Refugee Children from the point of School Administrators and Teachers' Experiences

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Abstract: In the present study, perceptions of Turkish school administrators and teachers towards Syrian refugee children were examined through metaphors. 71 school administrators and 242 teachers from 27 different provinces of Turkey participated in the study. As a result of the study, the metaphors produced by school administrators were grouped into four categories: "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems", "fragile and needy child", "child who is no different from other children" and "problematic child". The metaphors produced by teachers were grouped into six categories: "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems", "child who is no different from other children", "fragile and needy child", "problematic child", "child who can reveal her/his potential with interest" and "compatible child". Participants' perceptions of refugee children were not related to gender but there was a significant relationship between professional seniority and the number of refugee children at school. Although school administrators and teachers have positive perceptions about refugee children, their negative perceptions are largely due to the lack of professional experience and the high number of students at school. Providing vocational support to teachers and administrators, planning the number of students in schools, and providing resources to schools will improve positive perceptions about refugee children.

Keywords: *Forced migration, school administration, cultural adaptation, refugee children.*

To cite this article: Serin, H., & Bozdag, F. (2020). Refugee children from the point of school administrators and teachers' experiences. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *9*(4), 1455-1472. https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.9.4.1455

Introduction

Human beings are subject to many different changes throughout life. In the process of adapting to the changes, they may experience various problems. The phenomenon of migration, which is one of the most important sources of change in life, affects both the migrants and the inhabitants of the place of migration in different ways.

Individuals can migrate to gain better living opportunities, build a better future, escape political or religious pressures and seek a safe shelter (Bhugra, 2004). Because its internal dynamics, mutual agreements, wars and conflicts and economic and political events, Turkey is known to be ownership of various types of migration at different times (Icduygu, 2009). The most recent example of the migration process in Turkey is millions of Syrians coming to Turkey, who are being forced to flee their country because of the war in Syria.

Due to internal conflicts which have begun in 2011 and continued increasingly in Syria, millions of Syrians migrated to other countries, notably Turkey and Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, North Africa and European countries (Smith, 2017). According to data obtained from Immigration Administration General Directorate in 2020, the Syrian population in Turkey is 3.585.198 and children constitute the majority of this population. 1.681.471 children constitute 47% of the total Syrian population in Turkey, in other words, they represent nearly half of the Syrian population in Turkey.

Turkey, based on the additional protocol in 1967 of the Geneva Conventions in 1951, recognizes individuals who are from outside the European countries and request for protection as an asylum seeker (Cihangir, 2015; Ozdemir & Tell-Ozkan, 2016). After the intense wave of migration in recent years, Turkey has redefined the legal status of foreigners. By promulgating Law No. 6458 "Law on Foreigners and International Protection" on 11 April 2013, those who emigrate from Syria to Turkey have been given "temporary protected status" within the framework of the law. So the Syrians in Turkey are evaluated as individuals with temporary protected status, not as refuges according to the law. However, as

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they migrated because of both the war and political uneasiness and in order to ensure consistency with the literature, the refugee term is used for individuals who migrated to Turkey by escaping from the war in Syria in this study.

Literature Review

Migration affects individuals differently according to their gender and development period. Among the migrants, the most vulnerable group is children and women (Bozdag & Bilge, 2019; Tuzcu & Ilgaz, 2015). Especially children may be exposed to more problems because they do not have any authority for the process and are vulnerable. Losing parents, siblings, homes, friends, schools, habits, lifestyles and the expected future all are negative experiences (Ameen & Cinkara, 2018). After migration, children may experience various mental problems, which affect their attitudes towards education and achievements and adaptation skills (Stermac et al., 2008). In general, after migration, children are likely to experience more problems, while the problems experienced vary according to the types of migration. As a matter of fact, the problems and barriers faced by refugee children are more intense compared to immigrant children (Arnetz et al., 2013; Crul et al., 2016; Leow et al., 2006). Refugee children are exposed to different and cumulative stress resulting from forced migration as well as relocation and traumatic experiences (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2010).

The problems experienced by refugee children are differentiated in psychological, social, economic, cultural and educational fields, and problems in one field are reflected in other fields as well. Especially educational activities for refugee children are of vital importance. Education provides a safe environment for refugee children. Through education, these children can contribute to the well-being of both the country of migration and their own country. Also, through education, psychological and social needs of refugee children affected by conflicts can be met and their life skills, self-confidence and psychological resilience can be improved (The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2017). However, it is observed that most Syrian refugee children experience serious problems in access to education in Turkey. There are many problems to be solved in Syrian refugee children's education (Hos, 2016). Limited school environments, encountering with an unfamiliar language and curriculum, transportation problems, lack of documents of parents' legal status, poverty, child labor, early marriages, school fees and security issues are important barriers to access to education (Cochran, 2014; Culbertson & Constant, 2015). In spite of these obstacles, refugee children involved in education face with different problems. The lack of opportunities to learn the language of the host society, discrimination (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2015), adaptation problems, academic failure, continuation of the same class with the younger ones (Crul et al., 2016) are some of these problems. It is important to carry out studies to solve these and similar problems experienced by refugee children. In this respect, especially school administrators and teachers play a major role.

