context plays a role in encouraging or inhibiting these kinds of incidents. According Blanchard et al., (1991), people expressed less racist sentiments if they heard confederates say anti-racist attitudes. Contrary to this finding, their second experiment showed that people expressed more racist sentiments if they heard the confederate express pro-racist statements. These results demonstrated that even a stranger who represents a societal social norm could change attitudes. Thus, people should be encouraged and trained to be active bystanders and be more vocal about their opinions to protect disadvantaged group members.

In many countries, being prejudiced or even discriminatory is no longer as socially acceptable as it was before. Still, discriminatory behaviors and negative attitudes are not extinct. Incidents of verbal and physical attacks pertaining to race, gender, or ethnicity are disturbingly commonplace (Masser & Phillips, 2003). Even strangers can impact people's opinions about outgroup members. According to Masser and Phillips (2003), social norms become more effective if they are heard from an important person in their lives, such as friends or family members. Therefore, if a norm emerges from a social group an individual identifies with, that would significantly impact prejudice reduction efforts (Terry et al., 2000). For this reason, we aimed to investigate the impact of other people on narratives our participants have shared, and this was one of the codes we used under sources.

Media

We included both news media and social media in these analyses. Media is one of the primary sources of information for people to form impressions about outgroup members (Liebkind et al., 2019). Televisions and newspapers generally depict immigrants negatively,

which is likely to contribute to the maintenance of prejudice against them (Visintin et al., 2017). According to Crandall et al. (2018), anti-immigrant public discourse would be similar to an experimental manipulation to see the impact of those broadcasts. This condition would be challenging to maintain in a controlled lab setting but would likely significantly impact outgroup attitudes. Therefore, mass media is considered a moderating environmental condition for intergroup relations (Vezzali et al., 2014).

Media is an essential component of vicarious contact in the Intergroup Contact Theory. Even though it is most likely to hurt attitudes towards refugees due to the media's usage of anti-immigrant sentiment, it is also possible to utilize it in a way that will have a positive impact. For instance, Visintin and their colleagues (2017) stated that vicarious contact through films and TV series could help reduce prejudice against outgroup members if they favor the attribution of uniquely human traits to immigrants. Paluck (2009) suggested that if broadcasted entertainment covers positive intergroup interactions, it can function as a positive vicarious contact intervention.

After terrorist attacks and sexual and physical assaults in Turkey, Lebanon, and France, the media drew distorted images between refugees, crimes, and terrorism (Khan et al., 2016). Any misinformation on media that exaggerates refugees' risks must be counteracted with data and an evidence-based approach. However, even though scholars have concerns about traditional media regarding how they portray immigrants and refugees, they still have to meet some universal standards as media outlets. Yet, this is not the case with the internet and social media (Melican, 2008). For this reason, news media and social media were investigated carefully in this study to understand if they mainly cause negative perceptions or positive ones.

Advancements in technology and social media magnified people's voices. New technological tools have some positive implications for freedom of speech, but also they might be dangerous for intergroup relations. They are likely to increase racism and discrimination, as there are no universal standards that apply to all, in contrast to the case for mass media (Vezzali et al., 2014). Social media are widely used, and many people use social media as a news source. Davidson and Farquhar (2020) collected data from college students and examined the relationship between social media use and attitudes toward different social groups, including refugees. Their results showed that network diversity on social media accounts softened attitudes toward refugees.

Another study was conducted by Schwab and their colleagues (2019) and examined whether virtual contact via Facebook positively influences intergroup relations between Iranians and Israelis. Their results exposed that contact was negatively associated with affective prejudice, in line with the Intergroup Contact Theory. Their results supported the idea that vicarious contact via social media works even in virtual settings with hostile nations' citizens. They investigated previous real-life communication with an outgroup member and saw that it did not moderate the results. Therefore, researchers found virtual contact to be an essential factor in building positive outgroup attitudes.

According to Schwab and Greitemeyer (2015), an objective indicator of how intercultural an individual's Facebook friends list was positively correlated with favorable attitudes toward outgroups in general. People join Facebook to meet people in an anxiety-free virtual environment and maintain intergroup contact first built through in-person interventions (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna, 2006). These findings illustrate how social networks such as Facebook, which announced that it had more than 2.2 billion active users

from different demographic, cultural, and social groups in 2018, can be utilized for virtual contact under intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954). Thus, we were specifically interested in seeing media and social media's impact in shaping people's perceptions about Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Valence of Narration

We asked people to narrate their positive, negative, turning points, and vivid memory. Still, some participants responded negatively to the positive interaction question and vice versa. McCabe and Dinh (2016) found similar results in a study they conducted with Cambodian American adolescents. Even though researchers explicitly asked participants to narrate the high point in their lives and clarified that it meant a happy moment in their lives, responses often emerged from painful circumstances. The authors concluded that it might be a resilience strategy they have adapted. Also, McAdams (2006) argued that human beings tend to transform nasty scenes into good outcomes to seek redemption. Therefore, researchers might encounter surprising findings like the ones mentioned above.

In our study, we wanted to examine whether that would be the case. Following McCabe and Dinh (2016), we coded the narratives for valence, and our categories were positive, bittersweet (i.e., a mix of positive and negative feelings), negative, or neutral. After reviewing the first 10 participants, we decided to include a fifth valence, racist, since many statements had discriminatory memories (either observed or experienced) towards refugees. Discriminatory ones ought to be separated from those that are negative and sad.

X. METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants were recruited through social media (Twitter and Instagram) by distributing flyers online. Participants are Turkish citizens born and raised in Turkey, who were at least 18 years old. Individuals who were not yet adults (infants, children, teenagers) were excluded from the study. Our study reached out to 2,112 participants. We excluded the ones who did not respond to all nine questions, including demographic questions. We used narratives from 37 participants for training purposes. Therefore, we analyzed data from 286 participants from 49 cities who responded to all nine questions. Thirty-nine participants were male, and 282 were female. Participants were between 18 and 58 years old. The mean age was 30.24, the mode was 32, and the median was 30. The standard deviation for age was 6.69. 11 participants had primary school education, whereas 69 had a high school diploma. One hundred seventy-six participants had a bachelor's degree, and 35 had graduate degrees. Twenty-three participants responded as "other" to the education level question in our survey (Table 1).

Table 1. Participant Demographics (N=286)

Measure	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	27	9
Female	259	91
Education		
Primary School	13	4
High school diploma	67	23
Undergraduate degree	158	55
Graduate degree	27	9
Other	21	7
Age (years)		
18-24	55	19

25-34	171	60
35-44	50	17
45+	10	3

Materials and Procedures

The survey included four demographic questions and four open-ended questions. Demographic questions asked about age, gender, education level, and city-neighborhood participants lived in. The four open-ended questions focused on understanding how Turkish people perceive Syrian refugees in Turkey and what kinds of information sources shape those perceptions. We used an adaptation of McAdams' (2006) life story interview and tailored it to Turkish perceptions of Syrian refugees in the Turkish context. We used prompts from the life-story interview and included probe questions. Four questions about a positive experience, a negative experience, a turning point, and a vivid memory were directed to participants on Qualtrics. The exact prompts, back-translated into Turkish with a bilingual Turkish research assistant born in Turkey and raised in the US, were as follows. (Table 2).

Table 2. Interview Questions and English translations, (N=286)

<i>Question</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Turkish</i>
Positive Memory	Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in the last nine years that stands out as an especially positive experience about Syrian refugees. Please describe that experience in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Why do you think this particular personal experience was so good, and what moment might it say about who you are as a person?	Lütfen son 9 yıl içinde Suriyeli mülteciler hakkında özellikle olumlu bir deneyim olarak öne çıkan bir sahne, olay veya anıyı anlatın. Lütfen bu deneyimi ayrıntılı açıklayın. Ne oldu, ne zaman ve nerede oldu, kim dahil oldu, ne düşünüyordunuz ve ne hissettiniz? Hatırladığınız kişisel deneyiminizin neden bu kadar iyi olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz ve bu anı sizinle ilgili ne anlatıyor?

Negative
Memory

The second scene is the opposite of the first. Think about your personal memories in the last nine years. Please identify a scene that stands out as a negative experience about Syrian refugees in Turkey. Even though this event is unpleasant, I would appreciate your providing as much detail as you can about it. What happened in the event, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so bad and what the scene may say about you or your life.

İkinci sahne birincinin tersidir. Son 9 yıldaki kişisel anılarınızı düşünün. Lütfen Türkiye'deki Suriyeli mülteciler hakkında olumsuz bir deneyim olarak öne çıkan bir anıyı anlatın. Bu olay tatsız olsa da, bu konuda olabildiğince fazla ayrıntı vermenizi rica ediyoruz. Ne oldu, nerede ve ne zaman oldu, kim dahil oldu, ne düşünüyordunuz ve ne hissettiniz? Ayrıca, bu deneyiminizin neden bu kadar kötü olduğu hakkında bir iki kelime söyleyin. Bu anıdan yola çıkarak siz veya hayatınız hakkında ne söyleyebilirsiniz?

Turning Point

In looking back over the last nine years, it may be possible to identify certain key moments that stand out as turning points -- episodes that marked an important change in the image of a Syrian refugee in your mind. Please identify a particular episode that led you to change your opinion about Syrian refugees (either from positive to negative, or negative to positive). Again, for this event, please describe what happened, where and when, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, please say a word or two about what you think this event says about you as a person or about your life.

