

FORCED MIGRATION EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT SYRIAN
REFUGEES: AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

FORCED MIGRATION EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT SYRIAN REFUGEES: AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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A global refugee crisis is at the forefront of political debates in many countries including Turkey. The present study aimed to explore how young adult Syrian refugees experience and make sense forced migration at a critical stage of their life course. Eighteen Syrian young refugees (nine women, nine men) whose ages ranged between 20 and 23 participated in this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant. Fifteen participants were interviewed in Arabic via the support of an interpreter. The remaining three participants were fluent in Turkish and interviewed in Turkish. The transcribed interviews were analyzed by using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Eight superordinate themes were emerged from the analysis. These themes were as follows: 1) Living with war in Syria; 2) leaving homeland behind; 3) rebuilding a new life; 4) facing ongoing challenges and losses; 5) ways of coping with adversities; 6) changes in family dynamics; 7) changed views of the self; and 8) future aspirations. The researcher discussed the study findings in relation to the existing refugee literature, in particular the socioecological models of refugee mental health. Further, the researcher adopted a developmental approach to explore the interplay between developmental transitions and forced migration

experiences among young Syrian refugees. Finally, clinical and policy implications, as well as limitations and future directions were discussed.

Keywords: Forced Migration, Syrian Refugees, The Integrative Contextual Model, Young Adulthood, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.



ÖZ

GENÇ YETİŞKİN SURİYELİ MÜLTECİ GENÇLERİN ZORUNLU GÖÇ DENEYİMLERİ: BİR YORUMLAYICI FENOMENOLOJİK ANALİZ ÇALIŞMASI

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Küresel boyutta bir mülteci krizi Türkiye dahil birçok ülkede politik tartışmaların başında gelmektedir. Bu çalışma genç yetişkin Suriyeli mültecilerin yaşamlarının kritik bir döneminde yaşadıkları zorunlu göç deneyimini nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Yaşları 20 ile 23 arasında değişen on sekiz Suriyeli genç yetişkin (dokuz kadın, dokuz erkek) bu çalışmaya katılmıştır. Katılımcılarla yapılandırılmış mülakatlar yapılmıştır. On beş katılımcı ile mülakatlar bir çevirmen yardımıyla Arapça yapılırken, Türkçeyi akıcı bir biçimde konuşan üç katılımcı ile mülakatlar Türkçe yapılmıştır. Yazıya dökülen görüşmeler Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Analiz sonucunda sekiz üst tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu temalar şu şekildedir: 1) Suriye’de savaş ile yaşamak, 2) anavatanı geride bırakmak, 3) yeni bir hayat inşa etmek, 4) devam eden zorluklar ve kayıplar, 5) zorluklarla başa çıkma yolları, 6) değişen aile dinamikleri, 7) değişen kendilik algısı ve 8) gelecek beklentileri. Araştırmacı çalışma bulgularını var olan mülteci literatürüyle özellikle mülteci ruh sağlığına sosyoekolojik yaklaşımla bakan modeller

çerçevesinde tartışmıştır. Son olarak, klinik sonuçları ve araştırmanın sınırlılıkları ve sonraki araştırmalar için öneriler ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zorunlu Göç, Suriyeli Mülteciler, Bütünleyici Bağlamsal Model, Genç Yetişkinlik, Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Migration has been a global phenomenon that existed in many nations throughout history. Today, a global refugee crisis is recognized as a significant challenge and economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants are at the forefront of political debates in many countries. The global report published by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on forced migration delineated that the forcibly displaced population reached a record high in 2021 (UNCHR, 2021c). Recent estimates of UNHCR (2021c) put the number of forcibly displaced people at approximately 82.4 million, including 26.4 million refugees, 48 million internally displaced people (IDPs), 4.1 million asylum-seekers, and 3.9 million Venezuelans displaced abroad by the end of 2020. UNHCR (2021c) reported that the global population of displaced individuals continues to increase due to the armed conflict in the Sahel region of Africa and Myanmar, the deteriorating political and economic conditions in Venezuela, and continuing Syrian War. Violence-related displacement is at a 20-year high, while the number of IDPs is at its highest level in the last 50 years. Importantly, children under 18 constituted 42% of the global forcibly displaced population in 2020 (UNCHR, 2021c).

According to UNHCR (2021c) global report, as in previous years, Syria has remained to be the major source country of the world's forcibly displaced population in 2020, with a refugee population of 6.7 million. Besides Syria, other major source countries of the forcibly displaced population are Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Myanmar (UNHCR, 2021c).

As a result of being at a critical geographical location on the international migration routes, Turkey has been hosting the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers.

There were 4 million displaced people living in Turkey by the end of June 2021 (UNHCR, 2021b). Apart from Turkey, other countries hosting the largest number of the world's displaced populations are Colombia, Pakistan, Uganda, and Germany (UNHCR, 2021a). The majority of the forcibly displaced population in Turkey is from Syria, followed by Iraq (174.250), Afghanistan (116.400), Iran (27.000) (UNHCR, 2021a). Turkey has become the major country hosting the world's largest community of Syrians (UNHCR, 2021c). As it can be observed from the given statistics, the refugee issue has become one of the most crucial issues in Turkey. Therefore, it is important to understand Syrian refugees' experiences and problems from a psychological perspective and thereby provide useful information when developing migration policy and practice. Accordingly, the present study focused on the lived experiences of young adult Syrians and how they make sense of their forced migration experiences at a critical stage of their life course. Before discussing Syrians' legal, social, and psychological conditions in Turkey, it is important to clarify various terms related to the topic at hand.

1.1. Definitions of Terms: Refugee, Asylum Seeker, and Internally Displaced People

The United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention defined the term refugee as a person who

owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (UNCHR, 2011; p.14).

Refugee status protects people from refoulement and returning to danger in their country of origin (Silove et al., 2017). The 1951 Refugee Convention was written in the aftermath of World War II to protect European refugees. It was recognized as the key legal document to define the legal term "refugee" and outline the rights of the displaced people. Upon recognition of forced displacement as a worldwide issue, the 1951 Refugee Convention was revised in 1967 to expand its scope and include refugees outside of Europe (UNCHR, 2011).

An asylum seeker is described as a person who is also compelled to leave their country of origin and crosses an international border. Asylum seekers also formally apply for asylum to seek safety and protection in another country on the principle of non-refoulement; however, their application for refugee status has not been concluded and they are not granted the refugee status yet (Elliott & Segal, 2012; International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2019). A person may apply for asylum status due to various reasons, including fear of being persecuted due to his or her affiliation with a social group, political opinion, ethnic or racial background, religion, or nationality (IOM, 2019). The asylum process may take several years to reach an outcome. If the application is concluded negatively, the applicant must leave the country and may be deported (Ryan et al., 2009; IOM, 2019). Every recognized refugee is at some point an asylum seeker (IOM, 2019).

Internally Displaced People are those who had been forced to flee from home of origin due to armed conflict and violence, human rights violations, and natural and human-made disasters, yet they have not crossed an international border and reside within the border of their own country (Elliott & Segal, 2012; IOM, 2019). Since internally displaced people have not crossed international borders, they are not provided with the same international protections as refugees and stay under the protection of their government (UNHCR, n.d.-a)

The term of migrant is also frequently used in the existing literature. According to definition proposed by IOM, migrants are those who “move away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons” (IOM, 2019; p. 132). IOM used the term of migrant as an “umbrella term” which is not included in international law and covered all types of movement.

Various terms and their definitions have outlined the fundamental rights and entitlements of displaced people as well as legal obligations of States. Although Syrians in Turkey were not legally granted refugee status, Syrian people were referred to as refugees in the present dissertation for the sake of simplicity. The term refugee was used concerning its sociological and psychological connotations rather than as a

legal term. Before discussing forced migration and mental health literature with a particular focus on Syrian refugees, it is important to outline the legislative and social context of Syrian refugees in Turkey.

1.2. Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Turkey: Numbers and Legislative Regulations

Being located at the crossroads of the international migration routes, Turkey has been a transit country for many refugees and migrants who plan to reach European countries, United States, Canada, or Australia. According to the statistics published in July 2021 by UNHCR, Turkey is hosting approximately 4.0 million displaced people, including over 3.6 million from Syria under temporary protection and 330.000 displaced people under international protection (UNHCR, 2021). Besides the refugee influx from Syria, Turkey has also continued to receive an increasing number of asylum seekers and migrants from other countries, particularly from the Middle East and Africa each year. According to the statistics published by Turkish Republic Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), 22.606 displaced people from Afghanistan, 5.875 from Iraq, 1.425 from Iran, and 1.428 from other nationalities applied to international protection status in Turkey (DGMM, n.d.-a). Although Turkey signed both the 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 Additional Protocol for the status of refugees, Turkey maintains a geographical limitation. Only people fleeing from European countries can be recognized with refugee status in Turkey while non-European asylum seekers stay outside the Convention framework (Erdoğan, 2018; İçduygu, 2015). Therefore, Turkey has provided only temporary asylum to all non-European asylum seekers arriving in Turkey. UNCHR had carried out their applications for international protection, determination of their refugee status claims, and assistance for resettlement in a third country until September 2018 (UNHCR, n.d.-b). Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), as the national authority, has become primarily responsible for registering and processing international protection applications and determining refugee status claims since September 2018 (UNHCR, n.d.-b). Non-European asylum seekers apply for the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedure, which includes a process of

collecting and investigating information for refugee status application through individual interviews (UNHCR, n.d.-b).

The most comprehensive legislative regulation regarding refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants has come into force in 2013, under the name of Law 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) (Erdoğan, 2020). Although this law has brought necessary regulations and changes in line with international standards for protection and assistance, the item that limited accepting refugees from non-European countries was maintained.

The LFIP provided four types of international protection status: refugee status, conditional refugee status, subsidiary protection status, and temporary protection status (Erdoğan, 2020). Accordingly, only people fleeing from European countries were granted refugee status in Turkey. Refugee status under the LFIP was defined in accordance with the definition and rights outlined in the 1951 Refugee Convention. To reconcile the situation of people from non-European countries, LFIP included the terms conditional refugee, temporary protection, and subsidiary protection (Erdoğan, 2020). Conditional refugee was a legal term introduced by the LFIP in order to differentiate refugees from non-European countries and those from European countries. A person who needs international protection due to the same reasons as defined under the refugee status but originates from non-European countries was granted conditional refugee status. Conditional refugees were allowed to reside in Turkey temporarily until they were resettled to a third country (Law on Foreigners and International Protection, 2013). On the other hand, subsidiary protection status under LFIP was given to a person who could neither be granted a refugee status nor a conditional refugee status, but who was subjected to the death penalty, torture, or serious threat of indiscriminate violence in the country of origin if she/he returns (Law on Foreigners and International Protection, 2013). Conditional refugees and people under subsidiary protection have fewer rights compared to refugees.

The fourth type of international protection status delineated in LFIP, temporary protection status, provided a legislative basis with respect to the legal status of Syrians in Turkey. Temporary protection was used as an emergency response to a mass

movement of displaced people and provided immediate protection from punishment for illegal entry to the country and refoulement. It aimed to determine the rights and obligations of foreigners who arrived in Turkey in masses including Syrians (Erdoğan, 2020). Temporary protection regulation provided a legal framework to the Turkish government's de facto temporary protection regime for population influx from Syria since 2012 (Erdoğan, 2020).

Turkey is one of the countries hosting the largest population of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. Therefore, the Turkish government revised its own refugee protection regime to respond adequately to massive population movement from Syria and determined the rights of displaced people and obligations of the Turkish government. Since the Syrian population constitutes the largest group of displaced people in Turkey, it is crucial to focus on Syrians' social and legal situation specifically.

1.3.Syria Before the War and Syrians in Turkey

Syria war, which has entered its ninth year, started with pro-democracy uprisings and protests towards Syrian ruling party and presidency. Syrian citizens led the uprisings, inspired by the Arab Spring, and soon turned into a full-scale war including many groups and countries with their own agendas (“Why is there a war in Syria,” 2018). Eventually, the ongoing Syrian war has led to the largest humanitarian catastrophe of our time.

Before the Syrian War in 2011, Syria's population was estimated to be 22.4 million (Erdoğan, 2018). Syria has been home to an ethnically as well as religiously diverse population. The ethnic groups included Sunni Muslim Arabs (62%), Kurds (10%), Assyrians, Armenians, Turkmen, and Circassians. The religious groups included Sunni Muslims, Alawites, Ismailis (%13), Christians (10%), Druze (3%), and small communities of Yazidis and Jews (Hassan et al., 2015; Kahf, 2013). Before the war, Syria was the third largest refugee-hosting country with 750.000 Iraqis, half a million Palestinians dispossessed by Israel, and several thousand from Somalia, Sudan, and Afghanistan (UNCHR, 2010).

Since the start of the war, most of the Syrian population encountered war-related violence and human rights violations. Shelling and bombardments destroyed cities and caused mass civilian deaths and casualties (Hassan et al., 2015). Increased levels of poverty, loss of livelihoods, unemployment, and limited access to basic needs such as food, water, housing, and healthcare all had a destructive impact on civilians (Hassan et al., 2015).

Consequently, millions of Syrians have fled from their homes forcibly. According to UNHCR (2021d), almost 6 million Syrian were forcibly displaced and needed humanitarian aid by September 2021. The most recent statistics provided in September 2021 indicated that almost 6 million Syrian refugees had fled to neighboring countries and are hosted by Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and other African countries, with 65.7% fleeing to Turkey (UNCHR, 2021d).

Following the outburst of political turmoil in Syria in March of 2011, the first group of 252 Syrians arrived in Turkey in April 2011 (Erdoğan, 2018). After this first influx, the population of Syrian refugees in Turkey has increased very rapidly in the following years. Especially since 2014, the Syrian population increased rapidly and reached 3.707.564 in September of 2021. (DGMM, n.d.-b).

Around three and a half million Syrians live outside of camp areas, especially in urban areas, and 53.130 Syrians reside in camps near the Syria-Turkey border (DGMM, n.d.-b). According to the latest statistics of DGMM, all cities in Turkey host Syrian refugees. Istanbul, Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep, and Adana are the top five cities hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees, respectively. 1.994.271 Syrian refugees are male, whereas approximately 1.713.293 Syrian refugees are female (DGMM, n.d.-b) Importantly, the majority of Syrian refugees, approximately 1.7 million, are under the age of 18 and 749.410 Syrian are aged between 15 and 24. The majority of the Syrian population lives in low-SES neighborhoods of various cities (Erdoğan, 2018).

At the beginning of the Syrian conflict, Turkey maintained an open border policy and non-refoulement principle, which provided indefinite residence and protection against return under coercion. The Turkish government also responded to the emergency

needs of Syrians; however, the state suspended an open border policy beginning from 2016 due to security reasons (Erdoğan, 2018). The Turkish government initially adopted a temporary protection regime for Syrians in March 2012 to deal with mass influxes of Syrians, because the existing regulations were not suited to the situation of massive population movement (Erdoğan, 2018; Memişoğlu & Ilgıt, 2017). As mentioned above, to provide a legal framework to existing temporary protection regime, which had been in force since 2012, the Turkish government promulgated temporary protection regulation in October 2014 (Erdoğan, 2018; Memişoğlu & Ilgıt, 2017). Syrians cannot be granted refugee status in Turkey due to regulations, and therefore, uncertainty about the future status of the Syrian population in Turkey still persists (Erdoğan, 2018; Memişoğlu & Ilgıt, 2017).

Temporary protection regulation provides a legal framework for registered Syrians to access social services, including education, health care, employment, interpretation services, and social aid (Memişoğlu & Ilgıt, 2017). Based on this regulation, the Syrian children and youth have free access to schooling and the ratio of children and youth who are enrolled in schools is gradually increasing (UNCHR, 2017). In January of 2016, the Turkish government also issued legislation that gave Syrian people the right to work legally with a work permit (Erdoğan, 2018). However, only a small portion of the Syrian population has a legal work permit and the majority work illegally under poor conditions with low wages (Erdoğan, 2018; İçduygu & Diker, 2017).

As the Syrian population living in Turkey increased, researchers and local and international non-governmental organizations have directed their attention to the Syrian people and their living conditions. Accordingly, several important research reports on various issues about the Syrian population have been published. For instance, reports have been published regarding the socioeconomic impact of refugees on Turkey (Türkiye Ekonomi ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı [TESEV], 2015; Kirişçi, 2014), Syrian refugees living in urban settings (Bakioğlu et al., 2018; Erdoğan, 2017), labor market issues (İçduygu & Diker, 2017), future aspirations of Syrians (SEEFAR, 2018), Syrian children living in camps (Özer et al., 2016), social acceptance and integration of Syrians (Erdoğan, 2014, 2018), and health and mental health conditions (International Medical Corps, 2017). These research reports on Syrian refugees

revealed that although legislations in Turkey provided Syrian refugees with access to health care, education, employment, and other social services, the living conditions of Syrian refugees in urban areas still need considerable improvement. Syrian refugees living in urban areas face difficult living and working conditions, such as high and increasing cost of accommodation and housing facilities, difficulty meeting their basic needs, low wages, and illegal work (Bellamy et al., 2017). On the other hand, refugees living in camps have free access to a range of services and assistance, including food, shelter, education, healthcare, and vocational training provided by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD, 2017). However, the number of Syrians residing in camps constitutes only 2% percent of the Syrian community in Turkey. Therefore, the majority of Syrian refugees support themselves in various challenging urban settings.

Ankara is one of the cities hosting a substantial number of Syrian refugees, accommodating 102.175 registered Syrians (DGMM, n.d.-b). Altındağ, Yenimahalle, and Çankaya districts are known to accommodate more Syrians compared to other districts in Ankara. Squatter settlements in Demetevler neighborhood of Yenimahalle district, which is close to OSTIM industrial zone, host a significant number of Syrian refugees. Also, Altındağ district and its neighborhoods located near the Sitaler Industrial Area, including Önder, Ulubey, and İsmetpaşa neighborhoods, are home to higher numbers of Syrian refugees compared to other districts in Ankara (Bakioğlu et al., 2018; Eraydın 2017). These neighborhoods of Altındağ district are old shanty settlements that have been declared as an urban renewal area. Local people have evacuated most of the buildings, and therefore, Syrian refugees could find cheaper housing in these neighborhoods. In particular, Önder neighborhood is called Little Aleppo due to the increased visibility of Syrian culture and the development of Syrians' economic and social activities (Çoşkunarda, 2017, Kavas & Kadkoy, 2018). According to the results of a study conducted with Syrian refugees living in Ankara, refugees tend to prefer to live in Ankara because it is similar to Aleppo and has cheaper housing and better work opportunities than other metropolitan cities such as İstanbul (Bakioğlu et al., 2018).

Overall, Turkey has been hosting the highest number of Syrian refugee population displaced from the ongoing Syrian war and violence. Both international and local non-governmental organizations, as well as governmental structures and municipalities, have been striving to manage the socioeconomic and psychological needs of Syrian refugees. What is needed now is a national strategy addressing long-term solutions for the long-term or permanent stay of Syrian refugees, including psychological needs and social and economic rights of Syrian refugees.

1.4. Refugee Experience and Mental Health Issues

Forced migration can be defined as migratory movements of people who are compelled or coerced to leave their homelands as a result of persecution, violence, poverty, human trafficking, and environmental catastrophes such as natural disasters and pollution (Castles, 2003). The researchers viewed forced migration as a complex and heterogeneous process that includes a series of stages. That is to say, several factors influence the different stages of migration at individual and sociopolitical levels (Akhtar, 1999; Bhugra, 2004; Bhugra & Gupta, 2011). Not all individuals encounter similar experiences before and after migration. Individual variables such as personality and sociodemographic variables (e.g., gender, age, education level), as well as factors such as premigration experiences and events, how and in what state individuals decide to leave their country (voluntary or forced nature of migration), to what extent the new society welcomes the migrants and refugees, and what kind of support mechanisms are available interact and affect the individuals during the process of migration (Akhtar, 1999; Bhugra 2004; Bhugra & Gupta, 2011).

Since the 1980s, there has been a remarkable interest in research addressing the mental health effects of political violence and forced migration in the field of clinical psychology (e.g., Kinzie et al., 1986). The vast majority of research has mainly focused on traumatic experiences and their psychopathological consequences, prevalence rates of disorders such post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, and factors influencing the mental health outcomes of forced migration (e.g., Ingleby, 2005; Miller et al., 2006). Exposure to war conditions, violence, human rights violations, traumatic experiences, multiple losses, social and economic degradation, displacement,

instability, and deprivations associated with forced migration are expected to cause increased vulnerability to mental health problems for refugee populations.

In accordance with trauma-based approach and delineation of PTSD in DSM-III, early studies in refugee mental health primarily focused on prevalence and determinants of mental health problems, PTSD in particular, among refugee communities. Accordingly, a vast body of epidemiological research has documented increased rates of PTSD, mood disorders, and psychotic illness within the refugee communities from different ethnic and religious backgrounds relative to non-migrant communities (e.g., Fazel et al., 2005; Porter & Haslam, 2005). Researchers have explored the mental health consequences of exposure to war conditions, human right violations, violence, and traumatic events in diverse subgroups of refugee populations: adults (e.g., M'zah et al., 2018), children (e.g., Khamis, 2019), and young refugee populations (e.g., Kim, 2016), unaccompanied minors (e.g., El Baba & Colucci, 2018), torture survivors (e.g., Whitsett & Sherman, 2017), internally displaced people (e.g., Richards et al., 2011), asylum seekers in detention centers (e.g., Coffrey et al., 2010), refugees residing in refugee camps (e.g., Carta et al., 2013). Several systematic reviews and meta-analyses have synthesized the findings of this extensive literature (e.g., Bogic et al., 2015; Fazel et al., 2005; Lustig et al., 2004; Porter & Haslam, 2005; Steel et al., 2009).

The researchers have reported different prevalence rates of PTSD, depression, and other mental health problems across studies (Bogic et al., 2015; Fazel et al., 2005; Porter & Haslam, 2005; Steel et al., 2009). The most extensive review and meta-analysis (Steel et al., 2009) included 181 epidemiological studies conducted with 81,866 refugees and other conflict-affected populations from 40 source countries. Accordingly, prevalence rates ranged between 0 and 99% for PTSD and 3% and 86% for depression. Moreover, exposure to torture and the total number of traumatic events experienced were the major predictors of PTSD and depression, respectively. Bogic, Njoku, and Priebe (2015) also documented the same variability across studies in a review covering studies that focused on long-term mental health consequences of exposure to war conditions with 16,010 war-affected refugees. This review identified 29 studies reporting the prevalence rates of PTSD, depression, and anxiety disorders and pre-migration and post-migration factors associated with these mental health

problems. Consistent with previous reviews and meta-analyses, Bogic and his colleagues (2015) indicated considerable variability in prevalence rates ranging from 4.4 % to 86% for PTSD, from 2.3% to 80% for depression, and from 20.3% to 88% for unspecified anxiety disorder.

The researchers accounted for several factors to explain this variability across studies. There have been wide differences in terms of severity of war exposure and characteristics of displacement setting (e.g., refugee camps near to war zones or resettlement in high-income countries) across studies (Miller & Rasmussen, 2016). Apart from these differences, methodological factors such as the use of self-report instruments versus clinical interviews, community versus clinical samples, and quality of cross-cultural adaptation of tools also contributed to this variation (Miller & Rasmussen, 2017). Importantly, these systematic reviews and meta-analyses suggest that studies with larger samples and better methodology show lower rates of mental disorders among refugee populations compared to studies with smaller samples (Bogic et al., 2015; Fazel et al., 2005). In spite of all shortcomings of epidemiological research, it is imperative to emphasize that exposure to political violence and war conditions significantly elevate the risk of acute or chronic psychological problems (Miller et al., 2006). It seems that PTSD prevalence rates among refugee groups greatly exceed the estimated rates of PTSD among non-refugee populations. PTSD is the most commonly diagnosed mental health problem in forcibly displaced individuals. Further, depression is highly comorbid with PTSD in refugee communities (Silove et al., 2017).

When exploring the refugee mental health, risk factors before, during, and after migration are typically studied separately (Miller & Rasmussen, 2017). The researchers referred to war-related, potentially traumatic events as pre-migration risk factors and there is a well-established link between pre-migration risk factors and mental health consequences across different refugee communities (e.g., Schweitzer et al., 2011). The majority of the refugees encounter a host of stressful and traumatic events in their country of origin before the displacement, such as lack of access to basic resources such as water, food, housing, medical care; exposure to physical or sexual assault, persecution, torture; witnessing the death of loved ones; destruction of

physical environment; and separation from loved ones. Some researchers demonstrated a dose-response relationship between exposure to premigration traumatic events and mental health outcomes such as PTSD and depression. In other words, they found a significant association between cumulative exposure to traumatic events and PTSD and depression (e.g., Finklestein & Solomon, 2009). Early research projects primarily focused on the effects of premigration difficulties and war exposure on refugees' well-being. They paid little attention to the impact of adversities encountered during and after displacement to a new country (Ingleby, 2005).

Alongside the problems caused by pre-migration adversities, refugees may experience different kinds of difficulties that can hinder recovery from previous trauma or perpetuate mental health problems after resettlement (Bhugra, 2004; Hynie, 2018; Miller & Rasmussen, 2017). These types of experiences are referred to as post-migration risk factors. Several researchers emphasized the social ecological framework of refugee mental health (Miller & Rasco, 2004; Miller & Rasmussen, 2017) and focused on adverse and stressful conditions of everyday life after displacement or resettlement. This approach brought a new broader way of comprehension of refugee mental health and diverted the attention of researchers to the influence of post-migration stressors.

Accordingly, researchers have demonstrated the considerable influence of different kinds of post-migration stressors on mental health, for instance, social isolation (e.g., Priebe et al., 2013); unemployment due to the language barrier, lack of work skills, or restrictions on work permit (e.g., Silove, 1999; Momartin et al., 2006); poverty and lack of access to basic needs such as housing (e.g., Rasmussen et al., 2010); perceived discrimination and lack of acceptance by host community (e.g., Bogic et al., 2012; Ellis et al., 2008); increased family violence (e.g., Betancourt et al., 2012); language barriers (e.g., Watkins et al., 2011); uncertainty due to prolonged asylum-seeking process (e.g., Laban et al., 2004); lack of social support (e.g., Hecker et al., 2018) and homesickness and longing to return home (Te Lindert et al., 2008). Researchers also emphasized the importance of the post-migration environment as a major factor mediating the psychosocial recovery of refugee and asylum-seeking populations (Steel & Steel, 2011). In the existing literature on refugee mental health, there is a growing

tendency to explore the cumulative relationship between pre-migration traumatic events and post-migration stressors in refugees' mental health conditions (e.g., Carswell et al., 2011; Ellis et al., 2008; Teodorescu et al., 2012).

Although there has been comprehensive research with different refugee communities from the Middle East, Africa, and Southeastern Asia, there are fewer studies conducted with Syrian refugees regarding the prevalence rates of mental health problems and the relationship between pre-migration factors, post-migration factors, and such prevalence rates. However, due to the increase in the number of Syrian refugees worldwide, the interest in mental health problems of Syrian refugees has been increasing (e.g., Alpak et al., 2015; Cantekin & Gençöz, 2017; Chung et al., 2018; M'zah et al., 2019; Sağaltıcı et al., 2020; Tekeli-Yeşil et al., 2018; Tinghög et al., 2017). In a recent study (Tinghög et al., 2017) undertaken with a population-based sample of 1215 adult Syrian refugees residing in Sweden, the researchers explored the prevalence rates of PTSD, depression, anxiety, and low subjective well-being. Moreover, they investigated the association between pre-migration traumatic events, post-migration stressors, and mental health problems. They found that prevalence rates of depression, PTSD, anxiety, and low subjective well-being ranged between 30% and 40%. Depression was the most common mental health problem, its prevalence rate ranging from 36.9% to 43.3%. PTSD was the least common one, prevalence rate ranging between 27.2% and 32.6%. Mental health problems were more common among women, older and divorced, or widowed refugees. Further, traumatic events before and during migration such as experiencing war with greater proximity, forced separation from family or close friends, experiencing or witnessing violence were significantly related to mental health problems. Parallel with previous research among other refugee or migrant communities, post-migration stress factors such as perceived disrespect from the host community, economic deprivation, separation from family members, and family conflict were also significantly associated with mental health problems. A recent study also compared Syrian refugees in Turkey and internally displaced persons in Syria and found that depression was the most common mental health problem among Syrian refugees in Turkey. In contrast, PTSD was more prevalent among internally displaced persons in Syria (Tekeli-Yeşil et al., 2018). These findings indicated that depression is more prevalent in the context of external

migration where refugees are far from war conditions and struggle with post-migration adversities such as mourning of losses, longing for homeland, and loved ones. On the other hand, PTSD is more frequent in the context of ongoing war conditions (Tekeli-Yeşil et al., 2018).

In another research conducted with Syrian refugees in Turkey, Cantekin (2014) investigated the effect of pre-migration traumatic events and post-migration living adversities on the mental health status of 111 Syrian refugees residing in refugee camps near the Syria-Turkey border. The findings indicated that pre-migration factors such as forced separation and loss of loved ones were significant predictors for PTSD and depression. Post-migration factors such as difficult living conditions, loss of culture, and lack of support had a stronger effect on PTSD and depression. Significantly, young, female, and unmarried Syrian refugees were more at risk for mental health problems (Cantekin, 2014). Participants frequently utilized social support, reliance on religious faith, and commitment to a political cause of war to cope with difficulties (Cantekin, 2014).

According to comprehensive research projects conducted with various refugee groups, including Syrians, refugees are vulnerable to developing mental health problems due to multiple factors in pre-migration and post-migration contexts. As discussed in the next part, however, several researchers also demonstrated the positive aspects of refugee experience besides the psychopathological consequences of traumatic events.

1.4.1. Positive Aspects of Refugee Mental Health

As discussed in the above paragraphs, refugee populations who endured various challenges and adversities in their country of origin and during and after displacement tend to struggle with mental health problems. Yet, they also report a subjective experience of positive adjustment and positive psychological changes (e.g., Chan et al., 2016; Hussain & Bhushan, 2013; Kılıç et al., 2016; Papadopoulos, 2007; Rizkalla & Segal, 2018; Sleijpen et al., 2016). An increasing number of researchers have highlighted that neutral and positive reaction in the aftermath of traumatic experiences are ignored (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Moreover, as it is evident from the refugee

mental health research, most people from war-torn countries do not develop severe mental health problems (Rosner et al., 2003). The longitudinal research findings have pointed out a significant decrease in mental health problems in the long term (Montgomery, 2010). Many researchers highlighted the importance of the strength-based approach to refugee experience rather than psychopathology and deficit-based perspective (Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012; Liu et al., 2020). On the contrary to the deficit-based approach, a strength-based framework mainly focuses on an individual's capacities, skills, and resources rather than his shortcomings and dysfunctions (McCashen, 2005; as cited in Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012). The basic tenet of strength-based perspective is to empower individuals, families, and communities through their capacities in the face of adversities and traumas (McCashen, 2005; as cited in Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012). Therefore, a strength-based approach aimed to reveal resilience factors and strengthen the self-sustaining capacity of refugee groups (Liu et al., 2020).

In line with the approach focusing on positive aspects of the refugee experience, constructs such as coping, resilience, post-traumatic growth, or adversity-activated development have also been investigated. Resilience is a widely used but in fact variously defined concept. In general terms, resilience refers to a person's ability to adapt to and bounce back successfully from acute stress, trauma, or chronic forms of adversity (e.g., Masten, 2014). However, there has been a discrepancy in conceptualizing resilience as a personal trait or a dynamic process. Some researchers (e.g., Connor & Davidson, 2013) view resilience as a personal trait, the absence of which might lead to the development of psychopathology. Other researchers criticize using the term resilience in such a way. Luther, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000; p. 543), for instance, see resilience as "a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity." From an ecological perspective, Masten (2011; p. 494) defined resilience as "the capacity of a dynamic system (individual, family, community, society) to withstand or recover from significant challenges that threaten its stability, viability or development." Some researchers did not conceive resilience as a purely personal attribute, but they viewed a multidimensional and dynamic process including developmental, sociocultural, political, and social contexts of individuals and varying across age and gender (e.g., Pieloch et al., 2016; Tol et al.,

2013). Viewing resilience through a multilevel, dynamic lens is particularly useful because refugees, by definition, tend to live through multiple transitions and contextual shifts during their migration (Pieloch et al., 2016).

The concept of resilience has been widely studied with diverse refugee subgroups, such as refugee children and adolescents (e.g., Mohamed & Thomas, 2017), refugee women (e.g., Abraham et al., 2018), refugee youth (e.g., Montgomery, 2010; Sleijpen et al., 2016), unaccompanied minors (e.g., Carlsson et al., 2012), and adult refugees (e.g., Siriwardhana et al., 2014). The researchers specified a number of factors promoting and impeding resiliency. With regards to factors building resilience, personal characteristics such as optimism, hope for future, belief in inner strength (e.g., Brough et al., 2003; Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham, 2009), social support from family or wider community (e.g., Sleijpen et al., 2017; Schweitzer et al., 2007), language competency (Cinkara, 2017), and religious beliefs (e.g., Abraham et al., 2018; Earnest et al., 2015) were found to be positively related with resilience in refugee communities. On the other hand, language barrier (e.g., Schweitzer et al., 2007, Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham, 2009), ongoing daily stressors such as economic restraints in the post-migration context (e.g., Siriwardhana et al., 2014), and perceived discrimination (e.g., Çelebi et al., 2017) were negatively related with resilience. Existence or lack of social support, particularly family support, was the most prominent factor in building resilience.

As evident from the research discussed thus far, the researchers mostly conceptualized and studied the notion of resilience from an individualized perspective, focusing on individual factors in building resilience. Recently, however, the literature on refugee resilience has shifted to a more communal view that takes cultural and social characteristics and the broader social context of refugee communities into account (Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012). Accordingly, several researchers turned their attention to the notion of community resilience (e.g., Darychuk & Jackson, 2015; Doron, 2005). Community resilience refers to the ability of a community to adapt and bounce back from adversity. It is understood as “the actions taken by the community to absorb the shock of a crisis and the resources available to help a community act as a ‘collective unit’” (Nuwayhid et al., 2011, p. 508). Despite the limited number of studies on the

association between community resilience and refugee mental health, the existing evidence reveals its importance on how displaced communities negotiate traumatic experiences effectively and reduce the risk of mental health problems collectively (Nuwayhid et al., 2011). More research, however, is needed to investigate the influence of community resilience on war-affected and displaced populations.

Posttraumatic growth (PTG) is another concept that emphasizes the positive aspects of the refugee experience. Posttraumatic Growth refers to “the positive psychological changes experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging life circumstances” (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, p.1). Although some researchers criticized Tedeschi and Calhoun’s model for not placing sufficient emphasis on the cultural context of the growth experience, posttraumatic growth has been evident in refugee communities (Chan et al., 2016; Copelj et al., 2017). Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) specified five different domains of posttraumatic growth, namely improved interpersonal relationships, increased appreciation for life, sense of increased personal strength, growth in spirituality, changes in life priorities.

It is important to note that the concepts of resilience and posttraumatic growth are distinct concepts with different posttraumatic pathways. Resilience is the capacity to return to the level of functioning before the trauma and hardship. In posttraumatic growth, however, individuals not only cope but also experience subjective transformations, qualitative change, and additional benefits beyond their previous level of functioning. Therefore, posttraumatic growth is not a return to the baseline but rather an experience of change and improvement (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

Another concept, adversity-activated development (ADD), is also used to emphasize the positive changes after traumatic experiences among refugee populations (Papadopoulos, 2007). Papadopoulos (2007) defined ADD as “the positive developments that are a direct result of being exposed to adversity” (p. 306). He proposed that many refugees can find meaning in the face of adversity and positively transform their negative experiences. The concept of adversity-activated development is considered to be different from post-traumatic growth. Unlike PTG, ADD is not based on the assumption that growth occurs after the trauma but that refugees may

experience positive influences even during the ongoing trauma and adversity. Moreover, the use of the term development instead of growth encompasses a wide range of possible positive experiences that may not be covered otherwise (Papadopoulos, 2007).

As stated, a few studies have been carried out with refugees and immigrants to investigate their PTG (e.g., Hussain & Bhushan, 2013; Kılıç et al., 2016; Kroo & Nagy, 2011; Powell et al., 2003). The existing research has pointed out several factors that facilitate posttraumatic growth among refugee populations, such as dispositional optimism (e.g., Sleijpen et al., 2016), hope (Ai et al., 2007), social support (e.g., Sleijpen et al., 2016; Sutton, Robins, Senior, & Gordon, 2006), religious beliefs (Kroo & Nagy, 2011; Sutton et al., 2006), the type and severity of trauma (personal traumas vs. shared traumas) (Kılıç et al., 2016; Kroo & Nagy, 2011), and coping style (Rosner & Powell, 2006). Furthermore, with respect to demographic variables, in particular age and gender, there have been inconsistent findings in the literature. Hussain and Bhushan (2011) found that women refugees experienced a higher level of growth than males. However, in a study conducted with a mixed sample of refugees in Norway, Teodorescu and colleagues (2012) did not find the same gender difference. The findings were also inconsistent in terms of the age of the refugees. Some researchers have indicated that younger refugees experience more growth compared to older ones (Powell et al., 2003). However, other studies did not find evidence supporting this finding (Ssenyonga et al., 2013). The relationship between the level of trauma experienced and posttraumatic growth is also unclear. Several researchers (Hussain & Bhushan, 2011) emphasized the positive correlation between the number of traumatic events and posttraumatic growth, whereas other researchers (e.g., Kroo & Nagy, 2011) indicated a negative or no correlation between exposure to trauma and posttraumatic growth. For instance, Jordan, Rizkalla and Segal (2018) explored the relationship between demographic variables, well-being, and posttraumatic growth with 250 Syrian refugees. Their findings illuminated the importance of sufficiency of income, economic resources, and humanitarian assistance provided by NGOs in enhancing posttraumatic growth experiences for the Syrian refugee community. Yet, no association was found between PTSD and posttraumatic growth experiences. Also, a number of qualitative studies carried out with refugees further illuminated the co-

occurrence of growth and distress. Individuals reported subjective growth experiences while experiencing diverse challenges and distress (e.g., Hussain & Bhushan, 2013; Sutton et al., 2006).

In summary, the refugee experience involves multiple losses including the loss of the country of origin, family, sense of identity, social status, culture, support systems, and language. Refugees who flee from their homes due to war, violence, and persecution and migrate to a new environment need to endure numerous traumatic experiences and adjust to changing societal conditions. As discussed previously, these conditions put refugee communities at serious risk of developing mental health problems. However, as it is evident in the existing literature, most of these people display resilience and positive transformations in the face of extreme adversity. Thus, to fully comprehend refugee mental health, the researchers should consider premigration traumatic stressors and postmigration socio-cultural and political contexts together. In line with such emphasis, a different theoretical framework moved beyond a trauma-focused approach to refugee mental health and conceptualized refugee experience in relation to social ecology.

1.5.Different Conceptual Frameworks for Understanding Refugee Experience

Since the 1980s, the trauma-focused approach has been dominant in the field of refugee mental health. This approach documented the prevalence of psychiatric disorders and associated risk factors (Miller et al., 2006). The trauma approach with its focus on PTSD and other mental health problems have fulfilled a critical role in documenting the nature, extent, and impact of war, armed conflicts, and human rights violations (Steel, Mares, Newman, Blick, & Dudley, 2004; as cited in Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Identification of associated risk and protective factors influencing the mental health consequences of forced migration certainly had an important role in the development of effective interventions and treatments for refugee communities. However, some researchers adopting a critical, transcultural perspective emphasized the limitations inherent in the trauma approach. They questioned the validity of this framework in studying experiences of non-Western refugees (e.g., Bracken et al.,

1995; Miller et al., 2002; Miller & Rasco, 2004; Miller, Kulkarni & Kushner, 2006; Schweitzer & Steel, 2008; Summerfield, 1999).

Critics of the trauma-based approach stated that it is consistent with the biomedical approach and prioritizes examining the impact of forced displacement on the individuals rather than social systems such as families, communities, institutions (Miller et al., 2006). Thereby, researchers criticizing the trauma approach have argued that relying on psychiatric constructs, especially post-traumatic stress disorder, is limited in scope and the broader psychosocial and sociocultural context of refugee experience is being overlooked (Miller et al., 2002; Miller, Kulkarni & Kushner, 2006; Silove et al., 2017). Also, understanding the refugee experience in terms of psychopathology is criticized as being over-medicalizing (Papadopolous, 1999). Papadopoulos (2002, 2007) objected to the psychopathological approach and argued: “PTSD neglects the collective parameters of experience, as well as the wider socio-political context within which the stressor factors have been produced” (Papadopoulos, 2002; p. 30). Further, he pointed out that the process of becoming a refugee is not a pathological condition but a socio-political and legal phenomenon with its psychological implications (Papadopoulos, 2002). In other words, ordinary people become refugees due to a set of socio-political circumstances such as war and then seek refuge in another geographical region or country. Therefore, the individual-based perspective ignores the complexity and the multidimensional nature of the refugee experience. Individual, family, community, social and cultural implications of refugee experience get lost in the individual perspective (Papadopoulos, 2007).

Apart from those criticisms, some researchers have argued that there has been a gap between research and practice while working with survivors of war and refugee communities. That is to say; psychiatric epidemiological research is criticized for not providing adequate and helpful information for practitioners working in community mental health organizations with refugees who are concerned with multifaceted problems and adversities that go beyond the prevalence of psychiatric disorders (Miller & Rasco, 2004; Miller et al., 2006). Accordingly, these critical scholars suggested that too much emphasis on the assessment of PTSD directs research interest to the effect of traumatic events before displacement. However, studies conducted in refugee

camp or resettlement countries revealed that ongoing stressors in the day-to-day lives of refugees, such as social isolation, unemployment, and adjusting to a new environment, are more salient for individuals who have uprooted their homes. Such concerns have facilitated more holistic mental health interventions and broadening services, including empowering the community and local resources and enhancing social and community networks (e.g., Hubbard & Pearson, 2004).

Another criticism about the trauma-based approach entailed the cultural validity of psychiatric concepts such as PTSD and depression in societies outside the Western world (Bracken et al., 1995; Kagee & Naidoo, 2004; Miller et al., 2006; Summerfield, 1999). These scholars have questioned the supposed universality and cultural relevance of the notion of PTSD. They claimed that disorders such as PTSD might not capture indigenous conceptions and cultural variations in the expression of psychological and community distress. Critical researchers and clinicians emphasized the importance of addressing local idioms of mental health problems (Bracken et al., 1995; Miller et al., 2006). Additionally, they criticized the methodology of various research projects adopting the trauma-based approach. They argued that researchers adopting the trauma approach generally rely on quantitative methods and standardized instruments. Such questionnaires are based on a priori assumptions regarding the constructs that they measure, which may be problematic in capturing the complete picture of individuals' subjective experiences (Miller et al., 2002; Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Also, quantitative measures such as standardized questionnaires may not capture local expressions of psychological distress among refugee communities (Miller et al., 2002).

As discussed, several researchers have emphasized the limitations of the trauma model and started to use alternative perspectives to exploring the experiences of refugee populations (e.g., Miller & Rasco, 2004; Miller et al., 2006; Papadopoulos, 2002, 2007; Ryan et al., 2008). Parallel with these critiques, a growing number of scholars have broadened their theoretical and empirical focus and made use of a diverse range of research methods. They also attempted to cover different levels and multiple challenges of the refugee experience: the individual, the family, the community, and cultural and socio-political contexts (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Therefore, as an

alternative to the Western-based, individually oriented approach, some researchers have pointed out a new theoretical approach, namely ecological framework. The ecological framework is based on the idea that individual mental health is intimately related to the larger social ecology in which it is embedded (Betancourt & Khan, 2008; Miller & Rasmussen, 2010). Therefore, an ecological framework mainly attends to the multiple levels of context an individual is surrounded with that interact with the individual's well-being and development. It views the human experience as a developmental and multidirectional exchange process between the individual and the different levels of the ecologic system (Serdarevic & Chronister, 2006). An ecological perspective takes individual perspectives of refugees into account and highlights the importance of environmental context and its interaction with refugees' personal experiences (Haase et al., 2019).

The ecological framework draws on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which is essentially a theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; as cited in Thommessen & Todd, 2018). Bronfenbrenner provided a comprehensive and useful framework to identify and understand different social networks a refugee is surrounded with and how these social networks affect refugees' experiences and well-being (Silove et al., 2017). According to Bronfenbrenner, the ecological environment is an arrangement of different layers and structures wherein an individual is nested. These layers are viewed as concentric structures, each contained within the next. Also, each layer of social context both directly and indirectly influences the individual (Drozdek, 2015). The individual is positioned at the center, with his or her genetic, biological, and personal characteristics. There are five systems surrounding the individual, namely, Microsystem (e.g., home, family, school, peers, work setting), Mesosystem (relationships and connections between two or more of individual's microsystems (e.g., roles and responsibilities connecting the home and school), Exosystem (e.g., parental employment or unemployment, neighborhood), Macrosystem (e.g., organization and structure of society, culture, policies, religion), and finally Chronosystems (e.g., life transitions such as having to flee from the country of origin). Some researchers applied Bronfenbrenner's conceptualization to refugee mental health and named the nested layers as intra-individual, family/peers, society, and culture (Drozdek, 2015).