Relations with school administrators and teachers have a determinative power in the adaptation of refugee children to education and school environment (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research [FPESR], 2017). Teachers' knowledge of the life experiences of refugee children provides them to be more helpful for those children in their school life. Challenges for refugee children in the new cultural context are cultural conflict, discrimination, low socioeconomic level, parental loss and conflict with cultural values (Strekalova & Hoot, 2008). The more understanding school administrators and teachers have about these challenges, the more they can provide effective assistance to refugee children. Considering this situation and considering the density of Syrian refugee children in Turkey, school administrators and teachers' perceptions of the refugee children were examined in the present study. It is considered important to identify these perceptions through metaphors. It is stated that metaphors can be used as a qualitative data collection tool and through concepts, rich findings can be obtained (Patton, 2014). Besides, metaphors have been used frequently in the field of education in recent years (Yildiz et al., 2018).

Metaphors are important tools in understanding social phenomena (Silman & Simsek, 2006). Through these tools, individuals reflect beliefs, feelings and thoughts about themselves (Alger, 2009). According to McEwan (2007), since metaphors are a language reflecting values and beliefs, they can affect teacher behaviors and teaching activities. Taken from this perspective, it is important to determine school administrators' and teachers' perceptions about refugee children's education, which is one of the major problem areas in Turkey, through metaphors.

In the literature, various studies examine the views, attitudes or perceptions of host society about Syrian refugees. A study by Golcu and Dagli (2017) found that Syrian refugees, proportional to their duration of stay in Turkey, have been subjected to problematic, divisive and marginalizing discourse in issues such as economy, education, language, healthcare, legal arrangements and social cohesion. Another study revealed that newspaper articles generally reflected a negative viewpoint on Syrian refugees (Goktuna-Yaylaci, 2017). Kardes et al. (2017) concluded that social media users viewed Syrian refugees as the cause of serious insecurity and unrest and suggested that experiences with migrants and the news reports were influential in the shaping of such perceptions. According to Goker and Keskin (2015), Syrian refugees are defined as passive and victims and pointed out as scapegoats. In a similar study, Torun and Demirtas (2018) found that teacher candidates believed the press mostly published negative reports on Syrian refugees and the authors argued the candidates were negatively influenced by such reports. Teacher candidates described Syrian refugees as helpless, needy and homeless.

According to Sonmez and Adiguzel (2017), perceptions of Syrian refugees vary depending on differences at social, cultural and economic levels. Turkish people hold positive perceptions/attitudes regarding giving Syrian refugees' right to work and their criminal tendency, while they have comparatively more negative perceptions/attitudes about granting them citizenship/coexistence and showing empathy (Ciftci, 2018). A study by Gozubuyuk et al. (2019) found that Turkish people have many different, inaccurate and exaggerated opinions about Syrian refugees and that there is a lack of reliable information regarding legal arrangements and rights granted to them. Turkish people consider Syrian refugees a threat to cultural structure, social and moral order, economic order, security and access to basic services (Ekici, 2019). Ersoy (2019) concluded that local community viewed Syrian refugees a security threat and linked the rise in social problems to the presence of refugees. Members of the local community oppose refugees going to the same schools as their children.

In a study conducted with educators teaching Syrian refugees, Simsir and Dilmac (2018) found that Syrian refugee children experienced academic, social and language-communication difficulties. A similar study by Cigerci and Gungor (2016) also revealed foreign students, most of them Syrian refugees, faced economic, political, social, psychological and educational problems. On the other hand, Eminoglu and Eminoglu (2019) argued that although teachers in Turkey have negative perceptions, their perceptions of Syrian refugee students are generally positive. Teachers perceive Syrian refugee students, in order of frequency, compatible student, student with cultural difference problem, student with emotional problem and student with language problem.

In addition to the research presented above, various studies examine the views, attitudes or perceptions of school administrators and teachers about the education of refugee children. There are studies conducted in which school administrators' perceptions about refugee children are examined by Levet and Cayak (2017) and Chios (2016), teachers' perceptions about refugee children are examined by Yurdakul and Tok (2018) and Mercan-Uzun and Butun (2016) and school administrators' and teachers' perceptions about the education of refugee children by Emin (2016). In these studies, data were collected from study groups consisting of 6 to 70 school administrators and/or teachers by usually using interview technique. Metaphor analysis was used only in a few research studies (i.e., Eminoglu & Eminoglu, 2019; Yurdakul & Tok, 2018). However, as mentioned above, metaphors play a critical role in understanding social phenomena. When these studies were examined, this study was conducted by evaluating the limited number of participants in study groups from whom data were collected and the need for more comprehensive research on the education of refugee children.

The present study aims to identify perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards refugee children and contribute to the improvement of refugee children's school life. Positive or negative perceptions of educators can impact on refugee children's education process and indirectly their social life. By identifying educators' perceptions of refugee children, action can be taken to improve positive perceptions and diminish negative perceptions and thus increasing school belonging, school adaptation, school success etc. Improving such school-related experiences will affect societal life as well and as a result social integration of refugee children will become smoother. Furthermore, considering the limited number of studies into the education of refugee children in Turkey (Yilmaz et al., 2016), the findings of the current study are expected to contribute the literature concerning the education and integration process of refugee children in general.

Methodology

Research Goal

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of Turkish school administrators and teachers towards Syrian refugee children through metaphors. Within this respect, answers were sought to the questions below:

1. How do Turkish school administrators perceive Syrian refugee children?

2. How do Turkish teachers perceive Syrian refugee children?

3. Is there a significant relationship between Turkish school administrators' and teachers' perceptions about Syrian refugee children and gender, professional seniority and the number of refugee children in schools?

Research Design

According to Morgan (2006), metaphors can be used for two purposes, descriptive and prescriptive. When used for a descriptive purpose, the situation, phenomenon, case is depicted as is. In this regard, the present study, which aims to identify perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards refugee children, is designed to be descriptive. Used as a qualitative data collection tool (Patton, 2014), metaphors were utilized in this study to determine perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards refugee children. Additionally, quantitative analyses were conducted to examine whether identified perceptions varied depending on gender, professional seniority and the number of refugee children at school.

