

DESIGNING AN EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPY CURRICULUM TO SUPPORT
THE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING SKILLS OF SYRIAN REFUGEE
STUDENTS IN TURKEY: A VALIDATION STUDY

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I dedicate this thesis to all refugees whose childhood and future have been stolen.

Designing an Expressive Arts Therapy Curriculum to Support the Social-emotional
Learning Skills of Syrian Refugee Students in Turkey: A Validation Study

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August 2021

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope
and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Curriculum and
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ABSTRACT

Designing an Expressive Arts Therapy Curriculum to Support the Social-emotional Learning Skills of Syrian Refugee Students in Turkey: A Validation Study

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The researcher used aspects of instructional design in this study to develop and evaluate an eight-week curriculum designed to help improve social-emotional learning (SEL) skills of Syrian refugee students in Turkey. In this aspect, the researcher incorporated a technique called Expressive Arts therapy (EXA) into the curriculum and provided a clear guideline to those wanting to implement EXA in a more purposeful and rigorous way in the school setting. To ensure the validity of the curriculum, a mixture of open-ended and a five-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to investigate the perceptions of a group of experts from different fields about various aspects of the curriculum. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics of the quantitative data along with content analysis of the participants' written comments. the results of this study indicated that the EXA activities in the curriculum were feasible, effective and implementing this curriculum in the school setting would be beneficial to promote SEL skills of Syrian refugee students.

Keywords: Expressive Arts therapy, refugee issue, educational challenges, curriculum design, prevention programs, social emotional learning, creative expressions

ÖZET

Türkiye'deki Suriyeli Mülteci Öğrencilerin Sosyal-duygusal Öğrenme Becerilerini

Destekleyemeye Yönelik Dışavurumcu Sanat Terapisi Temelli Bir Müfredat

Geliştirilmesi: Geçerlilik Çalışması

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Bu çalışmada sekiz haftalık bir müfredat geliştirmek ve geliştirilen müfredatı değerlendirmek için öğretim tasarımı özellikleri kullanıldı. Müfredat, Türkiye'deki Suriyeli mülteci öğrencilerin sosyal-duygusal öğrenme (SDÖ) becerilerini geliştirmelerine destek olmak için tasarlandı. Bu amaç doğrultusunda müfredatta dışavurumcu sanat terapisi (DST) adı verilen bir teknik kullanıldı. Müfredat, bu tekniği okul ortamında daha doğru ve amaçlı bir şekilde uygulamak isteyenler için ayrıntılı bir kılavuz niteliği taşır. Müfredatın geçerliliğini sağlamak için, farklı alanlardan bir grup uzmana programın çeşitli yönleriyle ilgili görüşlerini belirtmeleri için birtakım açık uçlu sorulardan ve beşli Likert ölçeğinden oluşan bir anket uygulanmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları müfredatta yer alan dışavurumcu sanat aktivitelerinin uygulanabilir ve etkili olduğunu ve bu müfredatın okul ortamında uygulanması durumunda Suriyeli mülteci öğrencilerin sosyal-duygusal öğrenme becerilerinin geliştirilmesi konusunda faydalı olacağını göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Dışavurumcu sanat terapisi, mülteci sorunu, eğitim sorunları, müfredat geliştirme, engelleme programları, sosyal ve duygusal öğrenme, yaratıcı ifade

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The “Arab Spring” began in 2010 in the region of Northern Africa as pro-democratic movements against dictatorship regimes (Campante & Chor, 2012). The resistance movements quickly spread to the neighboring areas within the Middle Eastern region; in some countries, Syria in particular, the movement subsequently turned into civil war. Anti-government protests in Syria against President Bashar Assad’s government were firstly initiated in Deraa in 2011. The Assad government’s harsh retaliation against the protestors increased the tension in the country (Hacioglu, 2018; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). As a consequence of the increased tension, millions of Syrians have had to flee to neighboring countries to avoid the destructive effects of the war. When they arrived at these countries, they urgently needed assistance and protection, launching a refugee crisis worldwide (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2018). One of those countries most affected by this refugee crisis is Turkey. Connecting the Asian and European continents, Turkey serves as a bridge over which people use to cross into European countries. In this aspect, Turkey becomes an attractive place where Syrians come to take shelter or go to European countries for a better future.

Considering its geographical location, Turkey is a country bordered by the sea on its western edge and by land on its eastern side. This eastern side forms a border between Turkey and several other countries, and its longest border is shared with Syria. Partly because of its proximity to Turkey, many Syrians have fled to Turkey to seek refuge during their long civil war that began in 2011. Among the

Syrian refugees, about 65% reside in Turkey, which corresponds to more than 3.6 million people (UNHCR, 2019). Although this resettlement can provide a sense of safety and relief for Syrian refugees, it is not the end of the story. Instead, it is just a beginning.

Following is background information about the social, cultural, and psychological sources of upsetting situations for Syrian youth contributing to their challenges, trauma, and related health problems. The background concludes with the importance of education for learning how to cope with challenges that negatively impact their ability to improve SEL skills, leading to the question of how to investigate the potential of an EXA-based curriculum to support this education.

Background

The story of resettlement has many twists and turns. The plot is influenced by how long refugees want to or need to stay in their host country and if, in some cases, the refugees choose to stay indefinitely. A variety of reasons influence why some refugees decide to stay in Turkey, including or ongoing fear of the dire conditions in Syria (Erdogan, 2014). Whether the stay is for a few months or many years, another critical element of this story is how the immigrants become part of or do not become a part of the host country. Throughout human history, when people from two different ethnicities start to live together, the cultures may generally interact while still being distinct from each other. In some cases, one group adopts the culture of the other group after a while. This eventually leads to the assimilation of one culture by another, which entails the disappearance of any differences between the newcomers and the host society (Dryden-Peterson & Hovil, 2004).

On the other hand, assimilation requires a tremendous amount of time to eliminate all differences between the newcomers and the host society. If the cultures

interact but do not try to assimilate each other, this is called “integration”; integration refers to cultural pluralism rather than the loss of culture by dissolving into another culture (Dryden-Peterson & Hovil, 2004; Hacıoglu, 2018). In addition to these facts, Hacıoglu (2018) refers to relevant laws to clarify the residency status of the Syrians:

[Since] the Settlement Law of 1934 and its version in 2006 indicates that only people with Turkish descent and culture are eligible for permanent residency and citizenship rights, the Turkish government has followed an open-door policy towards Syrian refugees to provide temporary protection to them. (p. 4)

Therefore, given this temporary protection system, Syrians’ resettlement process in Turkey is likely to result in integration rather than assimilation. Integration is a primarily mutual process that requires cooperation from the host society as well as from the newcomer (Alpaydın, 2017; Erdogan, 2014; Human Rights Watch, 2015; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). In line with this consideration, Turkey voluntarily welcomed Syrian refugees as temporary guests at first. However, the temporary status has become more permanent over the years, and the welcome has waned gradually. Although Turks and Syrians are Muslim brothers who have lived together in peace for centuries under the Ottoman Empire’s auspices, differences between the two cultures cause the host society’s hospitality to turn into hostility and hate due to specific reasons. In the case of Turkey, Erdogan (2014) stated that one reason the welcome may have waned is that many host country residents worry the added Syrians may consume and limit access to public services, job security, and safety.

Hence, Turkish citizens who fear the permanence of Syrian residency in their country have many prejudices against Syrian refugees in general. With the effect of these prejudices, the refugees are exposed to discrimination and verbal or physical abuse in every aspect of daily life by the members of the host society. Brown (2015)

describes discrimination as “harmful actions toward others because of their ethnicity, nationality, language ability, and accent, or immigration status” (p. 5). Examples of individual discrimination can include receiving verbal insults, exposure to physical violence, and harassment.

Almost half of the refugee population dealing with such hardships during the resettlement process consists of young children. The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in 2019 indicated that almost 45% of Syrian refugees in Turkey are composed of Syrian children aged five through 18. This is a vulnerable population, and education is crucial in integrating all refugees (Alpaydın, 2017; Human Rights Watch, 2015; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin., 2015; Yuksek, 2019). It is important to note that before the civil war, enrolment rates of school-age children in Syria were at satisfactory levels. In particular, Human Rights Watch (2015, p. 5) reported that “the primary school enrolment rate in Syria was 99% and lower secondary school enrolment was 89%” with high gender equality. However, less than one-third of the 620,000 Syrian school-aged children who entered Turkey in the last four years are attending school—meaning approximately 415,000 remain unable to access education (Human Rights Watch, 2015). On the other hand, even if they have an opportunity to go to school, that does not mean that everything will be sufficient for them in the school setting. This is because there are a variety of reasons that prevent these children from integrating smoothly into the school environment.

As an example, exposure to the devastating effects of the war can provoke mental diseases similar to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is an anxiety disorder that takes place after exposure to traumatic experiences (Collie et al., 2006). The experiences that these children suffer from contain sexual trauma, experiencing a death in the family, exposure to being kicked, or physically hurt (Hacioglu, 2018;

Human Rights Watch, 2015; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). Sirin and Rogers-Sirin (2015) highlighted the fact that almost half (45%) [of Syrian children] displayed symptoms of PTSD, which is ten times more prevalent than in children around the world, and 44% reported symptoms of depression and anxiety. It is typical for these children with PTSD to suffer from psychological and emotional problems like emotional numbness, insomnia, and bursts of anger (Collie et al., 2006). As a result, unresolved mental issues related to traumatic events can lead to detrimental cognitive, emotional, and social consequences both now and later in life.

Suffering from unresolved traumatic experiences is not the only reason that causes Syrian children to fall behind mainstream education in Turkey. Although the resettlement process alone is a very stressful one, adapting to a new schooling system adds more weight to an already unendurable burden of stress (Alpaydın, 2017). These factors might lead to specific discipline problems in the school setting. For example, students with a high level of anxiety and stress levels are unlikely to manage their intense emotions in constructive ways, which causes them to become verbally or physically aggressive towards their peers and/or teachers (Aviles et al., 2006). Moreover, in case Syrian children are not warmly welcomed by their Turkish peers, the relationship between them is mainly based on hostility, which is the main factor of discrimination in the school setting (Taskin & Erdemli, 2018). The hostility emerges from the social conflict between adult Turkish citizens and Syrian refugees. Notably, when Turkish children witness their parents' discrimination against Syrian adults, they may emulate such attitudes against their Syrian peers.

Unfortunately, the fate of these children is surrounded by a cycle of hopelessness, fury, and marginalization, in general. If their current oppressive path cannot be altered, they may end up returning to Syria to fight, possibly joining

terrorists or extremist groups. One Syrian refugee mother, whose son died when he returned to Syria to fight because he had no educational opportunities in Turkey, told Human Rights Watch (2015):

If a person is sick, they can get treatment and get better. If a child does not go to school, it will create significant problems in the future—they will end up on the streets or go back to Syria to die fighting or be radicalized into extremists or die in the ocean trying to reach Europe. (p. 50)

This case creates such a vicious cycle, meaning that children who escaped from the war's destructive effects may have to return to their country to fight because they have no other option.

The cycle of civil wars results in violence, leading to desperation, resentment, aggression, and more violence (Brown, 2015). To help alleviate more of the horrors of war and other conflicts in the school setting, promoting social-emotional learning (SEL) skills of Syrian students should be a priority for schools in Turkey (Human Rights Watch, 2015; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015; Taskin & Erdemli, 2018).

According to Aviles et al. (2006), SEL skills are a set of skills through which people successfully manage a wide range of social roles and life tasks, including regulating their emotions in a way that relieves stress and other daily challenges; building and maintaining healthy friendship ties with others; achieving personal and/or collective goals. Delaney-Black et al. (2002) examined the impacts of SEL on academic performance and concluded that the students with a lack of appropriate SEL skills not only exhibit behavioral problems but also perform poorly in cognitive tasks and get lower grades. In their studies, Huth-Bocks et al. (2001) explain the effects of the limited development of SEL skills on academic performance by noting that exposure to community victimization puts individuals at greater risk for emotional distress and

increase in their emotional distress makes them suffer from intellectual, cognitive, and academic impairments. Given these arguments, it is apparent that the low grades they get may not always be reflective of their academic potential.

Thus far, the underlying reasons for the challenges preventing Syrian students from smoothly integrating into schools in Turkey have been explained in detail. Furthermore, this study also identified the role of those challenges on the development of their SEL skills. At this point, these students need to learn how to respond to a highly charged situation in a way that defuses impulsive actions and emotions. In response to this need, Aviles et al. (2006) emphasize that schools should provide a range of counseling services through which students from vulnerable backgrounds can perceive the adversity of a situation better and learn how to give a coping response to reduce the impact of the stressor in that situation. Dantzer (1989) defines coping response:

If a stressor elicits a physiological reaction A and if, in an individual engaged in a specific behavioral response, the observed physiological reaction is B, such as $B < A$, then by definition the response displayed by the subject is a coping response. (p. 278)

On the other hand, Syrian students with traumatic experiences become more anxious when they are in an unfamiliar setting and face discrimination and victimization from their host country peers (Human Rights Watch, 2015; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). Experiencing such challenges are the factors that repeatedly remind these people of the terrifying experience(s) through flashback episodes (Collie et al., 2006). Regarding such cases, Meyer DeMott et al. (2017) note that anxious individuals substantially withdraw or avoid situations in uncomfortable or unfamiliar settings that their minds can recreate or simulate traumatic experiences. The reason behind

this preference is that the brain decreases the ability of the senses to endure such intolerable situations (Malchiodi, 2008).

Accordingly, Syrian refugee students isolate themselves from the environment to minimize humiliation, pain, and harassment. It is a way to protect the ‘self’ from being destroyed. Meyer DeMott et al. (2017) say, “when a mouse is being tortured by a cat, the mouse plays dead, hoping that the cat will lose interest and leave. Similarly, being isolated might make a person less likely to be tortured” (p. 157). Unfortunately, ‘playing dead’ is only a temporary solution. Moreover, in case they maintain ‘playing dead’ for a long time, symptoms of PTSD may become chronic (Oldham & Zaninelli, 2001).

Considering the ongoing refugee crisis and the dire consequences of failed integration, the challenges that Syrian refugee students encounter in schools are issues that call for research and investigation. To this end, it is primarily necessary to analyze the extent to which the intervention programs are adequate to provide the services addressing the needs of these students. The outcomes of these studies can be used to develop a curriculum to help schools become entities that enable these children to change the course of their fate.