Son 9 yıla baktığımızda, kafanızdaki Suriyeli mülteci imajında önemli bir değişikliğe sebep olan olaylar oldu mu? Dönüm noktası olabilecek bu önemli anları tanımlamak için lütfen Suriyeli mülteciler hakkındaki düşüncelerinizi değiştirmenize yol açan belirli bir olay anlatın (pozitif bir izlenimden negatife veya negatif izlenimden pozitif). Yine, bu olay için lütfen neler olduğunu, nerede ve ne zaman, kimin dahil olduğunu, ne düşündüğünüzü ve hissettiğinizi açıklayın. Ayrıca, lütfen bu olaydan yola çıkarak siz veya hayatınız hakkında bir iki kelime söyleyin.

Vivid Memory

Please identify one scene that you have not already describe in this section (in other words, do not repeat your high point, low point, or turning point scene) that stands out as especially vivid or meaningful. This would be an especially memorable, vivid, or important

Lütfen bu bölümde daha önceki sorularda tasvir etmediginiz bir sahneyi/anıyı özellikle canlı veya anlamlı bir anı belirleyin. Bu an Türkiye'deki Suriyeli mültecilerle olan deneyimlerinize ilgili olumlu veya olumsuz, özellikle unutulmaz, canlı veya önemli bir anı olacaktır. Lütfen bu anıyı ayrıntılı olarak

scene, positive or negative about your experiences with Syrian refugees in Turkey. Please describe this scene in detail, tell what happened, when and where, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, what does this memory say about you or your life?

anlatın, ne olduğunu, ne zaman, nerede, kimlerin dahil olduğunu, ne düşündüğünüzü ve hissettiğinizi söyleyin. Ayrıca, bu anı siz veya hayatınız hakkında ne anlatıyor?

Data collection occurred online through Qualtrics between March 6 – April 2. 2115 participants in total participated in the present study. Participants from more than 60 cities (out of 81) in Turkey participated. The duration of an individual subject's participation in the study was 20 minutes. Following informed consent, participants the demographic question, followed by the four open-ended questions. There were no payments or compensation for participation in this study.

Analytic Approach

Research assistants coded data based on the source and valence of each narration. We included only those who answered all nine questions, including demographics (age, city, neighborhood, gender, and education), and analyzed narrations from the 321 participants who met the inclusion criteria. Two Turkish research assistants were trained for the qualitative data analysis. The doctoral student and both RAs were native Turkish speakers, which helped in terms of knowledge about local customs, practices, and religion-related components of this study.

Coding for source

Trained research assistants coded the source of each narration. Subthemes detected under source were as follows: Personal interaction, automatic judgments, other people, and media.

Coding for valence

Subthemes for the valence analysis were: positive, negative, bittersweet, neutral, and racist. Research assistants coded each narration based on its valence.



XI. RESULTS

Estimations of interrater agreement all exceeded Kappa= 0.84, $p < 0.001$ in all domains (Table 3). This level of statistically significant agreement is considered an outstanding agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Table 3. Interrater Reliability (Kappa Scores)

<i>Kappa</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>
Positive Memory	
Source: .904	0.022
Valence: .898	0.021
Negative Memory	
Source: .917	0.017
Valence: .892	0.024
Turning Point	
Source: .901	0.024
Valence: .843	0.024
Vivid Memory	
Source: .949	0.015
Valence: .912	0.018

Frequencies of sources showed that number of automatic judgments exceeded all other sources we coded in the present study. Also, personal interactions were the most prominent sources for the positive memories while it was automatic judgments for the negative memories (Table 4).

Table 4. Frequencies of Sources

	<i>Positive Memory</i>	<i>Negative Memory</i>	<i>Turning Point</i>	<i>Vivid Memory</i>	<i>Total</i>
Personal Interaction	187	91	50	133	461
Automatic Judgments	96	174	211	149	630
Other People	8	37	16	10	71
Media	27	18	44	29	118

Our findings in the valence code showed ambivalent results. For instance, even though we explicitly asked our participants to narrate a positive experience, 34 narratives were negative, and there were 15 racist reports in responses (Table 5). The second finding for narratives' valences is that racist remarks almost doubled positive experiences. The third important finding here was that the turning point question scored the highest in racist valence. This finding might imply that most participants switched their perceptions from positive to negative. However, it is essential to note that the racist code did not necessarily mean that participants had racist thoughts. Some participants narrated memories in which racism occurred, and they observed as an outsider. These instances were also coded as racist.

Lastly, media had the highest impact on the turning point questions, and this might show us the importance of media and social media is changing people's perceptions. Our results showed that only 8% of responses to the positive memory question were media-related narratives. Therefore, the perception media and social media creates might lead Turkish citizens to avoid interacting with refugees in the first place.

Table 5. Frequencies of Valence Code

	<i>Positive Memory</i>	<i>Negative Memory</i>	<i>Turning Point</i>	<i>Vivid Memory</i>	<i>Total</i>
Positive	159	4	27	48	238
Negative	34	41	43	81	199
Bittersweet	69	10	87	38	204
Neutral	44	60	51	82	237
Racist	15	206	113	71	405

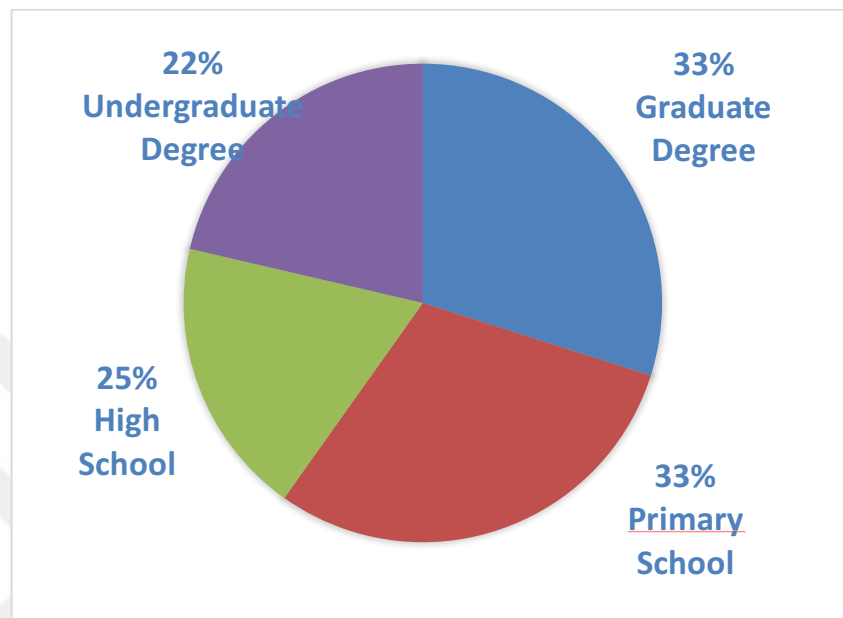
We also conducted a chi-square analysis as all our variables were categorical. A chi-

square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between gender and the valences of narratives. The relationship between gender and the valence of the turning point response was significant, $\chi^2(4) = 11.47, p = .022$. Specifically, women were disproportionately more than men in the present study. No other source or valence on different questions differed by gender.

The proportion of narrative sources in the negative memory question had a significant relationship with education, $\chi^2(12) = 23.13, p = .03$. The more educated the participant was, the more their narratives stemmed from personal interactions instead of automatic judgments. Ninety-two percent of participants who had primary school level of education relied on automatic judgments, and only 8% of them narrated memories that are stemmed from personal interactions. However, those who had a graduate degree narrated memories based 59% on automatic judgments and 33% on personal interactions. Therefore, those who had higher education relied more on personal interactions, while participants who had lower education levels relied more on automatic judgments.

Education also had a significant relationship with the valence of vivid memory responses, $\chi^2(16) = 26.54, p = .047$. For participants with primary school level education and those with graduate level education, 33% of narratives were racist (which also includes the experiences they observed or heard). The proportion of racist narratives were 25% for those with high school education and 22% for those with undergraduate education (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Proportion of education levels among narratives coded under racist theme



XII. DISCUSSION

The present study explored the dynamics of intergroup relations between Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens in Turkey. We investigated how Turkish people perceived Syrian refugees in Turkey and which sources shaped those perceptions. We used an adaptation of McAdams' (2006) life story interview and tailored it for the Turkish context's Syrian refugees. Using this qualitative technique allowed us to understand how Turks perceived Syrian refugees and their circumstances. Results showed that racism had become an issue in Turkey, especially in recent years. Besides, many Turks had a turning point from a positive attitude to a negative attitude towards refugees. By investigating the sources of perceptions Turks have about refugees and their valences, we will be able to design a more robust evidence-based intervention program to build better relations and reduce prejudice in the country.

We looked closely into the positive memory question as the aim is not only to reduce prejudice but also seek ways to improve intergroup relations. This is an effort to not only to focus on deficits, but also to focus of strengths each group have and design a strength-based intervention program. Our results showed that 59% of responses to the positive memory question stemmed from personal interactions. This finding aligns well with the idea of Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954), and points to the need to increase opportunities for positive intergroup contact. In addition to direct intergroup contact, extended contact through media also plays a crucial role in people's perceptions toward outgroup members. According to a meta-analysis, intergroup contact interventions that included face-to-face, indirect, or virtual contact influenced attitudes toward refugees (Lemmer and Wagner, 2015).