In this theory, an important concept is reciprocity. It refers to the mutual interaction between the individual and his or her environment. Accordingly, individuals can influence the nature of their social context while also being subject to the effects of the social environment. The concept of reciprocity highlights the complexity of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977 as cited in Thommessen & Todd, 2018). This perspective helps to explore how refugees use available resources to respond to traumatic events and adversity. Another ecological concept was the resource. Ecological perspective highlighted the importance of assessing personal as well as community resources. The extent to which individuals have access to resources was a key component of adjustment and resilience (Wells et al., 2018). From an ecological perspective, mental health problems, such as PTSD, are viewed as an outcome of multiple ongoing challenges in the environment that act together, rather than an expression of innate or intrapsychic problems at the individual level (Miller & Rasmussen, 2016). When considering refugees' well-being and experiences, the ecological theory postulates that it is essential to focus on refugees' relationship with their communities and the social support they receive from multiple contexts in which they are embedded (Soller et al., 2018).

Miller and colleagues proposed an example of an ecological model in refugee mental health (Miller & Rasco, 2004; Miller & Rasmussen, 2010; 2016). Their ecological model illustrated the effect of ongoing daily stressful conditions in refugees' social ecology at multiple levels (individual, family, community, and society) on their mental health problems and well-being (Miller & Rasco, 2004; Miller & Rasmussen, 2016). Moving from the individual level to the society level, they provided data indicating that daily stressors such as difficulty to meet basic needs, unemployment, and lack of family or social support in the post-migration context, partly or wholly mediate the effects of war-related trauma on mental health outcomes such as PTSD. In other words, ongoing daily life stressors are found to strengthen or weaken the impact of war-related traumatic events on mental health problems (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010). From their perspective, it is important to evaluate risk factors at different points of the displacement process (pre-migration, flight, post-migration) and different levels of social ecology (Miller & Rasmussen, 2016). Further, based on this conceptualization, Miller and colleagues (2004, 2016) have suggested a more holistic understanding of

mental health interventions providing psychotherapies and medical treatment and interventions fostering the social ecology of the refugees.

Another social ecological model cited in the refugee mental health literature is Silove and colleagues' model of Adaption and Development after Persecution and Trauma model (ADAPT; Silove, 2014; Silove et al., 2017). According to this model, war and forced displacement disrupted five core psychosocial domains. These five domains are: security and safety, interpersonal bonds and networks (family, community, society), roles and identities, justice, and existential meaning and coherence (Silove, 2014; Silove et al., 2017). Silove and colleagues (2017) argued that restoring these disrupted ecological systems is critical for recovery from mental health problems. The researchers have utilized The ADAPT model in establishing and implementing comprehensive mental health programs for refugee populations (e.g., Quosh, 2013). In brief, ecological frameworks have asserted the limitations of individualized trauma-focused medical approaches and suggested a more comprehensive and multisystem conceptualization of refugee experience. The ecological framework was complementary rather than being an alternative to the trauma approach. These frameworks directed the attention of researchers and practitioners to the overall social ecology of refugee experience to understand the implications and complexity of forced migration from a holistic perspective and broaden the scope of mental health interventions. Changes in theoretical perspective to refugee mental health also brought up questions regarding quantitative research methodologies and their limitations. Consequently, the importance of qualitative research methodologies was underlined in the refugee mental health field.

1.6. Qualitative Research in Refugee Studies

Different researchers (e.g., Miller et al., 2002; Miller & Rasco, 2004; Schweitzer & Steel, 2008) have noted that quantitative methodologies have certain limitations in understanding the cultural and political context associated with the refugee experience. Alternatively, they have suggested using qualitative and ethnographic methods to adequately understand the richness and complexity of the refugee experience

(Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Therefore, using qualitative methodology can make important contributions to the field of refugee mental health.

A number of researchers have underscored the advantages of using qualitative methodologies compared to quantitative ones (e.g., Miller et al., 2002; Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). The use of qualitative methods can provide a better understanding of the multidimensionality of the refugee experience. They also offer rich and detailed theoretical knowledge (Ahearn, 2000). Qualitative methods enable researchers to explore the phenomenon in a broader sociopolitical and cultural context (Ahearn, 2000). Moreover, qualitative methods provide us the opportunity to hear the refugees' experiences from their own voices. By using qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews, it is more likely that researchers understand how refugee communities perceive, experience, and make meaning regarding their forced displacement experience (Miller et al., 2002).

Despite the richness of the qualitative methodology's data, fewer qualitative research projects have been published compared to quantitative studies with refugee populations. The researchers used different kinds of qualitative methods in the field of refugee mental health; narrative methods (e.g., Goodman, 2004; Miller et al., 2002), grounded theory (e.g., Paat & Green, 2017; Sleijpen et al., 2017), thematic analysis (e.g., Muir & Gannon, 2016; Savic et al., 2013), hermeneutic phenomenological analysis (e.g., Svenberg et al., 2009) and interpretative phenomenological analysis (e.g., Thommessen et al., 2015). All these qualitative methodologies can be classified and differentiated from each other based on their epistemological stance, the extent to which they emphasize reflexivity, and the importance they give to the role of language (Willig, 2013). Phenomenological methods are concerned with how people make sense of their lived experiences, whereas discursive methods tend to focus on the way people use language to construct and negotiate knowledge, meaning, and identities (Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007; Willig, 2013). Further, grounded theory is preferred when researchers aim to build a theory or explanatory framework of a particular phenomenon (Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007; Willig, 2013). Finally, narrative analysis deals with the way people organize and bring order to the flow of their self-accounts to make sense of the world (Willig, 2013).

Many researchers highly emphasized especially the importance of the narrative approach in refugee studies and mental health (e.g., Eastmond, 2007; Puvimanasinghe et al., 2014). These researchers argue that it is possible to explore the diversity behind the over-generalized aspects of refugee experience with personal narratives (Eastmond, 2007). The narratives of refugees may also reveal the commonalities in the experiences of a particular group of refugees (e.g., Puvimanasinghe et al., 2014). Individuals organize, construct, and interpret a multitude of life events, both personally and socially, by expressing narratives (Clandinin, 2006). It was also suggested that forming narratives may repair the ruptures in refugees' identities by enabling them to restore order in the aftermath of disruption, gain control of their present life, and importantly, make meaning out of their disruptive experiences (Lieblich, Mcadams, & Josselson, 2004). Judith Herman (2015) proposed that creating, retelling, and revising narratives help people integrate their fragmented memories, develop coherent narratives, and contribute to the healing process.

In a highly cited, pioneering study using narrative analysis, Miller and colleagues (2002) explored exile-related stressors with 28 adult Bosnian refugees living in Chicago. Semi-structured interviews covered three areas: life in prewar Bosnia, the journey to host-country, and most centrally life in Chicago. The analysis revealed six main themes: *Social isolation and loss of community, loss of life projects, lack of environmental mastery, loss of social roles and the corresponding loss of meaningful activity, lack of sufficient funds for adequate housing and other basic necessities, and health problems not previously experienced in Bosnia*. For most participants, the loss of a rich network of social relations after migrating to Chicago seemed to be the most salient stressor. Losing their life projects, personal dreams, and goals and valued social roles were very stressful, especially for older participants. Also, there was a sense of optimism and hope for establishing a new life in Chicago among younger participants. Additionally, the participants reported language barrier and lack of adequate income for basic needs as sources of daily life stressors. Miller and colleagues (2002) indicated that several exile-related stressors, such as loss of valued social roles and the loss of life projects, were overlooked in the existing literature based on quantitative methodologies. However, many of their participants viewed these stressors as a significant source of distress. The researchers underlined the importance of qualitative

methods that allowed refugees to describe critical variables that affect their psychological well-being from their perspectives.

Another qualitative approach used in refugee studies is interpretative phenomenological analysis. There has been a growing interest in the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis in researching different refugee communities (e.g., Borwick et al., 2013; Hussain & Bhusban, 2013; Kelly et al., 2016; Rosbrook & Schweitzer, 2010; Thommessen et al., 2015). Various researchers have used this approach in studies of refugee mental health issues, such as pre-migration stressors (Groark et al., 2010), post-migration stressors (e.g., Al-Roubaiy et al., 2013; Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham, 2009; Thommessen et al., 2015; Thommessen & Todd, 2017), coping and resilience (Borwick et al., 2013; Schweitzer et al., 2007), and posttraumatic growth (e.g., Hussain & Bhusban, 2013; Sutton et al., 2006).

Thommessen and her colleagues (2015), for example, studied post-migration stressors and sources of strength with six 18-19-year-old Afghani unaccompanied refugees residing in Sweden. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis, four main themes were obtained: *From danger to safety, living in limbo, guidance and social support, and striving to fit in and move forward*. The participants expressed feelings of anxiety and uncertainty regarding their asylum process, which increased their post-migration distress. Further, a lack of contact with their family members and knowledge about their well-being created an additional burden. Education was regarded as important, because they viewed it as an opportunity to adapt to Sweden and move forward to a better life. Participating youth in this study spoke about the importance of taking full responsibility for their own life, rather than waiting for opportunities to be handed to them. Having left or lost their family members and friends behind, five of six participants also mentioned a need for adult mentoring, guidance, and advice during their adjustment to the new country. The participants viewed social support and guidance from mentors provided by the Swedish state as having a protective function in the face of challenges experienced in Sweden (Thommessen et al., 2015). The researchers underlined that using IPA enabled them to explore a previously overlooked factor, the effect of individual differences in arriving in a new country. They also indicated that their findings, in particular the need for adult mentorship and guidance,

revealed the importance of several factors that received less attention in the quantitative research literature (Thommessen et al., 2015).

Shakespeare-Finch and Wickman (2009) also conducted a qualitative study using interpretative phenomenological analysis. They explored how 12 Sudanese refugees dealt with experiences in Sudan, their journey to Australia, and after arrival. They interviewed the participants on the topics of life in Sudan, life during the journey, and life in Australia. The participants described a number of traumatic experiences while talking about their life in Sudan. Life-threatening events such as bombing, shelling, separation from loved ones, and death of loved ones were identified as major challenges. Almost all participants arrived in Australia after a long and dangerous journey. Most of them spoke of their experiences in refugee camps (Shakespeare-Finch & Wickman, 2009). Recurrent themes regarding life in Australia were longing for their homeland, separation from family members, language barriers, difficulties in making social connections, employment difficulties, and perceived discrimination from host community members (Shakespeare-Finch & Wickman, 2009). Importantly, the researchers pointed out the support mechanisms in the face of adversity before, during, and after migration. The sense of support from family and friends seemed to be the most critical source of help during difficult times. The participants also described a sense of hope, religion, and personal strength and growth as other resources.

Similar themes were reported in a recent qualitative study conducted with Syrian refugees in Germany. Robinson (2017) investigated the forced migration experiences of Syrian refugees in Germany. Ten men and four women between the ages of 20 and 56 were interviewed about their before, during, and after displacement experiences. Concerning the pre-migration period, most participants spoke of a lack of resources to meet basic needs, living in fear, and witnessing violence and death. The effect of war on the participants' lives was clearly described in the words of a participant: "Everything is destroyed. Everything is collapsed. It's a total chaos" (Robinson, 2017, p.66). The author pointed out that most of the participants arrived in Germany after a dangerous and challenging journey. The reasons for displacement were fleeing from a war situation, finding work, and continuing education (Robinson, 2017). Participants

also described a number of stressors regarding life in Germany: Uncertainty about the asylum process, longing for the homeland, separation from their family, and language barriers. Moreover, most of the participants frequently thought about the civil war in Syria and spoke of their frustration associated with the ongoing war (Robinson, 2017). In brief, the findings of this study on Syrian refugees' experiences in Germany shed light on the commonalities across different refugee populations (e.g., Al-Roubaiy et al., 2013).

In summary, using various qualitative methodologies, the researchers were able to explore the refugee experience in different socio-cultural and political contexts. The qualitative researchers emphasized a common point. In other words, the qualitative research enabled them to provide findings that could not be accessed through quantitative measures. Qualitative researchers also highlighted factors that contribute to the well-being of refugee communities, the sources that are available for refugees, and the differences and commonalities across different refugee communities. Moreover, the subjective aspects of becoming a refugee were emphasized. Especially factors such as age seem to influence the refugee experiences and the way the refugees negotiate their experiences in different contexts.

1.7.Experiences of Refugee Youth

As discussed, becoming a refugee is not a homogeneous experience. That is, refugees' experiences and their mental health consequences vary according to several factors, including the nature of the trauma, the number of traumatic events, objective or perceived severity of traumatic events, the post-migration environment, gender, and age (Porter & Haslam, 2005; Roberts & Browne, 2011). A growing number of researchers showed that age-specific factors influence the way refugees negotiate their challenging experiences throughout the displacement process. Unaccompanied children and adolescents (e.g., Bean et al., 2007; Eide & Hjern, 2013), children and adolescents accompanied by their family (e.g., Lakhwani, 2017; Ndengeyingoma, de Montigny, & Miron, 2014), young adults (e.g., Copelj, Gill, Love, & Crebbin, 2017; McMichael, Nunn, Correa-Velez, & Gifford, 2017), and older adults (e.g., Loi & Sundram, 2014; Virgincar, Doherty, & Siriwardhana, 2016) may experience the

process of becoming a refugee differently. Research has demonstrated that young refugees face unique challenges and hardships that impact on their transition to adult life and achieve future goals (e.g., Allsopp et al., 2015). Understanding how young refugees respond to forced migration experience is important to gain insight with respect to forced migration and its consequences. Accordingly, this study aimed to explore lived experiences of young adult Syrians. Therefore, this section focused on the existing literature on refugee youth.

Most researchers and humanitarian agencies (e.g., United Nations) describe youth as a transitional phase of life, and identify young people as those whose ages range between 15 and 24. Also, the concept of youth embodies different cultural and local understandings (Evans, Lo Forte, & McAslan, 2013; Sirriyeh, 2016). Various conceptualizations and different terms are utilized to understanding late teens and early twenties (the years 18-25), namely, emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000), late adolescence, post-adolescence, young adulthood, and transition to adulthood (Tanner & Arnett, 2009). Young individuals have particular characteristics, tasks, and needs distinct from younger children, adults, and the elderly (Evans, Lo Forte, & McAslan, 2013; Marshal et al., 2016). Refugee youth constitutes the majority of the worldwide refugee population. Young people between the ages of 10 and 24 constitute one-third of the global population for forcibly displaced people, with almost half being under 18 (Evans, Lo Forte, & McAslan, 2013). This situation is also observable in Turkey. Similarly, about 62% of the Syrian population in Turkey is under 25 years old, with 23% being between the ages of 15-24 (Directorate General of Migration Management, n.d.).

A growing number of researchers focused on the consequences of forced migration for young people. The literature on young refugees addressed several distinct issues, including mental health consequences of forced migration for young refugees (e.g., Brough et al., 2003; Wallin & Ahlström, 2005). Like other refugee groups, it is essential to address traumatic experiences and adverse situations before, during, and after displacement to understand mental health issues that refugee youth may encounter. Adding to various pre-migration hardships, refugee youth experience many post-migration stresses such as institutional barriers, economic difficulties,

intergenerational conflicts, language barriers, and perceived discrimination. Especially for unaccompanied refugee youth, being displaced and relocated to a new country without their family and friends was considered an important stressor (Marshall et al., 2016; Thommessen et al., 2015).

Post-traumatic stress disorder is the most common mental health problem among refugee youth (e.g., Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011; Fazel et al., 2012; Halcon et al., 2004). Other mental health problems like depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, stress and, conduct disorder are also prevalent (Guruge & Butt, 2015; Halcon et al., 2004). Importantly, unaccompanied refugees who are under 18 and who migrate to a new country without their parents and other family members are considered to be more at risk in terms of mental health challenges (e.g., Fazel et al., 2012; von Werthen et al., 2019). For instance, Hodes and colleagues (2008) noted that refugee adolescents separated from both parents and other family members are more prone to develop mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress. The prevalence rates of posttraumatic stress disorder among male unaccompanied minors and female ones were 61.5% and 73.1%, respectively, whereas the rates were 14.3% for male accompanied minors and 35.3% for female ones.

Several systematic reviews have provided valuable information regarding mental health outcomes of forced migration and war for young refugees (e.g., Fazel et al., 2012; Montgomery, 2011; Reed et al., 2012). Researchers who conducted systematic reviews of existing studies demonstrated that the effect of age and gender vary across samples and the findings regarding these variables are not conclusive due to potential confounding variables (Fazel et al., 2012).

There have been commonalities among young refugees and other refugee groups in terms of facing traumatic experiences and hardships in both the premigration and postmigration periods. In addition to traumatic events in their home country, young refugees encounter multiple stressors in the postmigration context, namely difficulty to access education, intergenerational conflict within family, parental expectations, increased economic and family responsibilities, and lack of social and family support (Fazel et al., 2012; Hyman et al., 2000; Wallin & Ahlström, 2005). For instance, in

their longitudinal study with unaccompanied young adults between the ages of 16-26 residing in Sweden, Wallin and Ahlström (2005) revealed that different socio-economic factors, namely being married, having friends, and being employed, determined both physical and mental sense of well-being. Additionally, participants who had difficulty finding a job, had poor social support, and unprocessed experiences of trauma had a lower sense of well-being.

Although multiple pre-migration and post-migration factors contribute to the psychosocial well-being of young refugees, some factors may be more influential in unique ways. In particular, family factors like the disruption of family bonds, separation from family members, changing roles and responsibilities within the family, lack of family cohesion and support, parental mental health problems, and family financial problems constitute significant stressors for refugee youth. These factors have a considerable impact on young people's well-being and resilience and how they cope with the stressors of forced displacement (Marshall et al., 2016). Similarly, being part of a supportive and cohesive family was associated with better coping, better adjustment to a new country, and increased well-being for young refugees (e.g., Carlson et al., 2012; Weine et al., 2014).

Another family factor, namely the intergenerational conflict between refugee youth and their parents was an important stressor for refugee youth, especially in the post-migration context (e.g., Hynie et al., 2012; Koh et al., 2017; McMichael et al., 2010). In their longitudinal study, McMichael and colleagues (2010) revealed that intergenerational conflict on a range of concerns including discipline, alcohol use, household responsibilities, freedom, and autonomy had a detrimental effect on young refugees' well-being and adaptation to a new country. Consequences of the intergenerational conflict included communication problems and loss of sense of safety at home (McMichael et al., 2010). The same findings were evident for 18 to 25-year-old Burmese women in Australia (Koh et al., 2017). The intergenerational conflict increased after resettlement to Australia due to their changing roles within the family, continued parental expectations to fulfill traditional gender roles, and parental restrictions regarding social roles (Koh et al., 2017).

In addition to mental health problems and changing social and familial roles, the resilience of refugee youth has also been evident in the existing studies. Despite all adverse experiences, young refugees display perseverance, adaptability, and strength (Boyle, 2009). Young refugees are more flexible, ready to learn new skills and a new language, and have an easier time adapting to new social and cultural order than older refugees (Boyle, 2009). Although refugee youth's experiences are filled with different types of adversities and risk factors leading to mental health issues (Fazel et al., 2012), adopting a strength-based, resilience perspective is critical to understand the complete picture of refugee youth's lives (e.g., Pieloch et al., 2016). Research findings underscored young refugees' resilience as they continue to hold onto their aspirations and plans in spite of prolonged adversity in their lives (Hopkins & Hill, 2010).

A number of factors promote resilience for young refugees. According to a recent meta-ethnography about resilience in young refugees, there are six resilience sources: social support, acculturation strategies, education, religion, avoidance, and hope (Sleijpen et al., 2016). Facilitating agency and autonomy (Edge et al., 2014), maintaining a positive outlook, and hope (Carlson et al., 2012; Earnest et al., 2015) were related to resilience. In their qualitative study with young refugees between the ages of 18 and 25, Edge and colleagues (2014) found that community programs, including sports programs, cooking classes, and educational and employment support services, facilitated resilience and empowerment.

Family level factors such as a supportive family environment, healthy family communication, and family unity were also essential in promoting psychological resilience among refugee youth. For example, healthy communication between parents and youth and preserved family unity facilitated resilience among 15-to-25-year-old Somali refugees and their parents living in the U.S. (Betancourt et al., 2015). The same factors also facilitated resiliency for a group of 11-to-23-year-old Middle Eastern refugee youth in Denmark (Montgomery, 2010).

Other resilience promoting factors for refugee youth were related to educational opportunities. In a longitudinal study in Denmark, 11-to-23-year-old young refugees from Middle Eastern countries who attended school displayed better adaptation over

time than those who did not (Montgomery, 2010). Similar findings were obtained in studies with Sudanese unaccompanied refugee youth (Carlson et al., 2012) and adolescents from Burundi and Liberia who resettled in the U.S. (Weine et al., 2014). Additionally, perceived support from community members and a sense of belonging to the community were helpful in the face of challenges during adaptation to a new country (Edge et al., 2014). A sense of connection with the home culture and religion was also resilience promoting refugee youth from diverse backgrounds (Betancourt et al., 2015; Earnest et al., 2015; Hopkins & Hill, 2010).

Another area of research involves changes and transitions that young refugees go through at different stages of forced migration. Refugee youth experience a dual transition, that is, they undergo a forced migration process, while simultaneously they make a transition from childhood to adulthood. Accordingly, scholars have recently brought attention to “young adulthood,” which is considered as a critical stage making transition from childhood to adulthood. It is important to underline that making the transition from childhood to adulthood is determined by age chronology and shaped and diversified by cultural and socio-political context, economic factors, race, class, migration, etc. (Konstam, 2015). Researchers highlighted key markers of the transition between childhood and adulthood, such as becoming financially independent, entering the labor market, starting independent living, getting married, forming a family, and completing higher education (Arnett, 2013; Valentine, 2003).

Although it has been a relatively understudied area, researchers have explored how forced migration influences young people during their transition into adulthood (e.g., Koh et al., 2017; Kohli & Connolly, 2009; Sirriyeh, 2016). Importantly, much of the research has been conducted in resettlement countries. Researchers found that adverse situations and challenging experiences due to forced displacement may accelerate or delay transition into adulthood and cause shifts in roles and responsibilities of young refugees (Evans et al., 2013; The Children’s Society, 2012). For instance, a report published by The Children’s Society (2012) revealed that young adult refugees living in the UK frequently struggle with limited opportunities in education and employment and lack of social support, which may delay their transition into adulthood. The sociopolitical context, legal restrictions, and refugee policies in resettlement countries

in delaying or supporting the transition to adulthood for young people are highlighted in the literature. Prolonged asylum procedures, the uncertainty of the legal status of refugees, legal barriers obstructing access to employment and education, and living in refugee camps make it more difficult for refugee youth in their transition into adulthood (Evans et al., 2013; Healy, 2012). On the other hand, in their comprehensive study conducted with 471 young refugees aged between 16 and 24, Evans and colleagues (2013) found that a young refugee may be required to take responsibilities at an earlier age or level of maturity, which might accelerate the transition into adulthood.

Another illustrative qualitative study on the transition of refugee youth into adulthood was conducted with six young adults aged between 16 and 26 in Iceland (Ottosdottir & Loncar, 2018). The narratives of young refugees indicated that they strive to continue their education and get a high-salary job as an expectation of adulthood and ensure a better life for themselves and their families. The participants also talked about their financial, emotional, and daily life responsibilities towards their family. They reported that they need to balance their responsibilities towards their family with their own needs, aspirations, and expectations (Ottosdottir & Loncar, 2018).

A common consequence of forced displacement is that young refugees are compelled to take additional family, social, and economic responsibilities in order to overcome post-migration ordeals. Their roles and responsibilities are reshaped and generally intensified after migration to a new country (Boyle, 2009; Evans et al., 2013; Hynie et al., 2012; Shakya et al., 2014). Accordingly, Shakya and her colleagues (2014) explored young refugees' family roles and responsibilities in Canada and how they influence their psychological well-being. The authors indicated that young refugees take on multiple roles and responsibilities, including translation, earning money, mentoring, taking care of younger siblings and parents, and doing daily life activities such as shopping and finding a house (Shakya et al., 2014). Hence, the authors argued that young refugees are resettlement champions and serve a vital role for their families during the adaptation process. The findings of this study also revealed how young people experience subjectively these shifts in their roles and responsibilities. Most of the participants expressed ambivalent feelings about these role changes. They shared

that there is a fine line between empowerment and vulnerability in regards to their responsibilities. On the one hand, most participants felt empowered and resilient, yet on the other hand, felt burdened and overwhelmed by these shifts (Shakya et al., 2014). Although there has been a growing number of studies with refugee youth coming from diverse countries of origin, studies on young Syrian refugees' experiences are very limited. Gökçearslan-Çiftçi and colleagues recently conducted a study with ten Syrian young adults living in Ankara, examining their challenges before, during, and after displacement to Turkey. Additionally, how perceptions of social support and future expectations are shaped in the context of forced migration was another focus of research (Gökçearslan-Çiftçi et al., 2016). They found that young refugees face various challenges, such as economic hardships and low wages, perceived negative attitudes of Turkish people, language barriers, and lack of governmental support (Gökçearslan-Çiftçi et al., 2016). Further, Syrian youth emphasized the importance of social support systems during the adaptation process to a new society and culture. Other Syrian refugees and their relatives, rather than Turkish people, were their main support for these young people. With regards to future expectations, a sense of despair and uncertainty about returning to Syria were reported (Gökçearslan-Çiftçi et al., 2016). Although this study on Syrian refugees in Turkey provided some information about young refugees' experiences, additional studies in this area seem to be a need. In summary, researchers highlighted that displacement to a new country brought substantial changes to family life, in particular roles and responsibilities within the family. Young refugees played a major role within the family in terms of handling the challenges of migration. They shouldered multiple roles and responsibilities that were totally different from their premigration life. They experienced a dual transition, that is, they underwent an acculturative process due to migration while simultaneously making a transition from childhood to early adulthood. Although there has been a limited number of studies, existing research has shed light on the consequences of this dual transition for young refugees. Therefore, it is crucial to hear more from young Syrian refugees about their perspectives to deeply understand how forced migration influenced them during the process of becoming an adult.

1.8.The Present Study

Even though the Syrian refugee crisis has been at the forefront of global concern for several years, studies exploring Syrian refugee youth's war-related and forced migration experiences are scarce. The present study contributed to the literature on refugee youth and forced migration by examining young Syrian refugees' lived experiences from their own perspectives. The refugee experience was conceptualized as a multilayered and complex phenomenon that includes psychological, sociopolitical, and cultural aspects with mental health and psychosocial implications. This study adopted two important theoretical approaches based on the existing literature: ecological theory and strength-based perspective. The ecological theory provides an overarching framework to examine the multilayered and complex nature of young Syrian refugees' experiences, including family, neighborhood, and work settings. Furthermore, a strength-based perspective was adopted, emphasizing assets, resources, collective strengths, and protective factors that empower young Syrian refugees.

The present study aimed to focus on the experiences of Syrian refugees who are in their early 20s. The early 20s is a critical stage in the life course in which an individual makes a transition to adulthood. Consequently, the participants of this study have been experiencing a forced migration process between countries of origin and arrival while transitioning into young adulthood. Moreover, this study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis, which is a qualitative method for conducting a detailed examination of individuals' subjective experiences.

This present study aimed to illustrate patterns of personal meanings related to being a young person who experienced war and forced migration based on these theoretical considerations. Additionally, the researcher aimed to give voice to young Syrians to understand the complexity of their refugee experiences. The researcher will examine the lived experiences of young Syrian refugees through the following research questions:

- How do young Syrian refugees experience and make sense of different phases of forced migration?

- How does going through forced migration affect young Syrian refugees at a critical stage of their life course?
- How do young Syrian refugees perceive sources of strength and support that are available to them?



CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1. Research Design

2.1.1. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

A qualitative research methodology, in particular, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2007; Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013) was used in the present study. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is mainly concerned with the detailed exploration of participants' accounts of a particular lived experience, the personal meaning of that experience, and how they make sense of that experience (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2011). Moreover, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis seeks to give voice to individuals who are not usually heard in the literature (Larkin et al., 2006). Phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography are the theoretical roots of interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2011; Willig, 2013).

Phenomenology is a philosophical school that is committed to studying how human beings experience the world. In spite of the different approaches among the phenomenologists, they all tend to think about the detailed examination of people's experiences on their own terms (Smith, 2011; Willig, 2013). Thus, phenomenological research describes the essential components of a given phenomenon that make it unique in its own right. The interpretative phenomenological analysis also draws upon fundamental principles of the hermeneutic perspective. Hermeneutics is the theory of interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). It suggests that the researchers cannot access lived experiences of human beings straightforwardly from their minds. Thus, the researcher needs to interpret the individuals' personal accounts of their experiences. Jonathan

Smith describes the process of interpretative phenomenological analysis as double hermeneutics; that is to say, the researcher is “trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them” (Smith et al., 2009; p. 3). Finally, the third theoretical root of IPA comes from idiography, focusing on the particular. IPA is idiographic in the sense that it focuses on exploring “how particular experiential phenomena is made sense from the perspective of particular people in a particular context” (Smith et al., 2009; p. 29). Therefore, IPA is not used to make broad generalizations at the group or population level. Accordingly, during the analysis process, the researcher engages in an in-depth analysis of each individual’s account of their experiences and then moves onto a case-by-case analysis of other individuals’ accounts (Eatough & Smith, 2008; Smith, 2011). For a more detailed discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of IPA, please refer to Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009).

This study aimed to closely investigate how young Syrian refugees make sense of their lived experiences of migration from their own perspectives. The researcher was concerned with the way young refugees perceive and talk about their experiences, feelings, and thoughts in relation to forced migration. In this regard, the phenomenological approach rather than other qualitative methods such as discourse analysis, grounded theory, and narrative analysis was the most suitable.

Grounded theory is generally viewed to be the main alternative method to IPA due to similarities between them. Despite similarities between grounded theory and IPA, however, the grounded theory approach was incompatible with the purpose of this study because its main focus is developing a theoretical explanation based on a large sample (Smith et al., 2009). Those who use discursive approaches, on the other hand, are mainly concerned with the use of language in constructing social reality, which was also incompatible with the purpose of the current study (Willig, 2013). Finally, even though the narrative approach overlaps with IPA, the researcher did not choose it because it mainly focuses on structures of people’s narratives in exploring a given phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). Also, because the current study involved different languages and an interpreter, it would have been difficult to focus on the structure of the refugees’ narratives.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis has been noted to be compatible with investigating refugee communities' experiences (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). There has been a growing body of IPA research about a diverse range of phenomena within different psychology branches, indicating its suitability for exploring refugee experience from a psychological perspective (Smith, 2004). Furthermore, underlying epistemological assumptions of this method underscores focusing merely on human experience and its unique attributes in the sociocultural context (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Predetermined suppositions and meanings about a given phenomenon are set aside, and hence the method provides an opportunity to uncover indigenous knowledge and experience (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Additionally, the idiographic basis of the IPA approach enables the researcher to be sensitive about the unique experiences and cultural and contextual background of each participant while specifying commonalities between individuals' accounts (Larkin et al., 2006). Thus, it enables the researcher to capture the complexity and richness of the refugee experience and gives voice to refugees to tell their account of refugee experience (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008).

2.2.Participants

Eighteen 20-to-23-year-old Syrian refugee youth (9 females, 9 males) took part in this study. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, which was noted to be the most preferred sampling strategy consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of IPA (Smith et al., 2009). In purposive sampling, a fairly homogeneous sample of people with similar experiences is selected to provide insight into the research question. The inclusion criteria were: Being forcibly displaced to Turkey after the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011, living in Ankara, living with their family members, and being between the ages of 20 and 23. The researcher took into consideration several issues when deciding to recruit the participants from Ankara. Ankara is the capital city of Turkey. As the second-largest city in Turkey, the cost of living in Ankara is cheaper than in other big cities such as İstanbul. Also, the furniture manufacturing industry in Ankara provides employment opportunities for Syrian refugees in the labor market. Therefore, Ankara has been attractive for many Syrian refugees. When considering the research on Syrian refugees in Turkey, a few studies have been conducted with

Syrian refugees living in Ankara. Therefore, this study could make a valuable contribution by focusing on Syrian refugees in Ankara. Participants were recruited into the study by snowball sampling procedure, which is recommended when sampling hard-to-reach populations (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). The first contact with the participants was done through personal contacts of the researcher who work in humanitarian NGOs in Ankara or have close personal relationships with Syrian refugees. Then, the researcher reached the participants through word of mouth. Once prospective participants were contacted, their eligibility for the study was checked.

All participants were from the Northern part of Syria, which is close to the Turkey-Syria border. All participants moved to Turkey after the Syrian war started and lived in Turkey for 1.5 to 5 years ($M=3.07$, $SD=1.08$). All participants were residing in Ankara. Nine of the participants were married (4 females, 5 males), eight were single, and one female was separated from her spouse. Seven participants (4 females, 3 males) had children. The number of children they had ranged from one to two. For married people, the duration of marriage ranged from 1 month to 54 months ($M= 28.67$, $SD=17.13$). Three female participants stayed in refugee camps located near the Turkish-Syrian border before settling in Ankara. The majority of participants had a basic understanding of the Turkish language, and three male participants were speaking Turkish fluently. Pseudonyms are used to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Sociodemographic Characteristics of The Participants (n=18)*

Name	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Education	Duration in Turkey	Work
Rana	F	20	Single	High School	3.5	No
Amira	F	22	Married	University (drop)	4.5	Yes
Rabia	F	20	Separated	High School	3	Yes
Marwa	F	21	Single	University (drop)	1.5	Yes
Naval	F	20	Married	Secondary School	4	No
Arwa	F	20	Married	Primary School	2	No
Yasmin	F	22	Single	University Student	2	No
Nayla	F	20	Single	University Student	4	No
Hesna	F	21	Married	Primary School	3	No
Faisal	M	20	Married	High School	2.5	Yes
Marwan	M	20	Married	Illiterate	4	Yes
Khalid	M	22	Married	Illiterate	2	Yes
Talal	M	22	Married	Primary School	2	Yes
Mustafa	M	23	Married	Primary School	3	Yes
Samer	M	21	Single	University Student	2	Yes
Imad	M	22	Single	High School (drop)	4	Yes
Farid	M	22	Single	High School (drop)	4	Yes
Aziz	M	21	Single	Secondary School	4	Yes

Note. F = female; M = male.

2.3.Materials

A semi-structured interview question protocol and a demographic information form were designed for this study (See Appendix C and Appendix D). The semi-structured interview method was regarded to be the best way of collecting data for IPA studies because it enables the researcher to be flexible, follow the direction taken by the participant, and probe additional questions to unravel interesting and important areas which arise during interviewing (Smith & Osborn, 2008; Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). Both semi-structured interview protocol and informed consent form were translated to Arabic by the interpreter.

The researcher developed interview questions and demographic information form based on the relevant literature and the researcher's experience in working with refugees. Then, the thesis advisor and two dissertation committee members reviewed the interview questions and gave feedback. Questions were open-ended and non-directive, focusing on experiences in Syria, during the journey to Turkey, and in Turkey. Participants were asked to talk about their experiences, recollections, challenges they faced, and the support they had received in Syria before and after the war, during their journey to Turkey, and after arriving in Turkey. In addition, participants were invited to describe the psychological influences of war and forced migration, changes in their family relations after the war, and their future plans. A pilot interview was conducted to check the clarity of the interview questions and test the flow of the interview process. The participant was asked to give feedback. Pilot interview was later included in the study.

2.4.Ethical Issues

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Human Subjects Research Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University. The researcher has used pseudonyms throughout the dissertation and the transcription and changed city names to protect participants' identities.

One of the concerns raised by the researcher was the risk of re-traumatization, which can occur when interview questions elicited memories of potentially traumatic experiences. To limit this risk, the researcher, a clinical psychologist experienced in working with survivors of trauma, conducted the interviews sensitively and monitored the participants to check whether they were comfortable or needed a break. Participants were told that they could pause the interview or stop altogether anytime if they felt distressed. At the end of each interview, participants were debriefed regarding the interview process. If a participant needed psychological support, they were informed that the researcher could do the necessary referral. The majority of the participants found the interview process beneficial for themselves in terms of telling their stories and being listened emphatically. Only three participants found the interview process distressing. All participants, except two, did not require further psychological support. The two participants who seemed to need psychological support were asked whether they would want to be referred to a source of psychological help, but they declined the offer. Additionally, the researcher contacted each participant one week after the interview in order to check whether they experienced any psychological distress due to the interview. None of the participants reported distress nor asked for psychological support.

2.5.Procedure

Data collection process took five months (from August 2017 to December 2017). Semi-structured interviews were undertaken either at a participant's house or at the Middle East Technical University, in accordance with the participant's preference. Six out of eighteen participants did not want to be interviewed at their own homes, and therefore, they were invited to Middle East Technical University campus. Before being interviewed, the purpose and procedure of the study and the issue of confidentiality were explained to each participant verbally and in a written consent form. Moreover, all participants were ensured that the interpreter would also maintain the participants' confidentiality. All the participants were assured that their responses would be anonymous and that the audio-records and written transcripts would be kept confidential. Moreover, participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study on request at any time. Participants were also asked permission for audio

recording. All participants gave verbal and written informed consent. The researcher conducted interviews. After obtaining written and verbal consent, each interview started with demographic questions to facilitate interaction with the participants. Interviews lasted between 90 and 180 minutes. All participants were given a 100 TL gift voucher as a token of acknowledgment of their contribution to the study.

All interviews, except one, were audio-recorded. One female participant did not permit being audio-recorded due to religious reasons. So, the researcher wrote the participant's responses by hand with her informed consent. Each participant was asked if they would prefer an interpreter to assist with the interview process. Three participants who were fluent in Turkish did not want the interpreter's assistance and their interviews were conducted in Turkish. Fifteen participants were interviewed in their native language, Arabic, via the support of an interpreter. Those interviews were simultaneously translated from Arabic to Turkish during interview. Later, the recordings of the translated and the Turkish interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The interpreter was a male Turkish citizen who is fluent in Arabic. He was pursuing a master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies and was working as a freelance interpreter and translator. He learned Arabic by going to a language course and immersing himself in Arabic-speaking environments. He was familiar with the Syrian dialect. He was experienced in oral and written translation. During the interviews, he translated from Arabic to Turkish and Turkish to Arabic. He was paid for the interpretation process.

Before starting data collection, the interpreter was trained on the research procedure and interviewing process. The researcher explained the aim of the research, interview schedule, ethical principles, and confidentiality to the interpreter. Semi-structured interview questions were discussed in terms of clarity and quality of translation. The interpreter was asked to translate directly and verbatim and use the first-person pronoun as much as possible. He was also asked to translate shorter sections of speech. The method of interpretation was explained to each participant before the interview. The interpreter was debriefed after each interview in order to reflect on the interview process. As it is underscored by some researchers (e.g., Edwards, 1998; Kelly et al., 2016; Temple & Young, 2004; Wallin & Ahlström, 2006), conducting research via

interpreters requires more attention and reflexivity. The importance of taking into account the emotional needs and experiences of the interpreters during the research process has been highlighted. For instance, during one interview, the interpreter became visibly upset while a female participant was talking about her family life and experience of displacement. The researcher paused the interview for a short time, checking with the interpreter about his feelings and needs.

2.6.Data Analysis

Interviews were analyzed by the researcher using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, based on guidelines suggested by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). Each interview was analyzed one by one, engaging with each text in an intensive and detailed examination (Willig, 2013). A step-by-step approach was adopted. The first stage was to read and reread the transcript several times. During this step, the researcher recorded wide-ranging notes, including associations, questions, summary statements, and comments. Smith and his colleagues (2009) suggested that it may be useful to include descriptive comments that focus on the participant's subjective experience, linguistic comments that capture the specific language use of the participants and its potential meaning, and conceptual comments that deal with the context of the participant's experience and identify abstract notions that help the researcher make sense of the participant's accounts. The researcher was aware of the limitation with respect to the linguistic comments due to the cross-language nature of the study. Interpretations were made based on the content of what the participant said rather than language usage, such as tenses used or repetition of words, because patterns of language usage could be lost in simultaneous translation. Therefore, only descriptive and conceptual comments were noted.

At the second stage, the researcher identified and labeled the specific themes that emerged from the text, with care to ground them in the participant's own account. The explanatory notes were used to obtain the emergent themes. The emergent themes were expressed as concise phrases capturing the experiential quality of what was represented in the text. The themes' titles may reflect a slightly higher level of abstraction and psychological terminology than explanatory notes (Pietkiewicz &

Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2007; Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). At this point, the researcher established a set of emergent themes and listed them in the order they came up at the second stage. The third stage involved looking for and mapping connections and commonalities between these themes based on conceptual similarities. At this stage, the researcher attempted to make sense of the relations between the emergent themes in a more analytical and theoretical way. During this stage, super-ordinate themes unfolded. Super-ordinate themes were given descriptive labels that expressed the essence of the emergent themes (Smith & Osborn, 2007; Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). Not all emergent themes were included in the final list, but some of them were discarded at this stage. That is to say, the ones that did not fit under the superordinate themes or were not well-founded within the transcript were dropped. In the last stage of analysis, a summary table of all superordinate themes and emergent themes with quotations illustrating each theme was obtained. Appropriate emergent themes were listed under each superordinate theme on the table.

After completing the first participant's analysis, the researcher moved onto the next participant's transcript and repeated the process outlined above. This process was repeated with each consecutive participant. In order to abide by IPA's idiographic stance, it is important to treat each case on its own terms. As suggested by Smith and Osborn (2007), the superordinate theme list from the first participant's transcript was used to inform the analysis of subsequent transcripts. Also, new and different themes were identified in the consecutive transcripts. Earlier transcripts were reviewed when newly emerging themes were included. Once all of the transcripts were analyzed, a final list of superordinate and emergent themes was obtained from the data. Each theme was supported with quotes extracted from the transcripts. It should be noted that the emerging themes and the interpretations reflected the way the researcher made sense of the participants' accounts through her own lens. Also, according to IPA, the reader will form another layer of interpretation by bringing an alternative perspective to data through their own understanding (Smith et al., 2009).

2.7.Validation and Quality Strategies

There has been a considerable discussion regarding the credibility of qualitative studies (e.g., Elliott et al., 1999; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Yardley, 2000, 2008). It has been argued that the criteria used in quantitative research (e.g., reliability, validity, representativeness, objectivity, generalizability) are not suitable for qualitative research in their current form. (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). Therefore, some researchers provided guidelines for assessing the validity of qualitative research and specified a number of criteria (e.g., Elliott et al., 1999; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Howitt, 2016; Mays & Pope, 2000; Yardley, 2000, 2008). For instance, Elliott and colleagues (1999) determined several criteria to evaluate qualitative studies widely accepted by qualitative researchers (Willig, 2013). According to the criteria set by Elliott and colleagues (1999), the researcher should self-disclose his or her own assumptions, beliefs and biases (researcher reflexivity), situate the sample, ground the findings in examples from participants' accounts, and provide credibility checks. Credibility checks may involve participant checking strategy, using multiple qualitative analysts, and independent auditing. The researcher should also compare two or more qualitative perspectives (triangulation), present analyses with coherence and integration, accomplish general versus specific tasks (clear description of research tasks and limitations of extending the findings), and resonate with readers (Elliott et al., 1999).

It was also highlighted that evaluation criteria should be compatible with the epistemological assumptions of each qualitative research method (Willig, 2013). Accordingly, Smith (2011) provided guidelines to evaluate and improve the quality of studies using IPA. Smith and his colleagues (2009) suggested that independent auditing is one of the most powerful ways of ensuring validity in qualitative research. Moreover, because IPA is based on the assumption of meaning in context and hermeneutic interpretation, addressing reflexivity is required for studies that use IPA (Willig, 2013).

Several methods of ensuring credibility were adopted to improve the quality of the present study. Also, the thesis advisor conducted audits throughout the whole research

process and audited the final superordinate and emergent theme table. Additionally, the researcher's own assumptions, beliefs and biases (reflexivity) were addressed. Furthermore, a detailed and precise description of the sampling procedure and various steps of the research process were described in detail to allow the reader to evaluate the validity of the methodological approach. Participants' own accounts were also provided to enable the reader to judge whether the interpretative analysis was compatible with the data. Therefore, the guidelines suggested by Smith (2011) were taken into consideration in order to improve the quality of research.

2.8. Reflexivity

The notion of reflexivity is particularly important in qualitative research. Reflexivity involves awareness of the researcher's subjective contributions to different stages of the research process regarding his or her own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, social identities, professional status, and political commitments (Watt, 2007). Willig (2013; p. 55) proposed that adopting a reflexive manner "requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining outside of one's subject matter while conducting research." The researcher's awareness of his or her own presuppositions and biases and their effects on the research process is also significant in IPA (Smith et al., 2009). An IPA researcher should reveal the meanings of a given phenomenon from the participants' and researcher's perspectives. Thus, the reflexivity of the researcher is very critical for a valid IPA work. In this study, the researcher adopted a reflexive manner. Before presenting the results of this study, it is important to acknowledge her taken-for-granted assumptions, experiences, beliefs, motivations, personal factors, and biases that may have affected the research process and data analysis openly and reflexively.

I am a 41-year-old female Turkish citizen who grew up in different cities in Turkey because of my father's job. I am a clinical psychologist, doing my doctoral training in clinical psychology. I have been working as a private practice psychotherapist since 2012. During my master's training in clinical psychology, I became academically and professionally interested in working with psychological trauma, forced migration, and

refugees. After completing my master's degree, I conducted individual psychotherapy with torture survivors and refugees in the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey for 4 years. Listening and witnessing extreme forms of psychological trauma as a human being and a psychotherapist was extremely difficult and facilitated my personal growth. My work with torture survivors shattered my assumptions regarding good and evil. It enabled me to reflect on human strength, morality, and the importance of standing up for justice and human rights.