Problem

Although it is apparent that Syrian students need assistance in strengthening their capacities to cope with the challenges in school settings, they often lack social-emotional support in their schools. Taskin and Erdemli (2018) claim that schools do not have any instructional programs that provide counseling services for these students. Instead, they just offer Syrian students a one-on-one Turkish language learning session. Accordingly, the existing school curricula lack appropriate services that support the social-emotional development of Syrian students. Furthermore, the

literature has shown that there is limited research in Turkey about interventions that address their social and emotional needs. (Hacioglu, 2018; Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Given these issues, Expressive Arts therapy (EXA) can be regarded as a multimodal therapeutic approach, offering the potential to improve their social-emotional learning (SEL) skills. Meyer DeMott et al. (2017) defines EXA as a combination of specific art therapies through which “people can heal through the use of imagination, physical and mental movement, connection, playing, being present, and the various forms of creative expressions for self-expression and sociability within the community” (p. 154). EXA incorporates five distinct modalities: image, sound, act (play-acting, staging, fiction), word, and movement (Knill et al., 2004). They are used during EXA-based interventions to provide individuals with new perspectives to cope with the challenges and increase their inner strengths. Similarly, through those modalities, Syrian students can handle emotional distress and social maladaptation in school settings.

One way to implement them in the school setting is by developing a relevant school curriculum. Unfortunately, even though EXA has been used by education and outreach programs around the world since World War II (Malchiodi, 2005), it is not well known in Turkey. Therefore, more research is needed to introduce and explore how an EXA-based curriculum can be developed, especially given the issues that Syrian students face in Turkey’s schools.

Purpose

In response to this need, the researcher aims to design an eight-week EXA-based curriculum to help Syrian students going to Turkish schools improve their SEL skills. In line with this aim, the researcher outline what EXA is by locating it in

relation to SEL theory and considering potential pitfalls in implementing it in the school setting. Moreover, since the use of the EXA in education is nascent in Turkey, there is a need to ensure the validity of the EXA-based curriculum designed.

In this context, the researcher proposes to use qualitative research methods as a part of instructional design to investigate perceptions of groups of experts related to the curriculum. To this end, the participants in this study will be purposefully selected. The intention is to find three experts from each professional field: EXA, curriculum development, and refugee support programs.

Considering data collection, a mixture of open-ended and a five-point Likert scale questionnaire will be conducted. The reason for conducting a questionnaire in this study is to provide an overview of the validation of the curriculum. Finally, the obtained data will be analyzed through qualitative content analysis, supplemented with descriptive statistics of the quantitative data. The results of the analysis will be used to revise the curriculum for quality improvements.

Research Question

This study will address the following research question to review and validate an EXA based curriculum for Syrian youth refugees:

1. What are the perspectives of the following experts who reviewed an EXA curriculum designed to help improve the SEL skills of Syrian refugee students attending Turkish schools?
 - a. Expressive Arts therapists
 - b. Curriculum developers
 - c. Experts on refugee support programs

The analysis will involve nine experts who are from three different professional fields. The experts' reviews will be based on their areas of knowledge.

Significance

The researcher used a strategy called “decentering” in the curriculum designed for this study to keep Syrian students away from the challenges that trigger intense emotions. In the decentering phase, Knill (2011) explains that implementing EXA activities provides an alternative world to participants. The alternative world contains an imaginary space that unpredictable, surprising, unexpected actions take place. In the imaginary space of EXA, participants are encouraged to leave their habitual world experiences and to be open to these unpredictable actions in a safe, democratic, and caring environment.

Knill (2011) asserts that participants’ sense of curiosity is triggered when they become out of their habitual world experiences, which directly stimulates the sense of discovery. An increase in the sense of discovery enables them to do some things that they hesitate to do in the world of reality. One of which is to use novel narrative genres to share their stories with others in the form of non-verbal communication approaches. These approaches include music, dance/movement, theatre, painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture (Siegel et al., 2016). In EXA, using these approaches stimulates them to get actively involved in social interaction and freely express themselves without worrying about outsiders watching or walking in on them (Knill, 2011). Accordingly, experiencing such interactions in a non-judgmental environment can also gradually help students recognize they have within them the capacity to face real-life challenges and guide them to regulate unintended reactions occurring due to their negative emotions. These are essential factors that enable Syrian students to improve their sense of belonging towards the group and build healthier friendship ties with other group members. In other words, Syrian

students can become visible again by restoring their senses to reconnect to the real world. This is a good way to stop being a mouse and start acting like a cat.

Lastly, regardless of the primary aims of the curriculum, this curriculum provides a baseline of information on how to implement EXA activities with a group of students with a traumatic background in an educational context. In this aspect, the curriculum can potentially contribute to updating the limited literature on the use of EXA in education and increase awareness regarding the effectiveness of EXA with refugee students.

Limitations

There were some limitations that should be considered in this study. The primary limitation was that because of time and pandemic restrictions, a pilot study could not be conducted. Besides, since many EXA activities taking place in the curriculum require physical contact and standing closer to each other, such activities can be applied neither socially distanced nor online. Another limitation was that the data were collected from a small number of experts, both in total number and within the constituent groups/fields represented. Working with a larger number of experts would help achieve a deeper insight into areas of critique to revise the curriculum more comprehensively. This is important because although I have a background in EXA and education, I am not an EXA therapist. Instead, I had attended EXA workshops for two-year span from 2017 to 2019 and I was trained to be an EXA facilitator to work with children from different marginalized groups in the society during those workshops. Therefore, it could be better if this curriculum has been reviewed by more than three EXA therapists to identify the potential problems that are missing in this study and make revisions accordingly. Lastly, given the small number of participants, the study was limited in its ability to do an accurate

reliability test. Nonetheless, a simple test was conducted for categories of the instrument that included more than three items. The results for all categories were found to be reliable, with results being over 0.7

Definition of Key Terms

Expressive Arts therapy: A multi-arts/intermodal approach that combines psychotherapy and a creative process to promote emotional growth and healing. During the EXA-based workshops, participants are encouraged to use multiple senses to create an artistic expression of their inner worlds. Such expressions in non-verbal media help them communicate their feelings that were not previously available to them. Communicating their feelings and explaining them through different art forms enable them to undergo a profound process of self-discovery.

Expressive Arts therapy modalities: Provide a coherent theoretical framework for each EXA activity that places the art-making process and the artwork itself at the center within the context of psychotherapy, counseling, and rehabilitation (Knill et al., 2005). In other words, both aims and content of EXA activities are specified by those modalities.

Coping response: Refers to a set of psychological mechanisms that generate behavioral or/and psychological responses to cope with personal and interpersonal problems by neutralizing the source of stress/conflict (Wechsler, 1995).

Social-emotional learning: Is a process through which individuals develop an understanding of who they are, how they are feeling, and what to expect while interacting with others (Aviles et al., 2006)

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Research about the integration of Expressive Arts therapy (EXA)-based curriculum into an instructional program is rarely acknowledged in Turkey. The integration remains limited because EXA has its roots in interventions with trauma survivors in psychotherapy. However, the use of EXA by other professionals in different fields is supported by most art and music therapists as long as the other professionals have proper training, supervision, and experience (Malchiodi, 2008). Given this support, there is no obstacle to implement EXA activities in the school setting if the facilitators are supervised by EXA workshop leaders. Still, it is important to have a rationale for using these activities in the school setting. For these reasons, the potential benefits of EXA activities in refugee rehabilitation in the school setting call for an investigation.

In support of this need, this chapter provides a review of the related literature. By doing this, the researcher of this study aims to explore other studies that have similar methods and anticipated outcomes to the research question of the current study. To this end, the chapter begins with general information about the theoretical background of EXA. The following section includes findings from studies investigating their potential for psychological development and recovery from trauma for refugees. These findings will be strengthened with a review of research about the effects of EXA interventions on the social-emotional development of these students. Finally, the chapter ends with the examination of social-emotional learning (SEL) by locating it in relation to EXA based on a literature review.

EXA Interventions in Theory

The influx of refugees into Turkey has substantially influenced the country's education system since hundreds of thousands of Syrian children have started attending schools in Turkey. However, language and cultural differences prevent Syrian students from effectively interacting with other students, leading to them being ostracized by their Turkish peers. As discussed in the previous chapter, sometimes these students are bullied and feel threatened, which may lead to higher anxiety and stress levels. Many Syrian students have experienced horrendous war-related traumas, and this exclusion from a peer group may inherently trigger symptoms of PTSD. According to Koch and Weidinger-von der Recke (2009), it happens because those symptoms "can be re-activated anytime by situational stimuli through conditioning patterns" (p. 289).

Fortunately, there have been various programs and resources implemented to provide social and emotional support to these students. Typically, students attend counseling sessions where they are encouraged to describe their experiences and share their feelings. However, it may be rather difficult for many to explain those experiences with words alone (Rubesin, 2016). The inability to verbalize those experiences can be related to neural functioning and malfunctioning (Malchiodi, 2008). If the experience that the individual suffers from is harrowing, then Mehrabian (1971) asserts that the brain encodes this experience non-verbally in a manner as to makes it literally impossible for the individual to talk about it. In the case of refugees, Koch and Weidinger-von der Recke (2009) highlight that the traumatized students carry those terrible experiences with them as a burden since such memories and experiences are not easily accessed or explicitly expressed. Therefore, it is likely that therapy that involves talking alone may not work on those

students. In other words, Syrian refugee students should be encouraged to find a way to externalize trauma-oriented experiences rather than verbalizing them.

Subsequently, the forms of therapy that allow students alternative means to express themselves are becoming critical to the field of education. Among the approaches is EXA. This strategy provides individuals with different ways to convey their ideas without words (Malchiodi, 2008; Rubesin, 2016). EXA consists of a variety of modalities, and all modalities are associated with the “decentering” approach mentioned earlier in Chapter one. It is briefly a way to keep students from conflict through art activities requiring a total presence and all senses to be activated (Meyer DeMott et al., 2017). Reasons why the “decentering” approach is the core of EXA are indicated in the paragraphs below.

EXA activities capitalize on non-verbal forms of communication that lead to therapeutic change. In the case of using non-verbal forms of communication, Koch and Weidinger-von der Recke (2009) state that “the disclosure of traumatic experiences usually happens more quickly” (p. 289). Since contexts of these media do not substantially change from culture to culture, they can be regarded as less threatening than explaining the experiences verbally. For example, suppressed traumatic experiences of refugee children can be elicited through symbols that they put into artwork, music, or dance (Koch & Weidinger-von der Recke, 2009).

Non-verbal approaches are less threatening because the common aim of these approaches is not to push individuals to express every detail of their traumatic experiences. Instead, they are used to help these people gain new perspectives by activating all senses. This happens only if these traumatic experiences are represented by symbols that come from a combination of the five senses and imagination of individuals (Meyer DeMott et al., 2017). By doing this, trauma

survivors can create verbal metaphor bridges forming a link between verbal and non-verbal communication. In this case, Mattes (1981) indicates that “words are no longer flat or hollow but offer an indiscernible feeling of self-recognition” (p. 231). In other words, using verbal metaphor bridges enables participants to access, process, and reflect in a manner that elicits the suppressed traumatic experiences (Siegel et al., 2016).

Thus far, the benefits of EXA have been explained in theory, yet this theoretical knowledge needs to be reinforced with empirical research. Fortunately, there have been a few researchers who have investigated the effects of EXA on troubled individuals. To ensure a global perspective on how these types of therapy modalities can be used in different cultures, this review includes studies from around the world that were purposefully selected.

EXA Interventions in Practice

Researchers that investigated how Syrian refugee students respond to EXA report that these activities were found to be effective in decreasing anxiety, depression, and other symptoms of PTSD. Dieterich-Hartwell and Koch (2017) provided a literature review related to the psychological problems of refugees. According to their review, the creative arts therapies with verbal metaphor bridges increase social interaction and create a safe environment where individuals reveal their symbolized traumas, leading to therapeutic changes in individuals. This conclusion of Dieterich-Hartwell and Koch (2017) has been supported by other studies.

As an example, Akhtar and Lovell (2018) used a phenomenological-interpretive framework to explore the efficiency of using creative arts therapies with refugee children. For this purpose, the semi-structured interviews were carried out

with three art therapists to capture their in-depth experiences and stories about the refugee children. The thematic analysis was applied to the collective. From the findings, it was concluded that creative art therapies provide refugee children with a safe environment where they are encouraged to discover their feelings and new self. Additionally, such treatments result in therapeutic changes by guiding them to reveal the unspeakable through their artwork. Malchiodi (2008) emphasized that therapeutic changes occur because externalizing the suppressed emotions with symbols helps these children intuitively alleviate traumatic experiences through these modalities, enabling them to apply those modalities to find comfort in a time of crisis.

The proportion of therapeutic changes in refugees can be increased through early intervention. As evidence of this assumption, an empirically supported intervention named “EXIT” was developed by Meyer DeMott et al. (2014). The workshop, without any control group, was held at the Hvalstad Arrival Centre in Norway between 2008 and 2010, and it consisted of 10 twice-weekly sessions. Since the population of refugee boys far outnumbered than girls in these times, the sample was correspondingly composed of 145 boys between 15 and 18 years old who had newly arrived at Hvalstad. Before the treatment, it was notably detected that 40% of the sample was suffering from symptoms of PTSD. During the intervention, instruments were used to measure four different criteria, including post-traumatic stress symptoms, general psychological distress, current life satisfaction, and expected life satisfaction. After that, researchers used Multilingual Computer Assisted Interview (MultiCASI) program to analyze the data. Finally, Meyer DeMott et al. (2014) concluded that there was a decline in mental problems of the participants, such as reduced post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and depression. What is

more, the workshop also decreased the typical symptoms of stress such as sleeplessness, lack of concentration, and withdrawal.

It is apparent from the previous studies that alleviating traumatic experiences results in the improvement of mental health. Another study that confirms this conclusion was conducted by Ugurlu et al. (2016). In research, they aimed to reduce trauma, anxiety, and depression among Syrian refugee children. The researchers carried out an art therapy workshop in Arabic with the help of Syrian facilitators. The five-day workshop included 63 Syrian children (aged 7-12) and took place in İstanbul, Turkey. Ugurlu et al. collected the data through pre-and post-assessment using the Stressful Life Events (SLE) Questionnaire to assess the prevalence of the participants' psychological problems. In the analysis, they used a paired samples *t*-test to check whether there was a statistically significant difference between the two assessments. The findings indicated that means of reported trauma, anxiety, and depression scores decreased in post-assessment as compared to pre-assessment. This concludes that EXA can be considered an effective way to reduce the psychological problems of Syrian refugee children.