Therefore, media was an important factor we investigated, and many participants recalled two main events that happened right before our data collection process: Syrian Mahmut and the Greek Border Issue. Almost half of the media related-narratives (42%) consisted of these two events.

Twenty-six narratives out of 118 media-related narrations (22%) mentioned Syrian Mahmut, who saved a Turkish couple from ruins after the earthquake in Elazığ in January 2020. One participant summarized what happened as follows:

“The grateful glances of the family rescued by a Syrian youth came to my mind in the Elazığ earthquake we lived through in January 2020. Young Syrian Mahmut rescued the Aydın couple from the wreck he dug with his bare hands. He lost his family in the bombardment in Idlib. His mother also passed away. Dürdane Aydın, the woman he saved, said, “From now on, I will be your mother,” and everybody in Turkey watched them in tears as they hugged each other. It cannot be told any other way.”

Even though we explicitly asked participants to narrate their own experiences, this narrative was one of the 26 narratives that recalled and described this same scene shown on the news. How people recall particular news stories is related to different factors such as the intensity of media coverage, characteristics of the audience, frequency, recency, and vividness of exposure (Price and Czili, 1996; Shrum, 1999). Riddle et al. (2011) also found that news stories are better recognized and recalled if they are based on a domestic issue or focus on an identifiable person.

Therefore, personalized (i.e., giving prominence to individuals) news stories that are localized, like the news about Syrian Mahmut, are more likely to engage audiences and be remembered (Price and Czili, 1996). Furthermore, stories that have emotionally arousing themes are recalled better due to the release of hormones caused by arousal (Robinson and Levy, 1986; Riddle et al., 2011). Therefore, our participants quickly recalled the Syrian

Mahmut story since it is personalized and localized news that recently happened at the time. Recency and frequency effects of exposure lead to better accessibility and recognition for information (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). In psychology, the ability to easily recall of items at the end of a list is considered the recency effect. Also, frequency means the repetition of the same message in media to promote interest on a continuous basis. High frequency helps the message to be remembered easily. Therefore, these two factors might also have helped participants to recall those two stories the most.

On the other hand, media can also have a detrimental effect. For instance, the Greek border issue was mentioned by 24 participants (20%) out of 118 narratives that stemmed from media, usually in a negative sense. In February 2020, Turkey announced that it would not stop refugees trying to cross its borders into Europe, and many refugees fled to the border of Greece in hopes of moving to Europe. Around the same time, 36 Turkish soldiers became martyrs at the operation in Syria on February 27, 2020 (Şen, 2020). One participant summarized what happened and their feelings as follows:

"I do not live in the same neighborhood with Syrian refugees, often we are not in the same neighborhoods, and I have very little dialogue with them. However, what happened in recent years has caused me to want them to leave the country. Our own soldiers became martyrs for them while refugees were fleeing to the Greek border. Was it worth it? During their migration from Turkey, they fell into the rivers; Greek police met them with gas bombs, they saw police violence. I was not sad at all. They lived comfortably in our country. Migration was their choice. They paid the price of their choice. We did our best, my country and myself. I am not sad about the kids either. Their fathers didn't think of their own children; they threw them in rivers and boats. I am not responsible for thinking about this. I do not feel uncomfortable in my own conscience. "

By starting with the fact that they do not live in the same neighborhood and have very little dialogue with refugees but still have a prejudice toward refugees, the participant lent support to the Intergroup Contact Theory's idea that lack of contact might result in prejudice

(Allport, 1954). Also, as shown in the narrative above, the frequency and recency of media exposure related to this news caused people to hold more negative attitudes toward refugees. Moreover, even though many Turks wanted them to leave the country for a long time, refugees' willingness to go to Europe was perceived as ungrateful by the Turkish society and covered by media frequently. One participant summarized it as: *"If they go back, they'll die; if they stay here, they will be dirty Syrians; if they go to West, they will be ungrateful."*

These prejudicial attitudes are mostly caused by the lack of intergroup interaction. Our results demonstrated that personal interactions were the source of 187 positive memories, while the number dropped to 91 for negative memories. Responses to the negative memory question had 41 negative (sad) valence while having 206 racist remarks in total. Therefore, most narratives that included racist remarks stemmed from automatic judgments (Table 2). One participant described how positive personal interactions transformed their intuitive judgments into positive feelings:

"My child has a Syrian friend in his class. I used to have a small amount of prejudice inevitably, but the child's attitude and his family changed that. He danced better than our kids in Turkish folk dances. He memorized the Independence Anthem first and is very easy-going and well-mannered. That kid broke my prejudice. I did not have any contact with other Syrians."

While this participant was positively influenced by their child's classmate and how well-adjusted he is, some other participants stated that their perceptions were influenced by the things they heard from peers or family members. These narratives were coded as "other people," and one example of that is as follows:

"I would hear sentences saying that they should go back to their countries from my family, and I also thought so. One day, while I was sitting with a friend of mine whom I love very much, another person next to us spoke back and forth about the refugees. My friend immediately intervened and said that they were our Muslim brothers and we could be in the same situation as them. While my thoughts were neutral on this subject, I started to look at it this way

after this incident.”

In the narrative above, the participant started with mentioning how their family thought refugees should leave the country and they also thought so. Narratives that originated from “other people”, such as friends or family members, were mostly observed in the negative memory question. There are two main explanations for this finding. Firstly, research shows that development of racism and prejudice is transmitted between generations (Altemeyer, 1988; Duriez & Soenens, 2009). Secondly, this finding also makes sense when the collectivist culture of Turkey is considered. Triandis (1995) claims that collectivist cultures are more likely to identify with their cultural group and eventually become more ethnocentric. Once social distance from outgroups becomes stronger due to ethnocentrism in such a setting, prejudice and discrimination are more likely to be observed. Therefore, the intergenerational transmission of prejudice and collectivistic culture in Turkey might have contributed to the impact we found about “other people” in the present study.

Moreover, the narrative shows the importance of bystanders, a crucial component of the "other people" code we used as a source, on the perceptions about disadvantaged groups. A bystander is defined as the person who becomes aware of and/or witnesses behaviors or practices that are unjust and worthy of comment or action. Promoting empathy and pointing out human commonalities were the person's bystander techniques in this narrative (Sue et al., 2019).

However, not everyone can intervene and become bystanders in such a situation due to the possibility of a negative consequence. Some participants also stated that they regretted not intervening in such cases. One participant narrated how they still regret not intervening in a situation that happened four years ago:

If I remember correctly, I was in Kirazlı metro with my father in Istanbul. It was a crowded wagon, a man with a black beard began to shout (...) A young man, who was apparently Syrian, was making a gesture with his hands. He seemed to say, "take it easy. I didn't do anything." (...) He did not know Turkish. It hurt me. The other man continued to yell, spitting saliva out of his mouth. None of us said anything to him. I get angry with myself as I remember this for four years. None of us said anything. I could only look at the man who shouted as if he was a speck of dirt. I don't think he understood it either. Finally, the young Syrian man had to get off at the station. I wish one of us could say, 'What are you doing, bro?' If one of us said that man would not dare what he said. It is tough to be wronged. It is tougher not to raise a voice after seeing that someone else is being wronged.

Factors that are found to be related to not intervene in these kinds of situations could be diffusion of responsibility, fear of retaliation, avoiding involvement, and fear of losing friends (ref needed here). Therefore, it is valuable that the bystander person in the first narrative above intervened even though they are in a friendly environment without expecting to get credit for what they do. Helms (2003) emphasized the significance of social justice rather than guilt or seeking glorification as a savior while intervening. In this narration, we understand the importance of bystander training as it is clear that many people would like to react in such situations but do not know how to do that properly.

The code “other people” did not always result in positive attitudes toward refugees like it happened above. Some participants were also negatively influenced by the sayings of people around them. An example of that is as follows:

“In the early days, I thought that all refugees were oppressed, and I was empathetic. Also, my sister was always talking about their good points since she was working with Syrians. However, as I heard from my friends, whom I trusted a lot, there were unpleasant situations in recent years, especially around Adana. After hearing those, I could not perceive everyone in the same way. But there is no Syrian I communicate with in person. I lost the impression that they are all unconditionally oppressed.”

These narratives show that people can be influenced by what they hear both positively and negatively. The sentence “*But there is no Syrian I communicate with in*

person.” has a connotation of automatic judgment and is also related to Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954). Intuitive judgments were the most common source of information for the participants in this study. Six hundred thirty narratives originated from automatic judgments in total. That number was 71 for "other people," 118 for "media," and 461 for "personal interactions." (Table 4) Therefore, the number of narratives stemmed from automatic judgments exceeded all other sources. One example of automatic judgment is as follows:

"(...) and now I realized that this is not something I paid attention to before, but I have never touched any Syrian in my life, including those children. As long as there are personal and social boundaries in my subconscious, whether I feel empathy or sympathetic towards them, no concrete step can cross this boundary. Unfortunately, it does not penetrate my being. Afghan, Chechen, Sudanese, Japanese, Syrian, Moroccan, Russian... Even considering this list, I read all of them as nationals and one (Syrian) as a refugee in the subtext. I also automatically create the perception of a person who does not belong to his country, directly in my mind."