Moreover, I worked as a full-time clinical psychologist in an international humanitarian organization serving refugees and asylum workers from different backgrounds. I had an opportunity to conduct individual psychotherapy and group work with refugees from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and African countries. Through these experiences, I gained first-hand personal and clinical knowledge regarding refugees' experiences in a multicultural environment. I recognized the importance of taking culture, ethnicity, language, religion, belief, and value systems into account. Furthermore, I worked with an interpreter in a psychotherapy context for the first time. I reflected upon both advantages and disadvantages of working with an interpreter. I became increasingly aware of the complexity and multidimensionality of the refugee experience. I realized the significance of social ecology in which the refugees are embedded in shaping the refugee experience. I observed that refugees experienced endurance and resilience besides hardships, losses and traumas. They were inclined to struggle and not to give up hope despite the difficulties they faced. As a consequence of such experiences, I discovered that I was not too fond of the perspective that depicts refugees only as victims. I developed a perspective that recognizes the strength of human beings and empowering aspects of the refugee experience. Further, listening to the individual stories of refugees in the therapy room enabled me to recognize commonalities and diversities among different refugee communities. To understand the complete picture of becoming a refugee, I decided to focus on individual and subjective stories of refugees in my research. My experiences influenced every aspect of my personal beliefs, values, and professional career.

As a researcher, I was aware of my outsider position regarding the participants' culture and acknowledged the potential differences between my experiences and theirs.

Several factors created a difference between the participants and me. It is important to reflect on my position as a Turkish woman researcher who has lived in Turkey her whole life. When interviewing my participants who were mostly committed to the Islamic way of life, being a woman who does not wear a hijab might have created an unusual encounter between the participants and me. Moreover, the position of a woman in Syrian culture is mostly confined to the domestic sphere. Although Syrian laws ensured equal rights in accessing education, employment, and inheritance, women were usually in a secondary position compared to men in the society. Therefore, it might have been an unfamiliar experience for my participants, for men, in particular, to speak about their subjective experiences and feelings with a woman who was a stranger. It is important to be mindful of the influence of such a position on the responses and information shared by the participants. In addition, being aware of my relative professional, social, and economic privilege compared to the participating young Syrians living in low-income neighborhoods, I was mindful of the power imbalance between the participants and me. It is important to reflect on such differences that inevitably affect how people make sense of their experiences.

When I reflected on the research process, I sometimes felt overwhelmed by the participants' emotionally intense stories. I had concerns about building a comfortable and safe relationship with the participants in a very short period of time. Moreover, I felt worried about the extent to which I was able to understand sociocultural factors in participants' experiences accurately. I consulted the interpreter when I realized a difficulty in understanding cultural issues. He was more familiar with Syrian culture, norms, and customs than I. Throughout the research process, I appreciated the interpreter for providing a bridge between me and the participants' perspectives. Moreover, having the interpreter with me was a source of comfort when hearing immensely traumatic experiences. On the other hand, I realized the difficulty and limitations of doing cultural research with an interpreter. First of all, hearing participants' painful stories had a profound emotional impact on the interpreter. Therefore, I felt responsible for him and monitored him closely. After each interview, we had a meeting and reflected on each participant and interview. Further, some aspects of participants' stories were possibly lost in translation. Although the interpreter was experienced and skilled, it was inevitable that there were potential

mistakes and errors during translation. Thus, it is crucial to take the potential influence of using an interpreter on participants' responses and my interpretations about the participants' narratives into consideration.



CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Using IPA, the researcher generated eight superordinate and twenty-eight subordinate themes from the participant's transcripts. The superordinate themes were as follows: 1) Living with the war in Syria, 2) leaving homeland behind, 3) rebuilding a new life, 4) facing ongoing challenges and losses, 5) ways of coping with adversities, 6) changes in family dynamics, 7) changed views of the self, and 8) future aspirations. To ensure the participants' anonymity, the researcher has used pseudo names and changed identifiable information. Table 2 provides the complete list of subordinate themes nested within the superordinate themes.

Table 2

Master Table of Superordinate and Subordinate Themes

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes	frequency (n=18)
1.Living with the war in Syria	Loss of safety and security	16
	Disruption of daily routine	12
	Normalization of violence	16
	Struggling for survival	13
	Mourning for loved ones	8
	Living in fear	8
2.Leaving homeland behind	Time to flee	17
	Moving to unknown	16
	Feelings about fleeing Syria	12
3.Rebuilding a new life	Initial times in Turkey	16
	The role of language	17
	Relations with various communities	15
	Facing discrimination	6
	Sense of homesickness	8

Table 2 (cont'd)

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes	<i>frequency</i>
4. Ongoing Challenges and Losses	Loss of socioeconomic status	10
	Loss of networks	11
	Loss of future life projects	7
	Loss of psychological well-being	10
5. Ways of coping with adversities	Personal characteristics	11
	Relational support	15
	Social services	8
6. Changes in family dynamics	Changes in responsibilities and roles	11
	Changes in family connectedness	10
	Different adjustment processes among family members	4
7. Changed views of the self	Increased sense of responsibility	12
	Recognizing my inner strength	15
8. Future aspirations	Uncertainty about the future	18
	Future dreams	9

Before discussing each superordinate theme, a brief summary of participants' prewar experiences will be illustrated. Participants' perceptions and experiences of life in prewar Syria seemed to be a reference point against which the participants compared their war and migration experiences. Almost all of the participants mentioned that they led an ordinary but good life prior to the war. They either attended school or worked, and had future aspirations. Moreover, they voiced that they lived a peaceful, calm, and joyful life, had close relationships with their families, friends, and relatives. They described Syria as a safe and secure country. Some participants especially talked about their families' economic situation to express their lives before the war. They emphasized that they had a well-off life, owned land, a store, or a house. Talal, a 22-year-old male participant, seemed to describe how the majority of the participants viewed their lives in Syria before the war: "Syria was like heaven before the war started. It was absolutely heaven compared to here (Turkey)."

3.1.Living with War in Syria

All participants spoke about specific changes in their lives and the adverse events when the Syrian war erupted in 2011. The war has changed their lives drastically. The participants' narratives were replete with violence, danger, constant hardships, and death. Accordingly, the first superordinate theme, *living with war in Syria*, aimed to capture the participants' life experiences in Syria after the war began. This superordinate theme includes six subthemes: 1) Loss of safety and security, 2) disruption of daily routine, 3) normalization of violence, 4) struggling for survival, 5) mourning for loved ones, and 6) living in fear.

3.1.1.Loss of Safety and Security

Almost all of the participants expressed strong feelings of insecurity prior to fleeing their home country. One of the fundamental changes due to war conditions was the shattering of the belief that their country was a safe home for them. The war brought a loss of safety, stability, and security and a sense of ever-present death threat to the participants' lives. Loss of safety and security became a primary source of distress. They no longer felt protected in their home country. A gender difference was also salient in the participants' experiences. Women seemed to perceive more threat. The following excerpt exemplified this situation. A woman participant, Nayla, stated that her family feared the possibility of her being kidnaped:

P: It's true that in the city I was living there was no bombing and no battles, but at home we had no peace anymore. There was no security. Someone could come to the door at any time. Our peace of mind was gone. When the electricity went off, we sat and hugged each other. Anything could happen at any time. But thank God nothing happened in our area. But still there was fear. During the last period my mother didn't send me to school, because some girls went to school but didn't come back.

I: What was happening to the girls?

P: They were being kidnapped. My mother only sent me to school for exams. I took the exams without having taken the classes. You can walk in the streets but you don't know what will happen to you. Even if people see something happening in the street, they were unable to do anything about it. They would not take any action.

Similarly, a male participant, Imad, stated that his family decided to send his sisters to their village in order to protect them. Although Imad did not mention explicitly, he seemed to imply fear of sexual assault:

People living in the (city) center started migrating to the countryside. My mother, father, and I didn't. I have three sisters. We sent them with my aunt out of the city, because, how can I explain, if the soldiers entered our home, we didn't know what they would do. Because they were girls. The soldiers were capable of anything.

In wartime Syria, the participants spoke about living under constant threat of harm to themselves or their families, staying indoors all the time, increased crime rates, and being caught in the crossfire between the Syrian army and other armed groups. Further, they were completely isolated and no longer had a social life due to the war conditions. However, all of the participants, particularly women, described prewar Syria as a very safe and secure country. For example, Rana emphasized that the loss of safety was the most fundamental change in her life after the war. She explained that they didn't take off their hijab even at their home and were waiting to die. She stated:

Before the war started, most importantly there was security. Where we lived was a really safe place. We women used to stay out late at night. We used to go to weddings, we got dressed up, got ready, dolled ourselves up. Sometimes we stayed out late. I mean, we lived in a very safe place. I was able to go home on my own. No one used to say anything to us. [...] Later the things we experienced, the things we witnessed outside, and the way we couldn't go out and about out of fear reminded us what safety was. We experienced things we could never have imagined. For example, for a woman to be covered is very important for us. It got so bad in Syria that even a dead woman wearing a hijab was not shown respect. Even her corpse was not shown respect. It got to the stage that people saw women's dead bodies immodestly dressed. Think about it, as you know, outside the home in particular women must be covered in the presence of men they are not related to. But at home they don't need to be covered. But the situation was such that we could be killed at any time. And so even at home we were covered. When a person dies, they must be buried according to Islamic customs. Even when a woman dies, she must be wearing a hijab. So, we didn't take off our hijabs and jilbabs even at home. We got to that stage. How did it get so bad?

The participants lacked physical safety and stability in their lives and voiced the omnipresence of the death threat. The participants' conceptions of safety encompassed not only immediate physical threats to bodily integrity but also disruption of economic

and social aspects of their lives. They linked the loss of safety and security in Syria with factors including lack of freedom of movement, inability to meet basic needs, and to access education, healthcare, and jobs.

3.1.2. Disruption of Daily Routine

Fourteen participants talked about the negative impact of the war on their everyday lives. Participants especially emphasized that their lives had a daily routine that included activities of work, study, leisure, and socializing with friends and relatives before the war erupted. Participants underlined that the loss of their daily routines disrupted the sense of predictability and familiarity in their lives. As 22-year-old Yasmin stated:

Our life was really good. We lacked nothing. Our house was tidy. We had an enormous house. My father worked and my mother was always at home. She cooked for us and kept the house tidy. My sister and brothers were students. We were in a familiar environment. I was going to school and life was going on normally. But with the war the things we experienced and saw changed entirely. Battles and war; these were things we'd never heard of before. My father could no longer go to work.

All of the participants, except four men, had been attending school when the war started. The four men who were not attending school had been working. As the war persisted, they risked their lives to go to school, so they had to drop out of school due to the increased safety and security issues. Eventually, schools and universities closed entirely as a result of the war conditions. Additionally, so many workplaces closed down due to the war and it became extremely difficult to find any work. In the following account, 23-year-old Amira explained how it became impossible to go to university after the war started:

Before the war we had a normal life like everyone else. We lived with our parents. We went to school. The war started during the exams for my high school diploma. It was a difficult time for us especially because it was right before the exams. Despite the war I got my high school diploma. Later I registered for university but I was unable to go. After I got my high school diploma, a bomb hit our house during the war. After the bombing, we decided to move out to the countryside. Later we came to Turkey.

The participants' stories illustrated that war conditions had a significant impact on the participants' educational pursuits. Although most of the participants were in school before the war, only four participants (three women, one man) had access to education after coming to Turkey. The rest of the participants did not have any access to education after the war. Men started to work, although women did not, to support their families. For example, 22-year-old Farid began to work after the armed conflict spread to his own city. Farid stated:

The war started right when I was about to take my high school finals. I was unable to take the exams because our city was divided in two between the Assad side and the Free Syrian Army side. My school was on the Assad side and my house on the other and so it was impossible for me to go. They were recruiting young people as soldiers. [...] We started doing voluntary work (*he worked without being paid for a while*) after we no longer went to school there (*Syria*). There was that stuff, you know, chemicals for bugs. We were doing that. We went to houses, gave them a good clean, and sprayed for bugs. I did that for a while. I worked at a farmers' market and at a shoe shop.

The war conditions brought distress to the participants' lives at many levels. For instance, participants were unable to continue daily life activities such as education and employment due to the destruction of schools and workplaces. Young Syrians viewed disruption of daily living as a significant challenge because they lost the sense of control over their lives. As the amount of violence and destruction of the war increased, the devastating effects of the war on the participants' lives went beyond their limits.

3.1.3. Normalization of Violence

Sixteen participants witnessed or personally experienced violence, death, and destruction in Syria. The remaining two participants did not want to talk about their experiences of violence explicitly during the interviews. Participants gave accounts of different forms of extreme violence such as bombings, shootings, seeing dead bodies on the streets, sniper fire, warplanes dropping barrel bombs (*unguided bombs made from a barrel-shaped metal container filled with high explosives*), and destruction of buildings. They described how they fought to survive. Some participants communicated how people came under sniper fire, missile attack, and barrel bombing in their neighborhoods and streets, bringing death closer to them in their daily lives.

For example, Imad, a 22-year-old man, gave vivid and detailed accounts of violent events he experienced in Syria throughout the interview. He described how the warfare became more violent and brutal day by day. In the following quote, he spoke about people who were wounded or killed by sniper fire and missiles in bread queues:

By the way, there was no security. How can I explain security...you go out on the street but you don't know what will happen. There was a road on the way we went to get bread. A sniper was watching it. Someone who passed us fell. We looked; a sniper. The guy was shot through the eye and killed. Waiting in the cold is not a problem. Waiting for death, however, is different, because you never know when a missile or bullet is coming your way. Once we stopped in a distant bakery. It was near where the soldiers were. People in the bakery started to get shot; people waiting in line. The sniper took up a position, saw us in front of the bakery, and was shooting directly. We got out of there. There was nothing else we could do. For example, we go and wait at the bakery. Once I waited 38 hours. I got to the front of the line and was going to buy bread when a missile hit the bakery. They fired three rockets. There was chaos. Some died, some were injured, and some escaped. We were little; there was nothing we could do. We fled. What else could we do? In the last year that thing started. You know, dropping barrel bombs from planes. That's the worst.

As the above extracts exemplify, most participants witnessed multiple forms of violent events and experienced fear of death. Yet, five participants were themselves the victims of violence, being wounded by sniper fire in their house or by rocket attacks targeting their houses. For example, a 21-year-old woman, Hessa, described her experience and the effect it had on her:

A Kanas (*Russian-made sniper rifle*) hit our house. It was about 6 in the morning. We were opening the doors to air out the house. After that I was in my room. That was when the bullet hit me. Everyone was at home at that time. Later they took me to the hospital. I was shot here (points to chest). I was in the hospital for about three months. I took a very long time to recover. And I began to feel cold for long periods. I couldn't get warm. I had that problem and from time to time I went to the doctor. I recovered but I'm still in pain. [...] I'm still really affected by the cold. I still have broken bones inside; I can feel them. [...] I've made it this far. Those days are over but it's something I'll never forget. I always remember that pain.

Moreover, participants highlighted the normalization of violence; that is, tremendous violence had become an integral part of everyday life in Syria. As the war continued, being a target of rocket attacks, seeing military aircraft, seeing dead bodies on streets, and fear became a normal part of life. Yasmin, who lived in Syria for approximately

three years after the war began, described how she normalized violence in her daily life:

[...] Later the missile attacks started. Honestly, after a while there were attacks every single day. The attacks started in the morning. The missile attacks started at like, I don't know, 7 in the morning, stopped for some time, and then started again. They went on until 11. They became normal for us. Planes, missiles, bombs, things like that, they started to become part of daily life. It got to the point that when we didn't hear those noises, we asked why.

Some participants voiced a state of emotional numbing and being indifferent to horrifying experiences in Syria. The participants suggested that emotional numbing might be necessary to survive under extreme violence. Rabia gave an account of her state of indifference when a rocket attack targeted her grandfather's house. She expressed a lack of emotion, interest, or concern after this attack:

Apart from that, we were used to the sounds of missiles and planes. I was never afraid of the sound of planes. In fact, I'll tell you about something that happened. One day, a missile landed next to my grandfather's house. All my brothers and sisters fled. I stayed where I was to see what was happening. This lack of concern of mine shows what things have come to.

The narratives of the participants highlighted the destructiveness and prevalence of violence in Syria. The narratives also indicated that the different parties of the war also directed violence and armed conflict at the civilians and civilian structures. The ongoing and widespread violence in Syria had become a normalized part of everyday life in Syria.

3.1.4.Struggling for Survival

Another common theme in the participants' narratives was their struggle to survive under dangerous, life-threatening, and resource-deprived conditions. Thirteen participants talked about the lack of resources to meet basic needs such as food, water, gas, and electricity. Moreover, some participants frequently moved from one place to another in search of a safe and secure place to live. After the war started, some participants had to flee their homes and move to conflict-free areas in Syria. Nawal elaborated on her experiences of violence:

As soon as the war started, we left our home. We moved many times. The reason for our leaving one place and finding another was the missiles, missiles and bombs targeting those houses. We went somewhere, bombs and missiles were dropped there and we left immediately for somewhere else. During that period, we spent all our time moving.

Further, Samer voiced similar experiences of moving from one city to another with his family:

We traveled around Syria after the war started. For example, when war broke out in our area, we moved to another when the situation got too bad. We moved to another city. We moved to the center of Aleppo.

As the warfare expanded, it led to a scarcity of resources. Water and electricity were shut off and it became challenging to find groceries. As Imad stated:

At that time life got hard. The hardships began. As the war got bigger, life got harder. Before the war, it took us 10 minutes to get bread. During the war it became difficult to find bread. The water was cut off. The electricity went on and off. Of course, I'm talking about a while after the war started. Our struggle with life began; a struggle to survive. There was no work. Savings ran out. There was no bread or flour. There was no diesel. Our bakeries used diesel; they were different. There was no flour. When there was flour, because most of the bakeries had closed down, in an area with 10 to 15 bakeries only one would be operating. In an area where 10000 families had been buying from 1000 bakeries, they were now buying from one bakery. I remember, for example, waiting in front of a bakery for 36-37 hours. I didn't wait, I slept there. We go at around 4-5 in the afternoon and we can't go the next day. We go back the day after.

In addition to the difficulty of meeting basic needs, the internet and mobile phone communication was cut off very frequently. Yasmin gave the following account:

Some of our basic needs were lacking too. For example, the internet was cut off. The phones didn't work. We had particular difficulties with communication. We used two SIM cards to try to get reception and we tried to talk like that. In fact, the basic communication facilities were disrupted.

The price of essential food items, clothing, medical supplies, and drugs increased as well. The prices were so high that they exceeded the Syrians' ability to cover their living expenses. For instance, Talal gave voice to his family's economic situation:

I'll give you a simple example. Before the war, gas was 10 Syrian pounds. It was that cheap. Now it's 50 dollars. Before the war, for example, bread was 1

pound and now it's 200 pounds. So, it's unaffordable. There's no water. No gas or electricity. I'm talking about the situation in Syria right now. My family is living there and they're experiencing hardships. Life is really hard. They can't buy medicine because it's so expensive there.

Worsening war conditions made it extremely difficult for most participants and their families to meet basic needs, including food, water, and electricity. For the participants, it was a very frustrating and overwhelming experience to live under unsafe and resource-deprived conditions.

3.1.5.Mourning for Loved Ones

Almost half of the participants voiced their experiences and feelings after their loved ones died or disappeared during the war. They spoke of their feelings of loss and grief. For instance, Imad became very emotional during the interview while talking about the death of his uncle. His uncle was killed in a protest against the government in the early months of the conflict. He stated:

We lost my uncle first in 2011 during the protests. My youngest uncle; he was 27 years old. Since there were problems elsewhere, they got permission from the Governor for the demonstration, the Governor of Aleppo. It was my uncle who sought permission from the Governor. Demonstrations had started in another city before ours. Some incidents had occurred. Since the first troubles started there, to avoid deaths or anything like that they were going to hold a demonstration, but it wasn't a demonstration against anything. The Governor granted them permission. After they started demonstrating, professional soldiers were sent in and killed them.

Another male participant, Khalid, talked about the death of his two siblings and how it affected his family. A bombing attack killed his brothers. While talking, he began to cry and stopped talking. It was a very emotional moment during our interview. He cried for a while and then he refused to talk more about his experiences of war. Khalid expressed:

I was sitting at home with my family when planes started to drop bombs. A bomb fell on our house. Two of my brothers died at that moment. [*silence*] We were at home too but were not injured. [...] The deaths of my brothers really affected the whole family. [*crying*] My mother developed a heart condition. My father was exhausted. He's very old. It affected all of us a lot.

Then, the researcher asked Khalid how the death of his brothers influenced him personally; he emphasized that this experience shattered to his core. His heart was full of fear and hopelessness:

Particularly after the deaths of my two brothers, I tried to stick it out in Syria to see whether the situation would change. That event affected me so much that my mind and thoughts completely changed. I started to see just blood in the streets. Blood was flowing. I felt that blood was walking on the streets. I began to feel afraid. I was terrified during that time. I personally witnessed these terrible events. I saw them with my own eyes. At that time, I felt great fear in my heart. I started to be really afraid. And I began to think that the situation in Syria would never improve.

Additionally, two participants talked about the disappearance of their siblings during the war. Both of the participants' older brothers were in the army when the war began. Neither of the participants heard accurate news about the fate of their brothers after the beginning of the war. They were left with the sense of "not knowing." For example, Rabia gave voice to her yearning for her lost brother:

At the beginning of the war one of my brothers was a soldier. He was an officer. First, we heard he'd been killed. Later we got news that he wasn't dead. [...] I was more attached to that brother than to my other brothers and sisters. I have so many memories of him. Sometimes I even hear his voice as I'm falling asleep. I often think of the things we did together and the things he said.

Similarly, Marwan has not heard from his brother for seven years. He voiced his mother's concerns about his missing brother. He still hoped that he was alive:

After the war started, I lost a brother. We heard nothing from him. We've not heard anything about him for seven years. We have no information about where he is right now, what he's doing, or what's happened to him. (*eyes filled with tears. Voice got quieter.*) [...] You know what mothers are like. After my brother went missing my mother was always saying the same things. What's he doing right now? Where is he? Is he in pain? What's he doing? Is he hungry? [*silence*] I remember the good times we spent together. We played together. We went for walks and even swam together. I remember those times. I remember so many things about him. And I pray he'll come back. I still hold out hope that he'll return one day. My mother says he's dead but I don't want to believe that. I still believe that he may come back some day. We have a saying. When you get hurt you say "ah". "Ah" in Arabic means brother. It's that valuable. You don't want anything to happen to your brother. You don't want him to be hurt. Every time I say "ah" I remember my brother.

Death or disappearance of loved ones was one of the common preflight experiences among the participants. Some participants have to live with grief or without closure. War brought these young people's lives grief and pain at a very early age.

3.1.6.Living in Fear

Destruction, death, and loss in Syria were shared experiences among participants' stories. Furthermore, almost half of the participants talked about their emotions in the face of trauma. As the below quotes illustrate, the participants experienced a wide range of painful feelings, including fear, horror, helplessness, hopelessness, and a sense of insecurity. In particular, participants talked about an intense fear of death and concern for their loved ones. For instance, Nawal said:

I was 13 years old when the war started. Life has very hard at that time and there was fear of death. Will your mother die today, will your father die? Think about it, my father was working at that time; he was leaving home and going to work. Will my father come home from work today or will he be killed? We were thinking of that constantly. I was praying that he would come back.

Another female participant, Nayla, also spoke about her feelings of insecurity and fear of death. Her account highlighted that terror, fear, and death were all around. They were extremely worried about their safety even inside their houses.

There are no young people left in Latakia right now, just old people and babies. Everyone migrated. They reached that point. Life is not possible there. Fear was constant. Even if you stay at home, what will happen next? Will I be killed? Will something happen? You're always thinking, you're always wondering. It's really hard.

Some participants talked about their feelings of helplessness and loneliness. For instance, Imad recalled how he was feeling in Syria:

When I was in Syria, I felt so bad. It's like this: sometimes it got to the point that dying was preferable to living like that, because there's nothing you can do. You get depressed and sit down and cry but you are helpless. There's nothing you can do, there's no solution. And so, no one cares what you're feeling. If you feel bad, you feel bad by yourself and if you cry, you cry by yourself, because everyone has their own problems. If you explain your problem to someone else, they have experienced the same thing. There's no one you can talk to. No one has any answers. So, I kept everything bottled up

inside. I didn't talk to anyone. If I wanted to cry, I would go to my room and do it. Sometimes I couldn't take it anymore.

In summary, the first superordinate theme explored the participants' experiences during the war in Syria. This theme included common preflight experiences such as loss of safety and death of loved ones. The narratives of the participants indicated that all participants encountered multiple traumatic experiences before fleeing Syria. War brought daily hardships, lack of safety, extreme violence, brutality, collapse, death of loved ones, and suffering to the participants' lives. As a consequence of such conditions, all participants began to weigh their decision to flee Syria to pursue safety.

3.2.Leaving Homeland Behind

The participants' narratives revealed how all participants were subjected to violence, persecution, and hardships that threatened their lives or their family members' lives. Before all participants had to flee Turkey to escape devastating war conditions, most of the participants moved across Syria in pursuit of a safer place. The second superordinate theme, *leaving homeland behind*, aims to encapsulate the participants' stories of why and how they fled Syria, how they viewed Turkey before seeking refuge in Turkey, and how they felt about leaving their homeland behind. This superordinate theme consists of three subordinate themes: 1) time to flee, 2) moving to the unknown, and 3) feelings about fleeing Syria.

3.2.1.Time to Flee

Almost all of the participants talked about how and why they left their own country. All male participants decided to leave Syria themselves, whereas the female participants followed their fathers, older brothers, or husbands' decision to leave. Seven male participants fled to Turkey alone, whereas all the woman participants took the journey to Turkey with their families. Most participants emphasized the involuntary nature of leaving their own country time and again. Stated differently, they asserted that the war conditions forced them to flee to Turkey and their initial motivation for leaving was to survive and find a safer place nearby. Twenty-year-old

Faisal expressed his motivation to flee Syria and highlighted that he left Syria involuntarily:

First of all, let me tell you, I didn't come here to travel or to be a tourist. I came here to survive. Just to live. I escaped from death. Actually, I wouldn't have come here if I could have helped it. I would have preferred to die there. My reason for coming here was just to survive.

Several reasons shaped the decision to leave Syria: worsening living and security conditions, increased violence, or a specific violent incident targeting them or their family. Participants remarked that survival in war-torn Syria became nearly impossible due to increased armed conflict, violence, limited resources, and collapsed infrastructure. Accordingly, some participants spoke about reaching their breaking point as they decided to escape. They generally came to that breaking point after their neighborhood was attacked or their family members were killed. For instance, Marwan gave an account of the moment at which he decided to flee:

How did I decide? Like this. I saw a building collapse there. There were five families in that building and they had children. I saw those people die horribly. I witnessed that. I saw it. I lived through that. I experienced it with my own eyes and I saw a girl with no legs. After that, I asked myself why should I stay longer in Syria? Why am I still waiting?

Likewise, twenty-year-old Arwa, who lost her husband in a rocket attack targeting their house, talked about how her father-in-law and mother-in-law decided to leave Syria after this attack. She indicated that it became unbearable for them to face bombings and fear of death. In order to protect the children, they decided to leave:

P: The crisis in Syria really wore us down. Missiles and bombs were hitting houses. We came here to leave that fear behind. The good part about coming here is not hearing planes. That really used to terrify us. We were scared to death. We relaxed after we arrived here thank God. We left the plane sounds behind. Thank God, here we're no longer afraid.

I: Who decided that you would come to Turkey?

P: My father-in-law and mother-in-law. Because we heard that Turkey was safe. People said it was a place without fear. My father-in-law hesitated at first. Later my mother-in-law said that she couldn't lose another child and the children were very young and that she couldn't stand it anymore. Therefore, they decided to come to Turkey and we set off.

Finally, a few male participants decided to flee Syria to avoid compulsory military service and fighting in the regime's forces. For instance, Aziz pointed out:

I had a number of reasons for coming here (Turkey). The first was military service. I had to leave Syria because of this problem. The second was that life in Syria was starting to get harder. It was getting worse and worse. That was one of the reasons that forced me to come to Turkey.

The participants' narratives indicated that fleeing their homeland was a coerced and involuntary decision due to several reasons. Participants had to decide whether staying in their homeland was worth risking their lives. They emphasized that they left their homes behind to search for safer, more stable places to live.

3.2.2. Moving to the Unknown

All participants except two talked about their journey to Turkey and what they knew and thought about Turkey before fleeing. The majority of the participants highlighted that Turkey was an unknown destination for them and had limited knowledge of Turkey's living conditions and culture. The expectation of safety and security in Turkey was a common theme in the participants' narratives. Importantly, a gender difference was evident across the interviews. Turkish TV series that aired in Syria shaped woman participants' perception of Turkey and they did not mention any expectations regarding living and working conditions in Turkey. On the other hand, the experiences of those who fled to Turkey previously shaped male participants' perceptions of and expectations about Turkey. For instance, a woman participant, Amira, expressed what she knew about Turkey:

We had only heard the name of Turkey before. We knew nothing at all about Turkey. We only knew that it was a European country. We heard things like life was better there. Apart from that we knew absolutely nothing about Turkey. [...] The things we knew were what we had seen on TV. Things in Istanbul like the Maiden's Tower, the Bosphorus Bridge, and other places...

Male participants, however, spoke about their knowledge of high living expenses and harsh working conditions in Turkey. For example, Imad remarked his expectations:

When we were there (in Syria), we heard things like it's very expensive (in Turkey). Life is really hard. Life there is not like it is here. Stay there (in Syria) and die but don't come to Turkey. That much. I didn't want to come to Turkey at all but I was forced to. And I mean forced to. [...] Those who had come here before said that life was so hard here. Don't come here, it's really hard, it's so bad. I'm sorry but Syrians can't stand the way Turks behave. You have to work all the time. They told us things like that. You'll do the donkey work, different jobs. They showed Turkey in a very bad light. And so, I didn't want to come. I thought I don't need to experience those things; I'm better off staying here (in Syria). But that's not what happened. Somehow, we came.

Moreover, half of the participants remarked that they faced a highly risky and dangerous journey to reach Turkey. Although most participants spoke about crossing the border illegally, two participants traveled legally and safely with their passports. A few participants stated that they failed to cross the border on their first attempts and had to try several times. Further, they described their journey as extremely difficult because they had to walk for long hours under harsh weather conditions, crossed active battle zones, came across smugglers, and faced the risk of getting caught by Turkish security forces. Accordingly, Imad voiced his experiences throughout his journey:

Our journey to the border would be difficult as it would take us through 3 regions. Through the FSA (Free Syrian Army), ISIS, and the Kurds. At that time ISIS had entered Syria. ISIS was there too. But we don't know which will do something. At that time, they were doing things, like beheadings and dragging people behind military vehicles. They're all a problem.

Along with the difficulties and dangers associated with getting to the border, some participants also talked about their experiences with Turkish border guards. For instance, one woman participant stated that Turkish border guards caught, detained, and deported her to Syria at her first attempt to cross. Although she avoided talking about the details, she remarked on the ill-treatment of those border guards. On the other hand, some participants appreciated Turkish security officers' kind and helpful attitudes towards Syrian refugees. For instance, a female participant, Arwa, gave a detailed and vivid account:

On the journey we experienced difficulties and fear. There were missiles, planes, and bombs during the journey. It was terrifying. Especially at the X (says the name) border crossing we had some frightening moments. At first the border was closed. It was really crowded. Because of the chaos people were

treating each other very badly. They were pushing and hitting one another. At that time, I was pregnant. And we were a family with lots of children. That chaos was more difficult for us and we were really scared. A while later the gendarmes opened the border. Of course, we suffered a lot in that crowd and confusion. But I have to say the Turks treated us very well. Especially the gendarmes. Think about it, we had nothing left with us to eat. But the Turks, bless them, gave us food. The gendarmes really helped us a lot. They gave us money out of their own pockets. During that difficult situation they gave us water. They were really kind.

After fleeing violence, destruction, and hardships through a dangerous journey, all participants eventually found safety in Turkey. Nonetheless, the participants and their families left most of their belongings behind, came to Turkey with very limited resources and faced uncertainty in Turkey. In their narratives, participants generally emphasized that escaping from war to uncertainty was not an easy decision.

3.2.3. Feelings about Fleeing Syria

Twelve participants revealed their feelings and thoughts associated with leaving their homeland behind. Some participants emphasized their indecisiveness to leave their home due to their concerns for those they left behind. Participants stated that it was difficult, heartbreaking, and painful to leave their home country, their belongings, their past, and loved ones behind. Rana expressed a sense of longing for her homeland even though she was satisfied with her life in Turkey:

Actually, it was a difficult time to leave Syria, because you're abandoning your homeland and leaving your memories behind. It was a hard time for me, (*speaks through tears*) really hard. We didn't know what we would do. At the end of the day, you're leaving your country but what can you do? It's fate. It's unavoidable. [...] We said goodbye to people we knew. More importantly we said goodbye to our country, because the situation there was getting increasingly worse. There was no way out for us. It was a very difficult moment. (*Speaks through tears*) your homeland is part of your heart. What I mean is it's your childhood, your memories, the wonderful times you spent with your loved ones. It's hard to leave those behind at a moment's notice. However well we live in Turkey, I still miss those times in Syria.

Similarly, Samer recalled the day he left his home and his family behind to seek a better life and reach his educational aspirations. Although separating from his family was very painful, he emphasized his determination to struggle for a better life in Turkey:

It's so hard. When I think about it, I get sad (*voice drops and eyes fill with tears, goes quiet for 3-4 seconds*). I left home in the morning. It was the worst morning. Of course, we cried, that's normal. But everything was over when I entered Turkey. I forgot everything. I told myself I need to be good now. I'm not going to cry, I'm going to be fine, I don't know, it's tough of course. I was 19 years old at that time. It's hard (*voice trembles*). And I'm the youngest in the family. It's more difficult. [...] In every family the youngest is treated differently. Everyone cares about them. Because of that. You're young, you're leaving, and they worry about you.

Male participants who fled alone voiced their mixed feelings of worry and sorrow about leaving their families behind and hope and concern about beginning a new life in a safer country. For instance, Aziz' mind was filled with thoughts about his family and his new life in Turkey:

After I left, I was always thinking of my family. I was leaving my family on their own. I was leaving them to themselves. Previously I had been meeting all their expenses. I was wondering how they were going to manage and such things. The second thing I thought about was life abroad. I was going somewhere different. I was wondering what Turkey was like, what life was like there, and things like that. The route was also difficult. Somehow, I arrived at the X (name) border crossing in order to cross into Turkey. [...] My coming here from Syria meant a new life and a new hope and at the same time a new challenge. There was pain for everything I'd left behind. During the journey when I thought of the future, I was hopeful, I felt that everything would be better and stuff like that. Ultimately, I had to think like that when I thought of all I'd left behind.

In summary, participants left their homeland, memories, and loved ones behind and took risky and difficult journeys to Turkey. They brought their painful experiences with themselves. Feelings of uncertainty about the future and hope for better opportunities accompanied them along their journey.

3.3.Rebuilding a New Life

The third superordinate theme, *rebuilding a new life*, represented a range of experiences and hardships that the participants faced upon their arrival in Turkey. Moreover, they spoke about their initial months in Turkey, the role of learning the Turkish language, their adjustment process, relations with the host community, and sense of homesickness. Accordingly, this superordinate theme includes five

subordinate themes: 1) Initial time in Turkey, 2) the role of language, 3) shifting different social networks, 4) facing discrimination, and 5) sense of homesickness.

3.3.1.Initial Time in Turkey

When participants were asked to describe their initial impressions of life in Turkey, they expressed facing challenges and disappointments about Turkey, as well as a sense of security and hope. Some participants remembered the initial arrival period in Turkey as a positive experience. When they arrived in Turkey, they were mentally and physically exhausted because they struggled to live in the context of extreme violence, deprivation, and fear. Upon arrival, they initially felt relief and a sense of safety and security to have left the war behind. Finding safety and meeting their basic needs had priority, which was met upon arrival. Naval reflected on her initial time in Turkey:

In the beginning, when I first arrived, I left the war behind and there was safety. Those were important for me; plus, we were laughing and having fun. We went out, went to Ulus, and wandered about. Most importantly, at first, we forgot about the war. Of course, there was water, electricity, you know, refrigerators, things like that. At that time in Syria, there was no water or electricity. Of course, when I think about it, it was a time of many changes in my life.

On the other hand, the participants' initial period in Turkey was also difficult due to uncertainties, lack of support, and homesickness. They indicated that they were concerned about their future in Turkey. The initial obstacles mentioned by the participants were not knowing Turkish, inability to communicate, lack of social networks, unfamiliarity with the new culture and environment, and difficulties in finding housing and employment. In the following extract, Imad gave a vivid account of his first month in Turkey. He voiced his concerns and his experience of feeling like a stranger in the new environment.

When I got off at the bus station (Ankara bus station) I asked myself where am I? What am I doing? Where is this place? Why have I come here? What am I going to do here? I felt this life was not for me. I thought if I kill myself, I'll be free. I was so sick of everything. This is not my country; I couldn't get used to it here. I go out but it's not somewhere I'm used to. I'm always at home. When I was in Syria, I'd go crazy if I couldn't see my friends every day. I didn't know anyone here. That time was really bad. What should I do? I went out and walked the streets. Where is this place? Why am I here? I was

wondering whether this place was real or a dream. This lasted about a month. By the way, I looked for a job but couldn't find one. How can I find a job? I was worrying about that too.

Some participants reported that they left their parents in Syria when they migrated to Turkey. For these participants, the initial months in Turkey seemed extremely difficult because they were worried about their family members living in the midst of war. Further, they expressed their feelings of loneliness and longing for their family and homeland upon their arrival in Turkey. Separation from their family members and the absence of family support were the most challenging aspects of living in Turkey for these participants. They emphasized having a strong desire to return to Syria in this initial period. In the following excerpt, Marwa reflected on her initial months in Turkey. She indicated that it was an immensely difficult time for her. She felt a sense of loss and longing for her family and homeland.

I had great difficulties when I first came. When I came here, I didn't know the language. I had difficulties with the language. At that time if a friend came and asked me whether I was happy here (Turkey), I would say no. Of course, I'm talking about the early days. I even wanted to return to Syria at that time. Also, I left my family behind there. Especially during the early days that was a challenge. And that lasted six months. It was hard to wait for my family to come here. To be honest, when I first came here, I didn't like it. That was because I was always thinking about home. But I was patient. But the thought of returning is always there. I felt something was missing. It was as if I was lost. At the same time, I felt weak. I was wondering how I would live my life here. Of course, my family was the most important thing, because I left them there. I was so used to being with them. At the same time, I was used to having friends and it was difficult to quit school.

Before moving to Turkey, some participants had high expectations that they would have new opportunities to put their shattered lives in order. They hoped to obtain stable and well-paying jobs and continue their studies in Turkey. They also hoped to find better living conditions in Turkey. Yet, these participants were disappointed and dissatisfied during the initial months, because the reality did not match their expectations. Their pre-migration expectations and hopes about their new lives were not fulfilled and unforeseen obstacles and challenges confronted them. Aziz stated:

Life here was tough at first. I didn't know anyone. I had no family here. I looked for work a lot. During that time, conditions were difficult. I didn't know what I was doing. I only knew what people had told me before about Turkey.

They said that life in Turkey was easier and better and there was more work. When I came here, what I saw was different of course. But I can tell you life is hard here. That's what was different, life being really hard here. Life here is expensive and work is difficult. Secondly, the atmosphere here is different. The place we live, the air, and the work environment are very different compared with Syria. Those things were really tough for me at the beginning.

Almost half of the participants spoke about the difficulty of starting over when they arrived in Turkey. These participants had to abandon everything they had built over the years and start from scratch, which was extremely difficult. They highlighted that they felt like "a newborn baby" trying to figure out and learn everything. This situation lowered their sense of efficacy and self-sufficiency in the initial months. Some participants mentioned the lack of environmental mastery. They found themselves in a novel environment requiring fundamentally different skills than those they had in Syria. Their prior skills and training were not adequate in Turkey. In particular, they had to learn a new language, new cultural values and practices, and adapt to a new way of living. Marwa described her experience of starting from scratch:

Think about it, someone is living their life somewhere else. Not in Turkey, in Syria. I lived my whole life in Syria. I grew up there. All my family, my friends, and my memories were there. I left everything behind there and came here at a moment's notice, in other words I started life from scratch again. Of course, at first not knowing Turkish. Since childhood I spoke Arabic. For someone like me to later come to Turkey and cope is quite difficult. It's a new language. But not only that, traditions, customs, and things like that are different in Turkey as well. That was another issue to deal with. So, I started life from scratch again here (Turkey).

Similarly, Faisal spoke about the enormous amount of change that took place in his life after coming to Turkey:

Let me tell you about the time I first came here, those first days were incredibly hard. Those times were really tough because when you move somewhere else, to another country, many things change. What changes? Your life really changes. The food is very different, everything is very different. To an incredible degree. Like I just told you, it's like starting your life over from square one. There you were someone, here you are someone different. You're a new kid. You have no money. You're broke and you have to start life over. So, when I came to Turkey my life started from scratch.

As the participants' narratives illustrated, initial months in Turkey were full of challenges due to lack of adequate resources and skills for adapting to a new environment. Difficulty to find work, inability to speak Turkish, and having limited social support were the initial challenges participants faced. The participants' accounts shed light on the importance of losing personal, social, and economic resources in Syrian refugees' lives. Moreover, they experienced a cultural transition and struggled to adapt to a new life. In particular, learning Turkish seemed to be a critical component of dealing with initial hardships.

3.3.2. The Role of Language

All of the participants except one spoke about the importance of mastering the Turkish language. They viewed speaking Turkish as either a critical barrier or a facilitator during the adaptation process in Turkey. Inability to speak Turkish posed a big challenge for almost all the participants upon their arrival. Only one participant could speak Turkish fluently before coming to Turkey. Also, a gender difference was observed between participants in terms of Turkish proficiency. Male participants had better language skills due to having more opportunities to learn Turkish, such as joining language courses or having frequent contact with Turkish people. Women participants, however, seemed to have greater difficulty with Turkish because their social lives have been confined to their homes. In particular, married women regarded childcare and housework as the major barriers to attending language courses and learning Turkish.

For many participants, learning Turkish was vital in order to build a new life in Turkey. The inability to speak Turkish was highly disturbing and influenced their entire life. It was a significant source of distress in the initial months. It made it more difficult for them to socialize with local people, access job opportunities, understand Turkish culture, access healthcare, and education, find housing, and use public transportation. In the following account, Nawal remarked that the language barrier was the major difficulty standing in her way to have a better understanding of Turkish culture. Moreover, she felt dependent on her Turkish-speaking husband to manage daily life:

The biggest problem for me here (Turkey) is the language. Most (referring to Syrians) learned the language when they came to Turkey. That made their business and lives easier. But I didn't do that. I wasn't able to learn the language. You can't become familiar with the culture if you don't learn the language. You don't know anything about the culture or life here. My husband helps me with this. If it hadn't been for him, I don't know what I'd have done. Also, I need someone with me to translate in order to get things done. A simple example is when I go to the doctor. If I can't find someone to explain my problem, the doctor can't help me. If I knew Turkish, it would be different.

Several participants also mentioned that the language barrier made it difficult to communicate and establish relationships with the local people. The language barrier made it difficult to understand the local people and be understood by them. For some participants, communication problems resulted in feelings of frustration, powerlessness, and alienation. For instance, Faisal expressed how he was frustrated because he was not able to express himself and communicate:

The biggest difficulty I have here (Turkey) was the language. When I first came, I didn't know a word of Turkish. I couldn't talk to people. Actually, the greatest problem most Syrians living here have is the language. Not being able to communicate with people. Communicating with people is so important. I have a feeling of what I want to convey to you, but you can't understand me, and you have something you want to explain to me but can't. So, it's a problem.

Yet, participants also remarked that once they began to comprehend Turkish, they were able to adapt to the culture more easily. The participants with better Turkish skills reported that they were more satisfied with their lives and had a better understanding of Turkish culture, which seemed to create a sense of belonging. Some participants noted that they felt more accepted by the local people as a result of their language skills. Amira stated:

I think learning the language played an important part in my adjustment to life here. When I first came here, I didn't know anything about Turkish. No one could understand us and we couldn't understand them. We couldn't get anything done. But later, after we learned the language, things like that started to get easier. In fact, we got on better with Turkish people as they behave differently to someone from Syria who can speak Turkish.

For many of the participants, becoming proficient in Turkish allowed them to adjust to the new culture and environment quickly. The ability to speak Turkish empowered them and increased their sense of efficacy. Moreover, it enabled the participants to

access available resources and work. As their language proficiency got better, they felt better adapted to Turkey.

3.3.3. Relations with Various Communities

Fifteen participants talked about their relationship with the host community or their own community members. Most participants portrayed their relations with local people as positive. They felt being welcomed and respected by Turkish citizens. They perceived Turkish people as helpful and friendly. Some participants stated that they have close social contact with Turkish people in their neighborhoods or at work. They explained that Turkish people helped them find a job or housing, that they were close friends with Turkish people, and they visit each other at their homes. Marwan stated: *“Many people were helping us. I don’t know their names, but there were Turkish people helping us. I have good relations with Turkish people living in my neighborhood. They helped me with finding my house and job. At the same time, there were many Syrians who helped me. We have fun together, and we make jokes to each other. We visit each other.”* Additionally, a few participants’ accounts highlighted the importance of close social contact to foster positive relations between Syrians and host community members. In other words, the relationship between the participants and the local people improved as they communicated with each other and visited each other’s homes. Rana explained:

[...] We invited the neighbors into our home. They accepted our invitation and asked who we were, where we had come from, and if we were Syrian. They actually asked very interesting questions. Oh, you’re not dark-skinned, we thought you were black. Some of you are even blond. We didn’t know. We were asked questions like that. In fact, they also said our girls were very pretty (*laughing*). Later they realized that we were not so different. We’re people like you. More or less the same. Later, once they got to know us, they started to help us. Bless them, both at home and outside they helped us a lot. Our houses were very close to each other. Later we started to be neighborly to each other and our friendships grew. That’s how we started getting on with people.