Although their significant findings show the effectiveness of EXA in ameliorating stress and trauma symptoms, the main limitation of these two studies was the lack of a control group. This limitation was addressed by Feen-Calligan et al. (2020) in their 12-week, controlled trial of art therapy intervention taking place in Michigan, USA. Similar to the previous two studies, the reason for the researchers to develop an art therapy program was to help the participants provide coping responses in a manner to reduce their stress and symptoms of PTSD. The program served 15 participants (aged 7-14), and groups were formed through a cross-sectional sample of convenience. During the intervention, the activities that the participants in the

treatment group engaged in encompassed visual art-making, singing, creative expression, drawing, drama therapy, and music therapy. To assess the effectiveness of the program, the data were collected both at the baseline, and the conclusion through the intervention notes taken by the researchers and self-report psychological questionnaires, including the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorder (SCARED) and Child/Adolescent PTSD Reaction Index (UCLA). The collected data were analyzed in the IBM SPSS v25 program. The findings indicated statistically significant effects of art therapy intervention on the participants' anxiety and post-traumatic stress levels in the treatment groups while comparing to the levels of those in the control group. Additionally, the researchers' notes showed that carrying out such a community-based program has not only positive effects on the mental health consequences of trauma but also improves the SEL of all participants.

School-based EXA Interventions in Practice

Relevant research has revealed that if EXA modalities become the primary form of communication in the school setting, these modalities can effectively help Syrian students confront some mental issues, including reconciling emotional conflicts, reducing anxiety, and increasing self-esteem (Binson & Lev-Wiesel, 2018; Malchiodi, 2008). As discussed in the first chapter, the school is a social institution that is a microcosm of the entire society, and children also spend most of their waking hours in school settings. Ideally, then, schools can provide students with a nurturing environment where they can increase their awareness and perceptions of themselves and each other. Following is a review of several studies that evaluate the effects of school-based EXA programs on refugees' well-being.

Beauregard (2014) reviewed 19 articles about different EXA programs in nine countries, including Turkey. She concluded that although some studies did not

report any significant change, many programs declared that they improved the children's mental health by reducing their emotional and behavioral problems. By considering the outcomes of the program in Turkey, moreover, she indicates "there was a significant improvement in distress indices, more precisely with regards to aspects related to anxiety, depression, self-esteem and affects management" (p. 271). This finding conveys that this type of intervention can be used in the school setting for the social-emotional well-being of Syrian refugee students.

More descriptive details about the benefits of school-based EXA modalities were provided by Rousseau et al. (2005). Rousseau et al. emphasized significant gaps between refugee children's home and their school and between their past and the present; these differences trigger mental diseases, including anxiety and depression. This phenomenological study therefore aimed to bridge the gap by using arts therapy workshops. The research was comprised of a 12-week program conducted in two elementary schools in Quebec, Canada. Participants of the research involved 138 refugee children whose ages varied from 7 to 13. The researchers employed an experimental design consisting of one treatment group and one control group for each school. The data were collected from both students and their teachers through self-report evaluation forms before and after the treatment. For the data analysis, paired sample *t*-tests were used to assess the statistical significance of the effect of the study. The findings indicated that refugee students in the experimental group reported significantly lower mean levels of mental health symptoms and higher self-esteem than those in the control group.

Another phenomenological study that aimed to increase the resilience level of Syrian students was completed in 2019 by Kalaf and Plante. The researchers designed an expressive workshop called "Arts4lives" to seek out the effects of EXA

on the mental health needs of these children. The study was conducted in an elementary school in Alley, Lebanon, in 2016. There were ten students, from 12 to 16 years of age, involved in the study. In the workshop, the researchers, in conjunction with participants, made a short stop-motion movie to illustrate resilience strategies. As a part of the production, the children were engaged in EXA modalities, including painting, collage, acting, and photography. The findings of the study showed that the workshop elicited positive emotions for these children and strengthened the friendship ties among them. The workshop also created a non-judgmental area where everyone could nurture positive emotions in each other; as one participant said that “I was not expecting you all [the facilitators] to be merry and jolly. I felt like we were brothers and sisters. I did not feel a distance between us” (p. 23). Since refugee children are at high risk for many psychological problems, this is a good example of what Expressive Arts therapies can do in the school setting to contribute to their social-emotional development.

Quinlan et al. (2016) provided further empirical support for the effects of Expressive Arts activities on refugee children. For this purpose, the researchers used a school-based program called Home of Expressive Arts in Learning (HEAL) at the Milperra high school in Brisbane, Australia. HEAL was a 10-week program that met twice a week, and each session took 45 minutes. The program’s sample size was 42, and the participants for the treatment group were identified based on teacher recommendations. The data were obtained through two different tests: the Hopkins Symptoms Checklist-25 (HSCL-25) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). These tests were conducted both before and after the treatment to assess especially depression and anxiety levels of the students. Furthermore, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to analyze the data. As a

result, Quinlan et al. found a statistically significant reduction in the means of students' emotional symptoms in the treatment group compared to those in the control group. What is more, the findings demonstrated that HEAL also had a moderate effect on the reduction of behavioral difficulties, hyperactivity problems, and peer exclusion.

In addition to short-term EXA interventions taking place in the school environment, some studies in the literature also aim to show how these interventions can be institutionalized to reach a vast number of vulnerable children who would benefit from EXA. One of which is an exploratory study carried out by Henley (1997) as a one-year project in Hampton, New Jersey. In the context of this project, Henley, who is both an art therapist and special education teacher, originated and implemented an EXA-based therapeutic curriculum for his ten students in an alternative school. That school was established by "a county educational commission whose mission was to provide alternative education for students on a "last chance" basis" (Henley, 1997, p. 15). The reason behind giving these students the last chance is because they have been either expelled from their previous schools or have just been released from various institutions like jail and rehabilitation. According to the researcher, what makes these students troublemakers is that they suffer from a range of severe problems such as anxiety, depression, aggression, and mania resulting from several factors including substance abuse, parental neglect and low socioeconomic status. Given these students' background stories, the lesson activities were designed to tap into these themes in a manner that renders their dangerous ideas in creative but socially acceptable forms. To this end, the researcher benefited from different kinds of EXA activities, creative expression, visual art-making, and drawing in particular. In the evaluation process, since the program prioritizes neither measurable objectives

nor students' academic achievement, the researcher used 'portfolio narrative' as a model of summative assessment that gives insight into a sequential and comprehensive view of students' learning processes. Accordingly, the researcher wrote a progression report for each student at the end of the year by considering the content of documents in their portfolios. In these reports overall, Henley concluded that a non-judgmental environment was created through these EXA activities during the lessons, which stimulated the students to bind many of their mental problems and encourage them to explore the disturbing contents they suffer from safely. These unique exploration processes helped them sensitize their perceptions in a manner as to gain the ability to "transform abusive content into expressions that channeled these energies for constructive purposes" (Henley, 1997, p. 17) as a way of self-regulation.

Unlike Henley's study, Palmiotto (2013) developed an instructional program detailing how to implement EXA modalities for school counselors in need of treatment plans to meet 13 different disorder/symptom-related mental needs of K-12 students. Autism, Anxiety, Selective Mutism, ADHD, and Emotional Disturbance are only 5 of 13 mental issues that the researcher addressed in the program. In an effort to fully ensure validity, the instructional program was evaluated by 24 experts in the following fields: EXA, education, and administration. After the experts reviewed the program, they completed a mixture of open-ended and a five-point Likert scale online survey. The analysis of the collected data was done by an online company in the form of percentages. Considering the expert reviewers' feedback, the results concluded that implementing this instructional program in the school setting would be beneficial to address those disorder/symptom-related mental needs of the students. In this sense, they also suggested that school counselors use these activities in their treatment plans.

Theoretical Framework

Although there is a vast array of theoretical perspectives utilized by the researchers in the development of EXA-based intervention programs, social-emotional learning (SEL) is the most relevant theory to the aims of this curriculum. The common denominator between EXA and SEL theory is the emphasis that they place on managing emotional stimulation within social interaction. According to Humphrey (2013), SEL aims to prevent mental health issues, improve social-emotional competence, and improve academic attainment. However, Hagarty and Morgan (2020) assert that although SEL professionals reach a consensus on those common aims, the field of SEL has some “jingle-jangle fallacies” (p. 209). This means that either different skills bear the same term (jingle fallacy), or different terms are labeled the same skill (jangle fallacy). One solution to this problem would be to organize SEL skills by using an appropriate framework.

Therefore, the curriculum in the current study uses the SEL Standards Framework designed by a team of experts working for The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). In this theoretical view, those experts conceptualized SEL as comprising:

Self-awareness (identifying and recognizing emotions, self-efficacy), self-management (impulse control and stress management, help-seeking), social awareness (empathy, respect for others), relationship management (communication, relationship building), and responsible decision making (problem-solving, personal, social, and ethical responsibility). (Ahmed et al., 2020, p. 664)

Using this framework enables a comprehensive way of conceptualizing different SEL skills and gives insights into how to incorporate SEL skills into practice

effectively. In this sense, the eight sessions taking place in the curriculum were designed in a manner to address the five CASEL competencies as well as 10 sub-competencies divided between them (see Appendix C).

Conclusion

Many researchers have conducted practical workshops with school-aged refugee students and other students with mental issues. Through these empirical studies, these educators and researchers also identified psychological and emotional mechanisms that clarify EXA activities' unique characteristics to promote the well-being of these children. However, these activities are rarely included in the discussions of possible interventions for the promotion of the SEL skills of Syrian students in Turkey.

Therefore, since the theoretical rationale for using EXA as an intervention for refugees is supported with empirical theories, it is now important to consider the most appropriate methodology and research to situate EXA activities in the context of the refugee issue in Turkey. In response to this need, the next chapter will mainly focus on the establishment of a research design with proper EXA activities to improve Syrian students' SEL skills.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the methodology that was used to answer the research question of the study. The methods were to help ensure that the quality of EXA activities can be effectively integrated into a curriculum designed for Syrian refugee students in Turkey. The chapter begins with an introduction to the research design. The introduction is followed by a description of the curriculum and participants. Following, instrumentation and the efforts that ensure validity and reliability are pointed out. Finally, I share the data collection methods and the analysis of the obtained data.

Research Design

The researcher examined perceptions of the validity of an EXA-based curriculum in guiding Syrian students with the aim to improve their social-emotional learning (SEL) skills in a group setting. In line with this aim, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to gather information from similar studies that reported both qualitative and quantitative materials regarding what kind of modalities were implemented in the EXA-based interventions that specifically target young people from vulnerable backgrounds. Relevant and reliable information about this subject was then utilized to design an eight-week EXA-based curriculum that serves to provide the target population with a playful, imaginative setting where they can recognize and address challenges and promote their SEL skills.

It is important to note that empirical research in Turkey that provides an EXA intervention belongs to the domain of psychotherapy in general. Considering that the

idea of the use of EXA in education is new in Turkey, there is still a need to ensure the validity of the EXA-based curriculum before implementing them to Syrian refugee students. In response to this need, the following research question was developed and aligned with data collection and analysis of the data:

1. What are the perspectives of the following experts who reviewed an EXA curriculum designed to help improve the SEL skills of Syrian refugee students attending Turkish schools?
 - a. Expressive Arts therapists
 - b. Curriculum developers
 - c. Experts on refugee support programs

The experts' reviews will be based on their areas of knowledge. To answer this research question, the current study referred to evaluation research for describing, evaluating, and validating the EXA-based curriculum in particular. Koplan et al. (1999) describe evaluation research as a "systematic investigation of the merit, worth, or significance of any organized action" (p. 6). Accordingly, the reason for employing the evaluation research in this study is to increase the validity of the curriculum by investigating the opinions of diverse groups of experts, which provides multiple aspects in the evaluation of the curriculum. In this regard, using this research method presents more reliable data for facilitators to achieve a deeper insight into whether or not they should operate this curriculum to promote the target population's SEL skills.

Prior to evaluating the curriculum, it was, of course, first necessary to design and develop the curriculum. To this end, independently of the evaluation research, the current study relied on aspects of instructional design to provide information for the planning, development, and implementation of EXA activities of the curriculum.

Carr-Chellman (2011) states that instructional design is a “process by which instruction is created for classroom use through a systematic process of setting goals, creating learning objectives, analyzing student characteristics, writing tests, selecting materials, developing activities, selecting media, implementing and revising the lesson” (p.3). It is, moreover, a systematic methodology that mediates learning more efficient and less complicated by prioritizing what learners “need to know” and disregarding relatively less essential content that is “nice to know” (Morrison et al., 2013).

Regardless of the vast array of instructional models, there is a standard guideline that must be taken into consideration in designing instruction. This guideline consists of the following phases: Analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (Khalil & Elkhider, 2016). In this respect, all instructional design models start with analyzing learners’ needs, and this phase is followed by respectively creating an instructional blueprint and developing instructional content and assessment instruments according to this blueprint. The fourth phase is the implementation, where the learning takes place. Finally, the design ends with evaluating students’ mastery of the learning objectives and the effectiveness of the overall instruction.

The Phases of Instructional Design Used in the Current Study

The researcher of the study followed the first three phases of the standardized guideline model indicated above to enhance conceptual accuracy and curriculum efficiency. These three phases are provided in further detail below. Although the implementation and evaluation phases are essential for finding out whether an instructional design works or not (Seel et al., 2017), it was unfortunately not possible to implement and evaluate the drafted curriculum because of time limitations and the

Covid-19 outbreak. Nonetheless, the three phases that were conducted give valuable insights into the potential effectiveness of the proposed curriculum.

Analysis Phase and Aims

Within a typical instructional design, the analysis phase is the foundation upon which the entire curriculum is built. This phase addresses what students are expected to learn and perform at the end of a course (Gagné et al., 2005). All content, methods, activities, and assessment of the course are made up in accordance with those expectations (Seel et al., 2017).

Regarding the expectations of the analysis phase during the current study, the aim was to develop interactive activities to help the target population improve their SEL skills in a group setting. The analysis revealed that it is essential to provide participants with a safe, caring, non-judgmental environment, especially to avoid situations that could cause stress or anxiety. This phase also determined that cautionary notes should be provided to facilitators regarding being careful about what they do and say during the sessions to avoid triggering students' traumatic memories. Ideally, facilitators should be guidance counselors, or work collaboratively with guidance counselors. Moreover, it would also be helpful for facilitators to confer with EXA workshop leaders or better yet, attend an EXA workshop or training. Although EXA is mainly used for the treatment of trauma-related disorders in the domain of psychotherapy, the activities in this curriculum are introductory, emphasizing prevention and promotion. In this sense, they are not designed to serve as a therapeutic intervention claiming to treat participants' mental problems. Subsequently, the analysis phase focused on identifying nonintensive and unintrusive ways to help curriculum facilitators provide their students with an "Expressive Arts experience" rather than more traditional therapy. These activities or

experiences were designed to help students perceive, understand, assess, express, and regulate their emotions in a group setting.