This is a strong narrative in which the participant openly expressed the boundaries in their minds. This narrative aligned well with Social Identity Theory' (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This theory posits that to understand human beings' beliefs and actions, one needs to understand self-categorization. That is, how they categorize themselves and which groups they use when they are defining themselves. Psychologically internalized self-categories help individuals to understand their own self and place in the world (Turner et al., 1987). People aim to achieve a positive social identity as it would boost their self-esteem by comparing in-groups and outgroups. Evidence revealed that merely thinking about group membership may reinforce the feeling that one has a social place in the world that they belong to (Cacioppo and Hawkley, 2010). Unfortunately, immigrants are often perceived negatively by the host society (Liebkind, 2001). This is evident in the narratives coded under the automatic judgment section. There

were some instances in which intuitive judgments became more stereotypical and hostile in the present study:

(...), a lot of people I have encountered who say that they will not return even if their country improves, Syrian women who initiate things that don't work for us, especially in the east (implies the increase in unofficial polygamy of Turkish men after the arrival of Syrian women - MAB), ungrateful people who took refuge in my country and complained about my country to me. (...) The things that annoy me the most are their constant childbearing and blatant ingratitude while needing basic necessities such as bread. During this process, I only saw the news that pushed my thoughts to positives on TVs, which was the Syrian that helped rescue those under the ruins in the Elazığ earthquake.

This narrative was a good example of the automatic judgments as the participant was full of anger and hatred even though they did not experience anything negative in-person. Also, the participant mentioned many stereotypes about refugees. These stereotypes included them having a lot of children, refugees' so-called ungratefulness, and ingratitude. The present study's findings show that narrative methodology can help gather a wealth of data about perceptions of outgroup members, while having a few limitations.

Limitations

We collected qualitative data in an electronic format. Collecting data online was less costly and time-consuming than traditional paper-and-pencil methods. We collected data from more than 2000 participants in such a short time without having to visit institutions or doing fieldwork during the COVID-19 pandemic. Web surveys are known to collect large amounts of data from a diverse population efficiently and economically in short time frames (Lefever et al., 2007). Even though there are many benefits to collecting data online as people participate at their convenience, some limitations still come with it. For instance, we could only access people who had a device connected to the internet like smartphones or laptops and use social media tools like Twitter and Instagram.

However, to compensate for this limitation, our survey was publicized by one Instagram celebrity account with over 150K followers and one Twitter celebrity account with more than 365K followers. After they shared the study, we left the rest to the snowball sampling technique. Accessing that many people helped our survey's reliability and generalizability. We reached out to more than 500K people in the country, and about 2K participated in the study. The relatively large number of participants gave us confidence about the geographical generalizability of our data to some extent. Despite these limitations mentioned above, a web-based survey provided us a unique opportunity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

XIII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, using this open-ended, qualitative interviewing technique has allowed us to understand how Turks perceive Syrian refugees and the circumstances in which they do and do not interact with each other. Taken together, researchers ought to sift through the situation by taking cultural and historical context into account, and qualitative methods help us meet these criteria. Future research need to include the perspective of Syrian refugees to see how they perceive Turks and what shapes their perceptions about them. Attention also need to be paid to other minority groups in Turkey to understand differences in stereotypical representations of each group and the sources of those representations. Furthermore, longitudinally conducting such research to investigate changes over the years would be valuable as the Civil War in Syria continues in its 10th year (2021).

XVI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our results demonstrated that negative memories mostly originated from automatic judgments. In the present study, more than half of the responses (54%) to the negative memory question originated from automatic judgments. Therefore, focusing on stereotypes and prejudice-reduction is an urgent task. On the other hand, personal interactions comprised 28% of responses to the negative memory question. Even though it is not a large proportion compared to automatic judgments, still the implication would be to reduce negative intergroup contact to improve intergroup relations and reduce prejudice.

XIV. LITERATURE CITED

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XV. LITERATURE REVIEW: STUDY THREE

The Syrian Civil War started on March 15, 2011, because of which Syrians fled to different parts of the world, with most of them going to geographically close countries such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and, Iraq. Syria is the source of the largest forcibly displaced population globally for several years. The number of forcibly displaced Syrians rose to 12.6 million and there are 6.3 million Syrian refugees all over the world in total which equals to almost one-third of the world's total refugee population (UNHCR, 2017). The rest of them are displaced inside Syria. In particular, Turkey is the largest refugee host country in the world, providing refuge to over 3.5 million registered Syrian refugees¹ In this paper, we designed an evidence-based intervention program to increase intergroup contact and reduce intergroup conflict in Turkey.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan welcomed Syrian refugees by calling them “our brothers” as a reference to the brotherhood in religion (Karaveli, 2013). *“For our Syrian brothers who are asking when God's s help will come; I want to say: God's help is near.”* He also added, “You are now in the land of your brothers, so you are in your own home.” when they first arrived in the country (Lazarev and Sharma, 2017). Even though the Turkish government used a welcoming discourse and followed an open-door policy in the beginning, the Turkish public still perceived them as a burden, especially in the areas that had the largest refugee populations (Kirişci, 2014). Some reasons for this anxiety and frustration are as

¹ Turkey gives official refugee status to those coming from Europe due to the limitations of the 1951 Geneva Convention. The term 'refugee' is preferred rather than "people under temporary protection" for the sake of convenience in this dissertation. In Turkey, Syrians were given ‘temporary protection’ status by the Law on Foreigners and International Protection.

follows: cultural differences, “not having manners,” being too loud, being uneducated, having too many children, polygamy, and harassment (Ozden, 2013). Both articles were published in 2013-2014 when the issue was still new and refugees were expected to go back soon. Now that the political climate has changed and refugees are in the 10th year of their arrival, institutional discrimination, bullying, intergroup conflict, and suicide rates are expected to increase. Thus, Turkish public support for Turkey's refugee policy has not been high (Lazarev and Sharma, 2017). Hawasli and Guvencer (2021) argued that Turkish community went through five stages in terms of their perceptions about Syrian refugees in the country. First, welcoming and sympathetic; second, internal or verbal restlessness; third, political provocations; fourth, discrimination and exclusion; and lastly, direct targeting.

Eight-six percent of Turkish people stated that no further refugees should be allowed in, while 30% of them wanted refugees to be deported (Balci, 2014). Because Turkish citizens still exhibited a high level of prejudice against Syrians, this political discourse that primes religious concepts at the time aimed to reduce intergroup conflict. Turkey prioritized the humanitarian aspect of the refugee situation when there was a big flow coming in (Hawasli and Guvencer, 2021). However, it is important to find durable solutions that also include not only physical health but also the mental health of refugees. Improving attitudes and reducing intergroup conflict is a significant factor for refugees' health and well-being as these become chronic stress factors for most refugees over time.

This paper proposes an intervention for improving intergroup relations between Syrian refugees in Turkey and Turkish citizens. First, we provide the historical and religious context that shapes the intergroup relationships between Syrian refugees and Turkish

citizens. Next, we describe the theoretical framework we will utilize for the intervention, namely the intergroup contact theory. Third, we will discuss the role of intergroup anxiety and threat in this conflict. Finally, we will propose an evidence-based and theory-driven intervention program to reduce intergroup conflict between Syrian refugees and Turks in Turkey.

This intervention will be based on two narrative analysis studies we conducted about Syrian refugees in Turkey. Paper 1 is a narrative analysis based on agency and communion themes. The goal of that study was to investigate the sense of self and community Turkish people experience about Syrian refugees in the country. By investigating the sense of self and community, we explored the impact of individualism and emotional connectedness in the refugee issue in this study. Therefore, in the evidence-based intervention program called Refik, we aimed to find the balance between individualism through power, victories and self-esteem, and communion through cooperation, caring and friendship.

In Paper 2, we investigated the sources and valences of the same narratives. We explored the impact of personal interactions, automatic judgments, other people and media in Turkish people's experiences with refugees. This approach enabled us to understand what kinds of sources shape 1) negative, 2) positive, 3) bittersweet, 4) neutral, and 5) racist attitudes among Turkish citizens. The goal of these two studies was to inform an evidence-based intervention program in the present paper to build better relations and reduce prejudice in the country. Throughout the literature review below, we will reference components of the intervention program and how they are informed both by prior research and by the studies in Papers 1 and 2.

Shared Religious Identity and History

In this paper, we focused on intergroup relations on multiple levels. Two strong contextual factors that could have been used more efficiently in the last 10 years in Turkey were history and religion. These two factors ought to be carefully examined to understand intergroup relations so that we can reduce intergroup conflict better.

It was thought that shared religion (Islam), and history (Ottoman Empire) would be sufficient to build a common identity to prevent intergroup conflict in Turkey after Syrian refugees started fleeing to it. Shared religion has been used in the first years with Islamic concepts such as “ummah” (Muslim community), “ansar” (host community) and “muhajirun” (refugees). Our Agency and Communion analysis results (Paper 1) showed that religion played a big role in the Unity and Togetherness code. Embracing Islamic terms were repeatedly used. For instance, the word “ansar” was repeated 34 times while “muhajirun” was repeated 35 times. Several other participants implied that Islamic understanding should be cultivated to raise awareness about the refugee situation.