Although most participants did not express any negative attitudes towards local people, four participants talked about violent incidents, conflicts, and tension involving Syrians and Turkish citizens. Two participants remarked that there might be Syrians with bad intentions; however, Turkish people tended to overgeneralize and

treat all Syrians as if they were all immoral and harmful. Additionally, some participants spoke about their relations with other Syrians. Generally, they expressed positive feelings towards their community and highlighted other Syrians' supportive and crucial role in the adjustment process. Only one female participant voiced her negative experiences with Syrians. She was coming from a Syrian Turkmen family. She used to live in a city that was located in a war-free region of Syria. She talked about the negative attitudes of her Syrian friends towards her due to ethnic differences between them. Her Arab-Sunni Syrian friends accused her of having fled Syria without a reason by Arab-Sunni Syrian friends. She also said that her Arab Sunni friends excluded her because she was a Syrian Turkmen. In sum, the study findings stressed the critical position of relationships with Turkish people and other Syrian refugees. In general, most participants viewed these relationships as a source of support in their adaptation process; a few participants talked about negative aspects of these relationships. In the following part, the researcher will present such negative experiences based on the participants' narratives.

3.3.4. Facing Discrimination

Though most participants indicated that they found local people welcoming and supportive in general, one third of the participants addressed being subjected to ill-treatment, negative attitudes, and discrimination when interacting with local people. They noted various instances of discrimination in the workplace, the housing market, and other social settings such as schools and hospitals. Instances of discrimination included unfair treatment in the healthcare system, insulting comments about Syrians, lower wages, verbal abuse, and physical attacks. According to the participants, the most difficult part of "being a Syrian refugee" in Turkey was the negative stigma that followed them wherever they went. They felt like "an outsider," "an alien," and "second class citizens" in the eyes of state officials and local people. They complained about unequal treatment and not having equal access to education and health care as Turkish citizens. In the following account, a 20-year-old woman, Rana, complained about being stigmatized by Turkish people. According to Rana, this stigma misrepresented Syrian people like beggars and helpless people. Turkish people perceived Syrians as a burden. This seemed to be a painful experience for her. Rana stated:

I realized that people treat you differently when they find out you're Syrian. I was asking: do you treat us like that because we're Syrian? Do you adjust your behavior toward us according to whether we're Syrian? These reactions from people of course sadden us. First of all, the biggest challenge about living here is the Syrian label. People describe you using a label. Someone can do a bad job or be needy, I don't know, someone can be a beggar on the streets, someone can be really needy, someone might not be really needy, but people always see you as needy. You might be well off but you're still a Syrian. You've escaped from the war and come here. You want to have the same rights as us now in this country. You're consuming our resources. It was really upsetting to hear things like this from Turkish people.

None of the participants experienced a physical attack but they talked about incidents that other Syrians experienced. Two participants noted that their younger siblings experienced humiliation, physical attacks, bullying, and discrimination by their Turkish peers in the school environment. Some participants mentioned that they frequently face discrimination at public hospitals. Participants voiced their concern about unfair treatment and negative attitudes that they experienced in hospitals in particular. They said that both health care providers and native citizens create problems and disrespect and mistreat them in hospitals deliberately. Two participants noted that hospital staff treats them in a less sensitive and ignorant manner than Turkish patients. One female participant, Marwa, voiced her personal experiences of facing hostility and rage:

There are things that I really hate in Turkey. Whenever I go to the hospital, I hate the Turkish people there. For instance, you are in a queue waiting for the doctor. When they (Turkish people) realize that you are a Syrian, they say you get out of the queue or go to the end of the queue. They (health care providers) don't respond to our questions adequately. They (health care providers) don't pay attention to our needs. They even hesitated to give water to use. [...] There have been some incidents where we live. There's a man at the end of our street. Whenever he sees us, he looks at us so angrily it's like he's going to attack us. In our neighborhood, some Turkish girls look at us with such hatred that it seems like they'll hit us. They do different things to scare us. But, of course, thank God, I'm not afraid of anyone. So, these are things I've experienced in Turkey and I hate all of them.

Participants also encountered disturbing questions and comments about their leaving Syria, their return to Syria, and social rights granted to Syrians. Such questions seemed to cause feelings of being a burden on Turkish society. Two participants' accounts revealed that the initial hospitality towards Syrians had been replaced by hostility,

mistreatment, and rage as the number of Syrians increased dramatically. For instance, one male participant, Samer told that Turkish people mistreated him because of being Syrian. He was unhappy about living in Turkey and felt uncomfortable in the face of accusatory questions and comments:

It's very hard for me. A lot of my Syrian friends like it here (Turkey). They say my situation here is really good but I don't agree. When I first came to Turkey, for example, when I got on the bus it was obvious that I was a foreigner. Everyone knows Turkish but I don't. I didn't have a card (bus card) for example. People first asked where I was from. I'm Syrian. Now you're Syrian. You get money from the government. You go to any school you want to. The government gives you a house, you can do whatever you want. Why did you come to Turkey? Stay in Syria. Fight. You face things like that. So, it's tough but there are some really good Turkish people too, like you, but generally it's hard. Very few people understand this. Not all (Syrians) get money from the government. We can't study whatever subject we want to. [...] I'm used to it now, are you Syrian, why did you come here, what do you do here, what job do you do, what are you studying, go back to Syria; okay I'm going back I say now. It's not a problem for me anymore. Well, it is, but I've gotten used to it.

Being subjected to experiences of discrimination has been a significant stressor for a few of the participants. The participants indicated that facing discrimination and exclusion from Turkish people weakened their sense of belonging. For those young Syrians who experienced multiple losses due to the war, a sense of belonging seemed to be a central need.

3.3.5.Sense of Homesickness

Eight participants expressed a deep longing for what they left behind, including their country, city, home, close friends and family members, and old routines and lifestyle. Importantly, a few participants highlighted that psychosocial and economic adversities in Turkey exacerbated their feeling of homesickness. Although the participants felt that they adjusted to life in Turkey, they seemed to experience homesickness due to various hardships, perceived discrimination, unfulfilled expectations, and separation from close friends and family members. These negative experiences increased their desire to turn away from Turkey and towards Syria. In the following account, Farid spoke about missing his school life and close friends and family environment. He wished he had a time machine that could take him back to his life before the war:

I miss my old life. I wish things had been different. I came here. I started a new life. I made lots of friends. But whatever happens I really miss my old life. My friends, where I was living, my family environment, my school... I even miss studying. The things you don't like, the things you don't like to do, you miss them once they're gone. I wanted to study. I want to go back to how it was before. I'm always wishing I had a time machine.

Some participants' accounts revealed that feelings of homesickness affected their psychological well-being. The common feature of these participants' experiences was being forced to separate from their parents and leaving their close friends and family behind in Syria. For them, homesickness was an intense and painful experience. Even though they could manage current challenges in their lives, they did not feel at home or like they belong to Turkey. They emphasized that being unable to return to Syria evoked deep feelings of homesickness and loneliness. Moreover, dealing with feelings of homesickness was the most important problem in these participants' lives. Talal spoke of his experience of homesickness:

I feel like my world has fallen apart but there's nothing I can do. I'm forced to live here (Turkey). Bairam is coming but I feel no joy. Life here is really tough. Especially without my mother and father. [...] I wish I hadn't come here if you ask me. I really wish I hadn't come here. I've spent three Bairams here. Somehow, I couldn't see my family. My heart aches for them. I can't go to Syria and see them. [...] I got used to it here but the longer I stay the more I want to go to Syria. I work here. I manage at work because one way or another I learned the language. But you're a child of Ankara and I'm a child of Syria. While you're from Ankara, I'm from Syria. Your home is Ankara and mine is Syria. I'm a child of Syria. I've been living in Ankara for 2.5 years and may live for 10, but my homeland is Syria.

Sense of homesickness was an inseparable component of these young Syrians' experiences in Turkey. Their homesickness became stronger as they felt less at home in Turkey. For some participants, homesickness was highly distressful.

3.4.Ongoing Challenges and Losses

As illustrated in the first three superordinate themes, the participants have gone through difficult and life-altering experiences at each phase of forced displacement, namely in wartime Syria, during their flight to Turkey, and after arrival to Turkey. Those experiences have brought multiple losses and challenges as well as changes in

different domains of participants' lives. The fourth superordinate theme, *ongoing challenges and losses*, describes tangible and emotional losses and challenging conditions the participants encountered. It comprised four subordinate themes: 1) loss of socioeconomic status, 2) loss of social networks, 3) loss of future life projects, and 4) loss of psychological well-being.

3.4.1.Loss of Socioeconomic Status

Half of the participants talked about the effect of economic losses resulting from the war. They emphasized that their families lost money, livelihoods, and property such as a house, land, and business alongside other losses and challenges. Most of the participants seemed to perceive such losses as a "status downgrade." Furthermore, they experienced financial hardships and a lower standard of living in Turkey than their life in Syria before the war. For some participants, such losses were the most overwhelming problem in their lives. In the following quote, Faisal talked about the loss of his family's business and possessions. He described his life prior to the war as that of a "president" and spoke of the "fall of the president" after the war started to explain the economic losses and challenges he experienced. He stated:

We had a moving company but it's gone unfortunately. I can explain my hardship like this. Imagine a president. The president of a country. Suddenly he becomes nothing. He loses everything. Nothing is left from when he was the president. We were like that [...] Everything changed. I mean, my home, my neighborhood, my clothes, my expenditures, my expenses, everything. Before the war, for example, I bought new clothes every week. After the war started, I couldn't.

Some participants talked about the way such losses affected their family members, particularly their fathers. They said that their fathers lost their businesses, money, and socio-economic status as a result of the war and displacement to Turkey. The fathers lost their occupational status. their skills were no longer valid in Turkey. For example, Yasmin spoke about the economic losses of her father:

My father, in particular, left everything behind. He lost his job. He lost so much, he lost lots of money. In Syria, there's a province outside Aleppo called Hama, slightly more to the south, southwest of Aleppo, and my father's job

was there. He quit his job there. He couldn't go back there again anyway. Obviously, we lost a lot of money during this period and lost everything we left behind. [...] My father is 50 years old but we can't work here (*Turkey*). My father's biggest problem is not knowing Turkish. Sometimes he does small jobs. Sometimes there are goods coming from Syria to sell but if he tries to sell them, because of the cost, the profit is small.

Additionally, Nayla mentioned that his father, who was a teacher in Syria, could not get the same job in Turkey and is now a laborer. During the interview, she emphasized that her most important aspiration is to earn an undergraduate degree, get a better-earning job, and support his father. As Nayla voiced:

My father's job in Syria was pretty good. He was a teacher. We had three shops. We were pretty well off. When war broke out everything changed. [...] There's only one thing I find hard here (*Turkey*). In the family only my father is working. We had no difficulties in Syria. The job my father did before was very different from the one he does here. Actually, my father should have retired but circumstances didn't allow it. At first, we had great difficulty. It's like this, my father is an English teacher. He got a job as a laborer when he came here. It was a bit, you know, hard for him. Doing a different job creates a different life.

Some participants made comparisons between prewar Syria and Turkey regarding the cost of living, working conditions, and wages. All of the participants had their own houses in Syria. Some participants' families were financially well-situated. They stated that their financial situation had improved only after working hard for years. Concerning living and working conditions in Turkey, they complained about insecure jobs, working long hours, and low wages. They also emphasized high living expenses such as food and rent being expensive in Turkey and the difficulty of meeting their needs with low wages. They pointed out that it was very difficult to regain the standard of living they had in Syria before the war. For instance, Talal, who had a high-paying job in Syria, complained about the high cost of living in Turkey. He explained:

I came here and I realized that life was different. It's not paradise here. I came here and I want money, I want a salary. It wasn't like that in Syria. Turkey is five times more expensive than Syria. Particularly food and drink and cigarettes are cheaper in Syria. While Marlboro is 6 liras in Syria, it's 14 liras here. Life is really very expensive here. Before the war I was working in Syria and bought a house within a year. Here if you work 20,000 years you can't buy one. You earn 1400 lira but spend it all. I have a wife and children. It was the

same in Syria. I was in the potato business and bought a house within a year. My brother was working in a restaurant and bought a house.

As it is evident in the participants' accounts, fleeing Syria had brought a substantial shift in the economic resources of participants' families. They encountered unemployment, insecure jobs with low wages, and financial hardships. Moreover, they often took lower-status jobs in Turkey. Participants noted that such economic and status loss overwhelmed them during the adaptation process.

3.4.2.Loss of Social Networks

Eleven participants spoke about the loss of contact with their friends and family members, separation from them due to the war and displacement, and weakened community and family ties among Syrians after the war started. The participants mentioned that they had very close ties with their relatives and friends and frequently visited their extended family before the war. Such networks provided moral and material support and solidarity to the participants. Therefore, the loss of such networks seemed to be one of the most significant problems in their lives. Furthermore, the participants emphasized that their relatives and friends dispersed across Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and European countries. Farid expressed a deep sense of loss and a longing for his extended family and friends:

I miss my friends. I miss my family environment. My grandmother, my grandfathers, trips, picnics. We lost a lot in fact, personally and as a nation. We lost our customs. We had beautiful customs. At Bairam, for example, without fail in the morning of the first day of Bairam everyone would get together at my grandmother's. We had our breakfast there. Around 50 people (laughs). A family of 50 sitting at one table. Everyone was talking to each other. Some were laughing. Some were talking. Saying pass the cheese. Saying pass the olives. (laughing) everyone's doing something. They were talking to each other. It was so nice. We lost all that when we came here (*Turkey*). There's at most 10 of us if my uncle and his family came for dinner. You can't do anything at Bairam. It was like that after the war started.

A few participants talked about the emotional effect of separation from their family members who stayed in Syria. They highlighted that they did not have new social networks to replace the old ones. This situation led to psychosocial difficulties such as lack of social support, loneliness, and isolation for these participants. For instance, a

woman participant, Hessa, expressed the pain of separation from her family and suffered from loneliness and isolation in Turkey.

To be honest it's really tough being far away. It's a situation that's hard to endure. When you think about it, we have absolutely no one here. We have no relatives, we know absolutely no one. No one visits. It's just me, my wife, and my daughter. We're trying to live together. We've been living abroad for three years. We have a hard life. (*eyes fill with tears*) [...] You somehow want to call someone to talk with them, to meet someone, to ask how they are. Of course, you feel lonely. You feel weird, you feel like a stranger because you're far from your family. Especially when it comes to my family, we were a family that constantly visited and talked to each other.

Moreover, some participants reflected on the deteriorating relationships with their relatives after the war began. They spoke about the loss of communication and closeness with extended family members. Amira stated:

After the war started the most important thing was that my relationships with other people changed a lot. For example, before the war we had lots of relatives. There were many living especially in Germany, Sweden, in different parts of Europe. Before the war we used to talk to them. We had close relationships with them. After the war started, they broke off those relationships.

Some participants stated that close-knit community ties and social connectedness in Syrian society deteriorated because of the war. Participants voiced that solidarity and support had diminished among Syrians. For instance, Marwan pointed out the loss of unity and support among Syrians due to the war:

When the war started relationships between people changed. People stopped asking each other how they were. Likewise, relatives stopped calling each other. Syrians, as you know, became scattered. Some went one way, some went another. But I don't think it should have been like that. In the end we're all Syrian. We should all help each other. We somehow have to maintain those ties. I'm so sad. Why did it turn out like this? Syrians should be united and act together.

For a few participants, post-war political and sectarian conflicts also weakened social connectedness and solidarity among Syrians. They highlighted that different religious and ethnic groups had been living together peacefully in prewar Syria; however, conflicts and tensions arose among various sectarian groups after the war. In the

following quote, Khalid spoke about peaceful relations among different ethnic and religious communities in the prewar era.

First of all, there was no difference between people in Syria before the war. I mean there are different religious denominations in Syria. There are Alawis, there are Sunnis, there are different religions, there are Yezidis, there are Shi'ites, there are Christians. Before the war there were no problems at all between us. We helped each other. More importantly, with all those religions and denominations, everyone gave permission for their daughters to marry whoever they wanted. For example, a Sunni would marry a Christian. An Alawi would marry a Sunni or a Yezidi and so on. There were no problems like that between us. But after the unrest started, as the civil war broke out differences appeared between us and we became separated. And we started to mistrust each other after the unrest.

Thus, the loss of close ties with family members and friends and weakened community ties posed a significant challenge for many participants. Loss of social support from extended families and friends was a major loss of resources. Such resource loss undermined young Syrians' capacity to cope with the hardships of migration.

3.4.3. Loss of Future Life Projects

In addition to the loss of social networks, seven participants remarked that they had to give up their future aspirations, life projects, and goals. In particular, loss of educational aspirations was the most salient theme in six participants' stories. They pointed out that not only did they aim to complete higher education before the war, but they also had vocational aspirations. However, war conditions had disrupted their school life in Syria. Following their displacement to Turkey, most participants didn't have the opportunity to continue their education due to financial hardships or new responsibilities such as raising children. For instance, Farid, who had a dream of becoming a doctor, had to drop out of school and abandon his educational aspirations to provide for his family. His siblings became his source of motivation to confront the hardships of displacement. He gave voice to his experiences:

In fact, I'm not living here (*Turkey*) for myself. And not even to keep my mother and father alive, we all know everyone has to go some day. They've lived their lives and they've lost their chance to go to school. Nothing can be done for them. I've got no chance to go to school either. Maybe later I'll get married and have children but that's it. I don't think I'll go back to school. Because if I go to school, I'll have to quit my job. And so, my children won't

be able to go to school. I'm not working for myself or my mother and father but for those two children at home. [...] I have a girlfriend at the moment and maybe later we'll get married and have children. About work, I'll find a better position in a better place. I'm only thinking about those things for my future.

Participants' accounts shed light on the perceived impossibility of actualizing their future aspirations and life projects that they had before the war. Although they felt like their lives were somewhat on track in Turkey, they felt restrained by severe financial hardships and overwhelming responsibilities and had to abandon their future dreams. For these participants, this seemed to be a loss that cannot be recovered. They didn't feel optimistic about actualizing their future plans. For example, Marwan had his own electrical business in Syria and talked about losing his business aspirations of expanding it. He highlighted that it seems too difficult to set up his own business in Turkey due to harsh financial conditions.

Likewise, Amira, who got married and had a child after moving to Turkey, spoke about her feelings regarding the loss of her educational aspirations. During her interview, the theme of loss of future aspirations emerged several times and she became very emotional while talking about her future dreams. She said:

I: What was school like? What kind of a student were you?

P: I was very hard working (says in Turkish).

I: What were your goals?

P: I wanted to be a pharmacist. Considering the environment in which the war took place, at home people coming and going all the time, I couldn't find enough time to focus on my studies. I couldn't find the right environment.

I: From what I understand, because of the war you couldn't achieve your goals.

P: Uh-huh.

I: Okay, how does that make you feel?

P: Very bad (says in Turkish. Smiles). It affects all aspects of your life. Just imagine, your whole life you've been dreaming about this and thinking about it. You're going to enroll in school and then with one year left something like this happens. It's so hard (*eyes fill with tears*).

The loss of future dreams emerged as an important source of distress for these young participants. War started at a very critical period in their lives at which they would normally explore different possibilities to build their lives. However, they had to forego their educational or vocational aspirations. Unfortunately, only a few of the participants had an opportunity to continue their academic or vocational ambitions in

Turkey. Most of them had to work or get married and become a parent at a very early age. Although the participants encountered uncertainties and disappointments about the future, they also voiced their sense of hope that life in Turkey might bring new possibilities and plans.

3.4.4.Loss of Psychological Wellbeing

Another theme that emerged from the participants' narratives was about the mental health difficulties that they experienced. Although ten participants mentioned that traumatizing experiences and losses affected their psychological well-being negatively, the remaining eight participants did not report any effect of such experiences and losses on their well-being. Those eight participants perceived no adverse changes in their emotional wellbeing and did not report any mental health problems after the war. Those who experienced psychological problems described a range of emotions and states such as sadness, anger, joylessness, worry, sleep difficulties and nightmares, loss of motivation, inability to have strong feelings, and indifference. The participants stated that they had not experienced such problems in Syria and attributed them to war-related experiences and hardships after coming to Turkey. In the following excerpt, Farid talked about his sleep disturbances and how he suffered from feelings of unhappiness as a result of war-related experiences:

The war has completely changed me as a person. You know, I can count the days I've been happy since the war started on the fingers of one hand. There's no happiness at all. I'm always unhappy. I don't think normally anymore. I'm always imagining bad things. I rarely sleep well. After I go to bed, for 30 to 45 minutes I'm constantly thinking about things. Like tomorrow I have to do that, I have to go there. I constantly wake up at night. I sleep for short periods.

Intense feelings of sadness and anger frequently came up during the interviews. The participants mentioned that they became angrier and more intolerant towards their surroundings. Participants described their feelings of anger related to feelings of helplessness due to lack of control over traumatic experiences and losses. For instance, Imad described his experiences as follows:

P: Before the war I was a very normal person. After the war started, you can't tolerate anything. You're short-tempered. The war affected me psychologically, I mean I started tormenting myself when I got mad. I got so

angry and I started to harm myself because I was feeling so bad. For example, I was punching windows and walls just to harm myself. Just to forget. For what I've experienced to be over. The war has really damaged me psychologically. Damaged me in that way most.

I: Are you still having these problems you've mentioned?

P: I am. I am angrier. Normally I'm calm but when I get angry, I lose control. It makes no difference who I'm with. Even with my mother and father, I'll do what I want and say what I want. I wasn't like that before. Before the war, I was normal. However mad I got. But it unavoidably affects you. It affects everyone differently. It made me really angry for example. I became a very angry person because of what I've been through. Extremely so.

Additionally, some participants voiced their feelings of indifference, numbing, and inability to have strong emotions due to multiple losses, adversities, and the death of loved ones. Yasmin stated that she could not “cry” and “feel intensely and deeply” even when someone dies. Yasmin shared:

The emotions I've experienced and the things I've laughed at and enjoyed in the past don't move me anymore. They're just normal. I started leading an ordinary life with its routines. Like if someone dies or if something bad happens to them, it just seems normal to me. I don't cry. Ultimately, things don't affect me as much as they used to. Everything started to seem very normal to me. If someone left or, I don't know, something bad happened to them or to me, or someone died I used to feel it very deeply. But now everything's become normal. It seems normal to me.

Half of the participants made a distinction in terms of their psychological well-being and mood states before and after the war. They identified previously unfamiliar experiences and emotions such as intense anger, lack of pleasure, worry, sleep difficulties and nightmares, and indifference. Some of the participants described their state as becoming a different person. Although these young Syrians faced multiple losses and experienced psychological difficulties, it was striking that they also exhibited endurance, effort, and resilience under extremely distressful conditions.

3.5.Ways of Coping with Adversities

The fifth superordinate theme is *sources of coping with adversities*. This theme describes how the participants handle challenging and adverse experiences throughout different stages of forced migration. Three subordinate themes have emerged: 1) personal characteristics, 2) relational support, and 3) social services.

3.5.1. Personal Characteristics

Eleven participants mentioned that their innate resources, including self-reliance, being patient and hopeful for the future, and religious faith, facilitated their coping with highly adverse circumstances. A few participants noted that they were left to their personal resources because there was nobody to help them. Accordingly, they stressed self-reliance as the primary source of coping. A 20-year-old male, Faisal, left all his family members behind and lives with his wife in Turkey. He emphasized that his self-reliance and the lessons he learned from his parents helped him deal with hardships in Turkey. He stated:

Like I told you before, I did everything myself. And I gave all my support to myself. I was on my own. [...] So far through everything I've learned, done, and experienced I've shaped my personality. I've created myself in fact. I've applied what I learned from the way my family raised me and what they taught me. Actually, I've done this: if I have a problem it remains in my heart and is solved there. Thank God I've learned this and I manage to cope in this way.

Faisal added that being patient provided him with strength. He mentioned that "What helped me the most was patience. Patience really helped me. Apart from that, if you ask me what about myself helped me the most, I would say my personality."

Other participants also echoed the theme of self-reliance. A woman participant, Marwa, reported that her sense of confidence in her abilities was the most significant source of coping for her. She described that "I trust myself. If I say I can cope with something, I can cope with it. I can handle all obstacles. I can say that. That's all."

A 22-year-old man, Farid, remarked on one distinctive theme of coping. When he was asked what gave him strength through hard times, he spoke of his motivation to struggle for other people and his younger siblings, as well as his sense of confidence. Despite his eagerness to support other people, he was unwilling to receive help from other people and only relied on his abilities in overcoming difficulties.

Let me tell you, I always want to do voluntary work. You know, I want to help other people. I support my family. So, my younger brother and sister won't go through what I went through. I'm working hard for them. I support my friends.

They keep me going. But when I have a problem, I deal with it by myself. I don't want support from anyone. I don't share my troubles with anyone.

In addition to self-reliance, two women participants expressed the importance of hope for the future to endure difficult times. For instance, Hessa indicated that maintaining a sense of hope for a better future provided her strength. With her own words, Hessa stated that “the thing that helps me most here (Turkey) and gives me the most strength is hope. Keeping hope alive. I believe that somehow things and life will improve.”

Another important personal source of coping was “prayer and faith in Allah.” Three participants acknowledged “prayer and faith in Allah” as a significant resource of support and strength throughout the difficult times in war and after arrival in Turkey. They experienced their faith in Allah and prayer as providing a form of emotional support. In particular, praying to Allah provided them relief and patience to bear the adverse conditions. A 22-year-old man, Marwan, told that his religious convictions had been a part of his life before the war and they became the primary source of comfort and strength after the war:

First of all, the Lord of the Worlds helped me. In fact, the Lord of the Worlds helped everyone. I maintained my connection with Allah by praying and performing namaz. And I counted on Him. Whatever happened, whether war broke out or not, I trusted in Allah. I relied on Him. I believed that He would solve all problems. As I told you before, a person who faces pain will pray to Allah and if he seeks refuge, he will find relief and his problems will be solved. Yes, seeing and experiencing the whole war was very painful for me and I trusted in Allah. I sought refuge in Him. I prayed a lot. I performed namaz and in the end I found comfort.

Moreover, faith in Allah provided a perspective through which the participants could assign meaning to their challenging experiences. For instance, Talal described the significance of his religious beliefs in handling painful experiences. He stated:

First, I'll talk about my faith in Allah. I don't perform namaz very often but my mother and father taught me it was the way to find patience. Allah will somehow make things happen if it is His will. Let us believe in Allah and our prophets and let us pray; there is no need for anything else.

When confronting traumatizing experiences and adversities, most participants relied on their inner resources, including self-reliance and religious faith. They emphasized

that their inner resources provided the guidance and support that they needed when they could not find anybody else to support them.

3.5.2.Relational Support

The participants frequently noted the importance of receiving social support from family members and friends when dealing with challenges. Fifteen participants stated that relational support was an important source of strength during various stages of forced migration. In particular, family, including extended family members, was pivotal to their lives and a key source of support. Family members provided a sense of belonging, emotional support, and soothing by talking and sharing the emotional pain. For instance, a 20-year-old woman, Nawal, underlined the soothing and supportive role of her parents when facing fearful conditions of the war.

I was somehow made stronger by what I experienced during the war. At first, I was terrified by the things I was going through. But my family was there for me and they were reassuring me in some way, and they supported me so I wouldn't be afraid. I cried a lot at that time. We cried together and suffered together.

The family also provided guidance in dealing with hardships. Aziz, a 21-year-old man, stated:

The presence of my family is my biggest source of support. During this period, my close family and other relatives gave me lots of advice. They instilled into me that everything would change. This period has really made me stronger in the face of challenges thanks to their advice and experience.

Along with parents and siblings, married participants also received emotional support from their wives and husbands. One of the participants, Khalid, got married a couple of months before the interview. He stated that his life has changed after marriage. He explained how his wife shared his loneliness and problems and provided comfort:

Before, I was going to work and coming home but there was no one to talk to, to share my problems with for example. Now I'm going to work and coming home and my wife is at home. That's nice. She keeps track of when and what I eat, when I go to the bathroom, and what I wear. Most importantly, we eat and drink together. We talk and we share our problems.

Apart from family members, friends were also a source of support and strength. Four participants described their Syrian friends acting as important sources of emotional

support, soothing, advice, and guidance during various stages of forced migration. For instance, Amira spoke about her early memories of the refugee camp in Turkey and how one of her friends had played a remarkably supportive and encouraging role in her life during the initial months in the camp. She stated:

Especially when I came to the camp, I was in such a state that I didn't talk to anyone. For two months I didn't communicate with anyone. Later I made a friend in the camp. Actually, she made me brave. She encouraged me. To continue with work and to continue with school. She inspired me by saying things like this will all be over one day.

Only one participant reported that Turkish friends and neighbors' assistance helped him cope with challenges in Turkey. Marwan talked about the importance of the support given by his Turkish neighbors in establishing his new home:

P: Like I said before, Turkish people helped me a lot too. We helped some and they helped us some as well. May Allah multiply the reward for their good deeds. They've helped us a lot during this period.

I: What kind of support did they give you?

P: For example, the woman who lives upstairs is my friend's mother. They brought us a sofa bed and gave us household goods. They brought us household items like this (points to a cupboard); in fact they brought me things I haven't used or even seen in the last couple of years. They helped me to set up my home.

The participating young Syrians identified social support from family members and friends as the most significant source of coping in the face of traumatic experiences and hardships. As it is evident in the narratives, extended family was one of the most critical aspects of Syrian culture. Similarly, family members and friends played a very crucial role in the participants' lives in Turkey in terms of providing guidance, soothing, and emotional support. Having such support empowered these young refugees.

3.5.3.Social Services in Turkey

A final coping resource utilized by the participants was the social assistance provided by governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations in Turkey. In particular, eight participants reported that receiving social services played a significant

role in improving their health and living conditions in Turkey. Remarkably, they emphasized receiving free health care from state hospitals as a critical source of support in the participants' lives. A 21-year-old woman, Hessa, appreciated the free health care provided by the government.

Everything, honestly, is good here (*Turkey*). There are no problems at all. There's a system. Life goes on somehow. Thank God when we face a challenge in Turkey, we are able to overcome it. Especially when someone gets sick here, they look after you when you're taken to a hospital, clinic, or some other health center. They examine you and give you medicine and that medicine is free. Those things are nice.

In addition to free health care, participants also spoke about social assistance that helped them meet their basic needs and cope with poor living conditions. For instance, Arwa, who was struggling in a poor neighborhood where Syrians live, stated that "there's also a charitable foundation. They give us aid supplies every 3-4 months. They also give food aid."

21-year-old Aziz also experienced the governmental assistance as very supportive in adjusting to Turkey and appreciated it:

The Turkish government has also helped us a lot. The government's treatment of us was very important. They treated us very well. During this period, they made things easier for us. They helped us in many ways such as giving us bread and other food. I can give lots of other examples too.

One female participant, Marwa, stated that vocational courses provided by the governmental institutions helped her learn new skills and find a job. She voiced the importance of these courses throughout the adjustment process and said that "I went to the Red Crescent's courses. Tailoring or other types of work. Those helped us."

In summary, the participants utilized different kinds of coping methods and resources to manage life's challenges and adversities. Such resources included faith in Allah, recognition of personal strength, support from family members and friends, and social assistance provided by the governmental institutions.

3.6.Changes in Family Dynamics

The participants' narratives shed light on young refugees' family life and the challenges they experienced in this area. The superordinate theme, *changes in family dynamics*, captures the participants' views on changing family dynamics caused by the war. Participants' accounts revolved around issues of shifting roles and responsibilities within the family, changes in family communication patterns, connectedness among family members, and varying experiences of adjustment to a new life after the displacement. The researcher identified three subordinate themes: 1) changes in roles and responsibilities, 2) changes in family connectedness, and 3) adjustment process within the family.

3.6.1.Changes in Roles and Responsibilities

The most cited issue in families was the shifting roles and responsibilities resulting from the war and displacement to Turkey. Eleven participants talked about how familial roles and allocation of responsibility among family members had been challenged and redefined. All participants highlighted the well-defined traditional roles in their families prior to the war. Their fathers were the head of the household and the principal breadwinner of the family. At the same time, their mothers never worked and were primarily responsible for housework and caring for their husbands and children. However, most participants reported that their fathers had lost their roles as the family's primary provider following displacement to Turkey. All male participants took a paid job to provide for their families because their fathers could not find employment due to their older age and language barriers. Adaptation to the new country was more difficult for the fathers. They were not able to speak Turkish. They were unfamiliar with the customs of Turkish society and their work skills were not transferable to the job market in Turkey. Young Syrian men, on the other hand, could find jobs easier than their fathers. These male participants experienced a reversal of provider and recipient roles between them and their fathers in terms of becoming the sole breadwinner of the family. These young men found themselves having to take on new responsibilities and roles such as looking after their families. They experienced these new responsibilities and roles as overwhelming. Farid explained:

My father works from time to time. Because he's 50 years old and doesn't know Turkish he can't find much work. [...] Actually, for us, for young people, for me it's really tough. Because I know Turkish, only I can find work. We have much more difficulties. I look after my father, mother, and family financially. Most of my salary goes towards the home. Before the war while in Syria my father had all the responsibility of course because he was working. We went to school. It's different now. Now the responsibility is on me. My father's working, doing things, but his responsibilities have become mine. I have to bear those responsibilities. I'm fine with that. There's no other way.

Although the participants reported that changing circumstances have imposed more burden and responsibilities on their mothers, all the mothers except one continued to be solely responsible for household tasks. Only one mother started to work after arrival to Turkey. Furthermore, two female participants talked about their fathers' feelings of disempowerment since they had lost their social status and the role of being the breadwinner of the family after displacement to Turkey. They felt dependent upon their children's assistance which was not needed in Syria. In the below extract, Yasmin talked about how the role reversal between her parents impacted their family dynamics:

After war broke out my mother started to work. My brother had to quit school to help our mother. This situation made my father think that he could not be of any use to us anymore. He thought that he had become worthless. Unfortunately, my father felt like that.

In general, migration affected the family dynamics of Syrian families. The most salient change stated by the participants was younger generations taking on more responsibilities, such as supporting the family financially. For older generations, migration made it harder to reclaim their past professions in the Turkish labor market due to a lack of language competency and required skills. This situation created a shift in the power dynamics of the family, resulting in new challenges for the family relations. Older members of refugee families became dependent on the refugee youth.

3.6.2. Changes in Family Connectedness

Concerning the changes in familial relations due to the war and displacement, some participants emphasized that the level of family connectedness and cohesion remained the same. On the other hand, other participants stated that their family relations became

more cohesive and closer due to the adversities. Ten participants, however, pointed out that the quality of the interaction among family members changed because of the challenges of the war and living in Turkey. They noted reduced family cohesion, increased family conflicts, and communication problems.

Some participants mentioned that serious interpersonal conflicts within the household arose and mutual understanding, tolerance, caring, and support among family members decreased. These family conflicts revolved around financial difficulties, unemployment, and harsh living conditions. Nawal gave voice to her feelings of loneliness as a result of changing communication and relationship patterns. She emphasized that there had been a strong sense of cohesiveness and unity in her family before the war. Yet, her family cohesion and unity suffered from the war and displacement. Nawal said:

P: (*eyes filled with tears*) Before the war everything in our family was shared. Our sorrow was shared. Our happiness was shared. If we were to make a decision, the whole family would get together and discuss it.

I: So, did things change with the war?

P: After the war started, everyone started to think different things. There were no more discussions. Everyone was thinking individually. It was like we weren't a family. [...] In particular, my father started not to talk at all. He was angrier and wanted to be on his own. My mother was the same. As for my younger brothers, they needed the family more. And as a result of those things, I was alone. And I started to feel lonely. Everyone was in a separate world. Everyone was thinking different things.

Some participants brought up the issue of communication problems among family members. Participants compared their communication patterns in Syria before the war with those in Turkey. They underlined that they had less family time in Turkey compared to Syria. Family members appeared to spend much less time together as a family due to harsh working conditions. Therefore, they had less time to talk to each other and share their problems. Nayla gave voice to her experiences:

I miss, you know, our old life. Before, every day I used to go out and about with my family. That was about six months ago. Now it's like we've forgotten about each other. My father comes home. He's so tired. He doesn't even have dinner. He goes straight to bed. My brother and sister are students. I mean everyone has their own thing. It's not like before. We used to go out and about.

(Switches to Arabic) We used to go out together. We wandered about. It's not like before. Now our conversations consist of just hello and goodbye. (Continues in Turkish) As you see, life in Turkey is quite tough. It's very tiring. It's hard whether you're a student or working. My older brother got married. He has another responsibility. He's got a baby. He comes once a month. My mother really misses him. It's like that. Everyone's built themselves a life. It's similar in Syria but not so much. We used to go out. We used to talk. I want to talk to my father like a normal person. We don't talk. We can't do things like before. There's less communication within the family.

Additionally, two male participants talked about the tension and arguments with their parents, particularly with their fathers. The arguments revolved around household responsibilities, being forced into marriage, and choosing a spouse. They reported that their parents did not understand or value their needs and intentions. As a consequence of conflict with their parents, participants described the deterioration of communication and becoming increasingly estranged from their family members. For instance, Farid stated that he chose to spend less time to socialize with his family members:

Right now, when I get home, I have dinner straight away. I sit down with my family for half an hour at most. We talk a little. Is there any problem? Did anything happen? After that I go to my room. I close the door. I wait by the phone. Apart from that I don't go out anywhere with my family. I don't want to go out. For example, they're going to the park, to a barbeque, or somewhere else but I don't want to go. Even if I go, I keep my distance. When I think about it, I think I'm right to keep a distance from my family but not totally. I'm not cutting off relations completely. I haven't left them but I don't want to spend time with them. I don't know why I've made such a choice but I feel happier this way. I feel better. Because whenever I try to sit down with them my father makes some remark. Yeah, they make me angry. They make me mad. You have to do it like this. When are you going to have time to do those things? They got used to transferring their responsibilities to me. Whatever responsibility there is they load it onto me and so to avoid that I keep my distance from them.

Although the participants still regarded family relations as the most crucial support during difficult times, some participants voiced tensions and erosion of communication within the family due to the challenges and hardships of war and migration. Participants' narratives indicated that the relationship between family members has eroded, and thus, conflicts and psychological distance between family members have increased.

3.6.3.Different Adjustment Processes among Family Members

Four participants spoke about the different rates at which their family members have adapted to Turkey. The participants mentioned that younger people often learned Turkish and adapted to Turkey faster than older people. Participants remarked that their mothers encountered significant difficulties in adapting to life in Turkey compared to other family members, because they generally had very limited Turkish and minimal contact with the outside world. The below quote exemplified the slower adaptation of those Syrian mothers. Rabia voiced her experience:

In fact, we have to get used to this environment. The work environment, lessons, school, and communicating with Turkish people and getting to know them were the things that made me get used to it here. For example, if you compare my mother, she's at home and has no contact with anyone except the neighbors. Therefore, I see she hasn't gotten used to life in Turkey.

Similarly, Nayla expressed her perception of and feelings about the adaptation process of her family members. She emphasized that her younger siblings fully adapted to Turkey. On the other hand, her mother has not adapted to Turkey due to the language barrier. She voiced her sense of worry and sadness about her mother:

P: My mother still hasn't got used to Turkey. She still says she wants to return to Syria. Mother, where are you going to return to? What are you talking about? My brother and sister are quite used to it here. If you saw them, you'd think they were Turkish. Really. They don't have any Syrian friends. And they don't want any. They speak Turkish at home. They only speak Arabic with my mother.

I: What are the reasons your mother hasn't gotten used to life here?

P: Not knowing Turkish. We have no one here except each other. She has no friends either but the neighbors are very nice, bless them. They come around every day. My mother visits them too. They chat. My mother spends her days like that. Always at home. If she does go out it's to the farmers' market. [...] I think about my mother. Is she very bored? My father goes to work and we go to school and I wonder what my mother does at home. Does she get really bored? Every day she says she wants to go back to Syria. She says she can't get used to it here. I'm always putting myself in her position. How does she do it? You'd be sad too.

Demands of migration were experienced differently by different members of refugee families. Certain members, particularly younger ones, were more adaptable and had skills and motivation that allowed them rapid adjustment to Turkey. At the same time,

other family members, especially participants' mothers, experienced major challenges in adjustment to Turkey. Such differences among family members might strain family relations, leading to intergenerational conflict. In addition to changes in family dynamics, forced migration brought changes to participants' views of themselves.

3.7.Changed Views of the Self

The participants talked about the changes that they experienced in the way they perceive themselves. The seventh superordinate theme, *changed views of the self*, aimed to describe participants' sense-making of such changes. This superordinate theme consisted of two subordinate themes: 1) increased sense of responsibility and 2) recognizing my inner strength.

3.7.1.Increased Sense of Responsibility

The majority of the participants spoke about finding themselves in a new position of great family responsibility upon the beginning of the war and moving to Turkey. They became increasingly aware that they had to shoulder a number of vital roles and responsibilities within their family. They felt that they didn't have an option in taking on these responsibilities and roles. Thereby, developing a sense of maturity has become a prominent theme in the participants' narratives; that is, they perceived a marked increase in their sense of responsibility.

The participants experienced an increase in the amount and diversity of their responsibilities. Responsibilities they articulated involved earning an income and becoming the primary breadwinner of their family, sending money to the family members in Syria, finding housing, accessing services and resources for their family, translating conversations, mentoring their younger siblings, and taking care of their children. The narratives documented some gender differences in terms of the nature of these roles and responsibilities. In particular, male participants took a paid job to provide for their families at the cost of their education and other aspirations. Three male participants who were married with children stated that not only were they responsible for maintaining their family in Turkey, but they also had to send money to

their parents in Syria. On the other hand, female participants' responsibilities were generally confined to inside the house and very few female participants took a paid job to support their family financially. Importantly, four female participants who were married with children stated that they experienced an important transition into becoming a mother after the war started. For these participants, becoming a mother led to increased responsibility and maturity. They generally felt that their life has changed entirely and voiced their concerns about providing a better future for their children. Hessa explained:

It's a nice feeling to be a mother, but at the same time it's a hard feeling. When you have a child, it means your responsibilities increase. Thinking about their future and arranging everything according to them bring new responsibility.

Participants' narratives revealed that these responsibilities had important implications for the participants' sense of self. Most participants regarded taking on multiple responsibilities as an opportunity and a maturing experience. Becoming a more responsible person and supporting their family increased these participants' sense of competence, confidence, and empowerment. Moreover, this elevated sense of responsibility led to a kind of personal growth. For instance, Faisal remarked that he learned to behave like a more responsible person and felt more grown-up due to challenges and hardships after the war. He was happy to become more autonomous:

P: After the war started, I started to raise myself. I began building myself. I didn't used to be afraid of war or anything. I mean, I hadn't seen anything of the world before the war. For example, after war broke out, I started to weigh up everything. I took every fine detail into account. Before the war, I did whatever I wanted. Before the war, people saw me as someone who didn't care if I made a mistake. I used to say I do what I want. After the war started, I no longer had that choice. After it started, I began to consider everything more carefully.

I: How do you feel about these changes?

P: Actually, I'm happy. Because I raised myself, I'm able to take responsibility and I'm able to run my own life. I'm able to stand on my own two feet. That's important for me. And at the same time, I'm able to help my family. That's what I feel.

Similarly, Yasmin spoke about the significant changes in the way she perceived herself through the hardships she endured. She regarded herself as an irresponsible child before the war but older and more mature after the war. Yasmin told:

Before the war, I was irresponsible. All I thought about was entertainment, having fun, going out with my friends, things like that. I had only one concern. And that was school. Apart from that I didn't worry about anything. My only concern was studying, because my father provided every opportunity for us. I was a kid before the war; I had no responsibilities. I had a weak personality. I wasn't a strong person. I didn't know the difference between right and wrong. When the war started, I was 17 and now I'm 22. Everything has changed compared to the past.

While taking on multiple responsibilities was regarded as a positive and maturing experience by most participants, elevated responsibilities and roles brought mixed feelings for some participants. They remarked that although taking on multiple responsibilities gave them a sense of empowerment, they also felt overwhelmed and exhausted because of these far-reaching responsibilities. They commented that they had limited time to do the things they like because of all the forced responsibilities. They often felt alone and did not have anybody to lean onto. For instance, Farid talked about being forced to take on multiple family responsibilities upon coming to Turkey.

Before the war life was good, it was normal. We had everything. And more. But now it's quite different. All the responsibility is on me. I have to do everything myself. I have to teach the kids. School expenses, all domestic expenses I have to meet all of them. The rent, bills, food, they're all my responsibility. I always pay them.

Farid added that he felt overwhelmed with these responsibilities. He emphasized that he sacrificed himself to save his siblings' future.

Yes, I'm single but it's like I'm married with four kids. I look after all of them. It's a bit difficult. Most of the time, I'm angry and fed up. I always get mad when anyone talks to me at home. Trouble at work and trouble at home. And it's really boring. Sometimes there are things I want to do but I'm not able to do them. Due to both lack of time and my responsibilities. I can't leave the house. Things like this... (interviewee appeared fed up). [...] As I said, I'm not living for myself. My life is over. There's very little left. And that's getting married, having kids, buying a car, and things like that. But for other people, for other children, for my younger brother and sister, and if I have children, they deserve a life. Sometimes not everyone gets the chance to live. In English it's sacrifice. Some people have to sacrifice themselves to allow others to live. I have to do that.