The analysis phase was undertaken with the idea of facilitators working with a group of 12 Syrian students (aged 12-15) in the school setting. This size is recommended based on the review of EXA literature and general classroom management. In such a scenario, the findings of the literature review have shown that the curriculum will cater to the needs of these participants in case the facilitator makes necessary arrangements by considering the number of students and in the class (Degges-White & Colon, 2015; Malchiodi, 2003). To reduce the workload of the facilitator, proposed solutions to a variety of potential problems are indicated at the end of each activity as a sub-title named 'suggested modifications.' For example, the objectives provide ideas on how to adapt the activity when greater than or fewer than 12 students are involved. However, it is good to bear in mind that these modifications are only suggestions, meaning that the facilitators can conduct different strategies to overcome the potential problems.

Design Phase and Objectives

Following the analysis phase is the design phase. This phase involves developing objectives for the identified aims. Furthermore, the design phase provides information about the development of an instructional blueprint for how the students will achieve these intended learning objectives (Seel et al., 2017). The instructional blueprint covers the entire planning of delivery methods, learner participation, teaching strategies, and organization of the environment (Khalil et al., 2016). Accordingly, it is apparent that the design phase is such a generative process that gives insight into what the instruction will look like.

Ralph Tyler (1949) explains the importance of well-defined objectives by saying that they are the most critical criteria “for selecting content, for suggesting learning activities, for deciding on the kind of teaching procedures to follow, in fact, to carry on all the further steps on curriculum planning” (p. 62). Seven years after Tyler clarified what the learning objectives stand for, a committee of educators prepared and published a comprehensive book named the *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* in 1956. This book presents a method classifying the educational objectives into complexity and specificity levels in a hierarchical order (Davis, 1992). This method is also known as Bloom’s Taxonomy, and the learning objectives written according to Bloom’s Taxonomy are defined as instructional objectives.

In Bloom’s taxonomy, the purpose of the evaluation is to check to what extent the instructional objectives have been achieved (Carr-Challmen, 2011). It means that the instructional objectives need to have measurable action verbs to describe observable knowledge, skills, behaviors, and abilities. In this respect, the role of instructional objectives is to explicitly indicate what the learners should do to demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. Alongside the instructional objectives, there is another type of learning objective that is named expressive objectives. According to Eisner (2005),

With an expressive objective, what is desired is not homogeneity of response among students but diversity. In the expressive context, the teacher hopes to provide a situation in which meanings become personalized and in which children produce products, and the product is likely to be as much of a surprise to the maker as it is for the teacher who encounters it. (p. 33)

From this concept, it is apparent that, unlike the instructional objectives, expressive objectives do not specify what learners will be able to do after they engage in the

learning activity. Instead, expressive objectives prioritize the learning process that the learners experience. In the evaluation process, Eisner (2005) also states, “the evaluative task in this situation is not one of applying a common standard to the products produced but one of reflecting upon what has been produced to reveal its uniqueness and significance” (p. 34). As part of the design phase, both instructional and expressive objectives were superficially examined. This examination provided information about the arguments of those holding contrasting views on the use of each type of objective in the educational literature. Considering the fact that objectives must be aligned with the aims, it is obvious that the objectives of this curriculum cannot be specified with action words. Therefore, the researcher will use expressive objectives in this curriculum where the dominant emphasis is to describe the learning experiences.

The Development Phase

The third phase in the instructional design, the Development Phase, was the most extensive in the current study. Based on the aims and objectives of the curriculum, the development phase first involved creating a scope and sequence of the curriculum, including the rationale, aims, and theoretical underpinnings of the sessions (see Appendix C). Regarding the latter, the activities were grounded in Howard Gardner’s (1983) theory of Multiple Intelligences. In this theory, Gardner asserts that each learner is unique in the way they learn and process the information. This uniqueness originates from the human brain’s anatomy since connectivity patterns in people’s brains are unique to them as much as their fingerprints and faces. That means that those patterns in our brains are substantially affected by both genetic factors and individual life experiences (Gregory, 2013). Accordingly, it is evident

that each student also has different strengths and learning needs. That is to say, as with clothing, the analogy of ‘one size does not fit all’ is also valid in education.

In this sense, it is strongly suggested that teachers must consider each student’s strengths and learning needs while planning their lessons. One way to meet all students’ learning needs in a classroom is to vary instruction, which gives students the freedom to demonstrate their knowledge in different ways. In this aspect, Gregory emphasizes that Gardner’s MI theory provides teachers with a comprehensive framework through which teachers can observe students and find out how they learn and process the information. In this framework, MI theory offers nine different ways of being intelligent: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematic, visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and added more recently, existential. While designing the curriculum sessions, all nine types of MI were carefully reviewed by the researcher of this study to honor the diversity of participants’ learning styles, and the objectives of each session are written accordingly.

The curriculum is comprised of eight sessions, with four activities per session. Ideally, one session can be done per week. The architecture of each session is sketched according to a recommended framework developed by Knill et al. (2005). The activities were selected from the following EXA activities to be included in this curriculum: Music, dance/movement, expressive writing, poetry therapy, and drama. The four activities for each session are labeled warm-up, bridge, main, reflection. These activities are more specifically described below.

Warm-up Activity

The warm-up is the opening activity of a session. The activity consists of two parts, in general. In the first part, the facilitator asks the students routine questions,

including how they are, how their week was, and whether they would like to share anything with the group before starting. In this aspect, this phase can be regarded as a pre-assessment form where the facilitators can assess students' current mood by encouraging them to talk about themselves. Considering the students' answers, the facilitator can decide whether they are mentally ready for the subsequent three phases. That is to say, if there is not a problem or some depressive feelings with the students, the facilitator can smoothly move on to the next phase. Otherwise, the facilitator can change the schedule and utilize different activities or simply finish the session of the week in a short time if needed. Briefly, this phase sets the course of the session. The second part serves as a transition between the warm-up activity and the bridge activity. The facilitator's main aim in this activity is to make all students mentally ready for entrance into the alternative world.

The Bridge Activity

The bridge activity is the first place where the students open their eyes to the alternative world. Since this world is their safe zone where they can freely elicit their emotions and act without thinking, the bridge activity serves to stimulate them to remove unnecessary thoughts belonging to the habitual world and purify their minds. However, such expectations may sound like too much, and it is likely to be challenging for the students to meet these expectations all at once. Considering this issue, this is the phase where the facilitator is expected to provide much more instructional support than in other units. For instance, the facilitator can explain the instructions with examples, and they can get actively involved in the activity or pair the students with each other. The reason behind this endeavor is to make them emotionally ready to achieve poesis in the main activity.

The Main Activity

The main activity is composed of two different elements, including poiesis and mimesis. Poiesis refers to shaping one's world by giving shape to an artwork (Trueit, 2005). In other words, poiesis is a process that makes all participants artists who create artworks that allow them to find the existential meanings in their lives. One way to achieve poiesis is to provide an environment for mimesis. The term mimesis simply refers to the imitation of the attitudes and desires; the thing being imitated is nature (Plato, ca. 370 B.C.E/2004). According to Plato, artists cannot create anything new, their artworks are the imitation of nature, and nature is the reflection of the ultimate truth. In this context, it is apparent that what the artists do is to re-reveal something that has already been in nature. Considering that all activities in this curriculum are art-based activities, there is a need to change the students' perceptions and put nature at the center to imitate it. To this end, this phase consists of the individual or communal activities that students attend to experience the diverse elements of nature so that they can discover the characteristics of their personalities as a reflection of nature. Doing this can guide them to achieve poiesis in the main activity, which helps them regulate their intense emotions overall.

The Reflection Activity

Reflection is the last but the most important activity of each session. In the previous activities, the students have had a variety of experiences in the alternative world that address specific aims and objectives. The reflection activity is when the students safely return to the habitual world and appraise what these experiences mean to them and what kind of positive effects these experiences have on them. In this aspect, reflection can also be regarded as an assessment part of the whole session that monitors students' learning progress. To this end, the students are encouraged to

create specific artworks, such as mandalas, and collages, as a way of self-reflection. In this aspect, this phase can be regarded as a unit that raises students' awareness of their self-concept. Another criterion that is essential as much as self-reflection is others' emotional reaction to this reflection, which is called an aesthetic response (Knill et al., 2004). Providing an aesthetic response means that 'I see you, I care about you, and I value what you do without judging.' Given its meaning, such an aesthetic response helps the presenters realize that they are in a safe zone, and nobody judges their feelings and thoughts. Instead, everybody is here to carefully listen to them and appreciate the way they express themselves. This is such a good way to make them feel individuals of worthwhile strengthening the solidarity and team spirit among the participants.

Assessment Considerations

Alongside the reflection activity, there are two more assessment criteria that provide information about the students' learning process. One of which is the "harvesting" section that is embedded in each activity. This section can be regarded as a meeting area where all students come together to talk about their experiences in the activity. Thus, through "harvesting," the facilitator can get feedback from the students about the efficiency of the activity. The participants will keep a diary to write or draw something about what they learned in each activity and how it made them feel. Keeping a diary helps them remember their thoughts and feelings about their experiences in the curriculum, which keeps their memories fresh and makes the learning outcomes permanent by consolidating the positive emotions resulting from periodically reading the diary. Independently of the participants, the facilitator can also regularly keep a diary to assess the participants' progress. Besides, the facilitator can also take both photos and notes during the activities for each session. Later on,

the facilitator can compile those materials chronologically and organize an exhibition at the end of the curriculum to inform the stakeholders about the effect of the curriculum on the participants. Organizing an exhibition is also a good way to visualize the whole process that those participants experience.

Participants and Sampling

The previous section provided detailed information on the analysis, design, and development phases of the instruction. Since the implementation and evaluation phases of instructional design could not be conducted in this study, evaluation research was employed as another research design to review and revise the curriculum accordingly. This type of research involves groups of experts as the participants of this study who evaluated the potential effectiveness of the drafted curriculum. Accordingly, this section provides information regarding these participants as well as the procedure that was used to select them.

The researcher received secured permission from the ethics committee of the researcher's institution, a nonprofit private university in early October 2020 to include these participants in the study. With this permission in hand, the researcher took steps to select participants purposefully. This process involved contacting groups of experts from different professional fields in the improvement of the EXA-based curriculum, namely: Three EXA therapists, three curriculum developers, and three experts on refugee support programs. Collaborating with experts from different areas enabled the researcher to reveal a multitude of experiences and perspectives related to the curriculum under evaluation. Analyzing these perspectives contributes to an improvement in the quality of the curriculum components, especially the objectives, operations, and outcomes (Koplan et al., 1999).

The experts in this study were purposefully selected based on the qualities that they possess. Using purposive sampling means that “the research decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience” (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 2). In this aspect, concentrating on a group of people with strong expertise in a phenomenon of interest enables the researcher to relatively get maximum efficiency from available resources. Despite this definition, purposive sampling is not adequate to indicate the rationale behind collaborating with these experts since it is a huge domain involving various methods. In line with this reason, this study more specifically employs a process called expert sampling. As indicated by its name, expert sampling means all the participants of this study are experts in their own professional fields. Etikan et al. (2016) noted that “expert sampling is a positive tool to use when investigating new areas of research, to garner whether or not further study would be worth the effort” (p. 2). Therefore, conducting expert sampling can be beneficial in regard to the researcher, who has a lack of observational evidence about the scope of the study.

To select the participants, the researcher initially sent particular groups of experts an invitation message by e-mail that informed them of their nomination, described the scope of the study, and provided instructions about how to respond to the questionnaire. Through this mail, they were also informed about the participation rights in this study. According to these rights, they could withdraw from the study any time they wished since participation was completely voluntary. Secondly, it was guaranteed that no personal information would be collected on this questionnaire to ensure participants’ confidentiality, and all data taken from them would be merely used for academic research purposes.

Instrumentation

To gain insights and perspectives about the potential of the proposed EXA-based curriculum to help improve the SEL skills of Syrian refugee students in Turkish schools, the researcher administered a questionnaire with relevant experts from different disciplines. It was a 29-item questionnaire that asked participants about various aspects of the EXA-based curriculum. The questionnaire items were adapted from three different pre-existing instruments available online. In the adaptation process, although the general designs of those instruments were followed, some items were removed while adding new items specific to the current study. Furthermore, some items were also rephrased to better fit the aims of the current study and to address the study's research question. Further details about the adaptation that apply to the existing questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

The first part displays the descriptive data from the questionnaire items 1-24 in list form. The beginning of the questionnaire included a space for the participants to share their first impressions about the curriculum. The subsequent 24 questions addressed four different sections; the curriculum's organization, aims and objectives, the curriculum content, and application of EXA in the curriculum. The participants were asked to rate those questions using a five-point Likert scale (5= Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Neutral; 2=Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree). For each of the four sections, some room was provided for participants to make further comments.

What is more, the first three of the five remaining questions included yes/no and multiple-choice questions about the implementation of the curriculum, providing a space for further comments. In the last two questions, the researchers were asked to detail what changes in this curriculum would be helpful for the improvement of the curriculum. In this sense, the experts' typed notes on the curriculum providing

qualitative data were analyzed to identify areas of critique and make revisions under each area for quality improvements.

The reason for administering a questionnaire is that it is cost-efficient and saves a considerable amount of time (Kaiser & Deaver, 2013). However, there are also some disadvantages of using such an instrument in research. One of which is that this method does not provide in-depth data. In other words, participants may have further suggestions or concerns about the curriculum's content, yet these opinions may not have been articulated in this questionnaire. Given this, the participants were also allowed to make comments and suggestions in the word document version of the curriculum for a thorough understanding of their opinions and perceptions.

Validity and Reliability

In the scope of the efforts to ensure validity and reliability in a research paradigm, Golafshani (2003) compares qualitative research to quantitative research and states, "although reliability and validity are treated separately in quantitative studies, these terms are not viewed separately in qualitative research" (p. 600). This means that the credibility in a qualitative research paradigm directly depends on the researcher's efforts since Patton (2002) emphasizes that the instrument in a qualitative research paradigm is the researcher. On the other hand, a qualitative researcher may have some expectations about the confirmation of his or her hypothesis. Those expectations usually lead to some subjective biases that jeopardize the impartiality of the study.