Even though shared religion helps building a common identity in Turkey, it was not utilized well and the discourse surrounding it was inconsistent (Balkılıç and Teke-Lloyd, 2020). Especially during the election period, the migration policy of the ruling party was criticized a lot by the opposition parties. This welcoming policy was downplayed by the opposition and promoted as the reason why many Turks struggled financially and politically (Hawasli and Guvencer, 2021). The confusing discourse and some racist press briefings from other nationalistic opposition parties in Turkey resulted in ambivalent feelings toward refugees in the country. One can also claim that public opinions cause such ambivalent

political discourses (Morales et al., 2015). In addition, the sense of instability has become a big source of stress for refugees. Therefore, it might have diminished the positive impact of the unifying discourse that used to be heard from politicians in the first couple of years. That has also coupled with the lack of information about the economic aspect of the situation.

Therefore, the effect of religious priming was limited and has dropped over the years and studies showed that its impact was dependent on the economic aspect of the situation (Lazarev & Sharma, 2017). Thus, without focusing on the economic aspect of the refugee situation and promoting it well, it is hard to build a common identity through religion to assemble people. Being open and transparent about the costs of refugees and financial aspect of the situation would help build better intergroup relations. Furthermore, burden-sharing with other countries become a necessity to reduce intergroup conflict in Turkey due to the economic burden and political exploitation of the situation. Additionally, the government needs to clarify misunderstandings and distinguish between the internal and external resources that are being used for refugees in Turkey.

Next, there is a misunderstanding about the financial resources of services offered to the refugees in the country. Many people believe that everything that is offered to refugees is provided by the Turkish government as there is no transparency in terms of costs and burden on the government (Hawasli and Guvencer, 2021). Our intervention program will include some information about the financial resources that are being spent for refugees in Turkey. For instance, the Turkish Red Crescent provides refugees with gift cards that are worth 120 TL each month. Since it is provided by a Turkish organization, local people assume that it is provided by the government by using Turkish funds. However, the money for these

donations come from the World Food Programme (Yilmaz, 2019). Turkish people might be concerned about their government's spending on shelter, food, and other services (such as education and healthcare for free) as these might be perceived as a competition over scarce resources as well as a burden and economic cost (Lazarev and Sharma, 2017). Thus, it is necessary to mention those facts in the training materials we will be using, as Paper 1's Agency and Communion analysis results showed that people have concerns and trust issues with the government and other institutions that do refugee work. Therefore, other than fact-checking in the training materials related to the financial aspect of the refugee situation, shared religion and history will also be mentioned to help to build a common identity.

History and religion are two important factors when individuals identify with certain groups. Both Syria and Turkey were a part of one big country until the 1920s: The Ottoman Empire. Thus, there is a historical connection as well. Tropp (2012) suggests that group identities are motivating forces underlying the perpetuation of intergroup conflict. The degree to which an individual identifies with their group might alleviate or exacerbate conflict with outgroup members. Therefore, that would be effective to use common history to build a common identity but there is a significant factor to keep in mind: both Syria and Turkey become highly nationalistic countries after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Shortly after the Ottoman Empire collapsed, both became separate countries and they became highly nationalistic. Therefore, in their teachings about history, both countries have used negative discourse about the other group (either Turks or Arabs) and the Ottomans. In Turkey, history classes have been teaching children how Arabs betrayed Turks whereas Syrian children have been raised by listening to how Ottomans colonized them. Even though many historians find both arguments to be one-sided and mistaken, official history has been breeding the

intergroup conflict since both countries were founded in the 1920s to strengthen the common identity within their groups and making the citizens of the other country an outgroup.

Lastly, it is also important to note that Ottomans used to use the Arabic alphabet but the Republic of Turkey revised it and eventually decided to use the Latin alphabet in 1928. Syrians still use the Arabic alphabet. Therefore, a Turkish adult today can not read a book that is written a hundred years ago and lost ties with the people of Ottoman Empire as well as its strong background of hundreds of years. Meanwhile, Syrians in Turkey have difficulty in reading the basic information on the streets, if the labels are not written in Arabic alphabet.

Theoretical Framework: Intergroup Contact Theory

The proposed program is based on intergroup contact theory and it is proposing a framework to reduce intergroup conflict through contact (Allport, 1954). Intergroup conflict is the disagreement or confrontation between groups or their members and it can either be physical or psychological. Intergroup conflict might include prejudice, discrimination, injustice, inequality, oppression, and even genocide and we see some forms of it starting to emerge against Syrian refugees in Turkey. Thus, many different disciplines focused on solving this issue from different perspectives, including social psychologists. For instance, Allport (1954) developed Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) and argued that contact is helpful to reduce intergroup conflict. In this paper, we will elaborate more on ICT and use it as the basis of our intervention as it reduces intergroup conflict significantly.

ICT states that interactions between members of different groups can help improving intergroup attitudes and reduce anxiety, tension, and prejudice. Lemmer and Wagner (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of studies that examine real-world interventions based on ICT. Results demonstrated that interventions improved attitudes toward other ethnicities even a year after the program got implemented. Our Source and Valence analysis results (Paper 2) showed that prejudicial remarks were mostly caused by the lack of intergroup interaction. Our results indicated that personal interactions were the source of 187 positive memories, while it was only 91 for negative memories. Participants responded to the negative memory question with narrations that had 41 negative (sad) valence while narrating 206 racist remarks. Therefore, most narratives that included racist statements were stemmed from automatic judgments. According to Lemmer and Wagner (2015), these interactions may be

through face-to-face, indirect, and virtual contact. They also reported that interventions that used face-to-face contact and those that used indirect contact were equally effective. Intergroup contact interventions have some other optimal conditions to be met in order to be effective.

Community centers are one of the best environments to implement intergroup contact interventions as they fulfill optimal conditions for such a program to be effective. Classmates have an equal status in an educational setting and they can be required to cooperate to achieve a common goal with encouragement coming from the teachers, which fulfills the institutional support condition (Poslon, 2019). However, diverse educational environments that do not fulfill the aforementioned conditions might diminish the experience for both groups, especially the disadvantaged group members. Research demonstrates that contact alone is not enough to reduce prejudice and improve attitudes toward outgroup members and there are different motivations, interpretations, and goals that maintain contact between different groups.

Nagda et al. (2012) emphasized the differences in motivations, interpretations, and goals for action for each group may vary and this might have an impact on the intergroup relationship and dialogue. They also mentioned four critical-dialogical processes that might be utilized to bridge differences through dialogue. Those processes include appreciating differences, engaging the self, critical reflection, and working to build alliances. By utilizing those processes and engaging in intergroup dialogues, groups might learn about conflict and from conflict (Tropp, 2012). Yet, physical proximity and coexistence on an individual level are not enough when there is no evidence of meaningful interaction between groups. Furthermore, diversity without meaningful interaction can even be detrimental to intergroup

relations (Ramiah and Hewstone, 2013). Paper 2's Source and Valence study results showed that, personal interactions included 28% of responses to the negative memory question. Even though it is not a large percentage compared to automatic judgments (54%), the implication would still be to reduce negative intergroup contact to improve intergroup relations and reduce prejudice. For this reason, in the intervention design, we did not only focus on positive memories, but also investigated the dynamics that played a role in the negative memories Turkish people narrated in order to prevent them from happening.

The following sections review dimensions of ICT that are pertinent to our proposed intervention: vicarious contact, majority/minority status and, intergroup threat and, anxiety.

Vicarious Contact

A vicarious contact is an indirect form of contact which might shape outgroup attitudes (Vezzali et al., 2014). Indirect contact has been an important component of ICT literature. Many researchers focused on extended contact, such as Wright and their colleagues (1997). They suggested that simply knowing about ingroup members having close relationships with outgroup members would improve intergroup relations. More recently, advancement in indirect contact research made a distinction between extended and vicarious contact, which implies observing ingroup and outgroup members interacting (Vezzali et al., 2019).

There is a wide body of literature that shows vicarious contact is a useful technique to reduce prejudice (Vezzali et al., 2014). This is especially useful when there are not many opportunities to interact directly with outgroup members. This is the case for many refugees in Turkey as there is a language barrier; Turkish people speak Turkish while Syrian refugees speak Arabic. Furthermore, many negative stereotypes about refugees are caused by the

media and the political climate. Paper 2's Source and Valence Analysis results showed that only 8% of responses to the positive memory question were media-related narratives and 59% of positive narratives were stemmed from personal interactions. These factors might lead Turkish citizens to avoid interacting with refugees in the first place.

According to a study, extended and vicarious contact might be used to prepare people for real-life encounters (Pettigrew & Hewstone, 2017). Ramiah and Hewstone (2013) discussed the importance of imagined contact and argued that simply imagining a conversation with an outgroup member results in lower levels of prejudice. Even though vicarious contact is found to be a useful tool to combat intergroup conflict, there are still some aspects of it that can be detrimental to people's perceptions. For instance, the impact of media can be considered under this idea. As mentioned above, results of our source and valence analysis showed that only 8% of positive memories stemmed from media.

The most important examples of vicarious contact in daily life are mass media which includes TV news and newspapers as well as social media, which are covered in Paper 2's Source and Valence study in detail. This idea ties back to the Social Cognitive Theory because Bandura (1986) suggested that the source of negative outgroup attitudes could be family, relatives, friends, and, media. Social Cognitive Theory suggests that people learn social norms by observing others around them. Therefore, negative images media keeps breeding would most likely diminish the possibility of a positive intergroup relation in the country as people keep observing the negative images and messages media is bombarding them with.