Additionally, four participants voiced how taking on multiple responsibilities at a young age forced them to grow up too fast and too soon. They mentioned that they

shouldered responsibilities that they would not typically have had as a young person. Taking on overwhelming responsibilities made them feel older than their actual age. It seemed that this theme was more prominent in the male participants' narratives. In the above excerpt, Farid expressed his feelings of exhaustion as a result of facing hardships and responsibilities at an early age. These experiences made him grow up too fast and too soon and brought distress and difficulties in sleeping. In the below extract, he voiced his sense of being older than his actual age:

[...] Normal people are 17 years old, then 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 up to 45, up to 50. Later their life ends. That's not what happened to me. When I left Syria, I was 18 years old and then I jumped from 18 to 30. Instead of 18, 20, 22, it went 18, 30, 32, 33. And I'm always stressed, what do I need to do, what am I going to do, there's something I have to do. My mind is always busy, I'm always stressed; I can't sleep, like I said.

On the other hand, another participant, Aziz, described his experience of growing up faster as a positive one. He also emphasized that shouldering great family responsibility at an early age caused him to grow up faster than his peers. It also reinforced his self-confidence.

Really when we think about life, I think that if people take on such responsibility, they will grow in the same way. Of course, 15 is a young age. When I think about it right now, what kinds of things would a 15-year-old kid be thinking about. Concentrating on lessons. He goes to school, comes home, he wouldn't have any other concerns, would he? But it was different for me. The things I went through at 15 are what a 20-year-old might go through there. And thank God I am happy. I am very happy that I learned and applied this responsibility and wisdom at such a young age. I've learned a lot during this period. I've learned to trust myself.

The participants revealed that there had been a considerable increase in their family responsibilities after displacement. Due to limited economic and social resources in Turkey, these young refugees found themselves taking care of their families. Such hardships led to a transformation in young refugees' views of themselves. Developing a sense of maturity and responsibility was the most salient change for them. Taking multiple responsibilities empowered these young refugees and overshadowed their own age-appropriate needs, aspirations, and desires.

3.7.2. Recognizing My Inner Strengths

Fifteen participants said that struggling with and overcoming numerous challenges and ordeals made them recognize their inner strength. They believed that surviving many hardships and losses in Syria, en route, and in Turkey led them to develop a stronger sense of self. The participants viewed such changes in self-perception as a positive experience by the participants. Recognition of inner strength theme included increased self-reliance, perseverance, competency, empowerment, and facing life's challenges and fears with courage. The following quote of Khalid exemplified the qualities of inner strength:

From everything I've been through I've learned how to fight the most. I learned not to run away from anything and in fact to confront problems. Even with that I should take the lead. I've learned how strong I can be and how much pain I can endure, even if I lose loved ones.

Co-occurrence of ongoing distress and empowerment was evident in the participants' narratives. The participants indicated that they have to struggle with various sources of distress, including ongoing economic and social hardships, uncertainty about their future, and conflict within family members. They also encountered the difficulties of the ongoing war in Syria. They, however, perceived a greater sense of strength and resilience despite perpetual trauma experiences in Syria and the ongoing challenges of everyday life in Turkey. As Nawal stated:

Many things changed after the war started. First, I grew up. Second, I became more enduring and stronger after it started. At the same time, I've suffered a lot. Like problems with my marriage and my parents and my brothers leaving me alone in Turkey. Those things changed my life. They made me grow up. When I say I grew up, I don't mean in age, I mean in strength and endurance.

For some participants, inner strength was experienced as hardiness and readiness to struggle with whatever life brings them. This attitude has evolved out of encountering extremely harsh and life-threatening experiences in Syria. They felt that they have become stronger and more competent to deal with future adversities. For instance, one of the female participants, Rana, commented:

Some think that war makes everything worse for people, you know, it damages them psychologically, but I don't actually agree with that. It's like this. War actually in some way makes you stronger. Your experiences, bad things, teach

us what we need to do in the future. We experienced such terrible things, saw such awful things in the streets that we began to say that after this nothing can upset us. It got so bad that the terrible things we went through made us stronger. In a sense, it forced us to stand strong. From now on, whatever we face in life, we can stand strong.

Briefly, these experiences revealed participants' sense of agency, strength, and competency in encountering hardships. Participants articulated the positive transformations that they went through and how they perceive themselves to be stronger. They perceived a profound sense of maturity and responsibility that emanated from their experiences. Moreover, they became aware of their capacity to deal with hardships in new ways.

3.8.Future Aspirations

The last superordinate theme was *future aspirations*. This superordinate theme aimed to encapsulate the participants' perceptions regarding their sense of the future and included two subordinate themes: *uncertainty about the future* and *dreams about the future*. The researcher will outline these subordinate themes below.

3.8.1.Uncertainty about the Future

This theme captured the participants' sense of uncertainty and unpredictability about their future. They addressed their concerns and thoughts regarding where to live in the future and expressed their views on staying in Turkey, returning to Syria, or migrating to another country. All participants, except one male participant, expressed a desire to stay in Turkey or return to Syria. Importantly, the gender of the participants played a role in their decision to return or stay. Most woman participants expressed their willingness to stay in Turkey, whereas most male participants mentioned that they want to return to Syria if conditions permit them to return.

Nine participants expressed their willingness to remain in Turkey in the long run, reflecting their aspirations of settling down in Turkey. For these participants, returning to Syria was not an option. The sentiment of adjusting to Turkey and building a new life seemed to motivate them to remain in Turkey. They talked about their improved living conditions, educational and vocational opportunities, and new social networks in Turkey as important factors affecting their wish to stay. For instance, Farid

expressed that there is no future for him in Syria. He referred to a strong sense of adjustment to Turkey compared to his parents:

I don't want to go there (*Syria*) anymore. My father and mother really want to return but I don't. Because I no longer have a future there; I've set myself up here. Okay, as they don't know Turkish it will be better and easier for them if they go back to Syria but it's not the case for me. I've set myself up here. My friends are here. I even have a second family here. Along with my friends, workplace environment, and girlfriend.

Also, harsh living conditions in Syria influenced the participants' decision to remain in Turkey. Some participants highlighted that they lost all their property and land in Syria. Additionally, they spoke about the destruction of cities and harsh living conditions. Some believed that it would take decades for the conditions in Syria to return to their pre-war state. For instance, Marwa, living in Turkey for one and half years, voiced her aspiration to remain in Turkey. She talked about the difficulty of starting from scratch again in Syria:

If I want to return to Syria, I have absolutely nothing there. There's nothing requiring me to go back. Let's say I did return, where to start? If we went back, it would mean starting from scratch. We lost our house, car, everything we owned in Syria. We've started a new life here. We have things to do here (Turkey). We've somehow gotten used to it here. It would be really hard for us to return and live in Syria.

Moreover, two women participants talked about their wish to receive Turkish citizenship, which would provide a sense of long-term stability and security. As 23-year-old Amira stated, returning to Syria has become less likely for her after having been in Turkey for years. She gave voice to her desire to receive Turkish citizenship:

P: At the start I wanted to return to Syria very much. Actually, I still do. It's like there's something keeping me here. And that's my marriage here. I've set up home here. I have a kid. Right now, even if I wanted to return to Syria, I don't think my life would be better there. I don't think the education system would be better. At some point later we can become Turkish citizens. Maybe after that we could go back.

I: What are your thoughts about getting Turkish citizenship?

P: It was something I objected to before, but I was happy about it afterwards. It's good to get Turkish citizenship. We've prepared the paperwork. There will be interviews. Later we'll get the result.

I: Why didn't you want it? (*laughs as I ask*)

P: Because I wanted to return to Syria. But there's a 4-year period. I want to get citizenship. I can even go to Syria right now, but I want to have another citizenship.

Contrary to those who want to stay in Turkey, eight participants said that they wish to go back to Syria if the war ends. Having close family ties in Syria seemed to be the most important factor influencing their desire to return to Syria. The majority of the participants who wanted to go back to Syria had family members, such as parents and siblings, still living in Syria. For example, Hessa, who is 22-years-old and has been living in Turkey for three years with her husband and daughter, expressed her expectations regarding her future life:

All my dreams for the future are about my family. My only dream is to have my family back together again. To be all together like in the past. To be able to return to our homeland and live there. It's hard to imagine right now, but when things get better in Syria, when life gets better, I'd like to go back and see my family again.

In addition to those who have family members in Syria, two male participants who brought their family members echoed a similar desire to return to Syria. Twenty-two-year-old Marwan, who came to Turkey alone four years ago and brought all family members later, stated:

My only expectation for the future is to return to my country. I want to go back to Syria and live in the house I used to live in with my family. I want to return to the places of my childhood memories.

Participants who wished to go back to Syria highlighted several conditions that are necessary for their return. The participants commonly identified the end to the war and improved security conditions as preconditions. For instance, Talal emphasized that he intended to temporarily stay in Turkey and voiced his desire to return if the war ended.

Wherever I live here, I want to return to my country. I'm here temporarily. If the war ended right now, I would go back to my country immediately. I wouldn't care about my salary or my job. If the war ended, I'd go straight back.

In addition to safety and security conditions, a sense of belonging to their homeland, Syria, can be considered an important factor influencing the participants' decision to

return. Twenty-one-year-old Aziz expressed his love and longing for his own homeland and wished to return if the security conditions in Syria allow:

(Breath deeply) I want to live a stable and predictable life. I want to live without the war. I want to live in security. When I look back, I miss my country. Even if life in Turkey is good, I want to return my country, I miss there and I want to die there, in my homeland. If the war ends, I will absolutely return.

Harsh living and employment conditions in Turkey seem to motivate the desire to return to Syria. For instance, a 20-year-old man, Faisal, aspired to get back to Syria to rebuild his life and regain their own property and land his family lost during the war. He also expressed his unwillingness to bring up his children in Turkey:

If we returned to Syria, I think everything would be better. At least I would work together with my father in our own business. We would start again. Like we would buy a new house. Everything would be good. [...] I don't want to stay here. Actually, I don't want my child to stay here. Why? I don't want my child to experience what I went through here. There are days when I don't have food to eat. Who would want that? Especially I don't want them to do the job I'm doing. We would have stayed in Syria if it hadn't been for the war. We would have worked with my father. Everything could have been better.

Very few participants talked about migrating to another country apart from Turkey and Syria. Only one male participant who is a university student in Turkey explicitly mentioned that he plans to immigrate to a European country. Samer stated: *"I don't want to live in Turkey. If I have an opportunity, I will absolutely move to Europe."* Other participants, however, expressed their unwillingness to immigrate to another country and communicated the difficulty of adapting to a European country due to the cultural and religious incongruity. As a 20-year-old woman, Rabia mentioned that "taking into account its customs, traditions, lifestyle, and religion, Turkey is the closest country to Syria. That's why I wouldn't consider any other country. But I'm not planning on returning to Syria."

Another male participant, Farid, mentioned that he would immigrate to Europe without his family. He highlighted the difficulty of adapting to the European lifestyle for his family, particularly for his father.

I want to go to Europe on my own. Not with my family. Because if we went there, my father is a bit old-fashioned. You'd call him conservative. He doesn't like drinking or going out and things like that, he doesn't like going out at

night. If we went there now it would be worse. It's a totally different culture. Here the culture is similar to ours but there it's very different. Everything would have to change completely. My father couldn't handle that. Because it doesn't make any difference for me anymore; I'm going to see what I see here. There is not much difference. But for example, the people I see here I will see there too but let's say a little more exposed there. My father couldn't handle that. He wouldn't want it.

In general, the participants' accounts highlighted that an uncertain future awaits these young Syrians in Turkey. Uncertainty about the legal status of Syrians in Turkey made it harder for the participants to experience a sense of settled life in Turkey. Moreover, the ongoing Syrian war made their return unpredictable. They addressed their thoughts, wishes, and motives with respect to staying in Turkey, returning to Syria, or migrating to a third country. However, the sense that their future was out of their hands was inherent in the participants' narratives.

3.8.2.Dreams about the Future

This subordinate theme described nine participants' expectations, aspirations, and plans for the future. Participants spoke about their wishes to build a better life for themselves and their families and moving forward through education and a better-paying job. Making an effort to attain the living conditions before the war seemed especially important for some participants. They expressed their wish to repossess property that they used to own but were lost or destroyed during the war, such as houses and cars. In the below extract, Khalid expressed his future dreams:

I want to have the things here that I had there (*Syria*). We had a house in Syria. We didn't pay rent. Our outgoings were less there. I want those. I want to have a car. But first a house. Because we had a house there. And we didn't pay rent. Our expenses were less. I want to have that feeling of safety we had before the war in Syria here.

On the other hand, some participants spoke about their aspirations to move forward with their lives and improve their socio-economic situation in Turkey. Continuing with their studies in Turkey, improving their Turkish, and having a better paying job were important aspects of promoting their sense of control over their lives. Although most of the participants expressed their wish to realize their educational aspirations in Turkey, they underlined the impossibility of continuing with their education due to their obligation to provide financial support for their families. Marwa, who had to quit

her studies in the university because of displacement to Turkey, talked about her desire to move forward through education and a better-paying job.

In fact, when I look at the future, I think I have things to complete. Especially concerning work. Finding a better job is my biggest goal for the future. I want to establish good relations with people and to create a good environment. And one of my goals is to continue in college.

Moreover, some participants seemed to prioritize the future of the next generation, such as their own children or their younger siblings, rather than their future aspirations. They mentioned that bringing up the younger ones and providing better living conditions for them was the primary goal for them. For instance, Talal, who has two children, emphasized that his priority is bringing up his children.

For the future, I only ask of Allah that my children grow up healthy. That they don't go through what I've gone through. My mother and father somehow brought me to this point, and I wish the same for my children. If we live, I want my 15-year-old son to get married. I want him to live according to Allah's will.

In summary, the participants expressed feelings of uncertainty about the future. In particular, the participants addressed the uncertainty about where to live in the future and their legal status in Turkey. Further, the wish to compensate for the losses and damages of the war shaped some participants' future dreams. The motivation to move ahead through a better-paying job or education was evident in the participants' narratives.

Overall, eighteen participants' rich narratives shed light on the way young Syrians experience refugee life. In their voices, Syrian youth reflected upon their emotions, thoughts, perceptions, and lived experiences regarding their past, present, and future. Not only did they voice suffering, losses, and trauma in their lives, but they also voiced a sense of resilience, hope, and agency. The findings also illustrated the commonalities as well as differences in young Syrians' experiences.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

4.1.Overview

In this chapter, the findings of the current study will be discussed with the existing refugee literature. The present study aimed to contribute to the limited research on refugee youth and forced migration by exploring Syrian refugees' lived experiences from their voices. Moreover, this current study aimed to contribute to clinical psychology and other fields related to forced migration in both research and clinical practice domains. Researchers in the clinical psychology field have conducted studies with refugee groups living in developed resettlement countries like the US, Australia, and Canada. The number of studies conducted with Syrian refugees is increasing (e.g., Eruyar et al., 2020; Utrzan & Wieling, 2020). However, there has been a gap in the literature regarding research, particularly exploring the meaning-making experiences of war trauma and forced migration among Syrian emerging adults in Turkey through a qualitative method.

The main research questions of the present study were a) how young Syrian refugees made sense of their experiences at different phases of forced migration, b) how forced migration experiences impacted them at a critical stage of their life course, and c) what they perceived as sources of strength and support system at challenging times. Focusing on the meaning-making of forced migration experience, eighteen young Syrian refugees talked about their pre-and post-war experiences in Syria, their migratory journey to Turkey, and their experiences after arrival to Turkey. By undertaking interpretative phenomenological analysis, eight superordinate themes emerged based on the data gathered from eighteen young Syrian refugees via in-depth, semi-structured interviews: *living with war in Syria, leaving homeland behind,*

rebuilding a new life, facing ongoing challenges and losses, sources of coping with adversities, changes in family dynamics, changed views of the self, and future aspirations. Beginning with a summary of the main findings of each superordinate theme, the researcher will discuss with reference to broader clinical psychology research on refugee experiences. Then, the researcher will situate the results within the socio-ecological models of the refugee experience to integrate the wide range of themes that emerged from the participants' narratives. Further, the researcher will adopt a developmental approach to explore the interplay between developmental transitions and forced migration experiences among young Syrian refugees. Finally, clinical and policy implications, as well as limitations and future directions, will be presented.

4.2. General Discussion of The Findings

4.2.1. Living with the war in Syria

Similar to previous studies from other refugee groups (e.g., O'Donnell et al., 2020), the present research documented that in the premigration period, young Syrian refugees were overwhelmingly exposed to many risk factors such as warlike conditions, extreme violence, and human rights violations, loss of safety and security, disruption to their daily life, economic upheaval, death of significant ones, being wounded by rocket attacks, the devastation of cities, and resource deprivation. Furthermore, premigration traumas described in this study were in line with the type and prevalence of those described in previous research conducted with Syrian refugees in different settings (Cantekin, 2018; Uygun, 2020; Tinghög et al., 2017). Strikingly, the participants described how extreme violence was normalized and became an integral part of everyday life. They reflected upon their sense of apathy in Syria resulting from overwhelming experiences of violence. In the face of such incidents, Syrian youth lost their sense of safety and security, which they regarded as the most fundamental challenge for them in the premigration period. Not surprisingly, women participants felt more threat against themselves compared to men. Although none of the participants in this study talked about a direct experience of sexual violence during war, some participants implied that their families feared and protected them from

kidnapping and sexual violence. Previous research suggested that refugee women and girls are more subject to gender-based violence, including being sexually violated and raped (e.g., Freedman, 2016). In sum, the results explicated that young Syrians experienced an exhausting and life-threatening period that might put them at high risk for developing mental health problems. Moreover, longitudinal studies conducted with refugee groups have suggested that the impact of traumatic experiences endures for long years (Bogic et al., 2015). Premigration traumatic exposure might also impact negatively the refugees' self-perception, identity and social relations (Silove 2014). Disruption of family and community networks might result in distrust, loss of solidarity and weakened community ties. These experiences might hinder to form new community bonds in the postmigration context (Morina et al., 2016). Moreover, being exposed to human rights violations and organized violence may disrupt the belief in justice at societal level (Cantekin, 2019). They faced many war-related stressors and adversities that pushed them to search for a safer place.

4.2.2. Leaving Homeland Behind

The study findings highlighted that traumatizing experiences and hardships in Syria drove Syrian youth and their families to flee from Syria. Similar to previous research conducted with Syrian refugees (Akesson & Coupland, 2018, Mangrio et al., 2018, Müller-Funk, 2019), worsening living and security conditions and limited food resources with rising prices forced the participants to flee from Syria. Furthermore, increased violence, a specific violent incident targeting them or their family, and avoiding compulsory military service can be counted as factors that pushed participants to leave Syria. In particular, Syrian youth determined violence and persecution as the most critical catalyst to flee Syria. As the violence increased in the country, they reached their threshold and decided to leave the country.

This study indicated that the decision to leave is not reactive. Decision-making was a process in which multiple driving forces in their socioecological context might have influenced Syrian refugees' decisions. In congruence with previous studies (Müller-Funk, 2019), the current study findings underscored a gender difference in the decision-making process. All participants decided to migrate to Turkey for their

families, and this decision was based on a family consensus. However, Syrian young women were less influential in the decision-making process. In contrast, Syrian young men were able to exercise agency to decide when and where to migrate. Furthermore, most of the young Syrian men in this study traveled to Turkey individually. In the literature on migration studies, there has been a debate on the extent to which refugee people are agent actors to decide to leave their home country (Erdal & Oeppen, 2018). Some participants and their families seemed to make conscious decisions of when and where to move and have enough time to balance this difficult decision, whereas others did not. Most of the participants felt forced to leave and they did not have enough time to prepare. So, they subjectively experienced their escape from Syria as an involuntary decision. Therefore, they often left behind their personal possessions, family members and friends. Feelings of uprooting They The flight experience also seemed to bring extra material burden to them due to having paid to smugglers. In line with previous studies on refugee journeys (Erdal & Oeppen, 2018), at the beginning of the war, all participants and their families expressed their strong wish to remain at home in Syria with the hope that the conditions would be better. These findings confirmed the previous literature exploring the refugee journeys (e.g., Akesson & Coupland, 2018; Hopkins & Hill, 2008; Mangrio et al., 2018, SEEFAR, 2018). Overall, the current study supported the approach that understands the decision to migrate along a continuum of experiences and driving forces rather than a dichotomy between voluntary and involuntary migration decisions (Akesson & Coupland, 2018).

Syrian youth also described traumatizing experiences during their flight to Turkey, mainly affecting them at individual and family levels. Most participating Syrian refugees took a dangerous and challenging journey, walking for long hours under harsh weather conditions and facing dangers that came from crossing active battle zones, the perils related to smugglers, and fear of getting caught by Turkish security forces. In different studies, refugee people voiced similar flight experiences (Farhat et al., 2018; Mangrio et al., 2018). Although Turkey was an unknown place for Syrian youth, they hoped to find a secure and stable home with economic resources. As illustrated in previous anthropological research (Kleist & Jansen, 2016), young Syrians hoped to find a better life in Turkey. Such a sense of hope had critical importance during migration to Turkey. Moreover, for Syrian youth, escaping from home in Syria was a

heartbreaking and painful decision when considering multiple factors, including their sense of belonging to home in Syria, their family unity, and their family assets. In sum, the findings highlighted various factors that affected the decision to leave Syria, particularly, deteriorating security conditions and diminished resources were the most significant push factors for Syrian youth and their families. The current study regards the decision to migrate as a complex and dynamic experience.

4.2.3. Rebuilding a New Life

The findings from the current study illuminated a range of post-migration experiences among young Syrians. In particular, for most of the participants, the initial times in Turkey were regarded to be the most challenging period due to the limited resources, lack of social support, uncertainties, and disappointing experiences in social and work life. Previous research found similar results (Brough et al., 2003; Thommessen et al., 2015). Although they felt safe and secure in Turkey, they identified initial postmigration stressors. They reported the language barrier, lack of social networks, yearning and concern for the family members back in Syria, unfamiliarity with new cultural values and practices, and housing and employment difficulties (M'zah et al., 2018; Tinghög et al., 2017). Some Syrian youth in this study also described their initial disappointment because their premigration expectations and dreams about Turkey shattered and they faced many socio-cultural challenges. This finding aligns with previous studies (Danso, 2002). Furthermore, they described these the initial times in Turkey as being like "a newborn baby" starting over from scratch. They stated that previous skills and knowledge have gone to zero. In line with the previous research (Nyarko & Punamaki, 2019), starting from scratch is a difficult task for young Syrians. They experienced difficulty to translate their skills and knowledge to the new Turkish context.

This study highlighted that Turkish language competence was associated with enhanced living conditions of Syrian youth. The issue of language competence was the most prominent and recurring theme among Syrian youth's narratives. In line with resource-based models (Hobfoll, 2001; Ryan et al., 2008), loss of language competency (inability to speak Turkish) was perceived to be the most crucial resource

loss in the early months in Turkey. Consistent with previous studies with Syrian refugees (Korukçu et al., 2017, Torun et al., 2018), they faced difficulties in communication with local people, understanding culture and social norms, accessing employment opportunities, education and health services, adapting to Turkish culture, finding housing, and using urban transportation. In addition to this, they encountered discrimination in daily life due to the language barrier.

On the other hand, mastering the Turkish language was underlined as a vital resource gain during the adaptation process. Drawing upon resource-based models (Ryan et al., 2008), Turkish language competence was a critical cultural resource in the post-migration context. Accordingly, almost all participants emphasized the significance of learning the Turkish language. These findings are in concordance with previous research that has documented difficulties with host language and communication to be a significant problem for resettled refugees in adapting and integrating to a new country (Earnest et al., 2015; Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham, 2010; Thommessen & Todd, 2018). In this study, Syrian youth perceived less rejection and more acceptance from Turkish people as they became more fluent in Turkish. Additionally, having language competency improved self-confidence when interacting with Turkish society.

Notably, the current study shed light on gendered experiences in having Turkish language competency, consistent with previous studies (Casimiro et al., 2007; Halcon et al., 2004). In this study, all Syrian youngmen learned to speak Turkish more quickly due to having more opportunities in the outside world than women counterparts whose social lives have been mostly confined to their homes. In line with research on refugee women (Mangrio et al., 2019), Syrian young women who could not learn Turkish emphasized that the language barrier impeded their adaptation process and led to a less active social life. Further, they felt restricted in social life and dependent on other family members due to the language barrier.

The other important finding with respect to post-migration experiences was Syrian young refugees' perceptions and experiences of Turkish natives and other Syrian refugees. Concerning relations with Turkish people, generally speaking, most

participants portrayed Turkish people as helpful and friendly. In particular, several participants remembered their Turkish neighbors' support in the early months in Turkey. Notably, most participants felt being welcomed, sympathized with, and respected by Turkish citizens. However, a small portion of the participants talked about violent incidents, conflicts, and tensions between Syrians and Turkish citizens. Apart from relations with Turkish natives, participating young Syrians underscored other Syrian refugees' supportive and significant role in their adaptation to Turkey. This finding is important because the critical role of in-group support and in-group belonging was a protective factor for refugee groups, including Syrians, in the existing literature (Smeekes et al., 2017). Yet, relations with other Syrians were not a source of support for all Syrian refugees. One participant voiced her negative experiences with Syrians in the current study. She talked about her Arab-Sunni Syrian friends' negative attitudes towards her, as she defined herself as a Turkmen. During the interview with her, she insistently emphasized that she belonged to Turkish society rather than the Syrian community. One explanation for this finding could be her experience of perceived rejection from Arab-Sunni Syrians on the basis of her ethnic identity (being a Turkmen) and hometown in Syria. Due to the ongoing war in Syria, Syrian community seemed to be divided on the basis of political, ethnic and religious affiliations. Şafak-Ayvazoğlu, Kunuroğlu, and Yağmur (2021) emphasized a similar point. In their study, they found that Syrian refugees did not perceive their in-groups as supportive. The researchers explained this finding based on regional, cultural, religious, and political differences among Syrians.

The current study's findings revealed the critical importance of perceived discrimination experiences and their effects on Syrian youth's adaptation and well-being. Experiences of discrimination, such as being treated with suspicion, unfair treatment in the health-care system, insulting comments and gestures about Syrians, offering lower wages, verbal abuse, and physical attacks were also cited in previous studies (DeJong et al., 2017; Demir & Özgül, 2019; Doğan et al., 2019, IMC & UNICEF, 2014, Şafak-Ayvazoğlu et al., 2021). Furthermore, they encountered disturbing questions and comments related to why they fled Syria, their return to Syria, and social rights granted to Syrians (DeJong et al., 2017; Demir & Özgül, 2019; Doğan et al., 2019, IMC & UNICEF, 2014, Şafak-Ayvazoğlu et al., 2021). Two participants

also indicated that their younger siblings faced humiliation, physical attack, bullying and verbal discrimination from their Turkish peers in school. Similar findings were echoed in a recent study conducted with 8-15-year-old Syrian children living in Turkey. Demir and Özgül (2019) revealed discriminatory acts such as humiliation and rejection by peers and witnessing public apathy. Therefore, this study indicated that Syrian youth are susceptible to experiencing various types of discrimination due to ethnicity, limited knowledge of the Turkish language, cultural differences, and economic reasons. Similarly, Şafak-Ayvazoğlu and her colleagues (2021) illustrated that Syrian refugees in their study encountered four types of discrimination, namely language discrimination, ethnic discrimination, refugee discrimination, and discrimination towards Syrian children by native children. As indicated, discrimination experiences have been an integral part of Syrian refugees' lives in Turkey. However, it is essential to note that only a small portion of the study participants (one-third) voiced their discrimination experiences. The rest did not mention any kind of discrimination and talked about their favorable experiences with Turkish society. Also, we should interpret the findings with caution because the participants may withhold their views and experiences of discrimination when talking to a researcher coming from the host society.

Aside from discrimination, the host society's overall perceptions and attitudes towards refugee communities and the host country's migration policies are critical in refugees' adjustment to the host culture (Haase et al., 2019). The extent to which the host society has a welcoming and accepting attitude towards refugees impacts their adaption process. This study indicated that Turkish society's negative and less welcoming attitudes impaired Syrian youth's desire to connect with Turkish people and adapt to Turkish culture. Previous studies demonstrated similar findings (Haase et al., 2019). Researchers who conducted studies in Turkey reported that initial hospitality towards Syrians eroded and discriminatory acts increased by the dramatic rise in the Syrian population. They also stated that Syrian refugees are perceived to consume resources and take jobs away from Turkish citizens (Ayvazoğlu-Şafak et al., 2021; Erdoğan, 2018, 2020; IMC & UNICEF, 2014). Therefore, this situation creates a hostile political atmosphere in Turkey, resulting in tensions and conflicts with Turkish people and Syrian refugees. Turkish society's acceptance towards Syrians seems to diminish and

racist and xenophobic attitudes and voices have been increasing. This political climate in Turkey interferes with the sense of safety and security for both groups, Turkish people and Syrians, and damage the culture of living together.

The Syrian Barometer 2017, a comprehensive research study on exploring Turkish citizens' attitudes towards Syrians, provided important insight into Turkish society's perceptions and views about Syrian refugees (Erdoğan, 2018). The same research was repeated in 2019 to explore Turkish society's changing attitudes and perceptions towards Syrians. Comparing the Syrian Barometer of 2017 and 2019, Erdoğan (2020) highlighted striking changes in Turkish society's perceptions. Turkish society seemed to perceive Syrian refugees more anxiously. Most of the participants portrayed Syrians as dangerous people, a burden on Turkish society, and exploiting resources and jobs. Thus, Turkish society's hospitality and acceptance seemed to erode. Previous researchers showed that perceived hostility and distance from host society negatively affect refugee groups' adaptation process. Accordingly, Şafak-Ayvazoglu and her colleagues (2021) revealed that Syrian participants expressed more negative feelings about their displacement and a low-to-moderate level of life satisfaction, reflecting a low-to-moderate level of psychological adaptation in Turkey. Further, the Syrian participants in their study displayed low socio-cultural adaptation due to economic problems, a moderate level of interaction with Turkish people, a low level of support from other Syrian refugees, uncertainty about their future, and a strong wish to return. Alongside the negative influence of discrimination on the adaptation process, there has been a well-grounded link between perceived discrimination and refugees' mental health problems. In this study, participants described their feelings of anger and resentment towards Turkish people and their experiences of dissatisfaction with living in Turkey. There is extensive literature that indicates the negative impact of perceived discrimination on the well-being of different refugee communities, including feelings of distress, anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression. In this respect, Borho and his colleagues (2020) indicated that a higher number of traumatic events in the premigration period and perceived discrimination in the post-migration context were associated with depression and generalized anxiety disorder among Syrian refugees. Perceived discrimination is considered to diminish sense of belonging to the host society and reduced the connection with the host society. Moreover, discriminatory

behaviors from local people lead to socioeconomic adversities such as the difficulty to find job, housing and to access to social and health services. The multifactorial impact of perceived discrimination might result in mental health issues.

Another postmigration risk factor mentioned by Syrian youth was homesickness. Half of participating young Syrians described a "sense of homesickness" as a fundamental challenge to their life and wellbeing in Turkey. They voiced their deep sense of yearning for what they left behind, including their country, city, specific places, home, close friends and family members, and old routines and lifestyles before the war. Consistent with previous studies (Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham, 2010), young Syrian' sense of homesickness was associated with concern for family members back, economic and psychosocial adversities in Turkey, and perceived discrimination. In conclusion, Syrian young people in this study emphasized the most salient post-migration experiences in their lives. The acquisition of Turkish was very critical in the socio-cultural adaptation process. The study findings provided a deeper insight into young Syrians' relationship experience with Turkish natives and the Syrian community. This study illuminated the major causes of perceived discrimination from Turkish society.

4.2.4. Ongoing Challenges and Losses

The study findings indicated that young Syrian refugees encountered a diversity of losses in many fields of life. Losses took many forms, including socioeconomic losses, loss of loved ones and social networks, loss of their life projects, and finally, loss of their psychological well-being. Thus, these findings echoed the existing literature indicating the centrality and pervasiveness of loss and mourning in refugees' experience (e.g., Im & Neff, 2020; Kelly et al., 2016; Kokou-Kpolou et al., 2020).

Drawing upon resource-based models of refugee experience (Hobfoll 2001, Ryan et al., 2008), this study also demonstrated that Syrian youth and their families faced considerable resource loss. The basic tenet of resource-based models is that the loss of various resources is the key component of developing mental health problems among refugees (Hobfoll, 2001, Ryan et al., 2008). Accordingly, experiencing rapid and

multiple losses can act as a critical risk factor for young Syrian refugees. Using resource-based models, young Syrians talked about various types of resource losses, including loss of loved ones through death or separation (social resources) and the loss of home associated with loss of livelihoods, money, community, stability, and security (material resources). Moreover, with Hobfoll's conceptualization, some participants voiced their experiences of condition loss; that is, they had to give up life projects, particularly educational and vocational aspirations. Accordingly, Syrian young refugees' skills and knowledge (e.g., language and education) initially had little adaptive value in Turkey. Due to war and displacement conditions, they had to give up their student life and they started to work or marry at a young age than expected. Hobfoll (2001) offered that there is a mutual relationship between these resources. This study also indicated relationships between losses that were allied with Hobfoll's concept of loss spiral. For instance, the participants' narrative showed that loss of livelihoods, family money, and possessions (material resources) led to the inability to pursue previous educational and vocational aspirations and start work-life or marry at a young age. This study echoed the previous literature; that is, participants' resource pool diminished, and their accessibility to all types of resources become limited following war and migration to Turkey. Resource-based models (Hobfoll, 2001; Ryan et al., 2008) also suggested that greater resource loss following traumatic experiences has been related to worse mental health problems among refugee groups. This study also illuminated that this resource loss brought additional stressors in young Syrians' lives and increased psychological distress and mental health problems.

The participating young Syrians also described mental health challenges due to pre- and post-migrations stressors. In line with the previous studies conducted with Syrian refugees (Cantekin & Gençöz, 2017; Tinghög et al., 2017), this research emphasized that traumatizing experiences during premigration and flight period and postmigration stressors pose a risk for the development of mental health problems among Syrian youth. The participants have experienced psychological distress and mental health problems. They described an increase in feelings of sadness, anger, joylessness, and worry. They also had sleep difficulties and nightmares, loss of motivation, inability to have strong feelings and indifference. Moreover, these results align with the literature indicating the salience of the post-migration context in refugees' mental health (Miller

& Rasmussen, 2010, 2017). The participants mentioned that their psychological distress was associated with socioeconomic adversities in Turkey, the death of loved ones, and the loss of previous familial and social attachments. The strength and duration of the impact of these risk factors on their psychological wellbeing would be moderated by the host country's socio-ecological context and the number of opportunities for resource gain (Ryan et al., 2008). In this regard, the available resources and coping sources are important to attenuate the negative impact of pre- and post-migration stressors on young Syrians' psychological well-being.

4.2.5.Sources of Coping with Adversities

Focusing on traumatic events and adversities in pre-, during, and post-migration might direct our attention to vulnerabilities of the refugee experience; however, Syrian youth in this study did not respond passively to traumatic and challenging experiences they endured. On the contrary, they generated multiple resources of strength and resilience to manage such adversities. Drawing upon the resource-based models of refugee adaptation (Hobfoll, 2001; Ryan et al., 2008), young Syrians in this study used multiple resources at personal (e.g., individual characteristics), material (social services), and social levels (e.g., family and peer relations) to build their resilience and strength. Thus, this study pointed to the ecosystemic conceptualization of psychological resilience in contrast to the trait-like approach to resilience (e.g., Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010; Masten & Obradovic, 2008). Resilience was initially conceptualized as a result of personality traits or coping skills. The absence of such personality characteristics led to psychopathology in the face of adversity and trauma. Hence, individuals were viewed as either resilient or vulnerable (Connor & Davidson, 2003). The trait-like approach to resilience was later criticized. Alternatively, resilience from the socio-ecological approach was described as: "...in the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, 2008; p. 225). As illustrated in this study, the ecosystemic conceptualization of psychological resilience was a dynamic process depending on one's socio-cultural

and economic context. Resilience should be conceptualized in terms of the interaction between individual and larger social environment (Vindevogel & Verelist, 2020). Echoing ecological understanding of resilience, Panter-Brick and her colleagues (2018) developed a psychological measure of resilience for Syrian refugee adolescents. In their study, 11–to 18-year-old Syrian refugees in Jordan used multiple resilience sources at individual, family, and community levels, including positive relationships with their community and family and religious beliefs, to cope with various adversities (Panter-Brick et al., 2018).

In developing resilience, most Syrian youth in this study noted the significance of familial and peer support as the primary resilience resource. They regarded family members and friends as a critical social resource to provide a sense of belonging and safety, guidance, emotional support, and soothing in difficult times. This finding is consistent with qualitative and quantitative studies showing the importance of peer and familial support in different refugee populations (e.g., Abraham et al., 2018; Labys et al., 2017; Seguin & Roberts, 2017). Some recent studies conducted with Syrian refugees also revealed that seeking social support, in particular family relations, was the primary source of coping and resilience among Syrian refugees (Alzoubi et al., 2019; Atari-Khan et al., 2021; Şimşir et al., 2021). This finding reflects a cultural fact: the family has a central role in Syrian culture to access socioeconomic resources and withstand losses and challenges (Panter-Brick et al., 2018). As Bemak and Chung (2017) suggested, managing traumas with the help of communal and familial relations was also evident in Syrian culture as opposed to individualistic cultures.

Apart from social resources, Syrian youth in this study relied on their personal resources, including having a positive outlook and hope, patience, and religious faith to deal with hardships and traumas. Significantly, Syrian youth viewed personal resources as necessary when they had limited access to relational and social resources. These findings were in line with previous studies conducted with Syrian refugees (Demir & Aliyev, 2019; Stewart, 2020). Demir and Aliyev (2019) found individual factors of resilience among Syrian university students in Turkey as follows: "determination, self-confidence, spirituality, career goals, patience, hope, and desire to contribute to the society." (p. 40). In the existing literature, being young was

associated with being more open to new experiences and opportunities. Thus, young refugees had a more positive and hopeful outlook for the future than older refugees (Earnest et al., 2015; Goodman, 2004).

Contrary to previous research with refugee groups, only a small percentage of Syrian youth in this study mentioned their faith in Allah and praying as a resilience resource. Relying on their faith and praying to Allah provided them relief, patience, and hope for the future to bear the adverse conditions. Further, placing trust in Allah has helped them make sense of the challenging experiences and events that have taken place in their lives. Numerous studies have demonstrated that religion and faith were among the effective coping strategies among different refugee groups (e.g., Ai et al., 2005; Benson et al., 2011). Similar findings were found in recent studies conducted with Syrian refugees (El-Khani et al., 2017; Hasan et al., 2018). However, the current study differs from existing literature because young Syrian refugees emphasized religious coping less than previous studies. Perhaps, they did not feel the need to mention it openly, because the Islamic faith was an ever-present part of their lives.

The results also underscored the importance of having access to social assistance and services provided by the Turkish state and non-governmental organizations in developing resilience. For instance, they stated that social services such as receiving free health care, language, vocational courses, and food assistance facilitated their resilience. The same findings were reported in previous studies (Goodman et al., 2017). It is crucial to note that the Syrian youth in this study did not have equal access to social services. Several factors, including being a woman, distance to services, economic hardships, and social networks, influenced social services access. For instance, most women participants stated that they had no access to social service benefits such as language and vocational courses. Because they faced barriers such as household responsibilities and child care. Some male participants could not utilize language courses either, due to long working hours and transportation costs.

In general, the current study made contributions to the resource-based model of refugee adaptation and the resilience-based approach to the refugee experience. These findings suggested that individual, relational, and communal factors fostered young

Syrians' resilience, highlighting the socio-ecological nature of resilience processes. Resource-based models and ecological systems models closely align with each other. In other words, the social ecology of young adult Syrians is shaped by various available resources and risk factors (Miles et al., 2019). Refugees' mental health problems and adaptation process may deteriorate under diminished resources and opportunities and improved with various resources and opportunities (Miles et al., 2019).

4.2.6.Changed Views of the Self

The present study sheds light on the participants' changing self-concept due to having been confronted with traumatizing events, losses, and struggles upon war and displacement. Consistent with the previous literature on refugee youth (e.g., De Jong et al., 2017; Earnest et al., 2015; Guruge & Butt, 2015; Hynie et al., 2012; Shakya et al., 2014; Suerbaum, 2017), young Syrian refugees viewed themselves as "grown-up individuals with an increased sense of responsibility." To a certain extent, young people were expected to take on some of these responsibilities as they get older. However, this study indicated that Syrian youth who had limited economic and social resources had to take on more significant responsibilities than it would generally be expected. In Suerbaum's research (2017), Syrian young men living in Cairo indicated that facing violence, death, and hardships had brought a more mature, realistic, and responsible life perspective. Another study conducted with 16-24 aged refugee youth in Canada highlighted the same experiences of being responsible and mature (Shakya et al., 2014). Afghan, Karen, and Sudanese young people voiced that their family responsibilities increased enormously, and they took on a leadership role in their families throughout the resettlement process to Canada. The researchers emphasized the vital role of these young people in their families, and they regarded them as "resettlement champions" in Canada compared to older members of their families. The same situation was observable in Syrian youth's accounts in this study. Several factors explained the increase of responsibilities for Syrian youth. First, limited supportive government policies and services for refugees can be considered as one of the causes of the extra burden on refugee youth. Moreover, older family members faced

difficulties in entering the labor market. Therefore, young people, particularly young Syrian men, had to enter the labor market and quit their education.

A closer look at young Syrians' accounts demonstrated that young Syrian refugees generally assumed adult roles and responsibilities prematurely at a young age. Such experiences led to significant transformations in their perception of self-concept. Young refugees interpreted that such fast maturation was at the expense of their educational and other future aspirations. Almost all participants highlighted that there would have been a smooth transition to adult responsibilities if the war and displacement conditions did not happen. Moreover, they would have felt more agency to make their own choices and shape their own life. The participants were given adult roles prematurely, for instance, entering the labor market as children or being forced to marry at an early age. As discussed in the previous sections, the participants experienced the loss of their life projects associated with educational and vocational aspirations. The new opportunities in Turkey have not compensated for these losses. They expressed their resentment due to not pursuing their age-related tasks, including educational and occupational plans. Previous studies were in line with these results (DeJong et al., 2017; Evans et al., 2013; Ottosdottir & Loncar, 2018). On the other hand, taking responsibility for their families empowered participants and increased their self-confidence. Notably, some participants' narratives shed light on ambivalent attitudes reflecting their feelings of empowerment and confidence while being overwhelmed and exhausted by these responsibilities. Prior research pronounced similar results (DeJong et al., 2017; Evans et al., 2013; Ottosdottir & Loncar, 2018).

This study's findings also highlighted the positive changes in self-concept, reflecting a stronger sense of personal strength. These young refugees voiced that they have become self-reliant and competent people and ready to struggle with any difficulties in life. It seemed that traumatic experiences and challenges were met with resilience by most young Syrians and they spoke of a personal growth experience from such challenges and traumas. Despite traumatizing experiences and ongoing adversities in their lives, young Syrians in this study mentioned that they viewed new positive developments in their views of self. These findings were also pronounced in the existing literature with different refugee communities (Copelj et al., 2017; Hussain &

Bhushan, 2013; Shakespeare-Finch et al., 2014). Instances of inner strength and growth described by Syrian youth might be conceptualized as post-traumatic growth (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 1996), adversarial growth (Linley and Joseph, 2004), and adversity-activated development (Papadopoulos, 2007). Despite various conceptualizations, the literature on posttraumatic growth suggested three main dimensions: enhanced relationship with other people, self-perception changes, and changes in life philosophy (Joseph and Linley, 2006; Tedeschi and Calhoun, 1996). Based on these theoretical perspectives, current findings suggest that young Syrian refugees experience growth in the self-perception domain. Two recent studies conducted with Syrian refugees living in Turkey also indicated posttraumatic growth experiences (Erşahin, 2020; Şimşir et al., 2021). In their qualitative research, Şimşir and her colleagues (2021) revealed that Syrian adult refugees expressed posttraumatic growth experiences in different domains such as personal strength, relationship with other people, new possibilities, spiritual change, and changed priorities. Moreover, they emphasized the significance of social support, hope for future, and religious belief in the development of posttraumatic growth (Şimşir et al., 2021).

A recent quantitative study with Syrian refugees elucidated the same growth experiences. Based on Tedeschi and Calhoun's theoretical framework, Erşahin (2020) indicated a moderate growth level among Syrian refugees living in Turkey. Further, problem-focused coping mechanisms and religious faith were related to a higher growth level (Erşahin, 2020). In line with existing literature on predictors of growth after adversity, the current study also highlighted the significance of personal and social resources for refugees in developing growth from hardships. Moreover, the participants' narratives demonstrated that individual, social and economic resources available to them promoted their coping capacity with adversities, which played a crucial role in the development of personal strength and maturation. In sum, the study findings supported the ongoing debate in the field, that is, exposure to trauma and adversity can cause not only psychopathological outcomes but also positive new developments and changes among refugees.