To help validate the instrument, the researcher sought a partnership with two colleagues who represent the subgroups within the intended sample. In this respect, the instrument was initially sent to them two times for pilot testing the instrument.

Accordingly, they are asked their opinions on whether they are confused about or hesitate to answer any part of the questionnaire. The purpose was to use feedback from those colleagues to make the instrument as clear as possible to avoid misunderstandings and subjective biases. Furthermore, alongside the sentence constructions, they also gave insight into both the additional questions that possibly make the data collected more comprehensive to assess the curriculum's intended aims and the sequence of the questions either encouraged or discouraged their willingness to continue with the questionnaire. With these insights, the questionnaire was revised before starting actual data collection. For further validation of the qualitative data, the colleagues were also asked to get actively involved in the data analysis, especially in the process of deriving codes and identifying 'areas of critique'. For the descriptive data, Cronbach's alpha was conducted for several of the categories of the instrument and the results were over 0.7, ensuring the items were reliable.

Method of Data Collection

Data collection involved emailing an electronic version of the questionnaire to the participants in early June 2020. In addition, they were sent the informed consent form. When the participants received these two documents, they were expected to primarily review the curriculum by taking notes for the curriculum's improvement and then complete the questionnaire in the one-month time frame allotted for this particular portion of the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved simple descriptive statistics of the quantitative data along with content analysis of participants' written comments. Furthermore,

participants also made comments directly on the curriculum draft, which was also considered.

For the quantitative data, responses to the items were tallied, followed by calculating the mean and standard deviation. Although there were just a few participants, these descriptive statistics helped provide insights into the general view of the responses. These responses were later related to the results of the qualitative data analysis.

For the descriptive data, each item's mean score was initially calculated. Next, weighted-mean criteria developed by Chao and Adisa-Teo (2014) were used to qualitatively interpret the mean values of experts' levels of agreement on four aspects of the curriculum. These aspects respectively include the curriculum's organization, aims and objectives, the content of the curriculum, and application of EXA in the curriculum (see Table 1).

Table 1

Weighted-mean Criteria

Mean Value ($\bar{x}$)	Level of Agreement
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
0.00 – 1.80	Strongly disagree

Analyzing the written comments required a more extensive review of data. Their comments were analyzed by using qualitative content analysis, supplemented with descriptive quantitative data from the questionnaire. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) describe qualitative content analysis as a “research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p. 1278). In

addition to that, this method is powerful in regard to the studies that “predominantly concentrate on reporting effects of interventions rather than producing a concentrate description of the implementation of intervention content or its outcomes” (Strobul, 2019, p. 175). So, from this concept, using the qualitative content analysis can provide better information concerning the role of EXA as a means of improving Syrian students’ SEL skills and how it is put into practice.

The following presents an overview of the procedural process that includes conducting the qualitative content analysis. The researcher used a qualitative content analysis framework described by Hsieh and Shannon (2005). Accordingly, the analysis started by familiarizing with the responses of collected data by reading them several times. The second step involved identifying a variety of codes that capture and attributes each datum’s key concepts. After the codes were highlighted, the researcher sorted the different codes into several categories based on some characteristics that they share. Although major themes were derived from these emergent categories, they were better categorized as ‘areas of critique’ in this study.

After ‘areas of critique’ were determined, the researcher adapted the decision framework developed by Ziolkowski (2017) to specify the potential barriers to the implementation of the curriculum. The framework includes a list of criteria for organizing and accepting/rejecting recommendations, and all those criteria were reviewed by checking with another researcher. Then, revisions were made accordingly for quality improvements. The key decision-making criteria used in this study are indicated below.

1. If a participant corrects any spelling or/and grammar errors, change will be accepted.

2. If a participant suggests an adaption to improve the content or make an activity easier/more attractive for students, change will be accepted.
3. If a participant makes a suggestion for an addition to the curriculum that was overlooked and should have been included in the curriculum before implementing it (example: organizing an exhibition to show to visualize the whole process that students will experience), that change will be accepted.
4. If a participant corrects factual content by explaining why the former was wrong, change will be accepted.
5. If a participant disagrees and criticizes subject-specific content, although they are not an expert in that field, and if that same content is not criticized by the participants that are the experts of that field (example: any negative comments from an Expressive Arts therapist about the curriculum objectives), that criticism will be rejected.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained the research designs conducted in the current study to design an eight-week EXA-based curriculum and investigate the perceptions of groups of experts related to the curriculum. The obtained data were used for the quality improvements. The findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

As indicated previously, the purpose of this study was to design an eight-week EXA-based curriculum to help Syrian students in Turkey improve their SEL skills. The curriculum is comprised of eight sessions, with four activities per session. To ensure the activities addressed the intended learning outcomes of the curriculum, they were reviewed by selected experts in the field. This review was guided by the following research question:

1. What are the perspectives of the following experts who reviewed an EXA curriculum designed to help improve the SEL skills of Syrian refugee students attending Turkish schools?
 - a. Expressive Arts therapists
 - b. Curriculum developers
 - c. Experts on refugee support programs

To answer the research question, EXA therapists, curriculum developers, and advisors on the refugee support programs were asked to review the curriculum to further support the validity. Furthermore, the results were used to revise the curriculum in a prevailing framework. This chapter presents and discusses the results of the above question. Part One displays the descriptive data and provides an overview of the experts' opinions on the curriculum. Part Two examines the findings from the analysis of the qualitative data. These findings were based on the coding of the participants' written responses and determining areas of critiques, exemplified by direct quotations.

Part One: Descriptive Data

Part One provides the results of descriptive data from the questionnaire items in table form. In detail, the first part of the questionnaire contains six items for the curriculum format, ten items for aims and objectives, four items for the curriculum content, and the three items for the application of EXA in the curriculum out of 24 items. The mean responses of 24 items were reported in relation to the purpose of finding out the experts' level of agreement on each questionnaire item. If any responses were neutral or negative, the researcher looked into which expert made a comment to help guide the analysis of the qualitative data. To this end, each expert was assigned to a respondent number. EXA therapists were assigned numbers EE1-EE3. Curriculum developers were identified with numbers CD1-CD3. Lastly, experts from refugee support programs were represented by numbers RE1-RE3.

The Format of the Curriculum: Items 1-6

The experts were first asked to respond to questions about the format of the curriculum. Based on the descriptive statistics shown in Table 2, experts had positive views about the format; their mean responses ranged from 4.33 to 4.78. EE1 and EE2 had a neutral response about the scope and sequence of the curriculum (Item six). Whereas the mean value of the curriculum developers' responses for item six was 5.00, which is the highest mean value. As a result, these responses given by the experts indicate that the curriculum is well-organized and looks professional.

Table 2*Frequency and Mean Responses Regarding the Organization of the Curriculum*

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. The format has a professional appearance. <i>N= 9; M= 4.67; SD= 0.47</i>	6 67%	3 33%	0 0	0 0	0 0
2. The format is easy to read and navigate. <i>N= 9; M= 4.78; SD= 0.42</i>	7 78%	2 22%	0 0	0 0	0 0
3. The material is presented in an organized manner. <i>N= 9; M= 4.78; SD= 0.42</i>	7 78%	2 22%	0 0	0 0	0 0
4. The time allotments for the sessions are clear. <i>N= 9; M= 4.67; SD= 0.4</i>	6 67%	3 33%	0 0	0 0	0 0
5. The learning activities are well organised. <i>N= 9; M= 4.67; SD= 0.47</i>	6 67%	3 33%	0 0	0 0	0 0
6. The scope and sequence of the curriculum are logical. <i>N= 9; M= 4.33; SD= 0.82</i>	5 56%	2 22%	2 22%	0 0	0 0

Note. SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

The Aims and Objectives of the Curriculum: Items 7-16

The next set of items asked experts to share opinions regarding the aims and objectives of the curriculum items. Descriptive statistics of their responses can be found in Table 3.

Table 3*Frequency and Mean Responses Regarding Aims and Objectives of the Curriculum*

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. The rationale for each session is clearly indicated. <i>N= 9; M= 4.78; SD= 0.44</i>	7 78%	2 22%	0 0	0 0	0 0
8. The curriculum aims are clearly stated. <i>N= 9; M= 4.67; SD= 0.47</i>	6 67%	3 33%	0 0	0 0	0 0

Table 3 (cont'd)*Frequency and Mean Responses Regarding Aims and Objectives of the Curriculum*

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. The curriculum aims are not too broad. <i>N= 9; M= 4.44; SD= 0.54</i>	4 44%	5 56%	0 0	0 0	0 0
10. The curriculum aims are useful for the target population. <i>N= 9; M= 4.67; SD= 0.47</i>	6 67%	3 33%	0 0	0 0	0 0
11. Eight weeks are enough to fulfill the curriculum aims. <i>N= 9; M= 3.67; SD= 1.12</i>	2 22%	4 45%	1 11%	2 22%	0 0
12. The activity objectives match the curriculum aims. <i>N= 9; M= 4.00; SD= 1.00</i>	3 33%	4 45%	1 11%	1 11%	0 0
13. The objectives are clearly stated. <i>N= 9; M= 4.33; SD= 0.71</i>	4 45%	4 44%	1 11%	0 0	0 0
14. The contents of the activities support the objectives <i>N= 9; M= 4.78; SD= 0.42</i>	2 22%	6 67%	1 11%	0 0	0 0
15. The learning outcomes are evaluated in relation to the aims and objectives. <i>N= 9; M= 4.11; SD= 0.6</i>	1 11%	6 67%	1 11%	1 11%	0 0
16. Each session has a strategy that assesses learners' achievement of the objectives. <i>N= 9; M= 4.67; SD= 0.47</i>	6 67%	3 33%	0 0	0 0	0 0

Note. SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

The mean values of the responses ranged from 3.67 to 4.78, indicating that the experts had positive views for almost all the statements given. While still high mean values, on the other hand, some experts in this study did not seem to have a relatively favorable attitude toward the curriculum's aims and objectives in comparison to their responses to the curriculum organization-related items. Their responses indicate that revision of the curriculum might include making sure all

objectives are expressive and re-writing some session aims in a manner to address specific SEL skills.

The Curriculum Content: Items 17-21

Following is the list of items demonstrating each expert's viewpoints about the curriculum content. Mean values for their responses are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency and Mean Responses Regarding the Curriculum Content

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
17. The introductory material explains the content well. <i>N= 9; M= 4.22; SD= 0,97</i>	4 45%	4 44%	0 0	1 11%	0 0
18. The writing in the curriculum is easy to understand. <i>N= 9; M= 4.56; SD= 0.73</i>	6 67%	2 22%	1 11%	0 0	0 0
19. It is possible to envision participant activities by reading the content. <i>N= 9; M= 4.22; SD= 0.83</i>	4 45%	4 44%	1 11%	0 0	0 0
20. The instructions are not too detailed. <i>N= 9; M= 4.56; SD= 0.53</i>	5 56%	4 44%	0 0	0 0	0 0
21. The curriculum content is age-appropriate. <i>N= 9; M= 4.44; SD= 0.73</i>	5 56%	3 33%	1 11%	0 0	0 0

Note. SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

As illustrated in Table 4, the questionnaire item with the highest average is 4.56, while the lowest average is 4.22. These responses show that the experts found the curriculum effective and strongly agreed on the idea of using the curriculum as a guideline for future implementations in the school setting. Nevertheless, Table 4 also shows that some experts had negative or neutral viewpoints about the curriculum content. For example, EE1 disagreed with the statement that *the introductory material explains the content well*. Further insights into these responses were explored in the qualitative data analysis.

Application of EXA in the Curriculum: Items 22-24

Lastly, the questionnaire also includes some items asking the experts' overall view of designing the EXA-based curriculum. Results from the descriptive data are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequency and Mean Responses Regarding the Application of EXA in the Curriculum

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
22. Expressive Arts therapy is implemented well in this curriculum. <i>N= 8; M= 4.38; SD= 0,92</i>	5 63%	1 12%	2 25%	0 0	0 0
23. The curriculum as presented is congruent with the principles of Expressive Arts therapy. <i>N= 8; M= 4.50; SD= 0.76</i>	5 63%	2 25%	1 12%	0 0	0 0
24. The facilitators need to seek professional help from EXA workshop leaders. <i>N= 9; M= 4.38; SD= 0,87</i>	4 45%	3 33%	2 22%	0 0	0 0

Note. SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

Given the data in table 5, the mean values of experts' responses for those items fall into the range of 'Strongly agree' according to table 1 ($M = 4.38, 4.50$, and $\bar{x} = 4.38$, respectively). As a result, it was found that the experts perceived the EXA-based curriculum effective overall and supported the idea of implementing EXA for Syrian students in the school setting if the facilitators are supervised by EXA workshop leaders. Regardless of the very high mean values, it is essential to note that RE3 preferred not to answer both item 22 and 23 and explained the reason by stating, *"I read the curriculum carefully and also liked the idea of using Expressive Arts therapy for vulnerable youth in the educational setting. Yet, I am feeling so confident about giving answers to those questions. I am sure that you have experts in that*

area.” For this reason, the researcher focused on the response of curriculum developers and EXA experts more closely.

In addition to these data, the experts were also asked to mark additional questionnaire items for further clarification of their perceptions about the curriculum. The analysis results were used to provide a more explicit guideline to the facilitators who want to implement it. In the first item, while seven experts found the curriculum level is introductory, CD1 and CD3 found it advanced. Secondly, all experts reported that they would like to be a participant in this curriculum if they had a chance. Similarly, eight experts stated that they would feel comfortable leading the curriculum activities after attending at least one EXA workshop. Only CD1 highlighted that *“First, I need to get PD to lead such curriculum. My major concern is about giving feedback to the participants.”*

In the last item, the experts were asked to share opinions about how this curriculum can be best utilized in the school setting. For this item, each expert could mark multiple options. Almost all experts supported the idea of implementing this curriculum as a guidance counseling program. The experts who marked that option are included: CD2, CD3, EE1, EE2, EE3, RE1, RE2, and RE3. Besides, the “after-school program” was the second most marked option by the experts. Those experts were CD1, EE2, RE1, and RE3. As a result, it can be concluded that it is suggested that the facilitators should implement this curriculum with the target population as either a guidance counseling program or an after-school program.

After descriptive statistics on the experts’ overall view of the curriculum were presented, there is a need to examine their supplemental written comments to gain further insights into their opinions and perceptions about the curriculum. To this end,

Part Two provides another source of data, and the findings were used for the curriculum revision.