However, as the social psychology literature shows, when people observe positive intergroup communication through visual and online written tools, there is an opposite effect

and helps build better relations between groups. It is also important to note that narration is found to be more effective if that is written in a first-person voice. Providing a picture and a description of the narrator could enhance identification with the narrator (Liebkind et al., 2019). This technique could be a way to achieve vicarious contact from the contact theory. However, simply providing people pictures or narrations is not enough because contact theory suggests that materials used will have a different impact on people based on their membership in a majority or the minority group because of the power differences among those groups.

Majority-Minority Status in Intergroup Contact Theory

Research shows that intergroup contact interventions were more effective for majority group members and those effects were generalizable to entire outgroups (Wright et al., 2017). Still, many intervention programs are implemented to change members of minority groups. However, minority members may prefer positive interpersonal relations over equality so as not to jeopardize the psychological closeness with majority members. This way of thinking might lead them to avoid discussing sensitive topics with majority members and undermine their negative experiences even though they are aware of inequalities and oppression (Wright et al., 2017). Low-status groups are more interested in discussing inequalities whereas high-status groups prefer to discuss commonalities between groups (Selvanathan et al., 2019). Therefore, finding a balance between these two approaches is necessary for such a program to be effective.

Especially in the specific case of Turkey, it is really difficult to find any program aiming to reduce intergroup conflict by focusing on the Turkish people. Thus, intergroup contact interventions that work with majority groups are valuable to deal with prejudice and

intergroup conflict due to power differences between groups. Besides, research showed that the prejudice-reducing impact of intergroup contact is stronger for majority group members when compared to a minority. This could be related to a few different factors such as the anxiety and worries minority groups tend to have about being disliked or discriminated against by majority group members. Therefore, the proposed program aims to minimize the risk of bias and reduce intergroup threat and anxiety both groups might perceive and feel.

Intergroup Anxiety

Intergroup anxiety is a feeling of discomfort and nervousness that arises during intergroup encounters and it is usually felt when an individual is anticipating the future, or currently experiencing contact with an outgroup member (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Those who strongly identify with their ingroup tend to have societal-level concerns whereas low-identifiers are more likely to have individual-level concerns and most research focuses on the latter (Ramiah and Hewstone, 2013). According to a meta-analysis, intergroup anxiety was found to be the most important predictor of outgroup attitudes (Riek et al., 2006). This anxiety might stem from symbolic threats that pose a threat to the ingroup's values, beliefs, and worldview. The source could be realistic threats that are related to ingroup's economic and political power. Lack of contact could happen particularly because these two groups might avoid interacting with each other just to free themselves from intergroup anxiety. Therefore, focusing on intergroup anxiety is necessary to overcome lack of contact and perception of threat between refugees and Turks. Thus, the goal of the proposed intervention program will be to reduce intergroup anxiety and intergroup threat by using several different techniques.

Intergroup Threat

The perception of intergroup threat can be real or imagined and they shape the cognitive representations of outgroup members (Pavetich and Stathi, 2020). Hosting societies might perceive refugees as a symbolic, security, and economic threat that is likely to result in negative attitudes toward refugees (Yitmen and Verkuyten, 2018).

Symbolic threat from the integrated threat theory is an important source of intergroup conflict. It needs to be explored carefully because symbolic threat might become an obstacle in seeking intergroup contact as it is a fear of being exploited, rejected, or embarrassed by the outgroups members (Ramiah et al., 2014). For the majority and high-status members (in this case, Turkish citizens), realistic threat functions due to ideas related to taking away jobs or engaging in crime whereas symbolic threat might emerge as a perceived threat to national identity. According to Ramiah et al. (2014), a symbolic threat for the minority group might look like a fear of assimilation or erosion of their values, culture, or language.

Konda Research and Consultancy (2016) conducted a public opinion survey and their findings aligned well with the literature. Approximately 60% of participants agreed with the following statements: *“Cities are less secure because of the presence of refugees,”* *“Refugees are affecting Turkish economy negatively,”* and *“There are fewer employment opportunities because of the presence of refugees.”* On the other hand, their survey showed that almost half of the participants agreed that *“Admission of Syrians without any discrimination regarding their language, religion, and ethnic background is a humanitarian obligation on our part.”* These results spark the discussion on what causes the negative attitudes and perception of a threat as there are diverging ideas. In Papers 1 and 2, we found that even though people sympathized with refugees and put themselves in their shoes most of the time, the so-called

"refugee-crisis" caused them to feel insecure and perceive refugees as a threat in several different domains.

Paper 1's Agency and Communion analysis showed that a balance of agency and communion is optimal for better intergroup relations. Unmitigated agency is found to be related to worsened social relationships and interpersonal difficulties, because the focus is on the self (Helgeson and Frits, 2000). Unmitigated agency was also linked to dominant behaviors, manipulation, selfishness, ordering others and refusing requests (Buss, 1990). Therefore, focusing on finding the balance between the two while implementing the intervention program is necessary. Paper 2's Source and Valence Analysis showed that personal interactions mostly resulted in positive memories, while automatic judgments were resulting in negative memories. Therefore, by using Intergroup Contact Theory in the Refik Project, we aim to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations in the country.

XVI. PROGRAM DESIGN

This program will be called “Refik” which means “*companion*” in both Arabic and Turkish. There is a mutual saying with this word (*Evvel refik, ba’del tarik*) in both languages which translates as “*first the companion, then the road.*” This program will be evidence-based (based on the findings mentioned above) and theoretically-driven (based on the Intergroup Contact Theory). Thus, ground rules will be taken from the ICT literature while the specific case of Turkey will be thought of based on the findings of the first two papers to make the program more culturally appropriate. Some ground rules will be about participation, the language of instruction, and so forth.

Mandatory participation is critical for an intergroup contact intervention to be effective in prejudice reduction when compared to voluntary participation (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). Besides, intergroup contact interventions are found to be more successful if they receive the support of the authorities. Thus, implementing a government-sponsored intervention would increase the effectiveness of such programs. Furthermore, it is important to form groups with an equal number of participants coming from similar socioeconomic and educational backgrounds to achieve an equal status condition. Both Arabic and Turkish will be used in activities and meetings will be held in a place outside of the classroom for the same reason. Participants will be expected to make an impact in their communities. That is why they will be informed about their importance and responsibility as educators of their people.

In addition to educating each other, participants will be expected to get in touch in their daily lives and build friendships. Facilitators will encourage participants to share contact information throughout the program implementation so that they can keep in touch

even after the program. Those who report having more everyday contact with outgroup members also report lower levels of prejudice towards them (Hewstone, 2009). Contact is more effective when it leads to the development of intergroup friendships (Pettigrew, 1998). Also, as participants are going to spend a long time together, the program will achieve the facilitated friendship-building condition as well. We will also focus on skills training as contact alone will not be sufficient to reduce intergroup conflict. Research shows the effectiveness of contact supplemented with skills training (Brenicka et al., 2019). This will be an online training because socially transmitted contact in nonface-to-face environments is about to take over in-person interaction to meet others (McIntyre, Paolini & Hewstone, 2016).

Therefore, all components of the program are designed in a way that is easy to be transferred to an online setting. The importance of online interventions has increased all over the world since the Covid-19 pandemic started and this will lead researchers to find alternative ways to get people in touch in an online or hybrid format. Besides, the increasing use of social media and technology shifted our attention to using audio-visual tools instead of print-outs. Even though most programs involve in-person encounters, new contact environments should be created to reach out to more people. Especially after the pandemic hit in 2019, this became a necessity. Thus, we will use online forums, social media, and instant messaging applications to create a platform to enhance accessibility and flexibility. This will help us implement the program and collect necessary data without taking people out of their social environment and having them participate in the study in highly controlled settings. Participants will have more flexibility and join at their own pace without facilitators or moderators.

Research has shown the impact of online interactions on finding a common ground for different groups at times that makes it hard to meet in-person. Also, it is easier to achieve optimal conditions of positive intergroup contact in an online setting by creating equal status or promoting cooperation. Besides, online interactions can help with anonymity and give more control over the interaction to the participants, which might lead to less intergroup anxiety (Selvanathan et al., 2019).

Modules

There are three modules to the training program: physical training, ally workshop, and documentary.