Sample and Data Collection

313 educators, 71 school administrators and 242 teachers, from 27 different provinces of Turkey constitute the study group. Convenience sampling technique was used to determine the study group. In the convenience sampling technique, accessible groups are selected for research (Fraenkel et al., 2011). Accordingly, 152 of the participants were male and 161 were female and their ages ranged between 23 and 63. 103 of the school administrators and teachers work in primary schools, 144 in secondary schools and 66 in high schools.

A form consisting of two parts was prepared in order to collect data. In the first part of the form, questions related to the demographical information of the participants such as gender, age, professional seniority, province, the number of refugee children in schools, were included. In the second part, the participants were asked to identify Syrian refugee children with a metaphor. For this purpose, school administrators and teachers are asked to complete the sentence that "Syrian refugee children are like....................Because........................". Thus, it was ensured that school administrators and teachers were able to create and explain a metaphor for refugee children.

The data collection tool was organized as Google form and the data was collected online. It was tried to reach the participants through online channels. So, the data collection process took two months during April and May 2019.

Analyzing of Data

Content analysis was conducted for the first and second research questions and chi-square analysis was conducted for the third research question. The main purpose of content analysis is to reach the concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. For this purpose, the data collected should be conceptualized first, then arranged in logically way according to the emerging concepts and the themes explaining the data should be determined accordingly (Glesne, 2015; Merriam, 2009). Similar metaphors obtained from the data analysis process were grouped and then categories were formed. Under the categories, excerpts related to the explanations of school administrators and teachers are included.

The following steps were followed for the analysis of the metaphors indicated by the participants:

1. The responses of the participants to the research questions online on Google form were saved as an excel file. By examining the recorded, a metaphor for refugee children was developed and justified accordingly and then the data of school administrators and teachers were started to be evaluated. Participant data that did not specify or justify a metaphor in a proper way for refugee children was invalidated. As a result of the evaluation, 13 data of school administrators and 38 data of teachers were excluded from the analysis. Thus, 58 data belonging to school administrators and 204 data belonging to teachers were analyzed.

2. 42 metaphors developed by school administrators and their justifications and 96 metaphors developed by teachers and their justifications were examined and separate categories were formed.

3. Procedures regarding validity and reliability of the study were performed. Detailed reporting of the data obtained and explaining how the researcher reached the results are among important criteria for validity (Yildirim, 2010). In addition, rich and intensive descriptions of the results obtained in the study contribute to the validity (Merriam, 2009). Accordingly, the data analysis process is explained in detail in order to increase the validity of the study. Examples of the explanations of school administrators and teachers for the categories obtained in the study are also included in the findings section. In addition to this, the opinions of an educational science expert other than the researchers were used to evaluate whether the metaphors were collected under the correct conceptual categories. Thus, validity of the research was tried to be ensured. In order to ensure reliability of the research, it has been confirmed whether the metaphors in the created categories represent the conceptual category correctly. For this purpose, the data were coded separately by two different experts and the metaphor and category list were finalized. For reliability of the study, the reliability formula (Reliability=Consensus/Consensus + Disagreement x 100) proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used. Accordingly, 92% consensus was reached between two different encoder evaluations. Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that the fact that reliability result is above 90% is valid for reliability of the study. As a result, the obtained reliability rate of 92% is sufficient.

4. In the study, 42 metaphors obtained from school administrators were classified under four categories and 96 metaphors obtained from teachers were classified under six categories. These metaphors and categories are presented in the findings section, including direct quotations from the participants.

After the content analysis, four conceptual categories for school administrators, and six conceptual categories for teachers were determined. The four conceptual categories were common for both school administrators and teachers. The relationships between school administrators and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and gender, professional seniority and the number of refugee students at school were examined by using these four common conceptual categories. Chi-square analysis was used to determine the relationships between these variables mentioned. In chi-square analysis, "Cramer's V" value was calculated to determine the power of the relationship between

dependent variable and independent variable. That Cramer's V value is between .00 and .10 means the association can be neglected, that it is between .10 and .20 means weak association, that it is between .20 and .40 means moderate association, that it is between .40 and .60 means relatively strong association, that it is between .60 and .80 is interpreted as a strong association and that it is .80 to 1.00 is interpreted as a very strong association (Rea & Parker, 1992).

Findings / Results

The findings of the study are presented under three headings considering the research questions. Firstly, the findings of metaphoric perceptions of the school administrators and then of the teachers about the refugee children were given. After that, findings related to relationships between school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and demographical variables are presented.

Findings of metaphoric perceptions of Turkish school administrators about Syrian refugee children

School administrators produced 42 metaphors for refugee students and describe refugee children with metaphors mostly as guest (8), motherless (3), wounded birds (3) and fatherless (3). When metaphors and their justifications are considered, it is evaluated that metaphors can be grouped under four conceptual categories in terms of their common characteristics.

According to the frequency of the metaphors, they are listed as follows: "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems", "fragile and needy child", "child who is no different from other children "and "problematic child". School administrators often perceive refugee children as fragile and in need of help. They also think that these children also have cultural adaptation and belonging problems. On the other hand, some of the school administrators stated that refugee children are not different from the other children, while others define them as problematic children.

Conceptual categories regarding school administrators' perceptions of refugee children that were revealed by content analysis and definitions of these categories are presented below in detail.