4.2.7.Changes in Family Dynamics

This research underscored the changes and challenges at multiple domains of family life that have the most significant influence on young Syrians' life course. This conclusion is not surprising since Syrian culture is a family-oriented culture (Hassan et al., 2015). For Syrian youth who lost their homes and communities, their families constituted the immediate social context in which they make sense of their traumatic war experiences and struggle with displacement challenges. Young Syrians in this study identified several changes across three domains of family life: changes in roles and responsibilities, changes in family connectedness, and different adjustment paces among family members. Echoing the literature on refugee families (Hynie et al., 2012; McCleary, 2017; McMichael et al., 2010; Weine et al., 2004), young Syrians seemed to be more resourceful in adjusting to the new country and acquired the new language faster than their parents and older family members. They played a vital and leading role in taking multiple responsibilities for family resilience and adjustment following migration to Turkey. Moreover, most of the participants' fathers faced difficulties in finding jobs due to aging and language barriers. Young Syrian men, in particular, entered the labor market and became the primary breadwinners of their families. The results may suggest a role reversal between the young refugee men and their fathers, as indicated in previous studies (McMichael et al., 2010; Weine et al., 2004). For Syrian young women, the situation was different. All women participants of this study, except three, were unemployed. Most of them did not seem to take active roles outside their home. However, they talked about taking on new responsibilities at home. None of the participants, except one, spoke about the effect of displacement and postmigration context on traditional gender roles in Syrian families. The only woman participant reported that role division between her mother and father changed and her mother took more active roles and responsibilities following the displacement to Ankara. However, Arenliu and his colleagues (2020) revealed that the urban context of İstanbul challenged traditional gender roles in Syria. Their participants reported that clear role division between men and women was disrupted following migration to İstanbul and women became more empowered and active. A future study comparing different urban contexts (e.g., İstanbul versus Ankara) and their effects on the family system would contribute to the literature on refugee families.

Yet, this study argues that role changes did not necessarily lead to a transformation in traditional family roles and power dynamics in the Syrian family structure. In a phenomenological study conducted with Iraqi families living in the US, Gangamma (2017) suggested that the reorganization of roles and responsibilities in Iraqi families did not transform families' patriarchal structure. The participants in that study voiced their desire to maintain the traditional gender roles of the Iraqi culture. Consistent with Gangamma's research, A few male participants in the present study expressed that despite assuming the breadwinner role in their families, it did not change the family setup in which their fathers were still the head of the family. Therefore, a future study focusing on shifts in power dynamics in Syrian families due to forced migration would make an essential contribution to the existing literature in terms of the Syrian refugee population. Moreover, a further study that would compare Syrian parents' and their children's experiences in terms of the effects of forced migration on the family system across generations and over time would provide valuable insight.

Although some participants reported that family bonds in the context of war and displacement became more vital, the findings illustrated that challenges of war and displacement created tension in family relationships and threatened the internal cohesion of Syrian families. Consistent with existing research on refugee families (McCleary, 2017; McMichael et al., 2010; Weine et al., 2004), some Syrian youth reported that family conflicts arose more frequently. Mutual understanding, tolerance, caring, and support among family members were lessened in the aftermath of the war and their displacement to Turkey. It was notable that having less family time in Turkey due to harsh working conditions negatively influenced communication quality among family members. As indicated in other studies on refugee families (McCleary, 2017), lack of economic resources in post-migration countries negatively impacts family relations.

Another theme voiced by a few participants was the different pace at which Syrian youth and their parents adjusted to a new way of living and culture in Turkey. As discussed in the literature, the acculturation process has a critical influence on refugee families (Timshel et al., 2017). In particular, participants' mothers showed a lesser and slower adaptation to living in Turkey than other family members since they generally

had minimal Turkish and minimal contact with the outside world and Turkish people. This situation has been a common theme in the existing literature (McCleary, 2017; McMichael et al., 2010; Renzaho et al., 2017). Even though this study had limited data, Syrian mothers showed less adaptation to life in Turkey. Consistent with existing studies (Birman, 2006, Lindner et al., 2020), lower Turkish language competence and mothers' less participation in the Turkish society were critical factors causing a slower process of adaptation to Turkey among Syrian mothers compared to their daughters. Similarly, previous studies emphasized that cultural adaptation pace may differ for parents and their children. This situation might lead to intergenerational conflict regarding parental control and discipline, autonomy, and maintaining traditional values and integration to the host country (Ho, 2010). In particular, previous studies from Western resettlement countries revealed the effect of acculturational differences on refugee youth's identity formation and mental health problems. Different adaptation experiences might pose critical importance for family relations and identity formation during the transition from adolescence to young adulthood. A future study conducted in the Turkish context would provide valuable and comparable findings to acculturation literature.

In conclusion, the present study suggests the importance of a family-focused perspective on refugee trauma and adaptation process, which would complement individually-focused understanding of forced migration experiences. Given the importance of family in Syrian youth's life, various changes and challenges in their family systems can be considered both a stressor and a resilience factor for psychological wellbeing and adaptation process.

4.2.8.Future Aspirations

The findings of this study also captured young Syrians' perceptions, thoughts, and expectations about the future. Almost all participants reflected upon the idea on return or stay or migrate to another country. The participants' narratives indicated that the idea of returning or staying in the future was shaped by several factors including the level of adaptation to Turkey, which in turn was shaped by perceived acceptance or discrimination from the host society. Almost all participants expressed a sense of

uncertainty and unpredictability about their future. Both returning and staying were equally represented in this study. In contrast, previous studies indicated a strong desire to return ultimately and a moderate wish to remain in Turkey among Syrian refugees (Müller-Funk, 2019). Moreover, this study revealed a gender difference. In other words, most of the female participants expressed their willingness to stay in Turkey, whereas most male participants mentioned that they preferred returning to Syria if conditions would permit them. This finding was contradictory to previous research exploring the future aspirations of Syrian refugees living in Turkey (SEEFAR, 2018). SEEFAR (2018) indicated that male Syrian refugees were slightly more willing to stay in Turkey than female refugees. Most women participants in this study were able to either continue their higher education or work and expressed satisfaction with their new lives in Turkey. On the other hand, none of the male participants except one could pursue their educational aspirations. Also, most of them had to work under challenging conditions with low wages. Such differences concerning living conditions in Turkey could be a possible reason behind this contradictory finding.

Study findings illuminated that the process of deciding whether or not to return, stay, or migrate to another place is complex and influenced by various factors. A combination of economic, societal, familial, and individual factors was influential on the decision-making process. The feeling that they were adjusting to Turkey and building a new life seemed to be important motivators to remain in Turkey. They pointed to their improved living conditions, educational and vocational opportunities, and new social networks in Turkey as important factors affecting their wish to stay. Moreover, the participants were concerned about the uncertain future of the war and ongoing warlike conditions in Syria. Having family members back in Syria seemed to be the most critical factor influencing their desire to return. Additionally, they stated a sense of belonging to the homeland and harsh living and employment conditions in Turkey among the factors driving them to return. However, the "end of the war" and improvement of Syria's security conditions were denoted as a precondition for return. Migration to a third country, for instance, European countries, did not seem like an option for the participants except for one. The participants emphasized cultural, language, and religious differences in European countries as important factors for their unwillingness to migrate. In a similar vein, Müller-Funk (2019) found that many

participating Syrian refugees living in Turkey did not want to migrate to Europe, even if they had an opportunity. Syrian refugees in Müller-Funk's study identified several reasons behind negative ideas about migration to Europe, including cultural differences, difficulty to learn language and build a work life, and the negative perception of European culture on family relations.

Syrian refugees also spoke about their future expectations and plans in this study. Focusing on an optimistic future perspective is considered to be a resource in coping with traumatic experiences. Importantly, their future views reflected their wishes to build a good life that would compensate for their various losses and regain living conditions before the war. In a similar vein, van Heelsum (2017) indicated that Syrians' future aspirations for living in the Netherlands were mainly about regaining a lost lifestyle. Accordingly, the young Syrians in this study frequently mentioned finding a better-paying job, repossessing a house or a car. Most young Syrian refugees had to change their aspirations before the war due to Turkey's contextual factors. In congruence with previous studies (e.g., Fincham, 2020), the present study revealed that pursuing their educational aspirations in Turkey was not possible for most participants, particularly for Syrian young men, because they had to take on a crucial role in the economic survival of their families. Moreover, they regarded language competency and the need for documentation (e.g., high school certificate) as barriers to enrolling in higher education. Only a small percentage of the participants voiced their educational aspirations and expressed their desire to move forward through education. Although most of the participants had to revise their future aspirations due to limited resources, it seemed that they found new pathways to establish a future life. Moreover, a variety of factors including available socioecological resources, perceived acceptance or discrimination, and socioeconomic situation, also have an impact on Syrian youth's future perspectives. For young Syrians, it is important to increase the number of possibilities to make choices in many domains of life. Giving voice to young Syrians' aspirations has provided insight into their desires, frustrations, and needs to establish a better life.

In summary, young Syrians encountered multiple stressors, adversities, and traumas during each stage of forced displacement. Pre-migration and migration stages were

filled with traumatic events, scarcity of vital resources, massive loss, and harm. The post-migration stage was characterized by a struggle to build a life in a novel and unexpected context. Various types of resources were vanished due to war and displacement while young refugees rearranged their resources or gained new ones to support themselves and their families. As illustrated, young Syrians responded to adversities and traumas with resilience. Family bonds and peer relationships functioned as a critical coping resource. Due to the generational variance in resource gain and adjustment to a new context, young Syrian have taken vital responsibilities in their families. This study also explicated that family relationships and dynamics have changed due to exposure traumas, resource loss, and migration to a new country. It is noteworthy that young Syrians have reported experiences of development and psychological growth in themselves that occurred in response to trauma and migration adversities. Finally, Syrian youth have viewed their future with uncertainty and unpredictability.

4.3. Interpretation of Study Findings from Socio-Ecological Model of Refugee Experience

The current study points that there are diverse and multiple factors affecting the mental health outcomes and adaptation process during pre-, during, and post-migration among Syrian young adult refugees. Several researchers in the field have suggested different models aimed to extend the focus beyond the trauma-based paradigm. Thus, these models have increasingly conceptualized refugees' responses to trauma within the context of different environmental systems (e.g., Drozdek, 2015; Miller et al., 2006, Papadopolous, 2007; Silove, 2013). Almost all these models are derived from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). As Drozdek and Silove (2019) argued, the socio-ecological model of refugee experience would help the researchers and mental health providers in the field to look beyond Cartesian thinking (mind-brain problems versus external world problems) of refugee trauma and its psychopathological consequences. They have emphasized that refugee people were not passive victims of traumas, losses, and adversities who suffer from psychological disorders. Instead, they evolve adaptively in interaction with their surrounding social contexts. Drozdek (2015) stated that their psychological symptoms

are not static; instead, they are dynamic and change according to the interaction between intrapsychic factors, social context, and resources.

The present study further contributes to the socio-ecological understanding of refugee mental health and adaptation. As this study highlighted, the Syrian war and displacement to Turkey made significant changes and transformations in young Syrian refugees and their interaction with different environmental settings. Accordingly, the study findings will be situated within Drozdek's Integrative Contextual Model to integrate all interacting components of Syrian refugees' experiences pre-, during, and post-migration periods. The suggested model offers insights into the refugee experience, considering individual perspectives and examining different migration contexts and their interaction with the individual. Drozdek and colleagues (2015) developed the Integrative Contextual Model of refugee mental health building on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) (2001). Drozdek's model of refugee trauma incorporates a resource perspective which is also a crucial element of ecological theory. Resource loss or resource gain is viewed as the key component in trauma and stress (Hobfoll, 2001). As emphasized in Bronfenbrenner's theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), another critical component of this model is the dimension of time and change over time. Importantly, researchers viewed refugee experience's socioecology as a multi-layered and dynamic process that actively affects the refugees. These environmental systems were described as nested layers, including intra-individual, interpersonal (family/peers), society/community, and broader cultural and political context (Drozdek, 2015). The interplay between the individual and environmental systems is bidirectional. Changes in any one level would influence the other ecological levels (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Drozdek (2015) has suggested that a clinician should focus on intrapsychic factors and interpersonal and sociopolitical dimensions of refugee experiences. A clinician should acknowledge the resources (protective factors) and the sources of damage (risk factors) in the refugee experience (Drozdek, 2015). The proposed model can be seen in Figure 1 (Drozdek, 2015, p.3).

The present study's findings have contributed to the understanding of young Syrians' war and displacement experiences within the Integrative Contextual Model. Firstly, Drozdek (2015) emphasized identifying sources of damage (risk factors) in refugees' experiences. According to this model, damage (risk) factors can be at different dimensions of social ecology and might change throughout displacement phases. The study findings related to the stressors and adverse experiences during pre-, during, and postmigration phases can be conceptualized as the sources of damage (risk factors). Such experiences and stressors might negatively influence young Syrians' adaptation to Turkey and their psychological wellbeing. Syrian youth reported significant risk factors such as traumatizing experiences (e.g., exposure to violence and loss of safety) during premigration and flight periods, diminished resource pool (e.g., loss of home, loss of social networks, and loss of future dreams), and economic and psychosocial challenges encountered following migration to Turkey. In addition to the risk factors that refugees experienced during the premigration period, various factors affected the Syrians' decision to flee from their country. From the socio-ecological model, a combination of multiple factors at different levels, including experiences of persecution and violence, lack of survival resources, and economic deprivation influenced the decision to leave Syria. Moreover, study findings illustrated that factors at the individual (e.g., gender) and familial levels (e.g., the importance of family networks and the role of family on the decision to leave) determined the decision-making process.

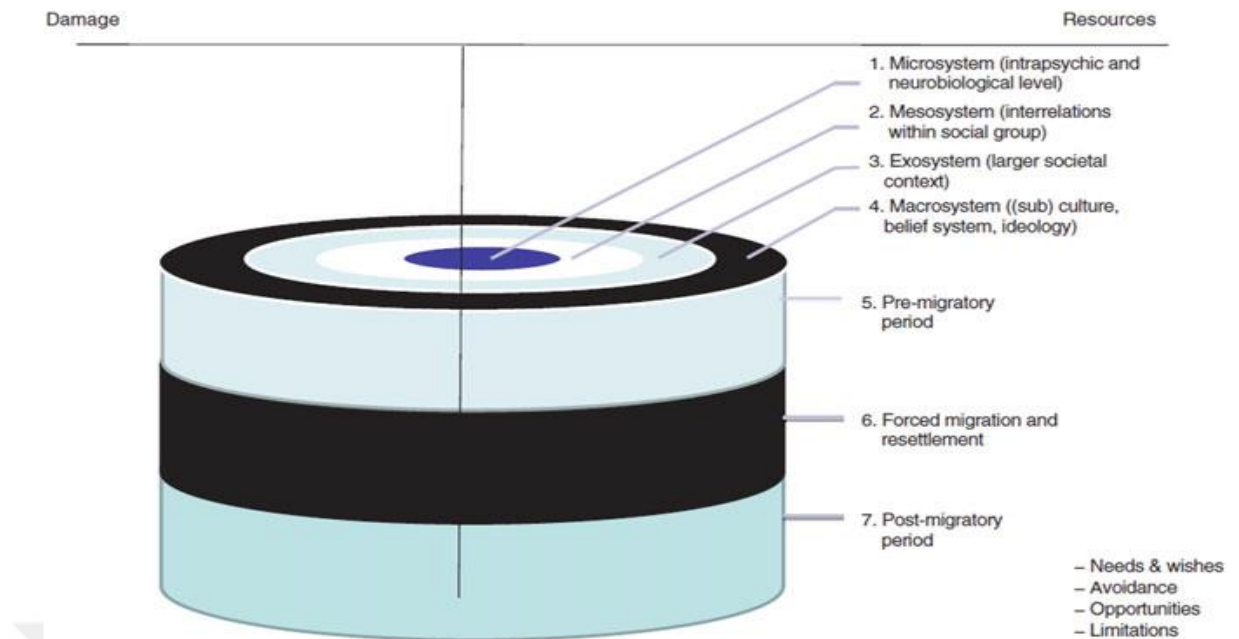


Figure 1 The Integrative Contextual Model

Note: Reprinted from “Challenges in treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder in refugees: towards integration of evidence-based treatments with contextual and culture-sensitive perspectives,” by Drozdek, B., 2015, *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 6 (1). Copyright 2015 by Coaction Publishing.

In line with Drozdek’s model (2015), the current study has suggested that available resources in young Syrians’ lives have critical importance in reducing risk factors' impact on young refugees' mental health and adaptation in Turkey. The findings pointed to different kinds of resources at the individual (e.g., individual characteristics and religious beliefs), interpersonal (e.g., family/peer support and supportive relations with Turkish natives), communal (e.g., social services), and cultural (e.g., learning Turkish) levels. Therefore, available resources and gaining new resources would be influential in adapting to a new country and developing mental health problems (Drozdek, 2015).

Some findings obtained from the present study, such as the changed views of self, can be conceptualized under the individual level. At the intra-individual level, personal growth experiences, including becoming a mature and responsible individual with self-reliance and competence, were frequently voiced by the participants. Different

layers of social ecology surrounding young Syrians (e.g., family context, the socioeconomic context of Turkey) contributed to such transformative experiences at the intra-individual level.

According to the Integrative Contextual Model, family context constitutes the second layer of the social ecology of young Syrians (Drozdek, 2015). Findings of the current study relevant to changing family dynamics can be conceptualized as the familial system in the young Syrians' environmental context. Taken together, the results associated with the familial dynamics of Syrian youth illustrated the interaction between different layers of socio-ecological context. For instance, redefinitions in family roles in terms of financial responsibilities had implications at the individual level. Although assuming financial responsibility for their families influenced their education and employment choices, it also enhanced their self-concept as becoming responsible and mature individuals. Similar findings were echoed in a study conducted with 16-24 aged young refugees from Afghan, Karen, and Sudanese communities in Canada (Hynie et al., 2012). Furthermore, the existence or lack of available resources at different ecological contexts (e.g., financial hardships, language competence) and harsh working conditions constituted a risk factor for family cohesion and communication.

The third level following the family and the individual levels is the community level. The current study also made contributions to the socio-ecological understanding of refugee experience in terms of how Syrian young people perceive and experience relationships with Turkish people and other Syrian people in their neighborhood, workplace, and different settings. The current study indicated that most young Syrians viewed both Turkish and Syrian neighbors as helpful and perceived their relations with both communities as a source of resilience. However, a few young refugees described tensions and conflicts within Syrians and between Syrians and Turkish communities. Thus, the study findings pointed that community factors in the postmigration context might play a critical role in young Syrians' resource pool. In other contexts where young Syrian refugees face conflict and tension with Syrian and Turkish communities, community-level factors may adversely affect their sense of belonging and lead to acculturation problems at individual and family levels.

The final dimension of the social context surrounding young Syrians is the cultural level. In this sense, perceived discrimination experiences and their effects on Syrian youth may reflect the interaction between macro-level and individual-level experiences. Thus, from a socio-ecological perspective, discrimination experiences can be viewed as a macro-level factor that might lead to mental health problems at the individual level. Further, young Syrian refugees' perceptions of Turkish culture might be considered as a macro-level factor. Before migration to Turkey, majority of the participants stated that Turkey was an unknown country and knew very few things about the culture and living conditions. Whereas some participants expected a European country with a better work and life conditions, some told that they heard about harsh working and living conditions in Turkey. In addition to these premigration expectations, majority of the participants underlined some cultural and religious similarities between Turkey and Syria compared to a European country or the US. In particular, Ankara city was described as an easy, conservative and modest urban context compared to İstanbul or İzmir. Therefore, such experiences might lead to a faster adjustment and less cultural shock. The present research illuminated the importance of societal-level factors (macro systemic factors), including experience of discrimination from Turkish society on Syrian youth's adjustment process and wellbeing from an ecological systems framework.

In summary, young refugees' experiences are nested within different socio-ecological contexts, namely intra-individual, familial, community/society, and broader cultural context. The participants' narratives indicated that interaction between these layers shaped Syrian refugees' adaptation and mental health problems. Importantly, the findings underlined that various sources of damage (risk factors) and resources (protective factors) were also influential on young Syrians' experiences. Various stressful and traumatic events at the premigration and postmigration period might hinder adaptation and augment the risk of mental health problems. However, the results highlighted that various kinds of resources played a crucial role in easing the effect of traumas and adversities.

4.4. Developmental Approaches to Experiences of Young Syrians Refugees

Importantly, this study illustrated that Syrian young people experienced a dual transition; they went through a transitional process concerning adjustment to a new culture, societal values, language, work, and educational system while simultaneously transitioning from adolescence to the young adult phase of life. From a developmental perspective, the early twenties are conceptualized as a transitional period to young adulthood and frequently associated with identity exploration, increased autonomy, economic independence, being responsible for oneself, having intimate relationships, family formation, and pursuing educational and career aspirations (Arnett, 2001; Erikson, 1968; as cited in Berk, 2018). Arnett (2000, 2001, 2015) introduced the term “emerging adulthood” to conceptualize this transitional period to adult life. Arnett (2015, p. 9) described emerging adulthood as an extended period and identified five features, namely, identity explorations, instability, self-focus, feeling in-between, and possibilities/optimism. In Western and industrialized cultures, gaining independence has been recognized as a significant marker for the transition to adulthood (Arnett, 2001; Erikson, 1968). However, in Middle Eastern countries, the transition to adulthood is described by having a regular job, settling on a career, getting married, and moving out of one's parents' home (Salehi-Isfahani, 2010).

Moreover, several scholars emphasized the critical importance of lifelong family loyalty and interdependence in Middle Eastern societies, contrary to Western societies (Gregg, 2005). Gregg (2005) indicated that most young people in Middle Eastern cultures resolve the conflict between family loyalty and their personal wishes in late adolescence and early adulthood in favor of family loyalty and interdependence. The emphasis on family loyalty and material and emotional interdependence between family members was a repeated focus in the narratives of young Syrians. Most of the young Syrians in this study sacrificed their individual strivings and wishes for the sake of their families, in particular their younger siblings. Accordingly, Syrian youth in this study assumed multiple responsibilities for their families at an earlier age. Displacement conditions and economic adversities accelerated the transition to young adulthood for young Syrian refugees. Prior research found that adverse situations and challenging experiences due to forced displacement may accelerate or delay transition

into adulthood and cause shifts in young refugees' roles and responsibilities (Evans et al., 2013; The Children's Society, 2012). The results of this study also demonstrated a gendered transitional experience to young adulthood. All male participants entered the workforce as children, whereas most women participants married at an early age (Strachan, 2015). Accelerated transition to adulthood had important implications for Syrian youth's lives (Lee, 2014). The findings highlighted that Syrian young refugees did not have enough time to acquire required resources to make choices about adult roles and responsibilities. When considering the emerging adulthood literature, Syrian youth were at a disadvantaged position because they do not have extended time and opportunity to explore various life options in love and work, being self-focused on their life choices, and experiment different life possibilities and reach desired goals. The current study supports the critical perspectives to the emerging adulthood that challenges the validity of this approach outside Western and industrialized cultures (Lee, 2014).

Previous studies indicated Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory's relevance in exploring refugee youth's developmental transitions into young adulthood (Alghamdi, 2019; Copolov & Knowles, 2020; McGregor et al., 2016). Erikson defined an eight-stage psychosocial theory of human development from infancy to old age (Berk, 2018). During each psychosocial stage, individuals face psychosocial conflicts, and they should successfully resolve them for healthy development (Erikson, 1968; as cited in Berk, 2018). Importantly, Erikson conceptualized human development in association with one's cultural and societal circumstances (Berk, 2018). Participating young adult Syrians were in their adolescence period when they fled to Turkey. Therefore, two developmental stages defined by Erikson's theory might have relevance to understanding young Syrians' experiences, namely, "Identity vs. Role Confusion" and "Intimacy vs. Isolation." At the "Identity vs. Role Confusion" stage, adolescents aged between thirteen and nineteen aim to form their identities and a sense of self by exploring their values and goals. Moreover, Erikson's theory emphasized the relevance of the individuation process in adolescents' identity formation. They focus on their educational and vocational futures. At this stage, failure to achieve such goals might lead to role confusion, lack of self-esteem, and unhappiness (Berk, 2018). The next stage, Intimacy vs. Isolation, which takes place between twenty and thirty-five years

of age, is the first stage of adulthood. During this stage, the primary psychological task is to establish intimate relations and form a long-term commitment to a partner. According to Erikson, the failure to achieve such relationships leads to feelings of loneliness and self-absorption (Berk, 2018).

In previous studies exploring the transition to young adulthood based on Erikson's theory (Alghamdi, 2019; Copolov & Knowles, 2020), researchers argued that young refugees, especially refugee young men, could not resolve psychosocial conflict at the adolescence stage (identity versus role confusion) due to their roles of being the breadwinner in their families. They argued that their inability to resolve this stage made refugee youth vulnerable to developing self-esteem problems and role confusion. In turn, they might experience difficulties forming intimate relationships at the next psychosocial stage, namely young adulthood. However, this study's findings revealed a different conclusion. When exploring Syrian youth's accounts, it was evident that occupational, marriage, and educational choices were narrower due to socioeconomic challenges, taking financial responsibilities, and diminishing resources in their lives. All these adversities might have influenced participants' ability to resolve psychosocial conflict at each stage. They experienced a rapid and unprepared transition to the adult world. Some participants expressed their unhappiness and conflictual feelings with this condition. Facing socioeconomic challenges, taking responsibility for their families, and having limited resources might have hindered refugee youth's developmental progress. However, Gregg (2005) argued that young people from Middle Eastern societies, compared to those in Western societies, might not experience identity crisis at adolescence as proposed in Erikson. Considering the family concept's critical importance in Syrian culture, Syrian youth in this study may not have been thrown into an identity -crisis in Erikson's terms because taking responsibility for their families was expected and rewarded by their community and family. The study findings highlighted that Syrian youth in this study might not experience identity crisis as a catastrophe, which resulted in psychopathological outcomes. Instead, they seemed to redefine their self-definition to become responsible and mature individuals with personal growth. For instance, even though some of the participants voiced being exhausted and overwhelmed by difficulties, many participants also expressed feelings of empowerment, increased confidence, and emphasized becoming more competent.

Concerning Erikson's intimacy versus isolation stage, almost all participants had intimate relations through marriage or friendships and felt supported in these relationships. Thus, it appeared that nearly all the participants managed to resolve the central developmental task of young adulthood in Erikson's theory. The presence of family members and friends played a buffering role for those Syrian young people to achieve the developmental task of young adulthood in Erikson's terms. In the same manner, Copolov and Knowles (2021) revealed that unaccompanied refugee youth is at risk of failing to Erikson's young adulthood stage compared to counterparts who are accompanied by their families.

Additionally, it is also crucial to consider the impact of cultural transition on achieving developmental tasks of Erikson's stages of adolescence and young adulthood. Even though young Syrian refugees were unfamiliar with Turkey's cultural beliefs, values, and lifestyle, they also highlighted the cultural and religious similarities between Turkey and Syria compared to a European country or the US. In particular, Ankara city was described as a conservative and modest city. Thus, this situation might allow them to experience less cultural shock and adjust to new contexts faster. Such cultural experiences seemed to positively impact establishing a coherent sense of self and intimate bonds in Turkey, which might have supported them to resolve Erikson's developmental task. On the other hand, experiences of discrimination and lack of belonging could interfere with the transition to adulthood. Accordingly, Copolov and Knowles (2021) underlined that experience of discrimination after resettlement to Australia created difficulties to develop a sense of identity for Hazaras unaccompanied refugees. A further study focusing on acculturation and developmental tasks among Syrian youth provides an insightful perspective.

In addition to Erikson's conceptualization of young adulthood, Daniel Levinson's theory of adult development might provide a framework to understand Syrian youth's experiences. It seems that Levinson's theory of adult development received less attention than Erikson's theory in refugee youth literature. Similar to Erikson's stages, Levinson described adult development as "a sequence of eras, which had its own biopsychosocial character" (Levinson, 1986, p. 5). The fundamental concept of Levinson's theory is the life structure, and it is defined as "the underlying pattern or

design of a person's life at a given time" (Levinson, 1986, p.6). Life structures related to marriage-family, close friendships, and occupation are the most important for one's self-concept (Berk, 2018; Levinson, 1986). According to Levinson, young people build an image of themselves representing their dreams in adult life during the transition to young adulthood (Berk, 2018). The task of young adulthood is to build a life structure in congruence with their identity and dreams, based on relationships, achieving occupational aspirations, and forming love relations and family (Gregg, 2005). Importantly, Levinson's research on adult development indicated that although both men and women pass through the same stages, they experience different developmental tasks due to social roles and psychological characteristics (Gregg, 2005). Unlike Erikson's theory, Levinson proposes that an identity crisis might occur when a young individual cannot build a life structure according to his or her dreams (Levinson, 1986). Based on Levinson's life structure theory, it was found in the present study that war and displacement disrupted young Syrians' life structures and they could not pursue their dreams. They also experienced difficulty forming a new life structure that confirms their dreams due to a lack of economic and social resources. This situation may potentially create a crisis in their lives. The study findings illustrated that Syrian youth attempted to deal with this crisis, redefined their life goals, and explored possible alternatives and opportunities in the new context.

The findings of this study were discussed and interpreted based on the socioecological model of refugee adaptation and developmental theories on early adulthood. Study results illuminated that refugee experiences of Syrian youth were characterized by the different layers of their social context and the interaction between Syrian youth and their environment. Traumatizing events, multiple losses, violence, persecution, and economic hardships in the premigration period shattered the lives of these young Syrians and drove them to escape to a safer place, Turkey. The family seemed to play a crucial role in shaping the participants' experiences. War and displacement conditions had a tremendous impact on different dimensions of family life, including family roles, communication and connectedness, and family functioning. Besides the family context, communal and larger societal context, particularly discrimination experiences, shaped their experiences in Turkey. One of the significant results was that Syrian youth utilized various adaptative resources and showed resilience and

posttraumatic growth in the face of trauma, loss, and uprooting. Notably, the developmental life stage of the participants was also critical in understanding the participants' experiences. Young Syrians had to assume multiple and vital responsibilities for their families. This situation created a stressful and rapid transition to adult life, empowered the participants, and led to an early maturation process but lost their dreams and life projects.

4.5.Limitations and Strengths of the Study

The present study provided a rich and in-depth insight into the lived experiences of young Syrian refugees. The idiographic perspective of IPA enabled the emergence of rich qualitative data, which was an important strength of this study. This study was the first known investigation of forced migration experiences of young adult Syrians living in Turkey at this age group. Due to the idiographic epistemological position of this study, the researcher did not intend to generalize to the general population of young Syrians living in Turkey (Smith et al., 2009). The idiographic approach focus on the particular. In contrast to making general claims at group or population level, IPA aims to explore "how the particular experiential phenomena (an event, process or relationship) have been understood from the perspective of particular people, in a particular context" (Smith et al., 2009; p. 29). Smith and colleagues (2009) suggest that the findings of an IPA study might be considered in terms of theoretical transferability rather than empirical generalizability. In other words, they suggested that detailed and rich analysis of the participants' accounts "enable readers to evaluate its transferability to persons in contexts which are more, or less similar" (Smith et al., 2009; p. 51). In line with IPA's theoretical approach, the researcher selected a homogeneous sample by using purposive sampling. The present sample was homogeneous in terms of age, gender, and city of residence. Moreover, this study had a relatively large sample size compared to other IPA studies. Having a larger and homogeneous sample is a strength of the current study. The findings of this research emerged from a detailed analysis of each participant regarding war and forced migration experiences. Taken together, study findings emerged from this sample of young Syrians and might be transferable to other groups of Syrian youth living in Turkey.

This study made several important contributions to the existing literature. This study's notable contribution was to explore the experiences of forced migration and wellbeing based on Syrian refugee youth's own voices, which have been mainly neglected within clinical psychology literature. Although young refugees constitute most of the worldwide refugee population, research giving voice to refugee young adults seems very limited. In this respect, this study contributes to refugee mental health literature by focusing on Syrian youth in their early twenties. Accordingly, the interpretative phenomenological analysis provided a more in-depth insight into refugee experience and mental health. One of the main contributions of this study is to reveal the multi-dimensional nature of Syrian refugees' experiences, with an emphasis on phenomenology rather than diagnosis and psychopathology.

Moreover, most refugee mental health literature has been mostly from high-income resettlement countries, including the US, European countries, Canada and Australia. Resettlement countries generally have well-established refugee policies and institutions despite all criticism related to these policies. Compared to such countries, Turkey is a developing country. Although substantial changes and developments have been recently carried out in legal regulations and laws concerning migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, there is still a need to improve refugee policies and institutions compared to high-income resettlement countries. Moreover, there are similarities between Syrian and Turkish cultures in terms of religion. Thus, a study conducted in Turkey would provide a different post-migration context compared to high-income resettlement countries. Therefore, the current study provided valuable findings regarding commonalities and differences between developed resettlement countries and Turkey in terms of the mental health problems, resilience, post-traumatic growth, and developmental needs of refugee youth

This research pointed to the significance of ecological and multi-layered understanding of refugee experience for policymakers, social workers, and mental health professionals. It was evident that ecological factors (e.g., available resources, discrimination, economic constraints, employment conditions) impacted Syrian youth's psychological wellbeing. Thus, mental health professionals should broaden

their trauma-based approach and tailor their prevention and intervention models according to different ecological levels when working with refugee groups.

Throughout the current study, the researcher aimed to conduct a rigorous research and data analysis process. However, it should be acknowledged that the findings might be different if another researcher conducted the interviews. For example, a different researcher using the same approach might have a different focus or orientation during the interviews or make different interpretations of the participants' narratives. Moreover, young refugees in this study likely chose to reveal specific experiences, thoughts, and feelings while withholding others, based on their attitude towards the researcher. Finally, it is essential to note that the researcher did not present the complete data set in the analysis and included the most salient themes as judged by the researcher, which could have represented the researcher's bias.

Several limitations should be noted for this study. Young Syrians in this study volunteered to talk about their lived experiences with a researcher coming from the host community. In this respect, this study might not include hard-to-reach groups in Syrian youth, such as those unwilling to participate and articulate their experiences in academic research. Moreover, it was challenging to recruit female participants in the Syrian community because young Syrian women spent most of their time at home. It would have been more time-consuming to build enough trust to have access to them. Moreover, existing literature has suggested that matching participants with the interpreter in terms of gender, religion, and age would be better (e.g., Chiumento, et al., 2017). However, it was not possible to achieve this sort of matching in the current study. In particular, a male interpreter might have influenced the relationship, especially with female participants and their responses during the interviews. Thus, this study included participants who accepted to speak with a male interpreter. If there were a woman interpreter, women participants might have shared different experiences and accounts, and it might have been easier to reach other groups of young Syrian women. Finally, it is essential to note that male participants of this study played a vital role in the recruitment of female participants. Due to such recruitment difficulties, the sample might not reflect young Syrian refugees in general.

Another limitation was the use of an interpreter, which might have created language barriers between the participants and the researcher. Conducting an IPA research through using interpreters brings methodological complexities. Attention to language usage, including temporal referents and repetition of words, is essential for IPA research. However, such aspects of the interview might get lost in translation. While all participants except three spoke in Arabic during the interviews, the interpreter translated the interviews simultaneously from Arabic to Turkish via the interpreter. The researcher transcribed the translated Turkish material and conducted the analysis based on the simultaneous translation. Due to the financial constraints, it was not possible to record the interviews in Arabic and then conduct Arabic to Turkish translation of the interviews, which might have weakened the trustworthiness of the findings. In addition, some of the details in the participants' accounts and the accuracy of the translated material might be lost during the simultaneous translation. This situation can be considered a possible limitation of this research.

4.6. Clinical and Policy Implications

Some important implications for mental health professionals and policymakers have emerged from this study. The study findings indicated that young Syrians had experienced manifold losses in different domains of their lives. Hence, when working with refugees therapeutically, addressing experiences of losses and feelings of grief would be a central point. Moreover, the researchers had indicated that grief responses and grief experience could vary across cultures (e.g., Kokou-Kpolou et al., 2017). Therefore, mental health professionals should consider culturally appropriate ways of addressing loss and mourning rituals in grief work with Syrian refugees (Jones, 2020). For example, Killikelly, Ramp, and Maercker (2021) explored the understanding of grief reactions among Syrian refugees living in Switzerland. The participating Syrian refugees described usual mourning rituals in their culture. The first three days after someone's death was regarded to be of critical importance. Syrians performed different rituals, including cleaning the body, social gathering with family, friends, and neighbours, reading the Quran, and praying for the deceased (Killikelly et al., 2021). Fourth day after the death was recognized as an important cultural marker during the grief process. Syrian women were expected to stay at home for the first 40 days

(Killikelly et al., 2021). Additionally, Syrian refugees indicated gender differences in expression of grief and mourning behaviors. This study also demonstrated the impact of becoming a refugee and post-migration context on grief experiences and responses. Participating Syrian refugees stated that adjustment difficulties, loss of homeland, lack of social network, and inability to engage in traditional mourning rituals aggravated grief experiences and responses (Killikelly et al., 2021).

Considering the multidimensionality and complexity of Syrian youth's experiences, adopting a cross-disciplinary perspective to refugee mental health and adaptation can help mental health professionals. In particular, while not dismissing the impact of past traumas on refugee mental health, mental health professionals should prioritize understanding the social ecology surrounding Syrian refugees and their cultural beliefs and practices to get a complete picture of refugee wellbeing. In this respect, the ecological understanding of refugee mental health underscores the significance of developing individual-level interventions and treatment models, in addition to familial and community-based intervention models and psychosocial programs. In particular, based on the study findings, psychosocial programs aimed to enhance family and community bonds may support Syrian youth's psychological wellbeing and resilience.

Additionally, this study shed light on Syrian young people who were not passive victims of war, trauma, and violence but actively struggled with traumas and adversities. Based on these findings, mental health professionals should adopt resilience-based perspectives alongside trauma-based approaches. Thus, it is critical to be aware of resilience factors and available resources to improve Syrian refugees' resilience when working therapeutically. Moreover, as the study findings suggested, resilience should be conceptualized from a socio-ecological approach rather than an individual-trait concept. That is to say, an ecological understanding of resilience can enable mental health practitioners to identify resilience factors and resources at different levels of social ecology, including individual, familial, community, and culture. For instance, Tol and colleagues (2009) adopted an ecological perspective to resilience. They indicated that family level (e.g., economic resources, family belief systems, family communication patterns), school level (e.g., supportive relationships with teachers, teachers as role models, improving skills and knowledge), and

community level (e.g., performing cultural rituals) resources contributed to refugee children's resilience and well-being.

Another critical issue in clinical practice with refugees is to offer culture-sensitive mental health services to refugees in Turkey. For this aim, addressing the Syrian culture's belief systems and values about psychological problems and their treatment might play a crucial role. Hassan and his colleagues (2015) made a valuable contribution to literature about Syrian cultural assumptions and beliefs about mental health problems and their treatment. In Syrian culture, concepts like "psychological well-being" and "mental health" have negative connotations, and psychological suffering is not something that requires psychological or psychiatric treatment (Hassan et al., 2015). Furthermore, seeking medical help with a physical complaint is common among Syrian people who have mental problems. They stressed that most Syrian idioms of distress reflect the interconnectedness of somatic and psychological experiences because body and mind are interconnected in the explanatory models of mental illness (Hassan et al., 2015). For most Syrians, religious value systems, including Islamic belief, shapes the perception and understanding of mental health problems. In the Islamic value system, emotional disturbances are found in the heart. Imbalance and disharmony in the heart are associated with psychological problems (Haque, 2004). Sometimes, psychological problems are attributed to supernatural forces such as jinn and the evil eye (Hassan et al., 2015). Besides seeking treatment from health and mental health professionals, religious healing is also sought among Syrians. Seeking help from religious leaders and visiting holy places is common (Hassan et al., 2015). Moreover, as emphasized in the literature (Doğan et al., 2019; Kiselev et al., 2020), there might be possible barriers including cost, distance, stigmatization, and language to access and use mental health services for Syrian refugees. Psychosocial and mental health programs should take into consideration such barriers. Several suggestions were addressed in the existing literature to overcome these barriers. For instance, some proposed to incorporate community-level psychoeducation activities to target mental health stigma. Byrow and colleagues (2019) suggested that the strategy of social contact might be effective in reducing stigma among refugee communities.

Moreover, mental health professionals can advocate for changes in policies, laws, and practices that negatively influence their clients. Since the Turkish state does not have a legal framework for giving Syrians refugee status to ensure a permanent stay, this situation would erode their sense of certainty, security, and safety about their future. Thus, it is critical to advocate for policies targeting discrimination from Turkish society, improving the legal status of Syrian refugees for long-term stability, and equal access to health and mental health services.

It is crucial to take into account gender-specific needs, capacities, and experiences when implementing psychosocial and mental health programs for Syrian refugees. As indicated in previous works (Cankurtaran & Albayrak, 2019; Çevik et al., 2018), Syrian refugee women and girls in Turkey are more at risk of facing gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment such as being a co-wife, forced/child marriage, sexual assault, and violence by their husbands or family members. Importantly, researchers (e.g., Cankurtaran & Albayrak, 2019) highlighted that most Syrian women experience mental health consequences; however, they do not know what gender-based violence is and their legal rights. Therefore, it seems crucial to implement psychosocial programs which are sensitive to GBV. Here, it is important to note a good example of a program that aimed to empower Syrian women by focusing on GBV and women's reproductive health among refugee women (Cankurtaran & Albayrak). This program was implemented in Ankara by Hacettepe University Women's Research and Implementation Center (HUWRIC) in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund Turkey (UNFPA Turkey) and European Union (Cankurtaran & Albayrak).

Further, some researchers indicated that forced displacement challenged the traditional roles of being the breadwinner of the family among Syrian men (e.g., Suerbaum, 2018; Yalim & Kim, 2018). Those dramatic changes in refugee men's experiences might lead to psychological distress and increase violence against women and girls (Suerbaum, 2018; Yalim & Kim, 2018). Thus, policymakers should consider ways to empower refugee men to prevent gender-based violence and implement interventions and programs to address the psychosocial needs of refugee men. For instance, an intervention called *Engaging men to promote resilient communities* (Veale et al., 2019) implemented with Syrian refugees and Lebanese men can be an example to develop

such programs. Veale and colleagues (2019) indicated that the support groups facilitated resilience among Syrian men and improved their family relationships. Therefore, it is critical to develop policies addressing refugee women and men's needs and challenges separately.

This study also highlighted significant considerations for policymakers. Given the importance of young adulthood as a critical period of significant transitions into adult life, the unique developmental needs of Syrian refugee youth should be considered. It is essential to recognize the considerable skills and resources these young people bring to Turkey. As stated by the participating young refugees, programs promoting self-sufficiency and facilitating youth's potential should be prioritized. Moreover, this study's findings illustrated the critical role of governmental policies in establishing a safe and meaningful life in Turkey. For that purpose, governmental policymakers should consider refugees' voices and implement policies that promote access to social and economic resources such as vocational training, safe working conditions, new employment opportunities, reducing the barrier to education, and enhancing the Turkish language. Accordingly, this research underscored that Syrian women refugees were disadvantaged in accessing services such as language and vocational courses due to housework, childcare, and cultural constraints. Non-governmental organizations and policymakers can implement interventions and programs focusing on the unique needs of Syrian women. Such programs should be accessible in terms of language, childcare resources, and location. Moreover, young Syrian refugees spoke about their physical, social, and psychological safety needs and their need to access educational opportunities and language courses. Further, they stated their need to have a stable and non-exploitative job, including social security rights and equal rights and opportunities with Turkish citizens. Therefore, it is vital to develop policies addressing these young refugees' needs to support them during the transition to young adulthood and building a meaningful and satisfying life.

Further, this study noted the interaction between Syrian youth and Turkish society. From the narratives of refugee youth, interaction with the host community can act as a risk factor (e.g., perceived discrimination) for Syrian youth and a resource for promoting their adaptation process in Turkey. As discussed, discrimination

experiences might interfere with the sense of belonging and adaptation, leading to mental health problems. Therefore, programs promoting social cohesion between Turkish citizens and Syrians would be vital for long-term social inclusion and integration. Policymakers and psychosocial programmers should prioritize policies and psychosocial services to bridge the Turkish community and Syrian refugees. At the policy level, policymakers should set out legal regulations ensuring refugee people's rights in Turkey.

Considering the vulnerabilities and adversities among refugee communities, it is important to note that disasters, including the COVID-19 pandemic, might affect disproportionately refugee populations (e.g., UN, 2020). United Nations agency report (2020) has identified that refugee populations in the Middle East struggled with socioeconomic and health challenges, including losing their jobs, inability to access health services and vaccinations, and increased discrimination. In particular, refugees with chronic diseases, older refugees, younger refugees, and those with disabilities face more disadvantageous and worrying circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic (UN, 2020). COVID-19 Pandemic has put significant risk on the education of refugee children due to the interruption of face-to-face education and increasing school drop-outs (UNICEF, 2021). For instance, more than 400.000 school-aged Syrian children in Turkey have not had any access to educational opportunities (UNICEF, 2021). Moreover, UNICEF remarked that violence against refugee women and children increased significantly during the pandemic (UNICEF, 2021). In this regard, policymakers should increase their effort to expand refugee children's access to education. Developing alternative approaches to digital education and the collaboration between state actors and NGOs might reduce educational inequalities. Besides socioeconomic and health challenges, several researchers indicated the mental health consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on Syrian refugees (e.g., Kira et al., 2021). Kira and colleagues (2021) identified COVID-19 as traumatic stress and defined three components: fears of getting infected, the economic impact on the individual, and social isolation. In their study, researchers indicated that the financial challenges of COVID-19 had the most severe effect on the mental health problems of Syrian refugees living in İstanbul. In sum, Syrian refugees and other refugee groups in Turkey are at greater risk of deteriorating psychosocial and economic issues during

times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, policymakers should prioritize services and programs to ensure refugees' rights, including humanitarian protection and equal access to health services and vaccination.

4.7. Research Implications

The findings emphasized the importance of developmental characteristics in understanding forced displacement experiences and their consequences. Accordingly, there is a need for comparative studies examining young and elderly Syrian refugees regarding their migration experiences, loss, mourning, and acculturation process.

The current study also indicated the changes in young Syrians' experiences and needs in Turkey over time. Moreover, as Turkish society's sociopolitical and economic climate changes over time, Turkish society's views about Syrian refugees also change. For this reason, this study recommends conducting longitudinal studies investigating such changes over time and their impact on Syrian refugees' mental health and adaptation. Accordingly, it would be relevant to research the interaction between refugees and Turkish society as it influences Syrians' acculturation process.