Table 1. Modules of the intervention program

Module	Description	
Physical training module	Provides high-arousal situations in which trainees can cooperate with outgroup members. As it was shown by Sherif's (1961) Robber's Cave experiment, it helps create positive intergroup attitudes. Also, they will cooperate and interact through games and sports. Team sports require cooperation and authority support is fulfilled in the form of a coach or a teacher.	
Ally workshop	Begins with identifying previous knowledge and stereotypes about Syrian refugees in Turkey. Training will consist of four biweekly 90-minute sessions which start with psycho-education and ends with a bystander training.	
	Week 1	Participants will learn about both Turkish and Syrian history, culture, and language. There will also be an exchange about the common history and culture.
	Week 2	In this skills training, participants will practice skills that are related to developing empathy and compassion as well as non-judgmental attitudes toward the outgroup. They will be taught about communication and perspective-taking skills.
	Week 3	Group discussions about related topics such as temporary protection or the letter revolution in Turkey. They will also have 2 texts for group discussions: i. Newspaper We will ask participants to read news about a negative incident which was published in a newspaper that will be created by the experimenter. Participants will be randomly assigned to the same news in which the suspect

		either has an Arab or a Turkish name. After that, we will discuss their opinions about the incident and see if there are any differences regarding the name change. ii. Positive story: We will ask them to read a positive story in which a Syrian refugee's life story was told (details about their life before the war, how they escaped and settled down in Turkey). In the story, this refugee will be in a positive interaction with a Turkish person and some historical religious concepts will be used as these are the common ground between the two groups (See Appendix C).
	Week 4	Education about misinformation surrounding refugees in the country and policies (both barriers and opportunities) that are affecting them. They will learn bystander skills and resources relevant to refugees in Turkey so that they can assist them if needed. The workshop will include case studies and action steps in case of such a situation to be able to better support refugees.
45-min documentary film		Chronicles the personal stories of Syrian refugees: Cadenas and their colleagues (2018) suggested that media and video-based interventions are useful to improve intergroup relations and they are comparable to the programs with in-person formats. A video intervention is an inexpensive effort to improve intergroup relations and it is highly applicable to an online intervention program. The online video-intervention will include components such as discussion questions related to the video to have participants reflect on the themes.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation will take place with a sample of 100 Turks and 100 Syrian refugees (age range: 18-50 years) who will be paid 50 TL in exchange for their time. All the measures will be on a seven-point Likert scale. The range will be between strongly disagree to strongly agree and higher scores mean stronger endorsement. All participants will complete questionnaires about both groups (Syrians will rate Turks and Turks will rate Syrians) and their perceptions will be measured at three time points. Thus, this intervention study will be a repeated measure, longitudinal design. quasi-experimental pre-post follow-up-test design. The intervention group will be questioned three times: one week before the first

meeting (T1); at the place of the intervention exactly after the middle (T2); and eight weeks after the program is over (T3).

Measures

The Intervention and control groups will answer the same questionnaire but items were translated to their first language respectively.

Sociodemographic variables. The first section of the questionnaire will include sociodemographic questions related to gender, age, ethnicity, citizenship status, education level, and marital status.

Intergroup anxiety. Intergroup anxiety will be measured with the most widely used measure of this theme: Intergroup Anxiety Scale (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). This scale has four items that cover the intergroup anxiety by asking participants four questions about how nervous, comfortable, anxious, and suspicious they felt while interacting with outgroup members on a scale from 1 to 7 (1 = never; 7 = always). Participants will rate each item based on to what extent they would feel those emotions when interacting with Syrian refugees in Turkey. The internal consistency of measures of intergroup anxiety has a high Cronbach's alpha (.91; Stephan, 2014). Also, its validity is supported by the idea that realistic and symbolic group threats, negative stereotypes and intergroup anxiety has one common theme: all of them have negative expectations toward the outgroup members. Thus, all four items should be correlated with each other. Studies also supported this idea and found that all items were significantly inter-correlated (Stephan, 2014).

Outgroup attitudes measure. The General Evaluation Scale (Wright et al., 1997) asks respondents to "describe how they feel about [ethnic group] in general" by using six bipolar adjective pairs on a 7-point scale. Items included warm-cold, negative-positive, friendly-

hostile, suspicious-trusting, respect-contempt, admiration-disgust. This scale had a Cronbach's alpha of .90.

Behavior intentions. To measure this, participants will read different scenarios about the outgroup member being subject to an aggression. In one scenario, an ingroup individual aggressively pushes an outgroup individual out of the way for easier access to an item in the store. Behavior intentions will be measured with this scale (Cronbach's alpha= 0.80) that is adapted by Dittmann and their colleagues (2016). After reading this scenario, participants were allowed to censure the action of the ingroup member using Likert scales, "How okay was it for X to shove/scream at/use derogatory words with Y?"

Social distance. We will use the Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1967) as it is a widely used measure of how participants imagine building relations with the outgroup. It is a Gutman scale (cumulative) and agreement with an item implies agreement with the others as well. The scale is used to measure prejudice and it asks participants questions such as to what extent they would have an outgroup member as close relatives by marriage, close personal friends, neighbors on the same street, co-workers, citizens, non-citizen visitors in their country and would exclude them from entry to their country. We will also measure outgroup regard through a feeling thermometer.

Direct and indirect contact. Participants will indicate the quantity of positive and negative past contact with questions adapted by Islam & Hewstone (1993). Islam and Hewstone (1993) aimed to understand contact both qualitatively and quantitatively. For the quantitative aspect, they wanted to measure the amount of contact by asking 5 questions on 7-point Likert scale. To investigate the qualitative aspect of contact, they asked questions

regarding perceiving outgroup as equal/inequal, voluntarily/involuntarily, superficial/intimate, competitive/cooperative and lastly, experienced as pleasant/unpleasant. These two aspects will be used in the present study by adapting it to the context in Turkey.

Reported personal experience: This section will consist of open-ended questions to evaluate the program and its impact. Questions will be listed as follows: “Did you tell anyone in your community about the meetings? If yes, what did you tell them?”, “What were the major challenges and why?”, “What were the lessons learned and the major wins.

XVII. DISCUSSION

This paper proposes an intervention program to reduce intergroup conflict and prejudice. To accomplish the goal, we first reviewed the literature to see previous efforts that are based on Intergroup Contact Theory. Then, we designed an intervention program called “Refik” to be implemented in settings that can achieve the optimum conditions that are emphasized in the theory. This program will include three different components: a physical training module, an ally workshop and a documentary. The program will also include vicarious contact and will be easily transferrable to an online setting,

One of the obstacles to improving outgroup attitudes through intergroup contact interventions is the number of people who can participate in the program. The number of participants can only be limited but we would like to achieve long-term and large-scale effects. To increase the long-term impact on a large scale, we need participants to influence members of their communities. One way Dittmann and Samii (2016) suggested for it was censuring and "ingroup policing" by peers, in which people publicly or privately admonish the hateful comments or aggressive actions toward the outgroup as an example of censuring by ingroup members.

It is important to investigate the community-wide long-term effects of the intervention program. Even if a program is successful and implemented effectively, returning to a segregated lifestyle would reestablish stereotypical images and automatic behaviors toward that group. Hence, we should focus on achieving long-term effects and inhibit negative contact experience after the implementation (Gufler and Wagner, 2017). For this reason, we will collect data eight weeks after the program is over so that we can investigate the long-term effects on a community-level.

Intergroup relations should be investigated on three different levels: individual level, cross-group interactions and relationships, and institutional structures and policies (Wright et al., 2017). The micro-level includes cognitive and emotional aspects of intergroup relations such as prejudice, stereotype, or allophilia, whereas the meso-level describes the relations and interactions between groups. Lastly, the macro-level includes social institutions, law, policies, and practices that have an impact on intergroup relations. This level also encompasses shared ideological beliefs and social norms as they are also highly influential for intergroup relations (Wright et al., 2017). Unfortunately, most programs focus on the first two levels but it is difficult to translate these effects into transformation on the macro-level. Consequently, our aim with this program is to lead to changes at all these three levels to maintain long-term impact. Therefore, more researchers are needed to incorporate societal-level factors into these interventions.

Lastly, even though there is an urgent need to reduce intergroup conflict and promote positive relations between groups, research on this issue is not systematically translated into prejudice-reduction interventions (Liebkind et al., 2019). Likewise, untested interventions can strengthen intergroup hostility instead of reducing it. This might decrease willingness for future contact and impair intergroup relations irreversibly. Thus, there is an dire need for scientifically tested prejudice-reduction interventions and tools. It is hard to find intervention programs that are based on theoretically driven empirical findings.

XVIII. CONCLUSION

According to UNHCR (2013), social integration happens when both refugees and the receiving community make an effort together. Thus, it is important to talk about harmonization and shift the attention from refugees to local citizens as most programs have been focusing on educating only the refugees since 2012. During the author's field trip in summer 2018, some refugees stated that they were overloaded with education programs. One refugee woman from a refugee camp in Turkey stated reproachfully, "We know how to wash our hands and we do not need any more education programs about hygiene." Therefore, we wanted our program to focus on both parties and based our program on the intergroup contact theory.

Even though we have a vast amount of information about intergroup contact, we still lack the intervention programs that use this theory to reduce intergroup prejudice and anxiety and cause societal changes (Pettigrew & Hewstone, 2017). Campaigns that aim to change stereotypes about refugees by telling their personal stories just like we will do in this study would be beneficial to replace negative stereotypes with positive ones. On a policy level, policies regarding refugees should be welcoming and they should aim to increase the contact. Government and many other NGOs offer Turkish classes for free to refugees, however, Turkish people have to pay money out of pocket to learn Arabic as they can only learn in a private institution. However, we know that integration is not a one-way street and free Arabic courses should be offered for those who are interested. Both Paper 1's Agency and Communion Paper 2's Source and Valence analyses demonstrated that language barrier

become an obstacle in finding the balance between agency and communion as well as building intergroup contact. One way to overcome this obstacle would be hiring Syrian refugees in Turkey who used to be teachers in Syria and willing to teach Arabic. That could help Turkish people learn Arabic from its native speakers and help Syrian refugees thrive financially and psychologically.



XIX. RECOMMENDATIONS

Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of more than 500 hundred studies and found that anxiety and empathy are key mechanisms to reduce prejudice. They reviewed 713 independent samples from 515 studies to see the association between intergroup contact theory and prejudice reduction. Anxiety and empathy were the two factors that are found to be more important than a cognitively oriented mediator of knowledge. Therefore, books and other materials might include stories like the one that we used in this study to promote empathy and reduce intergroup anxiety between Turkish and Syrian people. Nonetheless, one needs to be careful about creating confusion between empathy and humanitarian concerns as it might backlash.