Part Two: Areas of Critique

As mentioned earlier, the main source for the data analysis in this study was qualitative feedback obtained from the experts. Through a content analysis of the data, the researcher identified six ‘areas of critique’ and made revisions under each area based on the decision-making criteria developed by Ziolkowski (2007). The six identified areas for quality improvements are as below:

- Time allotment
- Appropriateness of objectives
- Population characteristics
- Quality of feedback
- Audio-visual materials
- Spelling and grammar

Area: Time Allotment

This area refers to the experts’ perceptions regarding the allotted time for the curriculum. Although the experts generally agreed that an eight-week period is adequate to achieve the intended curriculum outcomes, some experts suggested allocating more time to each activity. For instance, EE2 highlighted that “*the curriculum is well organized, and I think it can be more flexible (time periods for instance) because every group dynamic is different, and some activities take more time than the other or than the expected time.*” EE3 supports this argument by stating:

The time allotments are clear, but when it comes to practicing, that might be the case. It is good to note that the time period you define for a part might change based on the different dynamics and the needs of the group.

Apart from those comments, EE3 believes that “*sessions will need more time, around 90 minutes, to be applied properly.*” Based on the key decision-making criteria listed in chapter 3, since several experts make similar suggestions, the change was accepted. Therefore, the session duration of 70 minutes was increased to 90 minutes.

Area: Appropriateness of Objectives

This area provides an overview of the feedback from the experts about using expressive objectives in the curriculum. As mentioned in chapter 3, there are two different kinds of objectives: Expressive and Instructional. Based on the experts’ written comments, the researcher realized that instructional objectives were used unintentionally in some curriculum activities. CD2 highlighted this issue by noting that “*make sure all objectives are expressive.*” Furthermore, CD2 also specifically marked the instructional objectives and gave some advice on how to make them expressive. Accordingly, the change was accepted, and those objectives were corrected on activity 1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 18, 20, and 31 (see Criteria 5 listed in Chapter 3).

Area: Population Characteristics

This area discusses the experts’ opinions about implementing EXA for Syrian refugee students. Although the majority of the experts agree that implementing EXA in the school setting can guide them to improve their social-emotional learning (SEL) skills, EE1 claimed otherwise. EE1 explained the reason by stating:

The curriculum has a solid structure, and the writer explains his intentions as to where the content might lead are well explained. However, I am not

comfortable with the use of Expressive Arts therapy in an educational context. In the pedagogy of Expressive Arts learning and assessment are arts-based and carried out from a phenomenological perspective, which does not match the expectations of a classical curriculum material. What is more, I was deeply concerned about the content of the curriculum. Unfortunately, I had difficulty to see this content reaching out to children who were displaced from a country in war and had to start a challenging life in a new country with different challenges. So, the affective expectations from the children in the curriculum are not in congruence with the children's reality.

Given these reasons, EE1 offered the researcher to change the target population of the study and remove the curriculum objectives and assessment strategies from the activities. Unfortunately, this recommendation is not feasible to implement without jeopardizing the entire curriculum. Therefore, the recommendation of EE1 was rejected. Besides, other experts appreciated the researcher designing such a nicely prepared and presented curriculum for the Syrian youth refugees. In this regard, those positive comments of other reviewers also supported the rejection.

In addition to the facilitator's approach, it is also important how the content of the curriculum demonstrates what each activity will look like. Since this is not a familiar setting or practice for the students, they are likely to be confused about it and even hesitant to join the group in some activities. Given this issue, the script of each activity should clearly display how the facilitators will be explaining the tasks to the students. In this sense, the experts also provided some suggestions to strengthen the quality of the activity scripts. For instance, RE2 indicates:

There is a problematical statement on page 19. It says that your soul started to live inside the object that you made. This statement might contradict students'

religious beliefs. Additionally, it can also conjure the sense of death on the students. You need to re-write this sentence again by avoiding such metaphors.

Apart from RE2, other experts also made similar suggestions to correct the factual content. Therefore, the recommendation was accepted, and the researcher modified some statements on page 11, 17, 18, 21, 33, 34, 45, 51, and 67 (see Criteria 4 listed in Chapter 3).

Area: Quality of Feedback

This area includes the experts' comments on the efficiency of the feedback given by the facilitators in each session. According to their supplemental written comments, CD1 reported that *"you may provide some instruments to record their performances, so you may give them written (verbal) feedback, which will help them to improve their SEL skills."* Unfortunately, considering the population characteristics, students might feel shy, trapped, and uncomfortable if someone records their performances. It is important to bear in mind that one of the aims of EXA activities is to provide them with a safe environment where they can freely engage in the activities, and nobody judges their performances at all. At this point, the diaries that they kept throughout the eight weeks can serve as written feedback. They can be aware of their progress by reading these diaries regularly. The facilitators can read these diaries weekly only if they get permission from the students. Consequently, the recommendation made by CD1 was rejected.

Secondly, RE3 suggested an addition to the curriculum that was overlooked by saying:

The facilitators can compile those materials chronologically and organize an exhibition. The exhibition can consist of 8 areas, and each area represents one

session of the curriculum. So, visitors can have an opinion about how much progress the students made in eight weeks. Visitors might even want to buy the artwork. Briefly, the exhibition can be effective feedback for the students.

The recommendation was accepted, and the idea of organizing an exhibition was added as a suggestion to the introduction part of the curriculum (See Criteria 3 listed in Chapter 3). However, it is essential to bear in mind that getting written permission from each student's parents is required to present photos and artwork related to the activities in the exhibition.

Area: Audio-Visual Materials

This area provides detailed information about how audio-visual materials enrich the curriculum content and attract more attention. About the curriculum content, EE3 notes that *“it is presented clearly and easy to understand and follow. Furthermore, each step is explained well and ready to be used by any facilitator.”* These arguments are also supported by other experts overall. Nevertheless, some experts still discussed that there is a need to use/add audio-visual materials both to make some activities more attractive for the students and illustrate them better for the facilitators. In regard to this, CD1 stated that *“You may include some photographs and/or pictures to enhance and clarify some of the activities (i.e., the activity with the clay on page 26 was hard to understand for me, how big the clay is-so that 2 participants can work on it).”* Similarly, RE2 indicates that *“I would add some photos from the applied activities in the future to help the readers envision the activities by not only reading the content but also seeing the real-life applications via photos.”* Apart from the visual materials, the researcher created a playlist and recommended a specific song for each activity based on previous experiences. Yet,

RE1 suggested adding more Arabic songs that the students might be familiar with to promote students' enthusiasm levels.

Regardless of the decision-making criteria, the recommendation about adding some photos from previous EXA workshops that he attended was rejected due to Personal Data Protection Law. Instead, the researcher provided more detailed information about activity 11 and 13 to better illustrate both the students and facilitators. Regarding the audio materials, on the other hand, the recommendation was accepted, and the researcher added more Arabic songs to the playlist considering RE1's suggestion (see Criteria 2 listed in Chapter 3).

Area: Grammar and Spelling

Within the area of grammar and spelling, approximately two-thirds of the experts (63%) marked and corrected some words and phrases on page 3, 5, 14, 16, 30, 35, 41, 45, 51, and 65. Those changes were accepted (see Criteria 1 listed in Chapter 3). As an important note, RE3 asked the researcher to replace the singular pronouns (he, she, and s/he) with a neutral pronoun "they" to avoid sexist language. This change was also accepted, and the researcher modified all activity scripts by replacing all pronouns including s/he, his/her, and her/him, with new pronouns including they, their and them.

Based on qualitative feedback from the participants, it can be concluded although experts generally agreed that the curriculum is feasible and effective. Their critiques were mainly used to make the curriculum more consistent, clear, and organized. Many of these were minor changes that were addressed by implementing the recommended edits. The more extensive critiques focused on the objectives, supportive materials, and clarifying the facilitator's role. The following section

describes how these main areas were revised based on recommendations of the expert reviewers.

Recommended Revisions

In the process of data analysis, the researcher's primary concern was to gather data regarding quality improvements in the curriculum. In this regard, data analysis resulted in identifying three major areas for the revisions: rewording objectives, clarifying visual materials, and emphasizing the facilitator's role.

Rewording Objectives

The most frequently cited editing objectives were related to verbs used to write the objectives. Other suggested revisions concerned writing shorter objectives. Below is the list of the experts' suggestions.

- *Session One was good. Just double check the objectives and reword them if you want them to be more expressive. (CD2)*
- *Please revise some objectives and make them more expressive. (CD3)*
- *How do you measure "observe"? Add a verb that shows some expression. (RE2).*
- *Some objectives are a bit complex to understand. Some of them also seem wordy. Make them shorter. (EE2)*

Those suggestions were taken into consideration, and since several experts made similar suggestions to improve the quality of objectives, the change was accepted. Therefore, the researcher revised 13 out of 40 activity objectives.

Clarifying Visual Materials

The most common concerns regarding this area were related to the clarity of some activities. The experts' suggestions identified the need for further explanation,

illustration, or application of specific activities such as dance/movement and sculpturing. The list below provides examples of experts' suggestions.

- *I could not imagine how big clay is and how two people can work on it. Clay activity needs explanations. Maybe a photo of it? (CD1)*
- *In some activities, using abstract concepts may not be a good idea. Considering the age level of students, they might feel confused. In such a case, support your explanations with visual materials or demonstrations (EE3).*
- *What does proxemic mean? You better add some visual aids to describe such concepts. Otherwise, it could be challenging for the facilitators to know what to do (RE3).*

Regarding the suggestions, since several experts suggested similar adaptations to enrich the content and make it more attractive for the students, the recommendation was accepted, and five activities were supported with visual materials.

Emphasizing the Facilitator's Role

The remaining suggestions resulted in identifying the need to guide facilitators by correcting factual contents considering the target population's characteristics. Those suggestions were related to some statements in the activity scripts that might trigger students' traumatic memories. The revisions that the researcher undertook in the activity scripts to promote students' sense of well-being were reported in the part of 'areas of critique.' Still, considering the curriculum was designed to address a very sensitive and special group of students, any words, mimics, or expressions could mislead the objective of the curriculum itself. Therefore, regardless of those revisions, the experts strongly suggested that the

facilitators need training from the EXA workshop leaders. If it is not possible, they should attend at least one EXA workshop.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the analysis results under the research question. Data analysis occurred at several levels. First, the quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics to provide information about the experts' overall view of the EXA-based curriculum. Secondly, it became later possible to identify areas of critique through qualitative content analysis and make revisions under each area for quality improvements. For this purpose, the researcher used the key decision-making criteria developed by Ziolkowski (2007) to accept/reject the experts' suggestions. Therefore, some suggestions by the experts for improvements in the curriculum were considered but did not result in revisions for several reasons. Those are suggestions that addressed issues that were not necessary to include or that could not be technically changed without dramatically affecting the purpose of the study. The following chapter presents a more detailed and in-depth summary of the research findings.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the meanings and implications of the research findings presented in the previous chapter. The researcher also provides recommendations that can be pursued by facilitators who want to implement this curriculum more purposefully and rigorously. The chapter consists of five parts, namely: Overview of the study, major findings and conclusions, implications for practice, implications for further research, and limitations of the study.

Overview of the Study

The researcher used some aspects of instructional design in this study to create an eight-week EXA-based curriculum to help Syrian refugee students going to Turkish schools improve their SEL skills. The curriculum addressed EXA principles, methods of practice, and specific interventions that can be applied during each session. In this sense, the researcher aimed to provide a clear guideline to facilitators who want to implement the curriculum by demonstrating how to apply the EXA activities to the target population. Additionally, based on the literature review, the researcher used the SEL Standards Framework to explain which specific SEL skills that each activity aimed to address.

After the curriculum activities were drafted, they were reviewed by nine experts from the following professional fields: EXA, curriculum development, and refugee support programs. The questionnaire (see Appendix B) was administered in this study to ask the experts' perceptions related to various aspects of the

curriculum. The gathered data were analyzed through descriptive statistics of the quantitative data along with content analysis of participants' written comments. The research findings were then used to ensure the curriculum's validity, and revisions were made according to the list of accepting/rejecting criteria developed by Ziolkowski (2007). The final version of the unit after revisions can be found in Appendix D.

Major Findings

Based on the research question of the study, this section presents the major findings drawn from the data previously analyzed in Chapter 4. Those findings were divided into four distinct categories, and each category addressed the findings from one specific aspect of the curriculum.

Findings Related to the Use of Instructional Design to Develop an EXA-based Curriculum

The curriculum designed in the scope of this study sets forth an example of how to implement EXA activities with Syrian refugee students in a curriculum that focuses on improving their SEL skills. Regarding the aims of the study, experts on refugee support programs agreed that there are few opportunities for Syrian students in an educational setting to experience these kinds of activities without feeling uncomfortable. This finding was also supported by other research in the literature (Hacioglu, 2018; Human Rights Watch, 2015; Taskin & Erdemli, 2018). In response to this problem, the EXA therapists mainly reported that implementing EXA activities with Syrian students in educational settings might make a considerable difference in those students' lives. In the words of EE2:

The bonds between refugee children's problems and the benefits of Expressive Arts therapy are strongly explained, and the activities match the

expected outcomes. Those activities can guide the participants to explore and externalize their feelings, thoughts, and issues by actualizing the self physically, emotionally, and artistically.

EE3 supported this assumption by stating that “*These activities can provide new experiences for the participants to continuously assess their own progress by creating individually and collectively, which empowers participants’ capacities to cope and learn in a safe environment.*” In their empirical research, Akhtar and Lovell (2018) worked with children from a refugee background and concluded similar results to those assumptions.

Furthermore, although the researcher primarily aims in this curriculum to address the social-emotional needs of Syrian students, it also serves as an educational tool that assists facilitators in integrating the philosophy of EXA into their own experience. Regarding the latter aim, the findings revealed that the curriculum developers are in agreement with each other that this curriculum should be placed in existing counseling programs in public schools. For instance, CD2 noted that “*the curriculum is well-structured, easy to follow, highly professional, and each step is explained well. I think it is ready to be implemented by any facilitator as a counseling program.*”

Apart from the findings that reveal experts’ overall perceptions of the EXA-based curriculum, there are also other findings that give insight into experts’ perceptions unique to their subject area. In this regard, the following sections present unique findings in the three main areas of this study, namely: EXA, curriculum development, and refugee support programs.