This study demonstrated the importance of qualitative studies focusing on refugees' subjective perceptions and experiences in gaining a richer understanding of refugee experiences from an ecological perspective. However, mixed methods studies integrating quantitative measurements with qualitative methods can capture the complex nature of the refugee experience and its mental health outcomes. The association between stressors, mental health outcomes, and resilience can be understood holistically if the qualitative methodology combines quantitative measurements, including surveys about important premigration and post-migration risk factors and protective factors. Focusing on Syrian youth living with their families, this research indicated the significant role of family relations in shaping refugees' experiences. Yet, future research with unaccompanied young Syrians might highlight different aspects of refugee mental health.

4.8. Conclusion

This study captured how socio-ecological contexts and developmental life stages influence young Syrians' experiences of war and forced displacement. In this sense, the study findings are closely aligned with Ecological Systems Theory and Resilience-based perspectives. The current study provided significant insight into refugee mental health literature by indicating how immediate contextual factors, including familial and larger societal factors, influence the Syrian adaptation process. Furthermore, this research provided insight into how Syrian youth negotiated dual transition, that is, going through an adaptation process to a new context while simultaneously making a transition into young adulthood. Additionally, this study aimed to contribute to the development of psychosocial interventions and research addressing the broad range of ecological factors.

This study indicated that becoming a refugee is marked not only by trauma, loss, uprooting, and adversity but also resilience, growth, and new opportunities for individuals and families. Moreover, this research demonstrated that traumatic experiences and resilience processes are embodied in the environmental contexts that Syrian refugees encounter. A growing body of research focused on refugee people's experiences and mental health outcomes by integrating trauma-based and socio-ecological approaches. This study has given insight into a wide range of individual and contextual factors affecting refugee youth's subjective experiences with this focus. This study's overriding message is that it is crucial to look beyond the dominant framework in clinical psychology, namely *the trauma-based approach*, to understand the refugee experience better. Besides the micro-issues of dealing with refugee trauma, it is critical to consider the broader social context when researching and working clinically with refugees and implementing interventions targeting refugee communities.

The present research underscored the complex and multidimensional nature of the young Syrian refugees and the importance for clinicians, social workers, and policymakers to take an inter-disciplinary approach to support these young refugees. Notably, mental health professionals and policymakers should consider all aspects of

the refugee experience when developing psychological interventions and making policy decisions. In addition, it is also crucial that these young people's experiences should be understood within the context of their current socio-political position.



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APPENDICES

A. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (TURKISH VERSION)

BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ ONAY FORMU

Bu çalışma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Klinik Psikoloji doktora öğrencisi Uzman Psikolog Deniz Yılmaz Zambak tarafından, *doktora* tez çalışması kapsamında Doç. Dr. Deniz Canel Çınarbaş'ın danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Çalışma 20-23 yaş arası Suriyeli sığınmacı gençlerin göç öncesi ve göç sonrası deneyimlerini, yaşantılarını ve duygularını anlamak amacıyla yapılmaktadır.

Araştırmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Çalışmaya katılmamayı tercih edebilirsiniz. Bu çalışma kapsamında yapılacak görüşmede sizi duygusal açıdan sizi üzen deneyimler hakkında konuşmanız istenebilir. Görüşmede sorulan sorulardan dolayı kendinizi herhangi bir nedenden ötürü rahatsız hissettiğiniz takdirde soruları cevaplamayabilir ve istediğiniz an görüşmeyi sonlandırıp araştırmaya katılmamayı tercih edebilirsiniz. Çalışma sorularına yanıt verirken duyduğunuz rahatsızlığı anlatmak isterseniz, görüşme sonlandırıldıktan ya da tamamlandıktan sonra araştırmacı olan uzman psikolog sizi dinlemek, yaşadıklarınız hakkında psikolojik bilgilendirme yapmak ve sorularınızı cevaplamak konusunda size yardımcı olacaktır. Ayrıca ihtiyaç duyulması halinde psikolojik destek alabilmek için başvurabileceğiniz merkezlerin bilgisi sizinle paylaşılacaktır.

Bu görüşmenin yaklaşık bir buçuk saat sürmesi öngörülmektedir. Sorular cevaplanırken ek süreye ihtiyaç duyulduğu takdirde bu süre uzatılabilir. Tüm görüşme Arapça bilen bir görüşmeci yardımıyla gerçekleştirilecek ve araştırmacı görüşme boyunca ortamda bulunacaktır. Çalışmada sizden kimliğinizi belirleyici bilgiler istenmemektedir. Bu sebeple kimliğinizle ilgili hiçbir bilgi vermenize gerek yoktur.

Görüşme size genel kişisel bilgileriniz sorularak başlayacaktır. Daha sonrasında sizden Suriye’den göç öncesine ve sonrasında dair yaşadıklarınıza, sosyal ilişkilerinize, düşüncelerinize ve duygularınıza ilişkin soruları cevaplamanız istenecektir. Görüşme esnasında ses kaydı alınacak, bu ses kayıtları görüşmeci tarafından yazıya dökülecek, sonrasında Türkçe çeviri yapılacak ve her biri için numara atandıktan sonra araştırmacının bilgisayarında şifreli bir dosya içinde saklanacaktır.

Araştırmadan elde edilen bilgiler yalnızca bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılacak ve kişisel bilgileriniz gizli tutulacaktır. Çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular bilimsel kongre ve/veya makalelerde kullanılabilir.

Araştırmaya katılan katılımcılara teşekkür hediyesi olarak görüşme sonunda bir market çeki verilecektir. Araştırma sırasında istediğiniz zaman görüşmeyi sonlandırmanız durumunda yine de size hediye çeki verilecektir.

Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz, mülakattan hemen sonra Deniz Yılmaz Zambak’a sorunuzu iletebilirsiniz. Daha sonra sormak istediğiniz sorular için kendisiyle telefon yoluyla iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Bu çalışma hakkında bilgilendirildiğinizi ve çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katıldığınızı, herhangi bir rahatsızlık duyduğunuzda istediğiniz zaman çalışmayı yarıda kesebileceğinizi ve verdiğiniz bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayınlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorsanız, ses kayıt cihazını açtıktan sonra onaylıyorum demeniz yeterlidir.

Gösterdiğiniz ilgi, yardım ve işbirliği için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (ARABIC VERSION)

استمارة موافقة

تجرى هذه الدراسة من قبل الأخصائية النفسية وطالبة الدكتوراة بقسم علم النفس العيادي بجامعة الشرق الأوسط التقنية "دنيز يلماز زامبك"، في نطاق مناقشة لرسالة الدكتوراة وتحت اشراف الاستاذة المساعدة "دنيز جانل شناريش".

تقوم هذه الدراسة بالتقصي عن التجارب والحياة اليومية وما يشعر به طالبي اللجوء السوريين قبل وبعد الهجرة من الفئات العمرية التي تتراوح ما بين العشرين والثانية والعشرين. المشاركة في هذا البحث طوعية بشكل كامل حيث يمكنكم اختيار عدم المشاركة في هذه الدراسة كما قد يطلب منكم الحديث عن تجارب سببت لكم صدمات عاطفية وإذا شعرتم بعدم الارتياح لسبباً ما من الأسئلة المطروحة في هذه المقابلة يمكنكم مباشرة عدم الاجابة ومغادرة المقابلة في أي وقت. إذا أردتم أن تعبروا عن الضيق النفسي الذي مررت به في أثناء الاجابة على الاسئلة المطروحة فإن الأخصائي النفسي والباحث القائم على هذه الدراسة سوف يساعدكم عبر الاستماع إليكم و تقديم الدعم النفسي الكافي المتعلق بتجاربكم والاجابة على أسئلتكم. كما سيتم تزويدكم بالمعلومات اللازمة عن المراكز التي تقدم دعماً نفسياً عند الحاجة إليها. من المتوقع أن تستغرق هذه المقابلة حوالي ساعة ونصف. ويمكن تمديد هذه الفترة إذا كانت هناك حاجة إلى وقت إضافي أثناء الإجابة على الأسئلة. ستدار المقابلة من قبل شخص يتحدث اللغة العربية في حين أن الباحث سيتواجد في جوار المقابلة أثناء انعقادها. لن يطلب أي معلومات تساهم في تحديد هويتك خلال هذه المقابلة وعلى هذا الأساس لا حاجة لأية معلومات عن هويتك. في خلال هذه المقابلة سيطلب منكم أسئلة متعلقة بما مررت به والعلاقات الاجتماعية وأفكاركم ومشاعركم قبل وبعد الهجرة من سوريا. يتم الاحتفاظ بالمعلومات التي تم الحصول عليها خلال هذه المقابلة ضمن سرية تامة. في البداية ستؤخذ تسجيلات صوتية أثناء جلسة انعقاد المقابلة وبعدها سيتم كتابة التسجيلات وبعدها سيتم ترجمتها إلى اللغة التركية وحفظها في ملف مشفر على جهاز الحاسب المتعلق بالباحث و برقم معين خاص بكل تسجيل. لن تستخدم المعلومات التي تم الحصول عليها خلال هذا البحث إلا لأغراض علمية وستحفظ المعلومات الشخصية في سرية تامة. كما يمكن استخدام نتائج هذا البحث في المؤتمرات والمقالات العلمية. سيتم تقديم بطاقة تسوق للمشاركين كهدية شكر في نهاية المقابلة. وستحصلون على هذه الهدية حتى إذا قررتم إنهاء المقابلة في أي وقت أثناء البحث.

لمعرفة تفاصيل أكثر حول هذه الدراسة يمكنكم طرح أسئلة على الباحثة "دنيز يلماز زامبك" مباشرة بعد المقابلة، كما يمكنكم الاتصال بها عن طريق الهاتف حيث ستقوم بالرد على الأسئلة التي ترغبون في طرحها في وقت لاحق.

إذا قبلتم المشاركة بشكل طوعي بكامل هذه المقابلة التي تم إبلاغكم بها والتي يمكنكم التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت تشعرون به بعدم الارتياح بالإضافة مع قبولكم بأن المعلومات التي ستزودونا بها سوف تستخدم لأغراض علمية، فإنه كل ما عليكم هو أن تقولوا (انا موافق) بعد تشغيل المسجل الصوتي.

شكراً مقدماً على اهتمامكم وتعاونكم ومساعدتكم.

C. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

1-Cinsiyet ☐ Kadın ☐ Erkek

2-Yaş

3- Medeni Durum

4-Eğitim durumu

5- Ne kadar süredir Türkiye’de yaşıyorsunuz? (gün/ay/yıl)

6- Türkiye’de bulunduğunuz sürelerde nerelerde, ne kadar süre yaşadınız?

7- Şu anda evinizde kimlerle beraber yaşıyorsunuz?

8- Ailenizden kimlerle beraber yaşıyorsunuz?

9- Şu anda Suriye’de yaşayan aile üyesi var mı? ☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

Evet ise bu aile üyelerinden haber alabiliyor mu? ☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

10- Suriye’nin hangi bölgesinden geliyorsunuz?

11-Suriye’den ayrıldıktan sonra nerelerde, ne kadar süre yaşadınız?

12- Şu anda ücret karşılığı bir işte çalışıyor musunuz?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır ☐ Diğer

13- Göç etmeden önce çalışıyor muydunuz?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır ☐ Diğer

14-Sizden başka hanenizden kimler çalışıyor?

D. LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **Başlangıç Sorusu:** Bana doğumunuzdan itibaren yaşamınızı anlatabilir misiniz?

2. Çatışmalar başlamadan önce Suriye'deki yaşamınız nasıldı?

(**Yardımcı sorular:** Okula gidiyor muydunuz? / Nasıl bir öğrenciydiniz?

Çalışıyor muydunuz? / Çalışma ortamınız nasıldı?

İlişkileriniz nasıldı? (Akranlarıyla ve aile üyeleriyle)

En çok neyi özölüyorsunuz?)

3. Çatışmalar başladıktan sonra neler yaşadınız?

4. Çatışmalar başladıktan sonra yaşamınızda neler değışti?

5. Suriye'den ayrılmaya ve Türkiye'ye gelmeye nasıl karar verildi?

6. Suriye'den ayrılmaya ve Türkiye'ye gelmeye kim karar verdi?

7. Suriye'den ayrılma ve Türkiye'ye gelme kararı ile ilgili nasıl hissettiniz?

8. Türkiye'ye gelirken yolda neler yaşadınız?

9. Türkiye ile ilgili buraya gelmeden önce ne düşünüyordunuz?

(**Yardımcı Sorular:** Türkiye ile ilgili buraya gelmeden önce neler konuşuluyordu?

Türkiye ile ilgili buraya gelmeden önce neler bekliyordunuz?

10. Türkiye'ye ilk geldiniz zamanları düşünmenizi ve hatırlamanızı istiyorum.

Bana biraz o zamanlardan bahsedebilir misiniz?

(**Yardımcı Sorular:** Neler düşünüyordunuz?

Nasıl hissediyordunuz?

Türkiye'ye gelmenin olumlu tarafları nelerdi? Olumsuz tarafları nelerdi?)

11. Türkiye'de yaşayan Suriyeli bir genç olarak neler yaşıyorsunuz?

(**Yardımcı Sorular:** (Eğer çalışıyorsa) iş yerinde nelerle karşılaşılıyorsunuz? Sizce buradaki yaşamınızdaki en önemli sorun nedir? Türkiye'deki yaşamınıza ne kadar alıştığınızı hissediyorsunuz?)

12. Sizce buradaki yaşamınızın güzel yönleri nelerdir?

13. Yaşadığınız mahallede ilişkileriniz nasıl?

(**Yardımcı Sorular:** Yaşadığınız yerdeki Türklerle ilişkileriniz nasıl?

Sorunlarla karşılaşılıyor mu? Karşılaşıyorsa ne gibi sorunlarla karşılaşılıyor?)

14. Çatışma ortamını yaşamış olmak sizi nasıl etkiledi? Değişiklikler yaşadınız mı?

Duyusal açıdan nasıl etkiledi?

Maddi açıdan nasıl etkiledi?

İlişkilerinizi nasıl etkiledi?

15. Çatışmalar başlamadan önce nasıl biriydiniz?

16. Çatışmalar başladıktan sonra kendinizde nasıl değişimler gözlemlediniz?

17. Suriye’deki zor zamanlara dayanmanızı sağlayan şeyler nelerdi?

(Yardımcı Sorular: Zorluklara dayanmanızı sağlayan en önemli şey nedir?

En çok kimlerden yardım aldınız?

Onlardan nasıl destekler aldınız?)

18. Buradaki yaşamınızdaki zor zamanlara dayanmanızı sağlayan şeyler nelerdir?

19. Bu gibi zor zamanlardan sonra yaşananların insanlara öğrettiği yeni şeyler de olabiliyor, Suriye’deki çatışma ortamı ve sonrasında yaşadıklarınız size neler öğretti?

20. Suriye’de çatışmalar başlamadan önce aile ilişkileriniz nasıldı?

21. Suriye’deki çatışma ortamı aile ilişkilerinizde neleri etkiledi? Neler değişti?

22. Türkiye’ye geldikten sonra aile içinde neler değişti?

(Yardımcı Sorular: Aile üyeleriniz (anne, baba, kardeşler vb.) nasıl etkilendiler?

Aile içi sorumlulukların dağılımında değişimler oldu mu? Nasıl?

Aile içi ilişkilerdeki değişikliklerle ilgili nasıl hissediyorsunuz?)

23. **(Sadece evli katılımcılara sorulacak)** Suriye’deki çatışma ortamı eşinizle olan ilişkinizde neleri etkiledi? Neler değişti?

24. Türkiye’ye geldikten sonra eşinizle ilişkinizde değişimler oldu mu? Neler değişti?

25. Gelecekte neler bekliyorsunuz? **(Yardımcı Sorular:** Türkiye’deki yaşamınıza dair gelecekle ilgili planlarınız nelerdir? Başka ülkeye gitmeyi düşünüyor musunuz? Gelecekte Suriye’ye geri dönmeyi ister miydiniz?)

26. Bugünkü görüşme size nasıl geldi? **(Yardımcı sorular:** Konuşmanın iyi geldiği bir şey oldu mu? Ne hakkında konuşmak sizi zorladı?)

E. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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09 AĞUSTOS 2017

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç. Dr. Deniz Canel ÇINARBAŞ ;

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Deniz Yılmaz ZAMBAK'ın "*Suriyeli Sığınmacı Gençlerin Türkiye'ye Göç Öncesi ve Sonrası Deneyimleri*" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2017-SOS-020 protokol numarası ile 09.08.2017 – 30.12.2017 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN
Başkan V

Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL
Üye

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR
Üye

Doç. Dr. Yaşar KÖNDAKÇI
Üye

Doç. Dr. Zana ÇITAK
Üye

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
Üye

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK
Üye

F. CURRICULUM VITAE

1. PERSONAL DATA

Name/Surname: Deniz YILMAZ ZAMBAK
Email: [REDACTED]

2. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- 2013- 2021** **Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology**
Department of Psychology, Middle East Technical University, Turkey
- 2006- 2009** **MA in Clinical Psychology**
Department of Psychology, Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey
- 2003-2006** **MA in Social Psychology**
Department of Psychology, Boğaziçi University, Turkey
- 1998-2003** **BA in Psychology (with honors)**
Faculty of Art and Science, Boğaziçi University, Turkey

3. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2009-Present** Clinical Psychologist/Psychotherapist on Private Practice
- Providing psychoanalytic-oriented individual psychotherapy sessions to adults (18+) under the psychoanalytic-oriented supervision
- Feb. 2021-July-2021** Part-time Instructor in the Department of Psychology at İzmir University of Economics
- Apr. 2014-Apr.2017** Project Assistant at TUBITAK project (Project No:113K537)
- Sep. 2012- Sep. 2013** Clinical Psychologist at MSF – Doctors Without Borders / Helsinki Citizens Assembly HcA Psychosocial Support Project for Migrants and Refugees
- Sep. 2011 – Sept. 2013** Part-time Clinical Psychologist at Human Rights Foundation of Turkey
- July 2010 – Sep.2012** Part-time Clinical Psychologist at Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation
- Sep.2011-Sept. 2012** Part-time instructor at Department of Psychology in Yeditepe University

- July 2006-Sept. 2011** Research Assistant at Department of Psychology in Yeditepe University
- 2004- 2006** Psychologist of Special Education at Diyalog Rehabilitation Center

5. CLINICAL INTERNSHIPS

- 2007-2009** Internship at İstanbul Bilgi University Psychological Counseling Unit
- 2007-2008** Internship at Clinic of Consultation and Liaison Psychiatry, Cerrahpaşa School of Medicine
- 2003** Internship in Bakırköy Mental Health and Research Hospital

6. FURTHER TRAINING

- 2016-2019** Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training in Süddeutschen Akademie für Psychotherapie (South Germany Institute for Psychotherapy)-180hours
- 2014-2019** Self Psychology Oriented Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Training
- 2014** Mentalization-Based Treatment: Basic Training, Anna Freud Center, London, England (21 hours)
- 2012-2013** Advanced Seminar in International Trauma Studies, The International Trauma Studies Program, New York/Istanbul Bilgi University Clinical Psychology Master Program
- 2012** Somatic Experiencing Training, Department of Psychology, İstanbul Bilgi University
- 2010-2011** Family and Couple Therapy Basic Level Training from Trainers of Community Stress Prevention Center & Nord Cope Center, Israel
- 2010** “Emotional Availability Scales” Training, Department of Psychology, Yeditepe University
- 2010** Play Therapy Training, Boğaziçi University Center for Psychological Research and Services
- 2010** Certificate in the administration of Torrance Creative Thinking Test
- 2009** “Watch, Wait and Wonder” Mother-Child/Infant Psychotherapy Training, Department of Psychology, Yeditepe University
- 2008-2009** Introductory Seminars to Psychoanalysis, Istanbul Psychoanalytic Association for Training, Research, and Development
- 2006-2007** Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – WISC-R, Turkish Psychology Association

7. PUBLICATIONS

- Ünüvar, U., **Yılmaz, D.**, Özyıldırım, İ., Dokudan, E. Y., Korkmaz, C., Dođanođlu, S., ... & Fincancı, S. K. (2017). Usage of riot control agents and other methods resulting in physical and psychological injuries sustained during civil unrest in Turkey in 2013. *Journal of forensic and legal medicine*, 45, 47-52.
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8. BOOKS

- Yılmaz, D.**, Özyıldırım, İ., Ünüvar, Ü., Kutlu, L., & Korur, Ş. K. (2015). Türkiye'de işkencenin 22 yılı. Ankara: Human Rights Foundation of Turkey Publications.

9. CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Aksu-Koc, A., **Yılmaz D.**, Kocaođlu, Z. (2008, July). Effectiveness of different methods of narrative elicitation for assessment of comprehension and production. Paper presented in A. Nicolopoulou & K. Hirsh-Pasek (chairs), *Narrative Assessment of Preschoolers: Significance and Best Practices*. Symposium at the 11th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Edinburgh, Scotland.
- Göçek, E., **Yılmaz D.**, Buldur, N., & Kologlugil, D. (2013, November). *Emotion recognition ability in Turkish mother-adolescent dyads and its relationship to maternal attachment and adolescents' behavior problems*. Paper presented at the Regional Conference of the International Society for Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychology, Ankara, Turkey.
- Özyıldırım, İ., Köseciođlu-Çevik, S., & **Yılmaz, D.** (2014, December). Bir kasaba psikiyatri polikliniđine başvuran hastalarda tanılara göre çocukluk çağı travması sıklıđının karşılaştırılması. Paper Presented at International Psychological Trauma Meetings VIII, İstanbul, Turkey
- Göçek, E., **Yılmaz, D.**, Buldur, N., & Kologlugil, D. (2014, June). *Eyes to eyes, mind-to-mind: Pathways to creative thinking, emotion regulation, and social competence in childhood*. Poster to be presented at 14th World Congress of The World Association for Infant Mental Health, Edinburgh, Scotland.
- Sarısoy, G., Gündođan, H., **Yılmaz, D.**, Cihan, B., Ünlü-Baştuđ, B. (2015, May). *Ebeveyn Kabul/Reddi'nin Yaratıcılık ve Kişisel İyilik Hali Arasındaki İlişkide Aracı Rolü*. Paper Presented at VII. Işık Savaşır Klinik Psikoloji Sempozyumu, Ankara, Turkey

10. GRANTS, HONORS & AWARDS

- Boğaziçi University Dean's Honor Roll in Graduation (2003)
İstanbul Bilgi University Partial Scholarship (2006-2009)

11. LANGUAGE SKILLS

Turkish	Native
English	Fluent

12. COMPUTER SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and Internet Applications

Maxqda

SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Sciences)

Lisrel



G. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

GİRİŞ

Gnmzde kresel apta bir mlteci ve gmen krizi Trkiye dahil birok lkedeki en nemli sosyopolitik ve ekonomik sorunlardan biri olarak grlmektedir. Birleřmiř Milletler Mlteciiler Yksek Komiserlięinin (BMMYK) istatistiklerine gre (2021), 2020 yıl sonu itibarıyla, tm dnyada 26,4 milyonu mlteci, 48 milyonu lke iinde yerinden edilmiř kiřiler, 4,1 milyonu sığınmacı ve 3,9 milyonu Venezellalı olmak zere toplam 82,4 milyon zorla yerinden edilmiř kiři vardır. Trkiye uluslararası g yollarının kesiřim noktasında yer aldıęından tarih boyunca birok g hareketine tanıklık etmiřtir. Haziran 2021 sonu itibarıyla Trkiye’de resmi kayıtlı olarak yařayan zorla yerinden edilmiř kiřilerin sayısı yaklaşık olarak 4 milyon civarındadır. Nisan 2011 tarihinde bařlayan Suriyelilerin g hareketi, 2014 yılı sonrasında hızla artmıř ve Eyll 2021 tarihi itibarıyla 3.710.532’ye ulařmıřtır. Trkiye, Birleřmiř Milletler (BM) tarafından mlteciilerin hukuksal statsn belirlemek amacıyla hazırladıęı 1951 Cenevre Szleřmesine “coęrafi sınırlama” ile taraf olmuřtur. Dolayısıyla, Trkiye Avrupa dıřından gelen sığınmacılara mlteci stats vermemektedir.

Mlteci, sığınmacı ve gmenlerle ilgili en kapsamlı yasal dzenleme 2013 yılında 6458 Yabancılar ve Uluslararası Koruma Kanunu adı altında yapılmıřtır (Erdoęan, 2020). Bu kanun temel alınarak Trkiye’ye g eden Suriyelilere geici koruma stats verilmiřtir. Geici koruma hakkı lkesinden ayrılmaya zorlanmıř, ayrıldıęı lkeye geri dnemeyen kitlesel olarak Trkiye sınırlarını geen kiřilere acil ve geici koruma saęlamak amacıyla saęlanır (Erdoęan, 2020). Geici koruma altındaki resmi kayıtlı Suriyeliler eęitim, saęlık, eviri hizmetleri ve sosyal yardımlar gibi hizmetlerden faydalanabilmektedirler (Memiřoęlu ve Ilğıt, 2017; UNCHR, 2017). Ayrıca Ocak 2016 tarihinde Trkiye devleti Suriyelilere yasal alıřma iznini veren bir dzenleme yapmıřtır (Erdoęan, 2020).

Genel olarak, zorunlu g deneyimi yařayan mlteciiler, g ncesi lkelerinde, g yolunda ve g ettikleri lkede birok farklı travmatik deneyim ve stres etkeniyle karřı

karşıya kalırlar. Savaş, şiddet, insan hakları ihlalleri gibi travmatik olaylara maruz kalmak, çoklu kayıplar yaşamak, tehlikeli göç yolculuklarının olduğu yer değişiklikleri, sosyal ve ekonomik zorluklar, ayrımcılık, yasal belirsizlik gibi göç sonrası döneme ait güçlükler mülteci ve sığınmacılarda ruhsal problemlerine yol açabilir. Epidemiyolojik çalışmalar, göçmen olmayan topluluklara kıyasla mülteci gruplarında travma sonrası stres bozukluğu, depresyon ve psikotik bozuklukların daha sıklıkla gözlemlendiğini ortaya koymuştur (Fazel ve ark., 2005; Porter ve Haslam, 2005). Peconga ve Høgh-Thøgersen (2020) yetişkin Suriyeli mültecilerde travma sonrası stres bozukluğunun yaygınlık oranının %43 (%23.4-%83.4), depresyonun %40.9 (%20-%44.1) ve anksiyete bozukluğunun ise %26.6 (%19.30-%31.8) olduğunu göstermiştir.

Araştırmalar, mültecilerde ruhsal bozuklukların gelişimine yol açan göç öncesi, göç yolculuğu ve göç sonrası dönemlere ait birçok risk etmenini saptamıştır (Miller ve Rasmussen, 2017). Göç öncesi travmatik yaşantıların sayısının ve yoğunluğunun mültecilerde gelişen ruhsal bozukluklarla ilişkili olduğu gösterilmiştir (Finklestein ve Solomon, 2009). Göç öncesi döneme ait travmatik yaşantılar arasında fiziksel ve cinsel saldırıya maruz kalmak, sevilen kişilerin kaybı, aile üyelerinden zorla ayrılma ve yiyecek, su ve barınma yoksunluğu sıklıkla karşılaşılan deneyimlerdir (Schweitzer ve ark., 2011). Mülteciler güvenli başka bir ülkeye yerleştikten sonra yoksulluk, ayrımcılık, dil bariyeri, yasal statü belirsizliği gibi sosyoekonomik zorluklarla karşılaşmaktadırlar. Birçok çalışma mültecilerin ruh sağlığı üzerinde göç öncesi ve göç sonrası dönemlere ait yaşantıların kümülatif bir etkisi olduğunu göstermektedir (Teodorescu ve ark., 2012).

Mültecilerle yapılan araştırmalar, travmatik yaşantıların ve zorlukların sadece ruh sağlığı problemlerine yol açmadığını, aynı zamanda olumlu yönde ruhsal değişimlerin ortaya çıktığını vurgulamaktadırlar (Rizkalla ve Segal, 2018). Mültecilerin yaşadığı olumlu değişimler psikolojik dayanıklılık ve travma sonrası büyüme gibi kavramlar yardımıyla kavramsallaştırılmıştır. İyimserlik ve geleceğe dair umutlu olmak, aile ve sosyal çevreden destek, dini inançlar ve göç edilen ülkenin dilini öğrenmek gibi etmenler psikolojik dayanıklılığı arttıran ve travma sonra büyümeyi kolaylaştıran etmenler arasında sayılmaktadır (Sleijpen ve ark., 2017). Suriyeli mültecilerle yapılan

güncel bir araştırma ekonomik kaynakların, gelir düzeyinin yeterliliği ve STK'lerden yapılan sosyal yardımların travma sonrası büyümeyi kolaylaştıran en önemli etkenler olduğunu göstermiştir (Jordan ve ark., 2018).

Mülteci ruh sağlığı alanındaki travma odaklı yaklaşım eleştirilmiş ve travma sonrası stres bozukluğu kavramının Batılı olmayan toplumlardan gelen mülteciler için geçerliliği sorgulanmıştır (Summerfield, 1999). Travma odaklı yaklaşım, aşırı tıbbi bir bakış açısı benimseyerek mültecilerin sosyokültürel ve psikososyal bağlamını göz ardı ettiği yönünde eleştirilmiştir (Silove ve ark., 2017). Ayrıca travma odaklı yaklaşımı benimseyen araştırmaların çoğunlukla standardize anketleri kullanan niceliksel araştırmalardan oluştuğu ve bu araştırmaların mültecilerin kültürlerine özgü olan yaşantıları anlamakta yetersiz kaldığı belirtilmiştir (Miller ve ark., 2002).

Yukarıda bahsedilen eleştiriler çerçevesinde bazı araştırmacılar mültecilik ruh sağlığını anlamak amacıyla ekolojik yaklaşımları ileri sürmüşlerdir. Ekolojik Yaklaşım'a göre bireyin psikolojik iyilik halini yaşadığı sosyal ekolojinin farklı katmanlarıyla karşılıklı etkileşimi belirler (Serdarevic ve Chronister, 2006). Mülteci ruh sağlığı alanındaki ekolojik yaklaşımlar, Bronfenbrenner'ın Ekolojik Sistemler Kuramına dayanmaktadır (Silove ve ark., 2017). Ekolojik Sistemler Kuramına göre, birey en yakından en uzağa doğru, mikrosistem (ev, aile, okul), mezosistem (bir yada daha fazla mikrosistemin bağlantısı), ekzosistem (mahalle ortamı, ebeveynlerin iş durumu), makrosistem (toplum yapısı ve kültür) ve kronosistem (ülkede yaşanan savaşlar, ülkeden zorunlu ayrılık) olmak üzere beş çevresel katmanla ile devamlı olarak karşılıklı etkileşim içindedir (Bronfenbrenner ve Morris, 2006). Ekolojik yaklaşım açısından bireyin sahip olduğu *kişisel ve toplumsal kaynaklar* büyük önem taşımaktadır (Drozdek, 2015).

Mülteci ruh sağlığı alanındaki kuramsal değişimler, niceliksel araştırma yöntemlerinin kısıtlılıklarının ortaya koymuş ve niteliksel yöntemlerin önemini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Niceliksel yöntemlerin mültecilerin kültürel ve politik bağamlarını anlamak noktasında eksik kaldıkları vurgulanmıştır (Schweitzer ve Steel, 2008). Niteliksel araştırmalar ise zorunlu göç deneyiminin çok boyutlu ve karmaşık yapısını, mültecilerin kendi bakış açısından ve sesinden anlamaya olanak sağlar (Aheam, 2000;

Miller ve ark., 2002). Niteliksel arařtırmalar daha zengin ve detaylı kuramsal bilgi saęlarlar (Ahearn, 2000). Arařtırmacılar anlatı analizi (Goodman, 2004), gömülü teori (Paat ve Green, 2017), tematik analiz (Muir ve Gannon, 2016) ve yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (Thommessen ve ark., 2015) gibi farklı niteliksel arařtırma yöntemlerini mülteci ruh saęlığı alanında kullanmaktadırlar. Niteliksel yöntemler, epistemolojik duruş, içgözlemsellik ve dil kullanımının rolüne ilişkin yaklaşımları temel alınarak sınıflandırılırlar ve birbirlerinden ayrışırlar (Willig, 2013). Yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (YFA), son yıllarda mülteci ve göçmenlerle yapılan arařtırmalarda daha sık kullanılmaya başlanmıştır (Hussain ve Bhusban, 2013). Örneğin, Robinson (2017), yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analizi kullanarak Almanya’da yaşayan Suriyeli mültecilerle yaptığı arařtırmasında göç öncesi, göç yolculuęu ve göç sonrası yaşanmış deneyimlere odaklanmıştır. Arařtırma, Suriyeli mültecilerin farklı mülteci gruplarıyla ortak deneyimler yaşadığını ve Suriye’de yaşanan travmatik deneyimlerin yanı sıra, aile üyelerinden ayrılık, yasal statü belirsizlięi ve dil bariyeri gibi Almanya’daki stres etmenlerinin de ruhsal durumları üzerinde etkili olduğunu göstermiştir (Robinson, 2017).

Arařtırmaların gösterdięi gibi mültecilik deneyimi cinsiyet ve yaşı baęlı olarak farklılıklar gösterir (Roberts ve Browne, 2011). Bireylerin gelişim dönemlerine özgü etmenler, zorunlu göç deneyiminin etkilerini belirlemektedir. Refakatsiz çocuklar ve ergenler (Eide ve Hjern, 2013), aileleri ile göç eden çocuklar ve ergenler (Lakhwani, 2017), genç yetişkinler (Copelj, Gill, Love ve Crebbin, 2017) ve yaşlılar (Loi ve Sundram, 2014) mülteci olmayı ve zorunlu göç yaşamayı farklı şekillerde deneyimlemektedirler.

Birçok arařtırmacı 18-25 yaş arası dönemi yetişkinliğe geçiş dönemi olarak tanımlamış ve *beliren yetişkinlik* (Arnett, 2000), *genç yetişkinlik* ve *geç ergenlik* (Tanner ve Arnett, 2009) gibi farklı kavramlarla ifade etmişlerdir. Bazı arařtırmacılar farklı kültürlerde ve toplumlarla gençlik kavramının farklı anlamları olabileceğini vurgulamışlardır (Sirriyeh, 2016). Suriyeli gençler, Türkiye’de toplam Suriyeli nüfusunun yaklaşık olarak %65’i oluşturmaktadır (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, 2021).

Mülteci gençler ülkelerinde yaşadıkları travmatik olayların yanı sıra, göç ettikleri ülkede eğitime ulaşım zorluğu, aile üyeleri arasında nesiller arası çatışma, ebeveyn beklentileri, ekonomik ve ailevi sorumlulukların artışı ve sosyal ve aile desteğinin azalması gibi birçok göç sonrası zorlukla da baş etmeye çalışmaktadırlar (Wallin ve Ahlström, 2005). Özellikle, aile bağlarının zayıflaması, nesiller arası çatışma, aile üyelerinden zorunlu ayrılık, aile içindeki rol ve sorumlulukların değişmesi, ebeveynlerin ruh sağlığı problemleri yaşaması ve ekonomik problemler gibi ailevi etmenler mülteci gençlerin psikolojik iyilik hallerini en fazla etkileyen etkenlerdir (Marshall ve ark., 2016). Ruh sağlığı problemlerinin yanı sıra, birçok araştırma mülteci gençlerin, yaşlı mültecilere kıyasla daha fazla psikolojik dayanıklılık gösterdiklerini ve yeni ortama daha hızlı uyum sağladıklarını da göstermiştir (Boyle, 2009). Eğitim olanaklarına ulaşım (Edge ve ark., 2014) ve destekleyici aile ortamı (Betancourt ve ark., 2015) mülteci gençlerin dayanıklılıklarını olumlu yönde etkileyen en önemli unsurlardır. Mülteci gençlerle yapılan araştırmalar, zorunlu göçün neticesinde mülteci gençlerin aile içindeki rollerinde ve sorumluluklarında önemli oranda artış olduğunu ve bu değişimlerin yetişkinliğe geçiş süreci üzerinde önemli sonuçlara yol açtığını göstermiştir (Evans ve ark., 2013).

Çalışmanın Amaçları

Türkiye, Suriyeli mültecilere ev sahipliği yapan ülkelerin başında gelmesine rağmen klinik psikoloji alanında mülteci ve sığınmacılarla ilgili çok az araştırma yapılmıştır. Bildiğimiz kadarıyla Türkiye’de yaşayan 18-25 arası Suriyeli mültecilerin zorunlu göç deneyimleri ve ruh sağlığı üzerine bir çalışma henüz yapılmamıştır. Bu çalışma, genç yetişkin Suriyeli mültecilerin göç deneyimlerini kendi bakış açılarından araştırarak var olan literatüre önemli bir katkı sunacaktır.

Bu çalışma, ergenlikten genç yetişkinliğe geçiş gibi kritik bir dönemde savaş ve göçe maruz kalan Suriyeli gençlerin zorunlu göç yaşantılarını ve psikolojik iyilik hallerini, Ekolojik kuram ve psikolojik dayanıklılık yaklaşımı çerçevesinde araştıracaktır. Şu soruları cevaplamayı hedeflemektedir: 1) Suriyeli gençler zorunlu göçün farklı evrelerini nasıl deneyimlemekte ve anlamlandırmaktadır? 2) Zorunlu göç deneyimi Suriyeli gençleri yaşam seyrinin kritik bir aşamasında nasıl etkilemektedir? 3) Zorunlu

göç sürecinde Suriyeli gençlerin algıladığı destek ve psikolojik dayanıklılık kaynakları nelerdir?

YÖNTEM

Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz

Bu çalışmada niteliksel araştırma yöntemlerinden birisi olan yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz (YFA) kullanılmıştır (Smith ve ark., 2009). Yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz yaşanmış deneyimlerin öznel anlamlarına ve bireyler tarafından nasıl anlamlandırıldıklarına odaklanır. Fenomenoloji, hermeneutik ve idiografi, YFA'nın kuramsal temellerini oluşturmaktadır (Smith ve ark., 2009; Smith, 2011).

Yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz psikoloji alanındaki mülteci araştırmalarında giderek daha sık kullanılmaktadır (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). İnsan deneyimini sosyokültürel bağlamı içinde araştıran yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz mülteci araştırmaları için uygun bir yöntemdir (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Bu yöntem önceden belirlenmiş varsayımlara dayanmadığı için farklı mülteci gruplara özgü yerel bilgileri ve deneyimleri ortaya çıkarma olanağı sağlar (Schweitzer & Steel, 2008). Son olarak, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analizin idiografik temelleri araştırmacıların, tek tek bireysel deneyimlere odaklanmakla birlikte farklı bireylerin deneyimleri arasındaki ortaklıkları noktaların araştırmalarına imkân sağlamaktadır (Larkin ve ark., 2006). Dolayısıyla, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz mülteci deneyiminin çok boyutluluğunu araştırmak için etkili bir araştırma yöntemidir.

Araştırmacı bu çalışmada genç Suriyeli mültecilerin zorunlu göçe dair deneyimlerine, algılarına ve anlamlandırma biçimlerine odaklanacaktır. Bu çalışmanın amaçları doğrultusunda YFA'nın, anlatı analizi ve söylem analizi gibi diğer niteliksel yöntemlere kıyasla araştırma amaçları doğrultusunda daha uygun bir yöntem olduğu düşünülmüştür.

Katılımcılar

Bu çalışmanın örnekleme, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz kuramsal önermeleriyle uyumlu olarak amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak oluşturulmuştur (Smith ve ark., 2009). YFA çalışmalarında araştırma sorusuyla ilişkili olan homojen bir örneklem seçilir. Bu homojen örnekleme oluşturmak amacıyla katılımcıların çalışmaya dahil edilmesi için bazı kriterler belirlenmiştir. Bu kriterler 2011 yılında başlayan Suriye savaşından sonra Türkiye'ye göç etmiş olmak, Ankara'da ve aile üyeleri ile beraber yaşamak ve 20 ve 23 yaşları arasında olmaktır. Katılımcılara kartopu yöntemi kullanılarak ulaşılmıştır.

Bu çalışmaya 20-23 yaşları arasında 9'u kadın, 9'u erkek olmak üzere toplam on sekiz Suriyeli mülteci katılmıştır. Tüm katılımcılar Türkiye-Suriye sınırına yakın bölgelerden savaş başladıktan sonra Türkiye'ye göç etmişlerdir. Mülakatlar yapıldığı tarihte katılımcıların Türkiye'de bulunma süreleri 1.5 ile 5 yıl arasında değişmektedir. Katılımcılardan 9'u (4 kadın, 5 erkek) evli, 8 katılımcı bekar ve 1 katılımcı da eşinden ayrı yaşamaktadır. 7 katılımcının (4 kadın, 3 erkek) çocuğu vardır.

Materyal

YFA çalışmalarında, yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat yöntemi en iyi veri toplama aracı olarak değerlendirilmiştir (Smith ve Osborn, 2008; Smith ve ark., 2009). Yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar araştırmacılara esneklik sağlamakla birlikte ilginç ve önemli konular ortaya çıktığında bu konuları daha ayrıntılı ele alma imkânı da verir. Ayrıca katılımcıların kendi deneyimlerini özgürce ifade etmelerine olanak sağlamak için sorular açık uçlu bir şekilde ve yönlendirmeden uzak bir biçimde sorulur (Willig, 2013). Hem yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat protokolü hem de demografik bilgi formu Arapçaya çevrilmiştir.

Mülakat soruları katılımcıların Suriye'deki deneyimlerine, Türkiye'ye yaptıkları yolculuğa ve Türkiye'deki yaşantılarına odaklanmaktadır. Ayrıca savaş ve zorunlu göç deneyiminin psikolojik etkilerine, aile yaşamlarında meydana gelen değişimlere ve gelecek ile ilgili planlarına odaklanılmıştır. Tez danışmanı ve tez izleme komitesinde

yer alan iki üye soruları gözden geçirmiş ve geri bildirim vermiştir. Yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat formu EK C’de görülebilir.

Etik Konular

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu’ndan araştırma yöntemine ve sürecine dair etik onay alınmıştır. Görüşmeler sırasında katılımcıların yeniden travmatize olma ihtimali göz önünde bulundurularak mülakatlar dikkatli bir şekilde yürütülmüş ve katılımcıların ruh hali gözlenmiştir. Katılımcılara rahatsız hissettikleri herhangi bir zamanda mülakatı durdurabilecekleri bilgisi verilmiştir. Her görüşme sonunda katılımcılarla mülakat sürecinin üstünden geçilmiş ve psikolojik desteğe ihtiyaç duymaları durumunda gerekli yönlendirmelerin yapılacağı bilgisi paylaşılmıştır. Mülakat sürecini kaygı verici bulan üç katılımcı dışında tüm katılımcılar mülakat sürecine dair memnuniyetlerini ifade etmişlerdir. Araştırmacı her katılımcı ile mülakattan bir hafta sonra tekrar bağlantı kurmuş ve herhangi bir psikolojik zorluk yaşayıp yaşamadıklarını kontrol etmiştir. Hiçbir katılımcı psikolojik sıkıntı belirtmemiş ve yardım talebinde bulunmamıştır.

Prosedür

Görüşmeler katılımcının tercihiyle bağli olarak katılımcının evinde veya Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi’nde gerçekleştirilmiştir. 6 katılımcı evinde görüşmek istememiş, dolayısıyla görüşmeler Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi kampüsünde mahremiyet sağlanacak şekilde yapılmıştır. Mülakatlardan önce katılımcılara araştırmacının amacı ve prosedürü hakkında bilgi verilmiş ve gizlilik ve istedikleri zaman mülakatı sonlandırma hakları konusunda bilgilendirilmişlerdir. Ses kayıt cihazı kullanımı için izinleri alınmıştır. Görüşmeler 90 ile 180 dakika arasında sürmüştür. Katılımcılara araştırmaya yaptıkları katkıdan ötürü 100TL’lik market alışveriş çeki verilmiştir.

Akıcı bir şekilde Türkçe konuşan 3 katılımcı dışında diğer katılımcılarla görüşmeler çevirmen yardımıyla yapılmıştır. Çevirmen görüşmeler sırasında simültane bir şekilde Arapçadan Türkçeye ve Türkçeden Arapçaya çeviri yapmıştır. Araştırmacı kaydedilen görüşmeleri sonrasında yazıya dökmüştür. Türkiye vatandaşı olan ve serbest çalışan

çevirmen Arapça-Türkçe çevirmenlik hizmeti vermektedir. Araştırma süreci başlamadan önce çevirmen, mülakat süreci ve araştırma prosedürü hakkında eğitilmiştir. Etik ilkeler ve gizlilik ilkesi özellikle vurgulanmıştır. Her görüşmeden sonra çevirmen ile birlikte mülakat süreci gözden geçirilmiştir.