Perceptions of Turkish school administrators about Syrian refugee children 1: "Child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems"

School administrators produced 14 metaphors under the category of "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems". These metaphors are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Guest	8	A deserted desert	1
Wounded bird	3	A broken branch	1
Fish out of water	2	Unhappy	1
Foreigner	2	A child whose toy is taken from	1
Bird in golden cage	1	A timid bird	1
Helpless	1	Timid pigeon	1
Sheep without shepherd	1	A bird that flies newly	1
			Total 25

The most frequent metaphors produced by the school administrators who think refugee children experience cultural adaptation and belonging problems are guest (8), wounded bird (3) and foreigner (2). Some of the opinions expressed under this category are below:

S29:*"They don't see themselves belonged to here."*

S37:*"They had to live in a foreign country, in an environment they don't know."*

S52:*"They are not interested in our culture at all."*

Perceptions of Turkish school administrators about Syrian refugee children 2: "Fragile and needy child"

School administrators produced 16 metaphors under the category of "fragile and needy child". These metaphors are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. Fragile and needy child

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Motherless	3	Starfish	1
Fatherless	3	In need of attention	1
Flower	2	Bird with a broken wing	1
Baby	1	Gloomy	1
Desperate	1	Oppressed	1
Destitute	1	Flower without water	1
Gazelles	1	In need of help	1
Child	1	Special	1
			Total 21

The most frequent metaphors produced by the school administrators who perceive refugee children as fragile and needy are motherless (3) and fatherless (3). Some of the opinions expressed by the school administrators under this category are below:

S15:*"They are in need of help, they wish to be supported."*

S40:*"They always long for love and attention."*

S43:*"They are traumatic children."*

Perceptions of Turkish school administrators about Syrian refugee children 3: "Child who is no different from other children"

The number of the metaphors produced by the school administrators under the category of "child who is no different from other children" is 8. These metaphors are presented in the Table 3.

Table 3. Child who is no different from other children

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Ours	1	Everybody	1
Our students	1	Our own children	1
Beloved	1	Our student	1
Other students	1	Turkish student	1
			Total 8

The school administrators who think that refugee children are no different from other children produced metaphors such as "our students, beloved". Some of the opinions under this category are below:

S19:*"Geography does not matter, humanity is universal."*

S23:*"Child is child. Whatever their language, religion or colour, they are innocent."*

Perceptions of Turkish school administrators about Syrian refugee children 4: "Problematic child"

School administrators produced 4 metaphors under the category of "problematic child". These metaphors are presented in the Table 4.

Table 4. Problematic child

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Lady driver	1	One who needs to be educated	1
Outsider	1	Special education student	1
			Total 4

The school administrators who perceive refugee children as problematic ones used metaphors such as "lady driver, outsider". Some of the opinions under this category are below:

S18:*"They exhibit behavioral disorders."*

S44:*"They do not understand us and lessons."*

Findings of metaphoric perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children

Teachers produced 96 metaphors for refugee children and describe the refugees with metaphors of guest (27), other students (20), alone (7), our students (6), fatherless (6), our student (5) and in need of help (5) mostly.

The metaphors produced by the teachers for refugee children are grouped under six conceptual categories and in accordance with the frequencies, they are listed as "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems (84)", "child

who is no different from other children (57)", "fragile and needy child (29)", "problematic child (15)", "child who can present her/his potential with interest (13)" and "compatible child (6)". Accordingly, most of the teachers think that refugee children have cultural adaptation and belonging problems. On the other hand, it is seen that the number of teachers who see refugee children as no different from other children and who think that refugee children are fragile and in need of help is high. While some of the teachers perceive refugee children as problematic children, the other part acknowledges that refugee children have the potential to present when they are taken care of and they are compatible.

Conceptual categories regarding teachers' perceptions of refugee children that were revealed by content analysis and definitions of these categories are presented below in detail.

Perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children 1: "Child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems"

The teachers produced 35 metaphors under the category of "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems". These metaphors are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Guest	27	Wretch	1
Alone	7	Poor	1
Foreigner	4	Poor birds	1
Fish out of water	3	Immigrant birds	1
Outsider	3	Introvert	1
Bird with a broken wing	3	Self-enclosed and alone	1
With no one	3	Lost	1
Shy	2	Children who feel lonely	1
In gap	2	Flower picked	1
Inclusion students	2	A student in the village	1
Unhappy	2	Marginalized	1
Ship without route	2	Leaf that feels in the autumn	1
Absent	2	Abstracted	1
Fish going adrift to other seas	1	Confused and timid	1
Human trying to watch a movie without subtitles	1	Flower without water	1
Leaf picked from the branch	1	Abandoned	1
Homeless	1	Wild strawberry	1
Ship drifted in the storm	1		
		Total	84

The most frequent metaphors produced by the teachers who state that refugee children have cultural adaptation and belonging problems are guest (27), alone (7), foreigner (4), fish out of water (3), outsider (3), bird whose wing is broken (3) and with no one (3). Some of the opinions expressed by the teachers under this category are below:

T2:*"As they don't know our language well, they don't understand us."*

T65:*"They have difficulty in adapting to the environment they are in."*

T72:*"They feel foreign."*

T185:*"There is a difference in language and culture. The majority cannot adapt."*

Perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children 2: "Child who is no different from other children"

The number of the metaphors produced by the teachers under the category of "child who is no different from other children" is 16. These metaphors are presented in the Table 6.