Findings Related to Perspectives of Expressive Arts Therapists

This section reveals the findings from the opinions of Expressive Arts therapists about integrating EXA in education for improving Syrian students' SEL skills. As highlighted previously, the researcher does not claim to treat Syrian students' mental problems by implementing this curriculum. Besides, the activities were not designed to reveal their traumatic memories. On the contrary, it is intended to provide students with a playful, imaginative setting where they use their senses and increase their awareness and perceptions of themselves and each other. In regard to this aim, the therapists generally indicated that the content of the curriculum is designed to provide students with a fun and safe setting where they can express their opinions freely and comfortably. However, the warning most commonly made by the experts about the curriculum was that a written curriculum could not be a substitute for supervised experience. In the words of EE3, *"while practicing the curriculum, everything might not turn out to be in the planned way, and the facilitator should be aware of that, s/he should be someone who can take initiatives when needed."* In his study, Palmiotto (2013) revealed similar challenges and offered some suggestions to deal with this issue.

One suggestion is that it is much better if the facilitator who wants to implement this curriculum is experienced in leading therapeutical group sessions so that in case of unexpected reactions from participants like crying or withdrawing, they can step in with the right manner. Otherwise, Meyer DeMott et al. (2017) warn that incorrect manners (such as over-reacting or expressing frustration) can compromise the safety of the space and increase participants' stress and anxiety. Therefore, facilitators should delay practicing the curriculum until they take some

training/attend some art therapy workshops to gain some experience and confidence in implementing EXA activities.

Findings Related to Perspectives of Curriculum Developers

This section includes the specific findings from the opinions of curriculum developers about the EXA-based curriculum. They were mostly related to the curriculum format, the expressive objectives, and the theoretical perspectives in which curriculum activities were grounded. Regarding the curriculum format, the researcher wrote an activity script to explain his intentions as to where each activity might lead. The activity scripts were supported with “tips and key messages” to assist in the preparation of facilitators before practicing the curriculum. From the findings, all curriculum developers indicated that the curriculum has a solid structure, and it is easy to follow the opening, development, and closure of a session. Moreover, CD3 noted that *“I really want to appreciate the creator of this curriculum. The goal and benefits of the curriculum are expressed clearly and directly. When I read it, I understood why Expressive Arts therapy must be used in that situation.”* Based on this argument, it can be concluded that implementing of this curriculum can increase awareness regarding refugee issues in schools and provide new perspectives on the use of EXA in educational settings.

Secondly, the researcher integrated different art forms in this curriculum with a focus on developing self-expression and creativity in a group setting. Therefore, the activities were designed to improve the students’ SEL skills, working from the inside (exploring the feelings and increasing the internal awareness) to the outside (illustrating the expression of feelings through different art forms). In this sense, the curriculum prioritizes the art-making process of students rather than students’ performance or products.

The curriculum developers perceive that although the experiences that students have during the activities are explained better with expressive objectives, those objectives are not widely used in curriculum development (Eisner, 2005). Given the aims of the study, they generally suggested that the researcher should review the literature comprehensively to write more appropriate objectives for each activity. For instance, CD2 noted that “*some of the objectives look like more instructional.*” These suggestions invited the researcher to do more research about the expressive objectives, and it resulted in the identification of specific words used to make an objective more expressive. As a result, the changes made in activity objectives were presented in recommended revision section in Chapter four.

Lastly, the researcher correlated the aims of the study with SEL theory and designed each session in a manner to address different SEL skills. Furthermore, since each student has different strengths and learning styles, it was essential to differentiate the instruction to allow students to express themselves in different ways while practicing the curriculum. Therefore, the researcher embraced the MI theory and benefited from all nine types of MI in the curriculum design process by considering each student's different learning preferences. The findings revealed that the curriculum developers positively respond to the combination of SEL and MI theory in the scope of the study. They are agreed that each activity is linked to specific SEL skills. Additionally, they reported that designing different art-making activities according to different types of MI theory is a good way to facilitate effective learning. Doing this can also prevent students from having difficulties with the activities.

Findings Related to Perspectives of Experts Working with Syrian Refugees

This section addresses the findings from the experts' opinions on refugee support programs about the effectiveness of the curriculum on Syrian refugee students in Turkish schools. As previously mentioned, the target population of this study is Syrian students from a refugee background. Considering their vulnerable background, Henley (1997) emphasized that designing such a curriculum would work in a realistic manner only if the expectations from the students attending the curriculum sessions are in congruence with their reality. At this point, the experts highlighted that the curriculum makes clear how to use the Expressive Arts approach in a vulnerable community. Moreover, they reported that the researcher distinguished pedagogy and therapy, and the curriculum was written from a pedagogical perspective.

However, the findings also revealed that the Expressive Arts therapists also made some suggestions about the role of facilitators while practicing the curriculum. Firstly, they emphasized that facilitators should implement especially the first two sessions very slowly and mindfully by creating some space for children to warm up to their new community and their selves in this community. Regarding this suggestion, RE3 stated that *"Based on previous experiences, I can tell that it takes a while to create a safe space with participants who have a distressful background."* Given this issue, although the researcher increased each session's duration to 90 minutes, facilitators might want to get the support of an EXA workshop leader until they manage to create a safe environment for the students. According to the experts, if it is not possible, one way to provide a safe environment is that the non-judgmental and observing attitude of the facilitator should stand out from the beginning of the first session to the end of the last session. Based on the findings, it can be concluded

that the facilitators should be those who create a safe environment and keep students on the task rather than assessing their performance or products.

Implications for Practice

The data analysis process resulted in the identification of specific suggestions and ‘areas of critique’ that proved essential to quality improvements of the curriculum. The findings indicated that experts comprehended the key principles and methods of EXA presented in the curriculum; they identified the best venues for its potential implementation in the school setting; and finally, they made suggestions to improve the quality of the design. Those findings were used to revise the curriculum and provide new perspectives to prepare facilitators better before practicing the curriculum.

As noted in the implications for research below, this curriculum should be tested with actual students to ensure its effectiveness. Nonetheless, the potential for its use with Syrian refugees to promote their SEL skills has been supported through this review. However, it is important to note that this curriculum is a guide rather than a recipe for using EXA with refugee students.

Implementing these activities with students at risk is complex because each group is unique, meaning that one activity that works for one group might not work for another. Therefore, facilitators will need to review the list of activities and determine which are most suitable for their audience.

Another critical consideration for this curriculum is the skill and capability of the facilitator. Ideally, the facilitator has a background in guidance counselling or working with students at risk. It would be helpful for leaders to attend at least one EXA workshop. Another suggestion is that if the facilitators have an academic background, they can conduct content analysis research of existing books that

present EXA activities for different purposes and use them to make changes in their activity plans by considering the specific needs of the students.

The curriculum can be implemented in different educational contexts by expanding their accessibility to a broader range of facilitators working with different groups of students. For example, this curriculum could be used for Turkish students to make them more open-minded towards refugees and unlearn the prejudices that they have against Syrian refugees. Another idea is that this curriculum can be placed in the International Baccalaureate programs, especially in Diploma Program as a Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) project. The CAS coordinator and their students can contact EXA facilitators to learn how they and their students can attend an EXA workshop to become familiar with the process. Then the coordinator and the students can review this curriculum in light of CAS objectives. Activities of the curriculum can be conducted with the CAS coordinator and students to develop their social emotional learning. Likewise, with professional support, CAS students may want to involve members of their service group in the activities.

Finally, this curriculum was developed in English for the purpose of the validation research study. It will be translated into Turkish as it was designed to be implemented in schools in Turkey. However, some reviewers pointed out that some of the participants may not feel comfortable while expressing themselves in Turkish. One suggestion would be to carry out each session with the help of Arabic translators (Ugurlu et al., 2016). Facilitators may also need to make adjustments to the activities for students with special needs, including physical limitations. In this case, it will be important to consult special education teachers and physical therapists to make appropriate accommodations.

Implications for Further Research

This study helped validate a curriculum and its potential for using EXA with Syrian refugees to improve their SEL skills. As noted in the methods chapter, instructional design generally includes analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (Khalil & Elkhider, 2016). This study addressed the first three phases, but the latter two need to be done. Pilot testing is needed to further ensure the curriculum can achieve the goal of helping Syrian refugee students decenter from stresses in the world around them. Facilitators and educators who work in schools with Syrian students can be invited to implement the curriculum and be given an instrument to record their experiences and observations (e.g., Ziolkowski, 2007, p.49). The researcher could then interview the instructors to determine if further revisions of the curriculum are needed.

To investigate whether students' SEL skills were improved through participating in the EXA activities empirical research is needed. An experimental design with pre-post treatment assessments could be conducted with groups of students around the country.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Dear X,

My name is Ali Emre Yılmaz. I am a master's student at Bilkent University's Curriculum Instruction and Teaching Practice Program. I am seeking your comments and perspectives to help review a curriculum that I designed. The main of the curriculum is to help Syrian refugee students in Turkish schools improve their social-emotional learning (SEL) skills. In this aspect, the curriculum proposes incorporating a technique called Expressive Arts therapy and provides a clear guideline to those wanting to implement EXA in a more purposeful and rigorous way in the school setting. The curriculum is comprised of eight sessions, with four activities per session. Below is additional information about your participation. If you are interested in helping with this research project, please let me know by October 1st. If you decide to participate in the study, I will get in touch with you by e-mail. I will send you the curriculum with a questionnaire that includes Likert scale items and some open-ended questions. This questionnaire serves to guide your review and give insights into your analysis. Your answers will be used to provide an overall view of the curriculum.

I can guarantee that since your participation in this research is entirely voluntary, you can withdraw from the study at any time you want. The personal data will not be collected, and you will be given pseudonyms to keep your name or other identifying information confidential. No information about you will be shared anyone outside of the research team.

If you like to find out more about the scope of the study, please feel free to contact me or my thesis supervisor Dr. Jennie Lane, and we will take time to discuss the study in more detail.

Thanks for your interest

Yours sincerely



APPENDIX B: Questionnaire

Curriculum Evaluation Form

Thank you for reviewing the curriculum that we sent you. To check the validity of the curriculum, we ask for your assistance in completing this review form. Please fill out all pages of this form. Your feedback and comments will allow us to strengthen the quality of the curriculum.

Please return this form to the researcher after you finish reviewing the curriculum. Thank you.

Evaluator name: _____ Date: _____

As noted in the form you signed, your name and responses will be kept confidential

- ❖ In a few sentences, please share your first impressions after you finished reviewing the curriculum.

INSTRUCTIONS

As a part of your review and to help with our discussions, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Additionally, please feel free to skip the question you think is not in your area of expertise.

The format of the curriculum					
	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
1. The format has a professional appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The format is easy to read and navigate.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The material is presented in an organized manner.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The time allotments for the sessions are clear.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The learning activities are well-organized.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The scope and sequence of the curriculum are logical.	1	2	3	4	5

Continued →→→

Below, please write any other comments you have about the curriculum format.

Aims and objectives of the curriculum					
	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
7. The rationale for each session is clearly indicated.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The curriculum aims are clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The curriculum aims are not too broad.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The curriculum aims are useful for the target population.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Eight weeks are enough to fulfill the curriculum aims.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The activity objectives match session aims.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The objectives are clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The contents of the activities support the objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The learning outcomes are evaluated in relation to the aims and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Each session has a strategy that assesses learners' achievement of the objectives.	1	2	3	4	5

Below, please write any other comments you have about the aims and objectives of the curriculum.

Continued →→→

The curriculum content

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
17. The introductory material explains the content well.	1	2	3	4	5
18. The writing in the curriculum is easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
19. It is possible to envision participant activities by reading the content.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The instructions are not too detailed.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The curriculum content is age-appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5

Below, please write any other comments you have about the content of the curriculum.

Application of EXA in the curriculum

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
22. Expressive Arts therapy is implemented well in this curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
23. The curriculum as presented is congruent with the principles of Expressive Arts therapy.	1	2	3	4	5
24. The facilitators need to seek professional help from EXA workshop leaders.	1	2	3	4	5

Below, please write any other comments you have about the content of the curriculum.

Continued →→→

General comments about the curriculum
--

25. If you had a chance, would you like to participate in this curriculum:

- ☐ a. Yes ☐ b. No

26. Would you feel comfortable leading this curriculum?

- ☐ a. Yes ☐ b. No

Please use the space below to write any additional comments about Expressive Arts therapy implementation.

27. In what ways/how do you see that this curriculum can be best utilized in the school setting?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ A guidance counseling program | ☐ After school program |
| ☐ A summer school program | ☐ Restricted elective for Syrian students |
| ☐ Counselling course | ☐ None of these |

28. Please shortly explain what part(s) of the curriculum was not clear or vague and where additional commentary would be helpful. (Please briefly specify)

29. Are there any additional elements that were missing or that you would like to include in the contents of the EXA activities? (Please briefly specify)

Thank you for participating in the survey
I am looking forward to seeing your comments

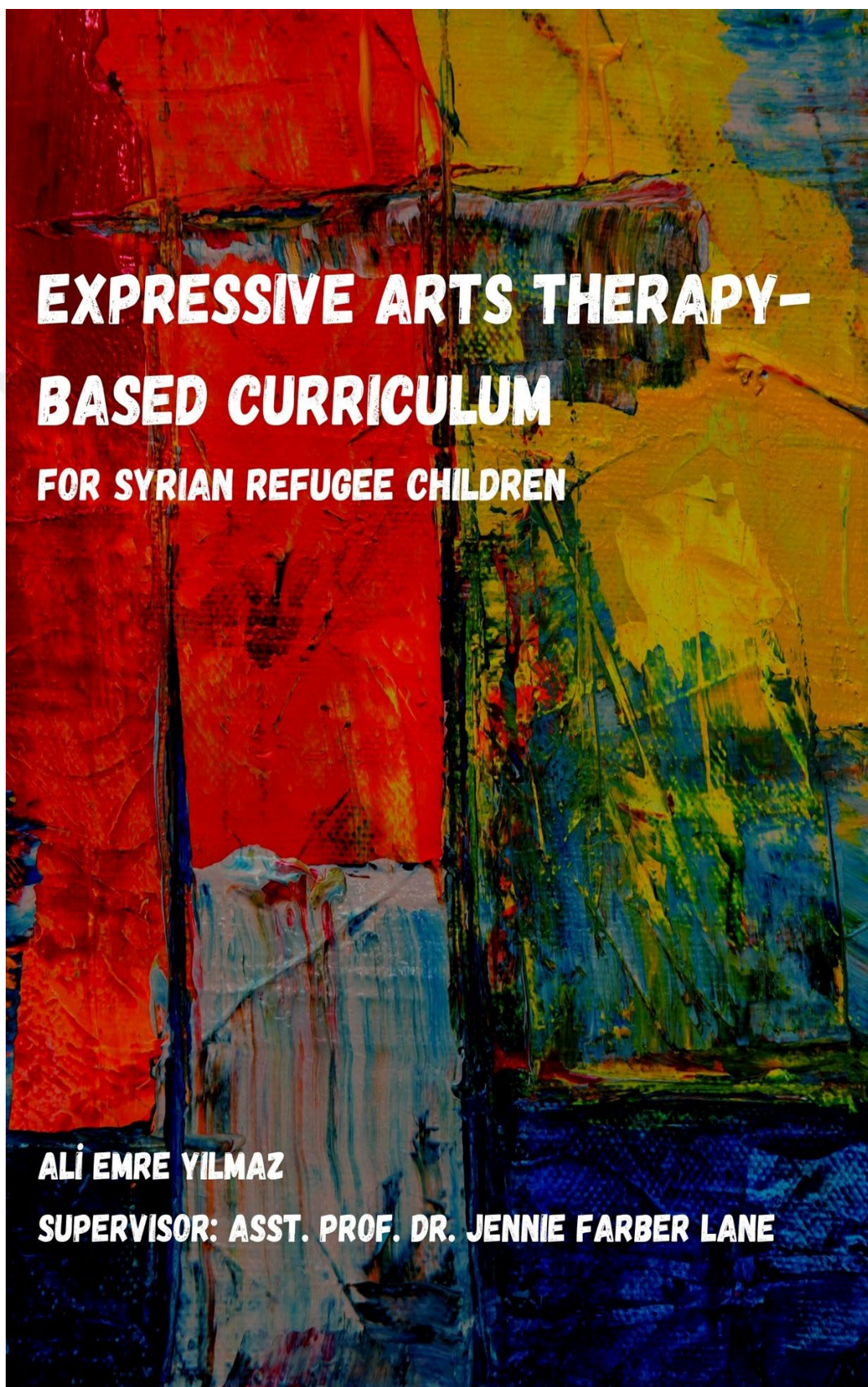
APPENDIX C: The scope and Sequence of the Curriculum.