Veri Analizi

Görüşmeler Smith, Flowers ve Larkin (2009) tarafından önerilen yönerge takip edilerek yapılmıştır. Analiz, her görüşmenin kelimesi kelimesine yapılan dökümünün birkaç kez dikkatlice okunmasıyla başlamıştır. Araştırmacı transkriptleri okurken çağrışımlarını, sorularını, yorumlarını, aklına gelen soyut kavramları ve keşfettiklerini not almıştır. İkinci aşamada, bu notlar analiz edilerek araştırmacı ortaya çıkan temaları belirlemiş ve isimlendirmiştir. Ortaya çıkan temalar katılımcının deneyimini yansıtan özlü ifadeler biçiminde sınıflandırılmıştır. Temaların başlıkları belli bir düzey soyutlama içeren psikolojik terminolojiyi yansıtabilir (Smith ve ark., 2009). Ortaya çıkan temalar listelenir. Üçüncü aşamada, bu temalar arasındaki kavramsal benzerliklere dayanarak bağlantılar ve ortaklıklar kurulmaya çalışılır. Temalar arasındaki ilişkiler analitik ve kuramsal bir şekilde anlamlandırılır. Bu aşamada ortaya çıkan yeni temalara, üst tema adı verilir (Smith ve ark., 2009). Üst temalar oluşturulurken, bir önceki aşamada ortaya çıkan tüm alt temalar kullanılmayabilir. Son aşamada üst ve alt temaların ve her temayı açıklayan alıntılarının yer aldığı özet tablo hazırlanır. İlk katılımcının analizi bittikten sonra, diğer katılımcılara geçilir ve aynı analiz süreci tekrarlanır. Her bir katılımcının mülakatı analiz edilirken ortaya çıkan yeni üst ve alt temalar listeye eklenir. Bütün katılımcıların analizi tamamlandıktan sonra üst ve alt temaların ve onları destekleyen alıntılarının yer aldığı listenin son hali verilir.

Çalışmanın Güvenirliliği

Bu çalışmanın güvenirliliğini tesis etmek için Smith (2011) tarafından önerilen yönerge dikkate alınmıştır. Smith (2011) bağımsız bir denetimin YFA çalışmalarının güvenirliliğini sağlamakta en iyi yol olduğunu belirtmiştir. Ayrıca YFA açısından araştırmacının yorumları büyük önem taşıdığından araştırmacının öz farkındalığı ve

içgözlemselliği oldukça kritiktir. Tez danışmanı tüm araştırma ve veri analizi sürecini denetlemiştir. Ayrıca araştırmacı kendi önyargılarının, inançlarının ve varsayımlarının araştırma süreci üzerindeki etkisini ele almıştır. Buna ek olarak, örneklem oluşturma ve araştırma sürecine dair detaylı bilgi paylaşılarak okuyucunun yöntemsel yaklaşımla ilgili değerlendirme yapmasına olanak sağlanmıştır. Katılımcıların anlatılarından alıntılar yapılarak araştırmacının yaptığı yorumların, araştırma verisi ile ne kadar örtüştüğünü okuyucu tarafından değerlendirebilecektir.

BULGULAR

Yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz sonuçlarına dayanarak sekiz tane üst tema belirlenmiştir. Bu temalar, “*Suriye’de savaş ile birlikte yaşamak*”, “*anavatanı geride bırakmak*”, “*yeni bir hayat kurmak*”, “*devam eden zorluklar ve kayıplar*”, “*zorluklarla başa çıkma yolları*”, “*değişen aile dinamikleri*”, “*değişen kendilik algısı*”, ve “*gelecek beklentileri*” şeklinde adlandırılmıştır.

Suriye’de Savaş ile Birlikte Yaşamak

İlk üst tema, katılımcıların 2011 yılında Suriye savaşının başlamasının ardından yaşadıkları travmatik olayları, kayıpları ve yaşamlarında meydana gelen büyük değişimleri anlatmaktadır. Altı alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Katılımcılar açısından fiziksel ve ruhsal güvenlik ve istikrar hissinin kaybolması ve daimî bir ölüm tehlikesinin eşlik etmesi yaşamlarındaki en büyük sorunların başında gelmektedir. Güvenlik ve istikrar hissinin kaybolmasıyla beraber, katılımcılar beslenme, su, sağlık hizmeti gibi temel ihtiyaçlarını da karşılayamamışlardır. Savaş koşulları nedeniyle iş ve okul hayatı son bulmuştur. Katılımcılar yaşamları üzerinde kontrol hissini kaybettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Katılımcıların dile getirdiği önemli bir tema da her türlü şiddet eyleminin günlük yaşamlarının bir parçası haline gelmesidir. Bombalama, keskin nişancıların hedefi olmak, silahla yaralanmak ve sokaklarda ölü bedenleri görmek gibi aşırı düzeyde şiddet içeren birçok deneyim yaşamışlardır. Bazı katılımcıların şiddet karşısında sergiledikleri duygusal donukluk ve umursamazlık hissi, şiddetin yaygınlığı ve aşırılığını göstermek açısından oldukça önemli çarpıcıdır.

Anavatanı Geride Bırakmak

Bu üst tema amacı katılımcıların Suriye’den kaçış deneyimlerini ve göç öncesi Türkiye dair algılarına odaklanmaktadır. Üç alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu Suriye’den ayrılma kararını “istemsiz” bir şekilde verdiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Katılımcılar Türkiye’ye kaçmadan önce güvenli bir yer arayışıyla Suriye içinde birçok kez yer değiştirmişler ancak savaş koşulları onları hayatta kalmak ve güvenli bir bulmak umuduyla Türkiye’ye göç etmeye zorlamıştır. Özellikle artan çatışma ortamı, yiyecek ve barınma gibi temel ihtiyaçlarını karşılayamamak ve kendilerini ya da ailelerini hedef alan bir şiddet olayını yaşamak Suriye’den ayrılma kararı vermelerini sağlamıştır. Suriye’den ayrılma kararının verilmesinde bir cinsiyet farkı göze çarpmaktadır. Erkek katılımcıların tamamı Türkiye’ye gelme kararını tek başlarına vermiş, kadın katılımcılar ise ailelerinin verdiği kararı uygulamak durumunda kalmışlardır. Suriye’den ayrılmak evden ve geçmişlerinden ayrılmak anlamına geldiği için katılımcılar için oldukça zor bir deneyim olarak tarif edilmiştir.

Suriyeli gençler göç etmeden önce Türkiye’deki yaşam koşulları ve kültür hakkında çok az bilgi sahibi olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Özellikle kadın katılımcılar Türkiye’yi televizyon dizilerinden bildiklerini ve bir Avrupa ülkesi beklediklerini dile getirmişlerdir. Bazı erkek katılımcılar, daha önceden Türkiye’ye göç eden Suriyelilerden çalışma koşullarının ağır olduğunu ve hayat pahalılığını duyduklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu yasadışı yollarla Türkiye’ye gelmiş, riskli ve tehlikeli bir yolculuk yaparak Türkiye’ye ulaşmışlardır. Türkiye’ye gelebilmek için uzun saatler kötü hava koşulları altında yürümek zorunda kalmışlar, savaş bölgelerinden geçmişler ve Türkiye güvenlik güçleri tarafından yakalanma ve kötü muameleye maruz kalma tehlikesi yaşamışlardır.

Yeni Bir Hayat Kurmak

Beş alt temadan oluşan bu üst tema, Suriyeli gençlerin Türkiye’ye göç ettikten sonra yaşadıkları deneyimlere ve zorluklara odaklanmaktadır. Türkiye’deki ilk zamanlar

hem güvenlik hissinin yeniden tesis edildiği hem de sosyoekonomik ve psikolojik zorlukların yaşandığı bir dönemdir. Göç öncesi beklenti ve umutların Türkiye’deki gerçek koşullar ile uyuşmamasından dolayı hayal kırıklığı yaşandığı bazı katılımcılar tarafından belirtilmiştir. Belirsizlikler, sosyal destek eksiği, Türkçe dilini konuşamamak, kültür ve çevreye yabancı olmak ve Suriye’de geride bırakılanlara duyulan özlem Suriyeli gençlerin ilk zamanlarda karşılaştıkları zorluklar arasındadır. Göç sonrası sürece dair katılımcıların sıklıkla dile getirdikleri önemli bir tema Türkçeyi öğrenmenin uyum sürecine yaptığı olumlu etkidir. Türkçeyi konuşamamak Suriyeli gençlerin uyum süreçlerini zorlaştıran en önemli unsurların başında gelmektedir. Erkek katılımcılar, kadınlara kıyasla daha fazla sosyal hayatın içinde olduklarından Türkçeyi daha hızlı öğrendikleri gözlenmiştir. Türkçeyi öğrenmek, kültürü anlamalarını, yerel halkla daha yakın ilişki kurmalarını ve sağlık ve eğitim gibi hizmetlere ulaşımı kolaylaştırmıştır. Türkçeyi öğrendikçe kendilerine güvenlerinin arttığını birçok katılımcı ifade etmiştir.

Katılımcıların Türkiye’deki yaşama dair anlattıkları diğer önemli bir deneyim de hem Türkiye vatandaşları hem de Suriyelilerle olan ilişkileridir. Katılımcılar çoğunlukla Türkiye vatandaşlarını yardımsever ve arkadaşça algılamakta, saygı duyulduklarını hissetmektedirler. Genel olarak olumlu algıların yanı sıra, az sayıda katılımcı Suriyelilerle Türkiye vatandaşları arasında yaşanan gerginlikten, çatışmalardan ve şiddet olaylarından bahsetmiştir. Ayrıca katılımcılar Suriyelilerle olan ilişkileri hakkında da konuşmuştur. Genellikle Suriyeliler destekleyici bir şekilde algılanmakta, Türkiye’ye uyum sürecinde önemli bir rol üstlenmektedirler.

Katılımcıların büyük kısmı Türkiye vatandaşları ile olumlu ilişkileri olduğunu vurgulansa da üçte bir oranında katılımcı Suriyelilere yönelik önyargılı ve dışlayıcı tutumdan bahsetmiştir. Hastane, okul, mahalle ve iş ortamı gibi farklı sosyal ortamlarda dışlayıcı tutumla karşı karşıya kaldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Algılanan ayrımcılık ile ilişkili olarak, sosyal ortamlarda Türkiye vatandaşları ile eşit muamele görmemek, iş yerinde düşük ücret verilmesi, sözlü hakaret ya da fiziksel saldırıya maruz kalmak ve Suriyeliler hakkında rahatsız edici soru ve yorumlar ile karşılaşmak biçiminde deneyimlerden söz edilmiştir. Katılımcılar hem devlet görevlilerinin hem de vatandaşların gözünde *ikinci sınıf vatandaş* konumunda olduklarını

vurgulamışlardır. Ayrıca neden Suriye’de kalmadıklarına, ne zaman geri döneceklerine ve devletin onlara sağladığı sosyal haklara dair rahatsız edici sorularla ve yorumlarla karşılaştıklarını ve bu soruların yük gibi hissetmelerine yol açtığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Suriyeli gençler her ne kadar Türkiye’ye alıştıklarını ve uyum sağladıklarını hissetmiş olsalar da Suriye’yi ve oradaki yaşamlarını özlemektedirler. Özellikle Türkiye’de karşılaştıkları ayrımcılık, beklentilerin karşılanamaması ve aile üyelerinden uzak olmak memleket özlemi hissini pekiştirmektedir.

Devam Eden Zorluklar ve Kayıplar

Suriyeli gençler, göç öncesi, göç yolculuğu ve sonrası dönemdeki travmatik ve zorlayıcı deneyimlerin yanı sıra yaşadıkları kayıplar ve bu kayıpların etkileri üzerine de sıklıkla konuşmuşlardır. Dördüncü üst tema, psikolojik, ilişkisel ve sosyoekonomik bağlamlardaki kayıplara odaklanmaktadır.

Sosyoekonomik kayıpların önemi katılımcıların yarısı tarafından vurgulanmıştır. Suriyeli gençler ve aileleri tüm geçim kaynaklarını, birikimlerini ve mal varlıklarının büyük kısmını kaybettiklerini ve büyük bir *statü kaybı* yaşadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Sosyoekonomik kayıplar ve Türkiye’de yaşadıkları ekonomik zorluklar katılımcıların yaşamındaki başlıca problemlerden biridir. Katılımcılar özellikle babalarının yaşadığı iş ve statü kaybının ve Türkiye’deki iş gücü piyasasında iş bulamamalarının işe yaramazlık duygusu yarattığını vurgulamışlardır. Katılımcılar, düşük ücretli ve güvencesiz işlerde çalışmak zorunda kaldıklarını ve yaşam giderlerinin çok yüksek olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Suriyeli mülteci gençlerin yaşadığı diğer bir önemli kayıp ailevi ve sosyal bağların kopması veya Suriyeliler arasındaki toplumsal bağların zayıflamasıdır. Katılımcılar savaş öncesi sahip oldukları geniş aile ve arkadaşlık bağlarını özlemle hatırlamış, onların kaybının Türkiye’deki yaşamlarında yalnız ve yalıtılmış hissetmelerine yol açtığını anlatmışlardır. Savaş sebebiyle ortaya çıkan politik ve mezhepsel çatışmaların

ve göçün ailevi ve sosyal bağları, dayanışmayı ve iletişimi zedelediği bazı katılımcılar tarafından vurgulanmıştır.

Suriyeli gençler açısından diğer bir önemli kayıp alanı kendileri için çizdikleri gelecek planlarını ve hedeflerini gerçekleştirememiş olmalarıdır. Özellikle savaş ve göç Suriyeli gençlerin eğitim ve mesleki alandaki hedef ve isteklerini gerçekleştirememelerine neden olmuştur. Savaş ve göç neticesinde çalışma hayatına girmeleri, evlenip çocuk sahibi olmaları ve aile içinde yüklendikleri büyük sorumluluklar okulu bırakmalarına neden olmuştur. Önceden kendileri için hayal ettikleri meslekleri edinmenin Türkiye'deki şartlar altında mümkün olmadığını vurgulamışlardır. Gelecek hayallerine ilişkin yaşanan bu kayıplar genç mülteciler için önemli bir stres kaynağıdır.

Katılımcılar tarafından son olarak psikolojik iyilik hallerinde gözledikleri olumsuz değişimlerden bahsetmişlerdir. Mülteci gençler üzüntü, öfke, neşesizlik, endişe, istek kaybı ve umursamazlık gibi duygularda artış gözlemlemektedirler. Ayrıca uyku bozuklukları ve kâbuslar katılımcıların yaşadıkları ruhsal zorluklar arasındadır. Bazı katılımcılar daha öfkeli ve tahammülsüz olduklarını özellikle vurgulamışlardır.

Zorluklarla Başa Çıkma Yolları

Bu üst tema Suriyeli gençlerin başa çıkma yollarına ve psikolojik dayanıklılıklarını güçlendirmek için kullandıkları kaynaklara odaklanmaktadır. Katılımcılar üç temel kaynaktan bahsetmişlerdir. Suriyeli gençlerin en önemli başa çıkma kaynakları aile ve arkadaşlık ilişkileridir. Aile üyeleri gençlere aidiyet hissi vererek, duygusal destek sağlayarak, yol gösterici olarak ve acılarını paylaşılarak destek olmaktadır. Sosyal destek kaynaklarının yanı sıra katılımcılar kişilik özelliklerini ve içsel kaynaklarını zorluklar karşısında kullandıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Kendi becerilerine ve kapasitelerine güvenmek, sabırlı olmak, Allah inancı ve dini ritüeller ve geleceğe dair umutlu olmak katılımcılara zor zamanlarda yardımcı olmuştur. Dini inançların yaşanan zorlukları ve travmaları anlamlandırma sürecinde mülteci gençlere yardımcı olduğu görülmüştür. Katılımcılar tarafından son olarak dile getirilen diğer bir başa çıkma kaynağı Türkiye'deki devlet kurumlarından ya da sivil toplum kuruluşlarından

aldıkları sosyal yardımlardır. Ücretsiz sağlık hizmetlerinden faydalanmak, meslek kursları, dil kursları ve yiyecek ve kıyafet gibi temel ihtiyaç yardımları Türkiye’deki zorlu yaşam koşullarında hayatta kalmalarına destek olmaktadır.

Değişen Aile Dinamikleri

Katılımcıların anlatılarında ortaya çıkan diğer bir üst tema savaş ve göç koşullarının aile dinamikleri, ilişkiler ve aile içi iletişim üzerinde yol açtığı etkiler ve dönüşümlerdir. Katılımcılar tarafından en sık dile getirilen değişim aile içi rollerin ve sorumlulukların yeniden tanımlanması ve dağıtılmasıdır. Savaş öncesi Suriye’de geleneksel aile yapısının ve aile içi rollerin hakim olduğu katılımcıların anlatılarından anlaşılmaktadır. Baba ailenin geçindirilmesinden birincil sorumlu olan kişidir. Ancak katılımcıların babalarının büyük bir kısmı savaş ve göç ile birlikte dil engeli ve yaş dolayısıyla iş piyasada yer bulmakta zorlanmışlar ve evdeki bu rollerini kaybetmişlerdir. İki katılımcı değişen bu durumla birlikte babalarının güçsüz ve aileye yük gibi hissettiklerini vurgulamıştır. Erkek katılımcıların tamamı ailenin geçiminden sorumlu hale gelmiştir. Kadın katılımcılardan sadece üç tanesi Türkiye’ye geldikten sonra çalışmaya başlamış ve aile bütçesine katkı sunma sorumluluğunu üstlenmiştir. Aile içinde genç nesillerin yaşlılara kıyasla sorumluluklarında önemli bir düzeyde artış olduğu gözlenmiştir.

Savaş ve göç aile içi iletişimi ve bağlılığı etkilemiştir. Katılımcıların yarısı aile içi uyumun ve bağlılığın yaşanan zorluklar neticesinde kuvvetlendiğini dile getirirken, diğer yarısı ise aile ilişkilerinin zedelendiğini, çatışmaların ve iletişim sıkıntılarının arttığını anlatmışlardır. Ailevi çatışmalar çoğunlukla işsizlik ve ekonomik zorluklar etrafında gelişmektedir. Zorlu çalışma koşullarından ötürü Suriye’ye kıyasla Türkiye’de aile üyelerinin birlikte geçirdikleri zaman azalmış ve bu durumun iletişimi olumsuz yönde etkilemiştir. Sadece iki erkek katılımcı tarafından dile getirilse de önemli bir mesele de nesiller arasında yaşanan çatışmalardır. Bu gençler Türkiye’deki yaşamla birlikte özellikle evlenmek konusundaki beklenti ve isteklerinin değiştiğini ancak bu durumun babaları ile çatışmaya yol açtığını belirtmişlerdir.

Değişen aile dinamiklerine dair ele alınan son bir temada aile üyelerinin Türkiye'ye uyum sağlamada gösterdikleri farklılıklardır. Ailenin genç üyeleri hızlıca Türkçe dilini öğrenmiş ve uyum sağlamışlardır. Yaşlı üyeler özellikle anneler Türkiye'ye alışmakta zorluk yaşamaktadırlar. Bu uyum farklılıkları nesiller arasında çatışmaya ve yaşlı üyelerin iyilik halleri üzerinde olumsuz etkilere yol açmaktadır.

Değişen Kendilik Algısı

Analizler sonucunda ortaya çıkan diğer önemli bir üst tema Suriyeli gençlerin kendilerini algılama biçimlerinde meydana gelen değişimlerdir. Suriyeli mülteci gençler arasında önemli ortak bir deneyim savaş ve göç deneyiminin sorumluluklarını arttırması ve bunun neticesinde sorumluluk sahibi ve olgunlaşmış birisine dönüşmeleridir. Mülteci gençler aileleri için hayati önemde birçok sorumluluğu yerine getirmektedirler. Bu sorumluluklar arasında para kazanıp aileye bakmak, Suriye'deki aile üyelerine para yollamak, ev bulmak, küçük kardeşlere bakmak ve gözetim sağlamak ve ailenin sosyal hayattaki tüm işlerini yerine getirmek sayılabilir. Sorumlulukların artışı katılımcıların çoğunda büyüme ve olgunlaşma deneyimini pekiştirmiş ve yetkinlik ve kendine güven hissini arttırmıştır. Öte yandan bazı mülteci gençler sorumluluklarla yalnız ve boğulmuş hissettiklerini ve yorulduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Deneyimlenen büyüme ve olgunlaşma hissi hızlı ve hazırlıksız bir şekilde yetişkinlik yaşamına geçiş olarak tarif edilmiştir. Kendilerini oldukları yaştan daha yaşlı bir şekilde algılamaktadırlar. Sorumluluklar karşısında mülteci gençlerin yaşlarına uygun istek, ihtiyaç ve hayallerinin gölgelendiği görülmektedir.

Genç Suriyelilerin kendilik algılarına dair deneyimledikleri diğer bir değişim de kendi içsel güçlerinin farkına varmalarıdır. Yaşanmış travmatik yaşantılar ve zorluklar ve bunlarla başa çıkabilme hissi gençlere kendine güven ve yetkinlik hissi kazandırmıştır. Zorluklar karşısında cesur ve güçlenmiş hissetmekte ve bireysel bir dönüşüm yaşadıklarını dile getirmektedir.

Gelecek Beklentileri

Analizler sonucunda ortaya çıkan son üst tema Suriyeli gençlerin gelecek ile beklenti ve algılarına odaklanmaktadır. Suriyeli gençlerin büyük çoğunluğu geleceklerini belirsiz ve öngörülemez bir biçimde algılamaktadırlar. Nerede yaşayacakları, Suriye'ye geri dönüp dönmeyecekleri ya da başka bir ülkeye göç edip etmeyecekleri konusunda büyük bir belirsizlik vardır. Çalışmaya katılan Suriyeli gençlerin yarısı Türkiye'de kalıcı olmak istediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Suriye'deki savaş koşullarının belirsizliği, Suriye'deki tüm mal varlıklarını kaybetmek, Türkiye'de kurulan yeni sosyal bağlar ve iş ve eğitim koşulları gençlerin Türkiye'de kalma isteğini güçlendirmektedir. Türkiye'de kalmak isteyen katılımcıların yanı sıra, sekiz katılımcı da Suriye'ye dönme isteğinden bahsetmiştir. Suriye'de aile üyelerinin varlığı dönme isteğine yol açan en önemli etmendir. Ayrıca Suriye'ye hissedilen aidiyet hissi ve Türkiye'deki zorlu ekonomik ve yaşam koşulları geri dönme isteğini etkileyen diğer etmenlerdir. Katılımcılar arasından sadece üniversite öğrencisi olan bir erkek katılımcı başka bir Avrupa ülkesine göç etme isteğinden bahsetmiştir. Diğer katılımcılar ise kültürel ve dini farklılıklardan ötürü Avrupa ülkesine göç etmeyi düşünmediklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Genç mülteciler ayrıca geleceğe dair hayal, plan ve beklentilerinden söz etmişlerdir. Katılımcılar savaştan önceki yaşam koşullarına ulaşabilmeyi, daha iyi kazandıkları bir işe sahip olmayı ve eğitimlerine devam edebilmeyi istemektedirler. Bazı gençler ise kendi gelecek hayallerinden ziyade kardeşlerinin ve çocuklarının geleceğini önceliklediklerini ifade etmişlerdir.

Özetle, Suriyeli gençlerin anlatıları kendi bakış açılarından mültecilik deneyiminin nasıl anlamlandırdıklarına ilişkin zengin bir içerik sunmaktadır. Suriyeli gençler sadece acı, kayıp ve travmadan bahsetmemiş, aynı zamanda umut, dayanıklılık ve zorluklarla karşısında gelişim gösterdiklerini de ifade etmişlerdir. Yapılan analiz Suriyeli gençlerin deneyimlerindeki ortaklıkları ve farklılıkları göstermiştir.

TARTIŞMA

Bu çalışma Suriyeli genç yetişkinlerin savaş ve zorunlu göçü nasıl deneyimlediklerini ve anlamlandırma süreçlerini araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Klinik psikoloji alanındaki mülteci araştırmalarının büyük çoğunluğu ABD, Avustralya, Kanada gibi gelişmiş yeniden yerleşim ülkelerinde yapılmaktadır. Bu çalışma Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan bir ülke bağlamında genç yetişkinlerin mültecilik ve zorunlu göç deneyimlerine odaklanarak var olan literatüre önemli bir katkı sunmayı hedeflemektedir. Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz kullanılmıştır. Analizlerin sonucunda sekiz üst tema ortaya çıkmıştır. İlk üç tema, yani “*Suriye’de savaş ile yaşamak*”, “*anavatanı geride bırakmak*” ve “*yeni bir hayat inşa etmek*” temaları katılımcıların göç öncesi, göç yolculuğu ve göç sonrası döneme ait anılarını, deneyimlerini, yaşadıkları travmatik olay ve zorlukları ve bunlara ilişkin duygusal yaşantılarını anlatmaktadır. Dördüncü tema, yani “*devam eden zorluklar ve kayıplar*” katılımcıların yaşamlarının merkezinde yer alan kayıp deneyimi üzerine odaklanmaktadır. “*Zorluklarla başa çıkma yolları*” adlı beşinci tema ise katılımcıların psikolojik dayanıklılık ve başa çıkma kaynaklarını göstermektedir. Altıncı ve yedinci temalar, yani “*değişen aile dinamikleri*” ve “*değişen kendilik algısı*” temaları savaş ve zorunlu göçün etkilerini ve katılımcıların geçirdikleri değişim ve dönüşümleri yansıtmaktadır. Son tema, “*gelecek beklentileri*” ise genç Suriyelilerin gelecek algısına, hayal ve planlarına işaret etmektedir. Tüm temalar bir arada yorumlandığında Suriyeli gençler için zorunlu göç ve mültecilik deneyiminin çok katmanlı ve boyutlu olduğu anlaşılmaktadır.

Araştırma Sonuçlarının Genel Tartışması

Suriye’de Savaş ile Yaşamak

Bu çalışmada bahsedilen göç öncesi yaşanmış travmatik deneyimler ve olaylar Suriyeli mültecilerle önceden yapılmış araştırmalarda yer alan göç öncesi deneyimlerle tür ve yaygınlık açısından benzerlik göstermektedir (Cantekin, 2018; Uygun, 2020; Tinghög ve ark., 2017). Farklı mülteci gruplarıyla yapılan araştırmalarda benzer sonuçları göstermektedir (örn., O'Donnell ve ark., 2020).

Çalışmanın sonuçları daha önceki çalışmalarda olduğu gibi (Freedman, 2016) kadın katılımcıların erkeklere kıyasla daha fazla oranda cinsel istismar ve tecavüz gibi cinsiyet temelli şiddet tehdidi hissettiklerini göstermiştir.

Anavatanı Geride Bırakmak

Suriyeli gençler ve aileleri kötüleşen güvenlik problemi, şiddet olaylarının yaygınlaşması, beslenme, sağlık ve barınma gibi temel ihtiyaçlara ulaşamama, zorla askere alınma ve ekonomik koşulların kötüleşmesi gibi nedenlerle Suriye'den ayrılmaya karar vermişlerdir (Akesson ve Coupland, 2018; Müller-Funk, 2019). Şiddetin artışı ve bu şiddetin kendilerini ya da aile üyelerini hedef alması Suriye'den ayrılmayı etkileyen en önemli sebeptir. Bu çalışma Suriye'den ayrılma kararının tepkisel bir şekilde verilmediğini ve sosyoekolojik bağlamın karar verme sürecini etkilediğini göstermiştir (Müller-Funk, 2019). Bu çalışma göç kararının gönüllü veya zorunlu gibi iki uçlu olmaktan ziyade farklı deneyimlerin ve itici güçlerin yer aldığı bir süreç olduğunu göstermiştir (Akesson ve Coupland, 2018).

Türkiye'ye geliş yolculuğu sırasında farklı mülteci grupları ile yapılan diğer araştırmaların da (Farhat ve ark., 2018; Mangrio ve ark., 2018) gösterdiği gibi travmatik deneyimlere maruz kalmaya devam etmişlerdir. Türkiye Suriyeli gençlerin gözünde bilinmezliklerle dolu olsa bile güvenli ve istikrarlı bir ülkedir. Kleist ve Jansen (2016) tarafından yapılan antropolojik çalışma genç Suriyelileri Türkiye'ye getiren en önemli etmenin umut hissi olduğunu göstermiştir.

Yeni Bir Hayat İnşa Etmek

Türkiye'deki ilk zamanlar göç sürecinin en zorlu dönemi olarak belirtilmiş ve benzer bulgular farklı mülteci gruplarıyla yapılan çalışmalarda da gösterilmiştir (Thommessen ve ark., 2015). Türkçe dilini bilmemek, sosyal destek ağlarının eksikliği, Suriye'de geride kalan aile üyelerine duyulan özlem, yeni kültürel değerlere yabancı olmak ve barınma ve iş bulma zorlukları gibi etmenler ilk dönemlerdeki en önemli stres faktörleri arasındadır (Tinghög ve ark., 2017). Bu stres etmenleri ile karşı

karşıya kalmak bazı Suriyeli gençlerde büyük bir hayal kırıklığı yaratmıştır (Danso, 2002).

Türkçe dilinin öğrenilmesi mülteci gençlerin uyum süreçlerindeki en önemli kaynaklardan biri olmuştur. Daha önce Suriyeli mültecilerle yapılan çalışmalar benzer bir bulguya işaret etmişlerdir (Korukçu ve ark., 2017). Önceki çalışmalar Türkçe dilini bilmemenin kültüre uyum sağlama, yerel halkla ilişki kurma ve barınma, sağlık olanaklarından faydalanma ve iş bulma konularında zorluk yarattığını ortaya koymuştur. Göçmen ruh sağlığına kaynak temelli yaklaşımlar (Ryan ve ark., 2008) dili öğrenmenin kritik bir kültürel kaynak olduğunu vurgulamış ve yeni ülkeye uyum sürecinde önemli bir kolaylaştırıcı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Göç sonrası döneme ilişkin ortaya çıkan diğer önemli bir sonuç, katılımcı gençlerin hem Türkiye vatandaşları hem de diğer Suriyeli mültecilerle ilişkilerini algılama biçimleridir. Türkiye vatandaşları genellikle yardımsever ve dostane bir biçimde tasvir edilmiştir. Türkiye vatandaşları tarafından saygı duyulduklarını ve kabul gördüklerini deneyimlediklerini vurgulamışlardır. Katılımcıların küçük bir kısmı çatışmalardan ve gerginliklerden bahsetmiştir. Aynı zamanda diğer Suriyeli mültecilerin Türkiye'ye uyum sürecinde destekleyici rolü hemen hemen tüm katılımcılar tarafından dile getirilmiştir. Bu bulgu iç grup desteğinin ve iç grup aidiyetinin mülteci ruh sağlığı üzerine koruyucu etkisini gösteren çalışmalara destek sağlamaktadır (Smeekes ve ark., 2017). Öte yandan bir Türkmen Suriyeli katılımcı Arap Sünni Suriyeli arkadaşlarıyla yaşadığı sorunlardan bahsetmiş ve kendisini Suriyeli olmaktan çok Türk olarak tanımladığını belirtmiştir. Safak-Ayvazoğlu, Kunuroğlu ve Yağmur (2020) benzer bir noktaya işaret etmiş, bölgesel, etnik, kültürel, dini ve politik farklılıkların Suriyeli mültecilerin birbirleri ile ilişkilerini olumsuz etkilediği sonucuna varmıştır.

Bu çalışma aynı zamanda algılanan ayrımcılık deneyiminin Suriyeli gençlerin uyum süreçlerine ve psikolojik iyilik hallerine gösterdiği olumsuz etkiyi ortaya çıkarmıştır. Şafak-Ayvazoğlu ve arkadaşlarının (2021) gösterdiği gibi bu çalışmadaki katılımcılar da dilsel ve etnik açıdan ayrımcılık algılamakta, mülteci oldukları için olumsuz tutumlara maruz kalmaktadırlar. Bu çalışma algılanan ayrımcılık deneyiminin Suriyeli gençlerin yaşamlarının kaçınılmaz bir parçası olduğu sonucuna varmıştır. Ancak bu

çalışmaya katılan Suriyeli gençlerin sadece üçte biri bu deneyimleri ifade etmişlerdir. Bu durum dikkatle ele alınmalı ve geri kalan katılımcıların Türkiye toplumundan gelen araştırmacıya ayrımcılık deneyimlerini ve fikirlerini ifade etmekten çekinmiş olabilecekleri akılda tutulmalıdır.

Göç sonrası döneme ilişkin diğer bir risk etmeni vatan hasretidir. Katılımcıların yarısı memleket özlemi hissinin Türkiye’de yaşamlarının en önemli sorunu olduğunu belirtmiştir. Daha önceki çalışmaların vurguladığı gibi Suriye’de aile üyelerinin bulunması, Türkiye’deki ekonomik ve psikososyal zorluklar ve algılanan ayrımcılık vatan hasreti hissi güçlendirmektedir (Shakespeare-Finch ve Wickham, 2010).

Devam Eden Zorluklar ve Kayıplar

Bu çalışma genç mültecilerin yaşamlarının birçok alanında önemli kayıplar yaşadıklarını göstermiştir. Böylelikle bu çalışma mülteci deneyiminin merkezinde kayıp ve yasın bulunduğu söyleyen araştırmalarla benzer bir sonuca varmıştır (Im ve Neff, 2020; Kelly ve ark., 2016). Kaynak temelli yaklaşım açısından (Hobfoll, 2001, Ryan ve ark., 2008), bu çalışma Suriyeli gençlerin ve ailelerinin sosyal, maddi, kültürel ve statü alanlarında önemli kaynak kayıplarına uğradıklarını göstermiştir. Hobfoll’un (2001) ileri sürdüğü gibi bu çalışma kayıp sarmallarının oluştuğunu ve bir alandaki kaybın başka alanlarda kayba neden olduğunu göstermiştir. Kaynak kaybının yoğunluğu ve fazlalığı mültecilerin ruh sağlıklarını olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir.

Zorluklarla Başa Çıkma Yolları

Bu araştırma katılımcıların yaşadıkları zorlukların karşısında etkin bir biçimde başa çıktıklarını ve psikolojik dayanıklılıklarını destekleyecek farklı kaynakları kullandıklarını göstermiştir. Genç mülteciler dayanıklılıklarını ve güçlerini tesis etmek için kişisel (kişilik özellikleri), maddi (sağlık desteği, meslek edindirme kursları gibi) ve sosyal (aile ve arkadaşlık ilişkileri) boyutlarda birçok kaynağı kullanmışlardır. Literatüre bakıldığında psikolojik dayanıklılık konusunda farklı kavramsallaştırmaların yer aldığı görülebilir. Bu çalışma mizaç temelli yaklaşımdan ziyade ekosistemik kavramsallaştırmaları desteklemektedir (Eggerman ve Panter-

Brick, 2010). Bu çalışma Suriyeli gençlerin en fazla kullandıkları başa çıkma kaynağının aile ve arkadaş ilişkileri olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu bulgu Suriye kültüründe ailenin merkezi rolünü gösteren ve aileyi önemli bir başa çıkma yolu olarak değerlendiren araştırmalarla benzerlik göstermektedir (Panter-Brick ve ark., 2018). Bu çalışma ayrıca devlet kurumları ve STK'lar tarafından sağlanan sosyal yardımların Suriyeli göçmenlerin dayanıklılıklarını desteklemekte önemli olduğunu göstermiştir (Goodman ve ark., 2017).

Değişen Aile Dinamikleri

Benzer deneyimler yaşamış diğer mülteci gruplarda görüldüğü gibi savaş ve özellikle göç koşulları Suriyeli ailelerde rol dağılımında önemli değişimlere yol açmıştır (Simmelink-McCleary, 2017). Ailelerin genç üyeleri, yaşlı üyelere kıyasla daha hızlı uyum sağladıkları ve Türkçe dilini öğrendikleri için evin geçimini sağlama rolünü üstlenmişlerdir. Bu durum genç erkeklerle babaları arasında tersine bir rol değişimine neden olmuştur (McMichael ve ark., 2010). Bu rol değişimlerinin ne oranda geleneksel Suriye aile yapısını ve cinsiyet rollerini dönüştürdüğü önemli bir araştırma konusudur.

Savaş ve göç koşulları aile içi iletişimi olumsuz yönde etkilemiş ve gerginlikleri ve çatışmaları arttırmıştır. Daha önceki çalışmaların gösterdiği gibi ekonomik zorluklar göç sonrası dönemde aile ilişkilerini olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir (Simmelink-McCleary, 2017).

Değişen Kendilik Algısı

Önceki araştırmalara benzer bir şekilde (Shakya ve ark., 2014; Suerbaum, 2017), Suriyeli genç mülteciler yaşadıkları savaş ve göç deneyimi neticesinde kendilerini *büyümüş ve sorumlulukları artmış bir birey* gibi hissettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Mültecilere yönelik devlet politikalarının ve hizmetlerin sınırlı olması ve yaşlı aile üyelerinin iş piyasasına girmekte zorlanmaları genç mültecilerin üzerindeki yükü arttırmaktadır. Ayrıca bu çalışmadaki Suriyeli gençler genç yetişkinliğe hızlı ve hazırlıksız bir şekilde geçtiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bu hızlı geçiş gençlerin hem

güçlenmiş hem de yorgun ve bunalmış hissetmelerine yol açmaktadır (DeJong ve ark., 2017).

Travma sonrası büyüme literatürü ile uyumlu bir şekilde genç mülteciler travmatik yaşantıların yanı sıra içsel büyüme ve güçlenme deneyimlediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Suriyeli mültecilerle yapılan önceki çalışmalar (Erşahin, 2020) travmatik deneyimler sonucunda büyüme deneyimi yaşadıklarını ve sosyal destek, dini inançlar ve geleceğe dair umutlu olmak gibi etmenlerin büyüme deneyimi üzerindeki etkisini göstermiştir. Katılımcı Suriyeli gençler bireysel, sosyal ve ekonomik kaynakların büyüme deneyimi üzerinde belirleyici olduğunu belirtmiştir.

Gelecek Beklentileri

Çalışmaya katılan Suriyeli gençler arasında Suriye'ye geri dönme ya da Türkiye'de kalma fikri eşit şekilde ifade edilmiştir. Daha önceki çalışmalar (Müller-Funk, 2019), geri dönme isteğinin Türkiye'de yaşayan Suriyeliler arasında çok güçlü olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca bu çalışma kalma isteğinin kadın mülteciler arasında daha fazla olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu bulguda da daha önce yapılan çalışmalardan farklıdır (SEEFAR, 2018). Bu çalışmaya katılan kadın katılımcıların eğitimlerine ya da çalışma hayatına devam ettikleri ve Türkiye'deki yaşamlarından memnun oldukları gözlenmiştir. Bu durum kadın katılımcıların kalma isteğinin ardındaki önemli bir etmen olabilir.

Bu çalışmada genç Suriyelilerin genel anlamda olumlu bir gelecek beklentisi içinde oldukları gözlenmiştir. Geleceğe dair planları Suriye'de savaştan önceki dönemde sahip oldukları yaşamı tekrar kurmak ve sahip olduklarını tekrar kazanmak üzerinedir. Van Heelsom (2017) Hollanda'ya göç eden Suriyelilerle yaptığı çalışmada benzer bir bulguya ulaşmıştır. Ayrıca Suriyeli gençlerin büyük çoğunluğu gelecek hayallerini ve planlarını kısıtlı kaynaklara göre yeniden şekillendirmiştir.

Sonuçların Sosyo-Ekolojik Model Açısından Yorumlanması

Bu çalışma genç yetişkin Suriyelilerin göç öncesi ve göç sonrası dönemde uyum süreçlerini ve psikolojik iyilik halleri etkileyen çok boyutlu ve katmanlı etmenler olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu etmenlerin birbirleriyle etkileşimlerini anlamak ve bütünlüklü bir çerçeve sağlamak amacıyla Drozdek (2015) tarafından geliştirilen Bütünleyici Bağlamsal Model kullanılmıştır. Suriyeli gençlerin göç öncesi, göç yolculuğu ve göç sonrası döneme ait anlattıkları travmatik yaşantılar ve zorluklar Drozdek modelindeki *hasar (risk) etmeni* kavramı ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Buna ek olarak, Drozdek'in modelinde diğer bir önemli kavram *kaynak* kavramıdır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları katılımcıların bireysel, ilişkiler arası, toplumsal ve kültürel açılardan farklı kaynakları kullandığını göstermiştir.

Drozdek (2015) bu iki kavram dışında sosyoekolojik çevreyi dört farklı şekilde kavramsallaştırmıştır. İlk katman *bireysel* katmandır. Katılımcılar savaş ve göç koşullarına bağlı olarak kendilik imgelerinde (sorumluluk sahibi biri olmak, içsel güçlerini keşfetmek ve hazırlıksız yetişkinliğe geçiş) meydana gelen değişimlerden bahsetmişlerdir. Bu deneyimler Drozdek'in modelindeki ilk katman altında düşünülmüştür.

Drozdek'in modelindeki ikinci katman *aile bağlamıdır*. Aile dinamiklerindeki değişimlere dair anlatılanlar bu katmanla ilişkili olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Aile katmanında meydana gelen değişimler bireysel katmanda etkilere yol açmıştır. Aile içindeki rollerin yeniden tanımlanması, gençler üzerindeki sorumlulukları arttırmış ve dolayısıyla yetişkinliğe hızlı bir geçiş ve olgunlaşma sağlamıştır. Üçüncü katman ise *toplumsal düzeydir*. Suriyeli gençlerin hem Türkiye vatandaşları hem de diğer Suriyeli mültecilerle deneyimler, ekolojik bağlamın toplumsal düzeyi ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu çalışma toplumsal düzeydeki olumlu deneyimlerin yeni dayanıklılık kaynakları sağladığını olumsuz deneyimlerin ise bireysel ve aile düzeyinde aidiyet duygusunu ve uyum sürecinin zedelediğini göstermiştir.

Drozdek'in modelindeki son katman ise *kültürel düzeydir*. Bu çalışmada katılımcıların *algılanan ayrımcılık deneyimlerine* ilişkin anlattıkları kültürel düzey ile bireysel düzey

arasındaki etkileşimi göstermektedir. Kültürel düzeyde algılanan ayrımcılık, istenmeme deneyimlerinin ruhsal zorluklara, uyum problemlerine yol açtığını göstermiştir. Sonuç olarak, birçok etmenin belirleyici olduğu mültecilik deneyimini Drozdek'in sunduğu Bütünleyici Bağlamsal Model açısından ele almak zorunlu göç deneyimini daha kapsamlı ve açıklayıcı bir çerçeve içerisinde anlamayı sağlamıştır.

Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları ve Güçlü Yanları

Bu çalışma Türkiye'deki genç yetişkin Suriyelilerin zorunlu göç deneyimlerini niteliksel araştırma yöntemi kullanarak inceleyen ilk çalışmadır. Bu çalışmanın en güçlü yanı psikopatoloji bakış açısındansa fenomenolojik yaklaşımı benimsemesi ve güçlendirme temelli, sosyoekolojik kuramsal bakış açısıyla genç yetişkin mültecilerin deneyimlerini kapsamlı ve bütüncül bir biçimde araştırmasıdır. Bu çalışmanın güçlü yanlarından biri homojen ve büyük bir örnekleme sahip olmasıdır. Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan bir ülkede yaşayan Suriyeliler ile yapılan bu araştırma çoğunlukla gelişmiş batı ülkelerindeki mülteci gruplar ile yapılan çalışmalar ile farklılıkları ve ortak noktaları kıyaslama imkânı vermiştir.

Bu çalışmanın bazı sınırlılıkları vardır. Öncelikle bu çalışmanın örnekleme bir araştırmayı katılıp, deneyimlerini konuşmakta isteksiz olan Suriyeli gençleri kapsamamaktadır. Ayrıca dini ve kültürel sebeplerden dolayı Suriyeli genç kadınlara ulaşmak oldukça zor olmuştur. Çevirmenin erkek olması özellikle kadın katılımcılarla kurulan ilişkiyi etkilemiş ve bazı deneyimlerini ifade etmeyi zorlaştırmış olabilir. Son olarak çeviri sırasında katılımcıların anlatımlarının detayları ve netliği kaybolmuş olabilir.

Çalışmanın Önerileri

Mültecilerle yürütülecek ruh sağlığı çalışmalarında kültürel açıdan uyumlu bir şekilde kayıp ve yas çalışmalarına öncelik verilmesi gerekebilir. Mültecilerle ruh sağlığı çalışmaları planlanırken sosyoekolojik temelli bir yaklaşım benimsenip disiplinler arası bir çalışma önemlidir. Özellikle ruhsal iyileşme ve dayanıklılık açısından aile ve toplumsal bağları güçlendiren çalışmalar planlamak gereklidir. Mültecilerle çalışırken

sadece savař ve zorunlu göçün psikopatolojik sonuçlarına odaklanmadan güçlendirme temelli çalışma modelleri benimsemek önemlidir. Ruh sağlığı alanında çalışanlar mültecilere yönelik politikaların geliştirilmesinde ve uygulanmasında hak savunuculuğu yapmaları oldukça önemlidir.

Genç mültecilerin gelişimsel ihtiyaçlarının dikkate alındığı, sahip oldukları beceriler ve kaynaklar gözetilerek gençlerin potansiyellerini ortaya çıkaracak politikalara ve psikososyal programlara ihtiyaç vardır. Ayrıca Suriye toplumu içinde daha dezavantajlı konumda bulunan kadınların programlara ulaşılabilirlikleri arttırılmalıdır. Ayrıca Suriyelilerin Türkiye’de uzun süre kalıcı oldukları düşünüldüğünde toplumsal uyum ve kabule yönelik çalışmalar yapılmalıdır.

Gelecek Çalışmalar

Gelişimsel dönemlerin zorunlu göç üzerindeki etkisini anlamak için genç ve yaşlı mültecilerin göçmenlik deneyimlerini, uyum süreçlerini araştıran karşılaştırmalı çalışmalar önerilmektedir. Mültecilerin ruh sağlığının ve uyum süreçlerinin zaman içinde nasıl değiştiğini anlamak için boylamsal çalışmalar yapılmalıdır. Bu çalışma aileleri ile yaşayan genç mülteciler üzerine odaklanmıştır. Genç mültecilerin deneyimlerini farklı açılardan anlamak için refakatsiz genç mültecilerle çalışma yapılması önerilmektedir.

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