Yitmen and Verkuyten (2018) conducted a study with 605 Turkish participants and they found perception of a threat as being responsible for this association between humanitarian concerns and negative attention towards Syrian refugees. They argued that when people feel threatened by refugees, emphasizing humanitarian concerns might fail. Therefore, one needs to be alert when it comes to using humanitarian concerns to improve intergroup relations and reduce intergroup anxiety as Turkish citizens might feel dismissed and have their feelings of threat ignored. Also, doing so might be perceived as a moral accusation of failing to meet humanitarian standards and thus, result in another threat to their sense of moral self and justification of their behavior. This is also evident in Turkey since refugees receive different types of assistance both from the Turkish government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs, and Turkish people. Societal debates surrounding this issue caused some Turkish citizens to have ambivalent feelings about Syrian refugees in the country. Thus, we should focus on preventing these kinds of ambivalent feelings from happening in the first place.

Intergroup contact not only helps reducing conflict but also helps to prevent it from happening in the first place. For instance, creating social networks such as business associations or professional organizations can promote peace and understanding and prevent conflict. Hence, intergroup conflict and violence become unlikely (Ramiah and Hewstone, 2013).



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APPENDIX 1: LIFE STORY IN TURKISH

“Suriye, Rakka’da ailesiyle geçirdiği yılları düşünerek, “Savaştan önceki hayatımız çok sıradandı,” diyor Wazzam. “Kapılarımız gece boyunca açık olurdu. Hiçbir şeyden korkmazdık. Bazen iş bulmak zor olurdu ama içimiz rahattı çünkü güvendedik.” diye sözlerine devam ediyor.”

O zamandan beri eşi Ayesha ve altı çocuğu ile birlikte Suriye’nin doğusundan Türkiye’nin güneyindeki bir mülteci kampına yaptığı bu uzun yolculuk, hâlihazırda beşinci yılına giren ülkedeki yıkıcı çatışmanın izlerini sürüyor. Savaşta ne zaman bir sükûnet olsa, aile yeniden Suriye’ye yöneliyor; fakat sonra tekrar kaçmak zorunda kalıyordu.

Wazzam “Bizi geri döndüren şey memleketimiz.” diyor. “Bizi geri döndüren şey toprağımız, doğduğumuz yer. Bizi çeken buydu.”

En az beş kez kaçıp geri döndüler ve sınırdaki Suriye ve Türkiye kasabaları arasında dönüp durdular. Bir keresinde, Rakka’ya bile dönmüşlerdi. Rakka’da hayatı zorlaştıran şey, şehrin yoksulluğa sürüklenmesiydi. Ayesha “Hiç iş yoktu ve çocuklarım açtı” diye ekliyor. “Ekmek almak için bile paramız yoktu. Bizim için ölüm daha kolay olurdu”.

Yalnızca bir ay önce, aile vazgeçti ve yeniden kaçtı. En küçüğü 18 aylık, en büyüğü 13 yaşında olan çocuklarını küçük aile arabasına toplayıp Türkiye’de güvenli bir yer bulmak için yola çıktı. Yolda bir hafta geçirdikten sonra, Türkiye’nin güneyinde büyüyen bir yerleşim alanı olan Suruç mülteci kampının kapılarına ulaştılar. Türk yetkililer kayıtlarını yaparken yorgun bir şekilde Wazzam, Ayesha ve büyük çocukları sessizce oturdular; evrakları doldururken bitkin görünüyorlardı. Küçük çocuklar daha enerjikti ve salonda oynayıp koşturuyorlardı.

“Çocuklar uyurken bazen yalnızca orada oturup ağlıyorum” diye ekliyor. “Bu hale nasıl geldik? Bu içinde bulunduğumuz durum nedir? Neden bu kadar küçük düşürüldük?” diye düşünüyorum.”

Türkiye’de çok yakın Türk dostlar ve komşuları olduğunu, Müslüman bir ülkede her gün ezan sesi duyarak yaşamının mutluluk verici olduğunu ve bu misafirperverliği unutmayacaklarını ifade eden çift, her şeye – şiddete, yoksulluğa, kanunsuzluğa ve sınırdaki

Source: UNHCR 1

zorbalığa – rağmen, memlekete dönme arzularının hala güçlü olduğunu söylüyor.

APPENDIX 1: LIFE STORY (ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

“Our life before the war was very ordinary,” says Wazzam, thinking back to the years his family spent in Raqqa, Syria. “Our doors were open all night. We feared nothing. It was difficult at times to find work, but our minds were at peace because it was safe.”

The long journey he has since made with his wife (Ayesha) and their six children from their home in eastern Syria to a refugee camp in southern Turkey traces the arc of the country's devastating conflict, which is now entering its fifth year.

One night, just over a year ago, bombs started to rain on the city shortly after midnight. The noise woke the whole family. “The children were crying, screaming ‘Daddy, Daddy,’” Wazzam recalls, thinking back to the beginning of what would become a yearlong journey to safety. Ayesha held the children and cried with them. “I said to myself, ‘As soon as the sun rises I am leaving this place and never coming back. That’s it, I will never come back.’”

The next morning they fled. They fled and returned at least five times, bouncing between Syrian and Turkish towns straddling the border. Once, they even went back to Raqqa.

What really made life difficult in Raqqa was the city’s plunge into poverty. “There was no work and my children were hungry,” Ayesha says. “We had no money to even buy a bag of bread. Death would have been easier.” Just over a month ago, the family gave up and fled again. They piled their children, ranging in age from 18 months to 13 years, into a compact car and took off in search of safety in Turkey.

After a week on the road, they reached the gates of Suruc refugee camp, a sprawling compound in southern Turkey. They appeared dazed as they registered with Turkish authorities. Wazzam, Ayesha, and the older children sat quietly and appeared exhausted while filling out paperwork. The younger children had more energy, playing and wandering around the hall.

“Sometimes when the children sleep I just sit there, crying,” she says. “I think: ‘How did we end up here? What’s this situation we are in? Why have we been so humiliated?’”

Even though being in a Muslim country and hearing the adhan every day feels like home to them and they are grateful for the hospitality of their Turkish neighbors and friends they still want to go back to their own country. Despite it all – the violence, the poverty, the lawlessness, and the tyranny across the border – Wazzam and Ayesha say the pull of their

Source: UNHCR

homeland is still strong.

APPENDIX 3: NEWS WITH TURKISH AND ARABIC NAMES AND THEIR TRANSLATIONS

	Turkish Name	Arabic Name
Turkish	Adana Büyükşehir Belediyesi'ne bağlı zabıta ekiplerince dilencilere yönelik düzenlenen operasyonda dilencinin üzerinden 13 bin 800 TL çıktı. Adana Büyükşehir Belediyesi Zabıta Daire Başkanlığı Denetim Şube Müdürlüğü ekipleri, kentin farklı noktalarında dilencilere yönelik operasyon gerçekleştirdi. Operasyon kapsamında Atatürk Caddesi üzerinde bulunan Abidin Dino Parkı'nda dilencilik yapan Murat Korkusuz yakalanarak Zabıta Daire Başkanlığı'na getirildi. Burada yapılan üst aramasında Murat Korkusuz'un (52) üzerinden 13 bin 800 TL çıktı.	Adana Büyükşehir Belediyesi'ne bağlı zabıta ekiplerince dilencilere yönelik düzenlenen operasyonda dilencinin üzerinden 13 bin 800 TL çıktı. Adana Büyükşehir Belediyesi Zabıta Daire Başkanlığı Denetim Şube Müdürlüğü ekipleri, kentin farklı noktalarında dilencilere yönelik operasyon gerçekleştirdi. Operasyon kapsamında Atatürk Caddesi üzerinde bulunan Abidin Dino Parkı'nda dilencilik yapan Suriye uyruklu AbdelRahman al-Saud yakalanarak Zabıta Daire Başkanlığı'na getirildi. Burada yapılan üst aramasında AbdelRahman al-Saud'un (52) üzerinden 13 bin 800 TL çıktı.
English Translation	In the operation organized against beggars by the police teams affiliated to Adana Metropolitan Municipality, 13 thousand 800 TL was paid over the beggar. Adana Metropolitan Municipality Police Department Audit Branch Directorate teams carried out operations against beggars in different parts of the city. As part of the operation, Murat Korkusuz, who was begging in Abidin Dino Park on Atatürk Street, was caught and brought to the Police Department. In the body search made here, 13 thousand 800 TL was found out over AbdelRahman al-Saud (52).	In the operation organized against beggars by the police teams affiliated to Adana Metropolitan Municipality, 13 thousand 800 TL was paid over the beggar. Adana Metropolitan Municipality Police Department Audit Branch Directorate teams carried out operations against beggars in different parts of the city. As part of the operation, Syrian national AbdelRahman al-Saud, who was begging in Abidin Dino Park on Atatürk Street, was caught and brought to the Police Department. In the body search made here, 13 thousand 800 TL was found out over AbdelRahman al-Saud (52).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Merve Armagan Bogatekin is a graduate of Istanbul Sehir University in Turkey with a B.A. in Psychology and the University of Massachusetts Lowell with an M.A . in Community Social Psychology. Her interest has evolved throughout her involvement in various institutions such as UCLA, Utrecht University, Harvard University, UNRWA, Stanford University and finally, University of Massachusetts. Her research interest lies in the health and well-being of Syrian refugees in her native Turkey and how intergroup relations influence them.