Table 6. Child who is no different from other children

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Other students	20	Our children	2
Our students	6	Our own children	2
Our student	5	Person of our country	1
From us	4	Students of this country	1
Turkish student	4	Child	1
Human	3	Half of an apple	1
Normal student	3	Everybody	1
Ours	2	Native students	1
		Total 57	

The most frequent metaphors used by teachers who perceive refugee children as no different from other children are other students (20), our students (6), students (5), from us (4) and Turkish student (4). Some of the opinions under this category are below:

T8:*"All children in the World are the same."*

T20:*"It is wrong to discriminate people according to their race, gender, colour."*

T52:*"Being a refugee child does not change the reality that they are children."*

Perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children 3: "Fragile and needy child"

Teachers produced 16 metaphors under the category of "fragile and needy child". These metaphors are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Fragile and needy child

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Fatherless	6	An extra plate on the table	1
In need of help	5	Motherless	1
Oppressed	3	Without self-confidence	1
Deposit	2	Sparrow	1
A newborn	2	Question mark	1
Flower	1	Wounded bird	1
Baby	1	Kitten	1
Fresh flowers that need to be protected from rage of public	1	Deprived	1
			Total 29

The most frequent metaphors used by teachers under the category of "fragile and needy child" are fatherless (6), in need of help (5) and oppressed (3). Examples of teachers' statements under this category are presented below:

T33:*"They are very gentle, very sensitive."*

T208:*"Far from home, psychologically corrupt. It is necessary to come to their aid, support and win them."*

Perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children 4: "Problematic child"

Teachers produced 13 metaphors under the category of "problematic child". These metaphors are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Problematic child

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Irresponsible	2	Lost children	1
Impertinent	2	Tramps causing problems in the society	1
A person we can't compromise	1	Tourist	1
Idle	1	Indifferent	1
Extra burden	1	Insensitive student	1
Uninterested	1	Walking danger	1
Invader	1		
			Total 15

The most frequent metaphors used by teachers who perceive refugee children as problematic children are irresponsible (2) and impertinent (2). Some of the opinions under this category are below:

T79:*"They disrupt the order instead of adapting and do not take offense at all."*

T158:*"They do not assume any responsibility."*

Perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children 5: "Child who can reveal her/his potential with interest"

It is seen that the teachers produced 12 metaphors under the category of "child who can reveal her/his potential with interest". These categories are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Child who can reveal her/his potential with interest

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Flower*	2	Unprocessed mine	1
Mirror	1	Cat	1
Glass	1	Coal	1
Ore	1	Seed	1
Ugly duckling	1	Mirror of the Turkish public	1
Climate	1	Water	1
			Total 13

*Flower is a metaphor that has explanations directed to different categories.

The teachers who think that refugee children can exhibit their potentials when they are interested in used metaphors for them such as "flower, mirror, glass and ore". Some of the expressions of the teachers under this category are given below.

T98:*"If they pass through the right stages and you wait patiently, they become diamonds but if you approach superficially, you would burn them out."*

T175:*"They are in need of watering, greening and feeding."*

Perceptions of Turkish teachers about Syrian refugee children 6: "Compatible child"

The teacher produced five metaphors under the category of "compatible child". These metaphors produced are given in Table 10.

Table 10. Compatible child

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
Happy	2	Respectful	1
Optimistic	1	Star	1
Flowers blossoming in snow	1		
			Total 6

The teachers who see refugee children compatible used metaphors such as "happy, optimistic, star" towards them. Some of the opinions under this category are below:

T134:*"They do not reflect any problems."*

T151:*"They respect their teachers very much."*

Findings related to relationships between Turkish school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of Syrian refugee children and demographical variables

Table 11 shows the chi-square test results for the relationship between gender and the four common conceptual categories produced by school administrators and teachers for refugee children.

Table 11. Relationship between Turkish school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of Syrian refugee children and gender

Perceptions	Gender		Total	χ^2	df	p
	Female	Male				
A[1]	57	52	109			
B[2]	23	27	50			
C[3]	36	29	65	1.16	3	.764
D[4]	9	10	19			
Total	125	118	243			

[1]*Child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems*
[2]*Fragile and needy child*
[3]*Child who is no different from other children*
[4]*Problematic child*

As shown in Table 11, there is no significant relationship between school administrators and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and gender χ^2 (3, n = 243) = 1.16, *p* = .764.

The results of the chi-square test on the relationship between school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and their professional seniority are presented in Table 12.

Table12. Relationship between Turkish school administrators and teachers' perceptions of Syrian refugee children and professional seniority

Perceptions	Professional Seniority				Total	χ^2	*df*	*p*	Cramer's V
	5 years and less	**6-10 years**	**11-15 years**	**16 years and more**					
A	8	31	26	44	109				
B	6	7	11	23	47				
C	16	10	16	21	63	21.30	9	.009	.18
D	6	4	3	3	16				
Total	36	52	56	91	235				

There is a low level significant relationship between school administrators and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and their seniority χ^2 (9, n = 235) = 21.30, *p* = .009, Cramer's V = .18. As a result of the paired comparisons made by applying Bonferroni correction, it was observed that school administrators and teachers with a seniority of 5 years or less had less perception of refugee children having cultural adaptation and belonging problems than those with a seniority of 6-10 years and 16 years or more. In addition, it was determined that those who have a seniority of 5 years or less have higher perceptions that refugee children are problematic children than those with a seniority of 16 years or more.

Table 13 shows the chi-square test for the relationship between school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and the number of refugee children at school.

Table13. Relationship between Turkish school administrators and teachers' perceptions of Syrian refugee children and the number of refugee children at school

Perceptions	Number of Refugee Children at School		Total	χ^2	*df*	*p*	Cramer's V
	5 and less	**More than 5**					
A	34	75	109				
B	12	38	50				
C	29	36	65	10.33	3	.016	.21
D	2	17	19				
Total	77	166	243				

There is a moderately significant relationship between school administrators and teachers' perceptions of refugee children and the number of refugee children in the school χ^2 (3, n = 243) = 10.33, p = .016, Cramer's V = .21. As a result of paired comparisons made by applying Bonferroni correction, school administrators and teachers whose schools have 5 or fewer refugee children had higher perceptions that refugee children are no different than other children while they had lower perceptions that refugee children are problematic.

Discussion

As a result of this study conducted to determine the metaphorical perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards refugee children, it was determined that school administrators produced 42 metaphors for refugee children. The most commonly used metaphors are guest, motherless, wounded bird and fatherless respectively. When they are classified by considering their justifications, it is seen that metaphors fall under four conceptual categories. These conceptual categories which are "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems", "fragile and needy child", "child who is no different from other children" and "problematic child" in order of frequency represent the perceptions of school administrators towards refugee children. Accordingly, the majority of school administrators think that refugee children experience cultural adaptation and belonging problems. In addition, school administrators consider these children as fragile and in need of help. While a small number of school administrators do not see refugee children as different from other children, a very low number of them perceive them as problematic. In Levent and Cayak's (2017) study examining the views of school principals towards refugee children, similar results were obtained. According to this study, school administrators think that refugee children are frequently exposed to language barriers and have adaptation problems. Similarly in Toker-Gokce and Acar's (2017) study the results revealed that school principals mostly experienced communication, adaptation, accreditation, absenteeism, psychological and financial problems with Syrian refugee students. In another study conducted by Sakiz (2016), it was determined that school administrators had negative attitudes towards the education of refugee children in their own schools and that these children should be educated in segregated environments. It has been argued that these negative attitudes towards refugee children are mainly due to structural deficiencies and low level of social acceptance. The study results of Levent

and Cayak (2017), Toker-Gokce and Acar (2017), and Sakiz (2016) are consistent with the findings of the present study, in particular, that refugee children are perceived as children with cultural adaptation and belonging problems.

When the results of teachers' metaphoric perceptions of refugee children are examined, it is seen that teachers produced 96 metaphors for refugee children. The most common metaphors used by the teachers are guest, other students, alone, our students, fatherless, our student and in need of help respectively. By examining the justifications of the metaphors, it was determined that they were classified into six categories. These categories are, in order of frequency, "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems", "child who is no different from other children"," fragile and needy child ","problematic child", "child who can present her/his potential with interest" and "compatible child". Based on the conceptual categories composed, it is seen that most of the teachers think that refugee children have cultural adaptation and belonging problems. It is also understood that most teachers do not see refugee children as different from other students and perceive them as fragile and in need of help. Teachers who consider refugee children as problematic children make up a small proportion of the teachers participating in the study, while a very small number of teachers believe that their potential can be revealed when they are interested in and that they are compatible children. In a similar study conducted by Yurdakul and Tok (2018), it is seen that the most common metaphors used by teachers for refugee children are guest, harmonious, incompatible, puzzle and flower detached from the branch. As a result of this study, it was determined that teachers had more positive thoughts about refugee children and the most metaphors were produced under the compatible student theme. This theme was followed by themes such as language problems, cultural differences and emotional problems. Unlike the findings of Yurdakul and Tok (2018) in the current study, the theme of compatible refugee children is the theme the least metaphors were produced. On the other hand, the fact that the most frequently produced theme is "guest", and that refugee children are perceived as fragile and in need of help, are consistent with the findings of Yurdakul and Tok (2018). In another study, Mercan-Uzun and Butun (2016) stated that teachers could not communicate with refugee children, that refugee children had limited communication with their peers, that they were left alone in the classroom and that they could not express their problems to their teachers. Similarly in Toker-Gokce and Acar's (2017) study the results revealed that teachers have communication problems with Syrian refugee students. In another study conducted by Kara et al. (2016) with prospective teachers, it is found out that prospective teachers generally had negative perceptions towards refugees. Pre-service teachers frequently produced metaphors for refugees such as guests, fatherless, desolate, helpless and refugees. The category represented by the metaphor with the highest number is with no one and in need of help. When these findings are also taken into consideration, it is seen that refugee children frequently experience problems of belonging and cultural adaptation and are perceived as fragile and in need of help.

Schools are representative of their communities. All changes and events in the social sphere are reflected in the schools. Within this context, having knowledge of how the perceptions and attitudes towards refugees in general in Turkey are is also important. One comprehensive study addressing attitudes towards refugees in Turkey was carried out by Migration and Politics Research Center at Hacettepe University in 2014. According to the results of this study, despite the negative attitude that would reach racism, xenophobia and hate towards Syrians from time to time in Turkey, social acceptance level is generally high. The continuation of the social acceptance depends on the provision of community support and participation in the process towards the Syrian refugees in Turkey. The number of people who consider the presence of the Syrians in Turkey as a problem, emphasize cultural differences and marginalize them is quite high. Those people frequently state that Syrians are "guests" and they need to adapt in this sense (Erdogan, 2014). Syrians are often represented within a discriminatory discourse in the mainstream media (Doganay & Coban-Kenes, 2016; Erdogan, 2017). Metaphors including racist and discriminatory statements against Syrians are used in the press. For example, with metaphors such as raids, floods, waves and refugees are represented as a threatening factor; and with metaphors such as cost, expense, expenditure and invoice, they are shown as economic burden (Coban-Kenes, 2016). Similarly, refugees are portrayed in social media in a discriminatory language with expressions such as so-called war victims, beggars, rogue, renegade, coward, traitor, bully and extortionist (Ozdemir & Oner-Ozkan, 2016). In the study conducted by Esigul et al. (2017), the Syrians were perceived as a threat to their work and living spaces and the potential of crime of Syrians was emphasized by the participants. It is found out that the participants' perception of Syrians in general was negative. These and similar views in the society are reflected in the field of education. In a study conducted by Topkaya and Akdag (2016) with prospective teachers, prospective teachers stated that with the arrival of the Syrians, they understood the value of their country better, the rents increased due to the Syrians, the city became extremely crowded and they were partially negative towards the Syrians. According to the results of the study conducted by Sakiz (2016), school principals generally have negative attitudes towards refugees. From another point of view, according to the results of the study conducted by Istanbul Bilgi University Children's Research Center [IBUCRC] (2015), while some of the teachers do not take responsibility for finding a solution to the problems they face by perceiving the existence of refugee children as a problem, the other section sometimes tries to find solutions by getting support from school administrators and sometimes by themselves.

Education has an active role in helping refugees to escape their sense of alienation and to reduce their cultural problems (Nicassio & Pate, 1984). In this context, schools have an important role in settling refugee children, developing feelings of belonging and adaptation (Taylor & Sidhu, 2012). Schools are important socialization contexts where children learn cultural norms, behaviors and expectations through peers and teachers (Delgado-Gaitan, 1988).

In the present study, the perception of refugee children as children with cultural adaptation and belonging problems by school administrators and teachers shows that schools do not perform these functions adequately. School administrators and teachers should be supported in this regard. In the study conducted by IBUCRC (2015), it was found that although they do not have sufficient information and equipment about refugee children, teachers are expected to find solutions for all difficulties related to these children and the teachers are uncomfortable with this situation. Negative attitudes of teachers and administrators make it difficult for refugee children to adapt to school (Emin, 2016). When school administrators and teachers are not trained to deal with the problems of refugee children, undesirable results may occur (Garza et al., 2015). Therefore, first of all, training should be conducted to support the knowledge and skills of school administrators and teachers on issues such as life experiences of refugee children, cultural backgrounds and multicultural education. In addition, cooperation and support efforts should be increased both within the school and from different institutions.

The rights of refugee children are guaranteed by various national and international regulations (law, regulation, contract, etc.). Educators should be aware of the rights of refugee children and carry out educational activities accordingly and, when necessary, provide information on their legal rights to refugee children and their families. In this study, it was determined that most of the school administrators and teachers perceived refugee children as fragile and in need of help. It is a positive approach that school administrators and teachers develop an awareness that they are fragile by considering the life experiences of refugee children. On the other hand, although this perception contains a desire for help for refugee children, it may lead school administrators and teachers to misconceptions and practices due to the underlying pity feeling. Therefore, a rights-based approach for refugee children needs to be taken as a basis. Advocacy in Turkey is taking place among the important and the urgent needs and in this regard, important responsibilities should be taken by particularly psychological counselors with educators (Keklik, 2010).

It is important for refugee children as to maintain their own culture and to be accepted with their cultural codes and as to adapt to the culture of the country they are settled in (Ergun, 2019). Schools have a number of privileges for the integration of refugee children into society (Giovannini & Vezzali, 2011). Educators play an important role in the social acceptance of children and in dealing with negative judgments in society (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2016). Immigrants and refugees can integrate into the school and society more easily owing to culturally responsive educators (Hill, 2020). They appreciate it when educators allow them to use their cultural backgrounds and previous experiences at the school (Benediktsson & Ragnarsdottir, 2019). In this study, it was determined that most of the teachers and a small part of the school administrators did not see refugee children as different from other children. This result can be considered as positive in order for the integration of refugee children and reducing negative attitudes in society. From this perspective, it is possible for teachers and school administrators to influence other teachers and students in the school, thereby reducing negative attitudes towards refugees in the community.

According to the other results obtained in the present study, only a small number of school administrators and a small number of teachers perceive refugee children as problematic children, and a small number of teachers believe that their potential can be revealed when they are taken care of and that they are compatible children. In order to overcome the problematic child perception, school administrators and teachers can be informed about the traumatic events and other life difficulties of refugee children. Support mechanisms can be put in place to solve the situations that are seen as problems. For example, school psychological counselors may be asked for support in solving educational and psychosocial problems. However, school counselors should also be trained to work with children and adolescents with different cultural characteristics (Kagnici, 2017). For cultural problems, support teachers who know the language of refugee children and who have information about the problems they experience can be asked for help (Rutter, 2003). Besides, efforts can be made to develop teacher perception that potential of refugee children can be revealed when they are dealt with and that these are compatible children. By asking teachers who have this perception to share their positive experiences with refugee children and, the social impact process could be activated. Through the social impact process, negative attitudes of other teachers and administrators in the school can be reduced. As Benard (1991) points out, teachers can build healthy relationships by providing support warm-heartedly and accepting their students as they are. In this way, they can create opportunities for students' active participation and contribution to the school.

As a result of the quantitative analysis, it was found that school administrators and teachers' perceptions of refugee children were not related to gender, but there was a significant relationship between professional seniority and the number of refugee students in the school. The fact that school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of refugee children is not related to gender shows that females and males have a common perception of these children. On the other hand, it was found that school administrators and teachers with a seniority of 5 years or less had high perceptions of refugee children as problematic children and low perceptions that they are experiencing cultural adaptation and belonging problems.

School administrators and teachers who are at the beginning of their professional life perceive refugee children as problematic children. Lack of or limited courses on multicultural education and student diversity during university education and in-service training after they start teaching may cause refugee children to be perceived as problematic children. However, as experience increases, teachers are expected to be more moderate (Kayabasi & Cemaloglu, 2007). As professional experience increases, school administrators and teachers develop their knowledge and skills in dealing

with and managing different types of students and problem areas effectively. This makes them more tolerant of differences and no longer regarded as a problem. As a matter of fact, Martinez et al. (2015) also stated that newly started teachers may have problems in areas such as in-class attitude and behavior, classroom management and emotion management, and that their competence increases in these areas over time. On the other hand, while experienced school administrators and teachers perceive refugee children as children with cultural adaptation and belonging problems, it is understood that newcomers do not have such a perception. It is possible to explain this situation with school culture. School administrators and teachers who have more seniority have higher perceptions of school culture (Korkut & Hacifazlioglu, 2011). While experienced school administrators and teachers have formed a school culture, newcomers gradually adopt this culture. Therefore, experienced school administrators and teachers can evaluate refugee children within the scope of school culture and foresee that they experience cultural adaptation and belonging problems.

According to the current study, school administrators and teachers who have 5 or less refugee children in their school have higher perceptions of that refugee children are no different from other children than those with more than 5 children and have lower perceptions that they are problematic children. In other words, when the number of refugee children in the school is high, school administrators and teachers perceive refugee children as different from other children and as problematic children. With the increase in the number of refugee children in school, it is understood that the perception of school administrators and teachers about refugee children is more negative. According to Allport's (1954) hypothesis of inter-group social contact, segregation and non-interaction among people from different groups can lead to negative attitudes such as prejudice and discrimination. When factors such as equal status, common goal, cooperation and institutional support among groups, social contact give positive and effective results while the absence of these can lead to an increase in negative attitudes among groups (Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The increase in the number of refugee children in the school increases the social contact between the groups, but the lack of equal status, common goal, cooperation and institutional support among the groups can lead to negative attitudes towards refugee children. Therefore, the above-mentioned conditions should be met in order to obtain positive results of social contact in schools where the number of refugee children is high.

Conclusion

This study examines the perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards refugee children. As a results, the majority of school administrators think that refugee children experience cultural adaptation and belonging problems. In addition, school administrators consider these children as fragile and in need of help. While a small number of school administrators do not see refugee children as different from other children, a very low number of them perceive them as problematic. Similarly, most of the teachers think that refugee children have cultural adaptation and belonging problems. It is also understood that most teachers do not see refugee children as different from other students and perceive them as fragile and in need of help. Teachers who consider refugee children as problematic children make up a small proportion of the teachers participating in the study, while a very small number of teachers believe that their potential can be revealed when they are interested in and that they are compatible children. In addition, school administrators and teachers' perceptions of refugee children do not related to gender, but there is a significant relationship between professional seniority and the number of refugee students in the school.

Suggestions

Based on the current study, some suggestions for further research can be presented. It is possible to provide face-to-face information to the participants before the data collection process for future studies. Longitudinal studies can provide more robust results on perceptions of refugee children. In order to improve the education process of refugee children, mixed-patterned studies in which educators' perceptions are addressed can be conducted. With the help of different data collection techniques, richer data can be obtained. Various studies in which focus group interviews are conducted with school administrators and teachers with positive perceptions of refugee children can be conducted. Thus, the issue can be examined in more detail. By organizing studies that examine the value given to education by refugee children and their expectations from education, perspectives of refugee children can be investigated. In addition, by collecting data from refugee children in person on their schooling problems, contribution to the improvement of their educational processes could be made.

It is known that some efforts have been carried out by the Ministry of National Education regarding the inclusion of refugee children in the education system and society. School administrators and teachers play a critical role in the integration of these children into the educational system and society. The present study shows that school administrators' and teachers' perceptions of refugee children are generally negative. Therefore, MoNE should take this finding into account in their policies and practices on refugee children. Particularly during the in-service training process, school administrators and teachers can be provided with effective training on issues such as the life experiences of refugee children, legal rights, multicultural education and student diversity.

According to the study, the perception of refugee children as problematic children is higher among the newly-started school administrators and teachers. School managers and teachers can be provided training on the education of refugee

children, effective classroom management and school management during their university education before they begin their careers. Experienced school administrators and teachers can mentor those colleagues. On the other hand, the number of refugee children in school is also related to the perceptions of school administrators and teachers. The increasing number of refugee children in school increases the negative perception of school administrators and teachers about refugee children. For this reason, it is necessary to make a planned and balanced distribution when the number of refugee children in schools is distributed. In addition, social contact with refugee children based on equal status, common goal, cooperation and institutional support should be ensured. To this end, psychological counselors in schools can bring together refugee children and children from the host community with common goals and carry out collaborative group work. Similarly, school administrators and teachers can organize activities for effective social contact with refugee children and their families.

Limitations

There are some limitations of this study, which examines the perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards refugee children. First of all, although it is expected to avoid from any possible pressure by collecting data online via Google form in the study, the lack of providing face-to-face information on the purpose and importance of the study can be considered as a limitation. As it is a cross-sectional study, it is not possible to determine how the participants' perceptions change over time. On the other hand this study was conducted with a qualitative approach. Therefore, generalizability of the study findings may be limited. The findings only can be transferred to groups with similar characteristics the study group.

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