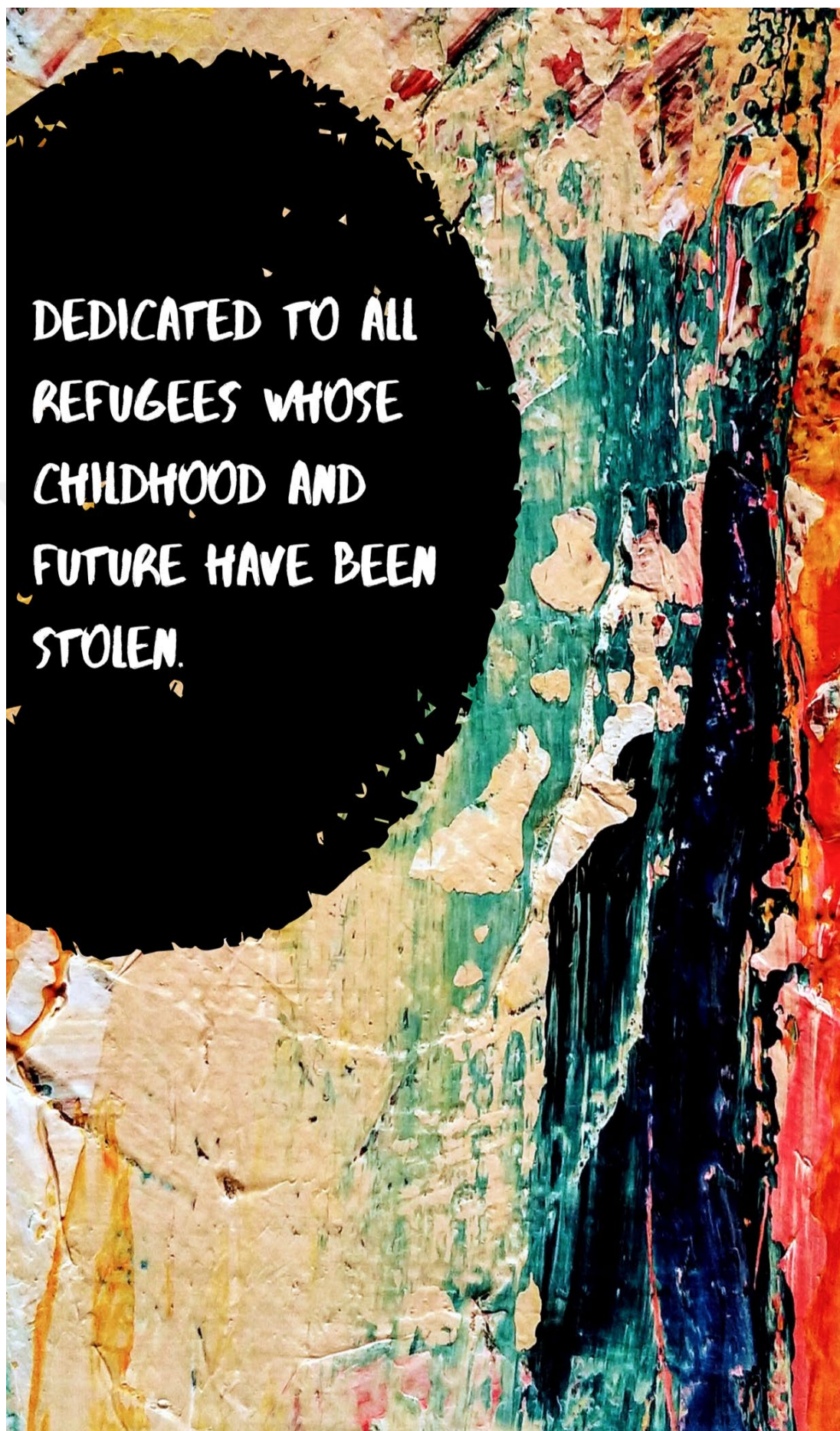
Session Number	Session Title	Rationale	Aim of the session	The activities	Educational Theory
1	Finding happiness in your treasure chest	They need to... • Manage their intense emotions. • Explore and identify the emotions in a safe atmosphere. • Develop new social connections by meeting people.	The session aims them to... • Collaboratively create a safe zone where they can feel a sense of belonging and reduce isolation. • Have an increase in self-awareness and self-efficacy. • Increase their play space and imagination.	• Warm-up activity: Orientation • Bridge activity: Meditation • Main activity: Dance and movement • Reflection activity: Visual artmaking	• Multiple Intelligence: ○ Intrapersonal intelligence ○ Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence • Social-emotional learning: ○ Relationship management (relationship building) ○ Self-awareness (identifying and recognizing emotions, self-efficacy)
2	Turn over a new leaf in an alternative world	They need to... • Increase their awareness and perceptions of themselves and others. • Gain new perspectives to externalize their thoughts and feelings • Regulate their intense emotions	The session aims them to... • Guide students define themselves through symbols • Build empathy among students • Develop caring attributes. • Increase their play space and imagination.	• Warm-up activity: Orientation • Bridge activity: Visual artmaking • Main activity: Dance and movement • Reflection activity: Drawing mandala	• Multiple Intelligence: ○ Naturalistic intelligence ○ Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence • Social-emotional learning: ○ Self-management (help-seeking) ○ Social awareness (empathy)

3	Gaining awareness of the personal and social zones	They need to... • learn how to use personal zones in the right manner • Gaining an awareness of the differences between zones. • Draw borders for each zone that they have.	The session aims them to... • Raise the awareness of personal and social zones. • Develop more effective social awareness and self-management skills. • Show respect for others' personal spaces and ask respect for their own space	• Warm-up activity: Orientation • Bridge activity: Dance and movement • Main activity: Clay work • Reflection activity: Creative expression	• Multiple Intelligence: ○ Interpersonal intelligence ○ Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence • Social-emotional learning: ○ Self-management (Stress management) ○ Social awareness (respect for others)
4	Developing mindfulness about the inner self	They need to... • Raise awareness of their bodies in its sensation, coming and going of intense feelings. • Have a clearer understanding of how to control their emotions and thoughts.	The session aims them to... • Concentrate on the "self" to evaluate their own characters, feelings, and thoughts • Improve the ability of emotional regulation.	• Warm-up activity: Orientation • Bridge activity: Dance and movement • Main activity: Meditation • Reflection activity: Collage work	• Multiple Intelligence: ○ Visual-spatial intelligence ○ Bodily-Kinaesthetic intelligence • Social-emotional learning: ○ Self-awareness (identifying and recognizing emotions) ○ Self-management (Impulse control)
5	I believe therefore I am	They need to... • Take initiatives to break the cycle of hopelessness that surrounds them. • Believe in the dream that says, "you can do it if you want." • Get supported by others to improve their self-efficacy that will make this dream come true.	The session aims them to... • Dream about the future. • Realize how both mentally and physically strong they are. • Increase their play space and imagination.	• Warm-up activity: Orientation • Bridge activity: Playing a game • Main activity: Meditation (Dance and movement) • Reflection activity: Creative writing	• Multiple Intelligence: ○ Linguistic-verbal intelligence ○ Bodily- Kinaesthetic intelligence • Social-emotional learning: ○ Self-awareness (self-efficacy) ○ Relationship management (communication)

6	Accept and love yourself as you are	They need to... - Find out that our relationship with ourselves sets the tone for our relationships with others. - Find out how to love themselves first to be loved by others. - Regard themselves as individuals of worth.	The session aims them to... - Learn how to approach their bodies - Develop mindfulness about the association between their moods and their body language. - Regulate their intensive emotions to control their unintended reactions.	Warm-up activity: Orientation Bridge activity: Dance and movement Main activity: Dance and movement (a love-based approach) Reflection activity: Drawing spiral mandala	Multiple Intelligence: - Bodily- Kinaesthetic intelligence - Intrapersonal intelligence Social-emotional learning: - Self-awareness (identifying and recognizing emotions) - Self-management (impulse control and stress management)
7	We are social creatures who need each other	They need to... - Follow a dream that says, "there is a world in which everybody lives together brotherly and in peace." - Learn to see issues from opposing viewpoints. - Make choices that are personally, socially, and ethically responsible	The session aims them to... - Increase responsible decision-making skills. - Become those that prioritize solidarity and cooperation to maintain harmony in the group. - Engage in collective action to achieve common goals.	Warm-up activity: Playing a game Bridge activity: Dance and movement Main activity: Visual artmaking Reflection activity: Creative drama	Multiple Intelligence: - Interpersonal intelligence - Bodily- Kinaesthetic intelligence Social-emotional learning: - Responsible decision making (personal, social, and ethical responsibility)
8	We are the precious parts of the whole	They need to... - Become a leader in all aspects of their lives. - Sustain the commitment to the group they are in to maintain the motto that says, "one for all, all for one." - Take initiatives to engage in the problems taking place in the group.	The session aims them to... - Increase their problem-solving skills. - Value teamwork, solidarity, and friendship. - Assess their learning process in the program.	Warm-up activity: Orientation Bridge activity: Dance and movement Main activity: Creative drama Reflection activity: Painting	Multiple Intelligence: - Logical-Mathematical intelligence - Interpersonal intelligence - Bodily-Kinaesthetic intelligence Social-emotional learning: - Responsible decision making (problem-solving)

APPENDIX D: The Final Version of the Curriculum after Revision





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Requests for such permission should be addressed to:

Ali Emre Yılmaz



Foreword

This eight-week curriculum was designed to help improve the social-emotional learning (SEL) skills of Syrian refugee students attending Turkish schools. In this aspect, the researcher proposes incorporating a technique called Expressive Arts therapy (EXA) in this curriculum and provides a clear guideline to those wanting to implement EXA in a more purposeful and rigorous way in the school setting. It addresses EXA principles and methods of practice and specific interventions that can be applied during each session. However, it is important to note that this curriculum is a guide rather than a recipe for using EXA with refugee students.

Implementing these activities with a group of students at risk is complex because each group is unique, meaning that one activity that works for one group might not work for another. Secondly, although EXA is mainly used for the treatment of trauma-related disorders in the domain of psychotherapy, the activities in this curriculum are introductory, emphasizing prevention and promotion. In this sense, they are not designed to serve as a therapeutic intervention claiming to treat students' mental problems.

Consequently, the curriculum just sets forth an example of how to implement EXA activities with Syrian refugee students in a curriculum that focuses on improving their SEL skills. Understanding the key principles of developing an EXA activity in a manner to avoid triggering students' traumatic memories can guide facilitators to make adaptations or employ their own strategies for facilitating students' creative and artistic expressions in a non-judgmental environment.

About the Author

I have a background in art and education. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Turkish Language and Literature from Boğaziçi University. During my graduate years, I attended Expressive Arts therapy (EXA) workshops weekly for a two-year span from 2017 to 2019. In those workshops, I was trained to become a facilitator who implements EXA activities with children from marginalized groups in society to support their social and emotional development. Apart from attending the EXA workshops, I also took various art and therapy-related elective courses at Boğaziçi University to enrich the content of the workshops that I design, including drama therapy, play therapy, scriptwriting, cinema, and visual art.

Right now, I am a master's student at Bilkent University's Curriculum Instruction and Teaching Practice Program. Therefore, I also have experience developing instructional materials as I developed lesson plans on a daily and weekly basis over a two-year span between 2019 and 2021, which incorporated standards, aims, and objectives.

The reason for designing such a curriculum is to show the readers that the refugee crisis in Turkey is manageable, not unsolvable. It is important to bear in mind that refugees are not people moving to another country to get a better life. Instead, they are fleeing for their lives. In 2015, the lifeless body of three-year-old Alan Kurdi was found washed up in the Mediterranean. It's too late for Alan, and unfortunately, we could not do anything to bring him back to life. However, it is still not too late for the millions of others, and our responsibility is to help them rebuild their lives. This curriculum sets an example of how we can make a positive difference for refugees.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of those who have helped shape this curriculum. First and foremost, I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to dear Edanur Akyüz with respect and love. She formatted the material and helped me enrich the curriculum's content with her remarkable suggestions by discussing ideas and preventing several wrong turns. I also have a special debt to Asst. Prof. Dr. Jennie Farber Lane who meticulously proofread and edited the material in the curriculum. Without her encouragement and continuous support, this curriculum's compilation and preparation would not have been possible.

My continuing thanks are due to:

Dear Aylin Vartanyan, who is the mentor that taught me the principles of EXA. It was a privilege for me to attend her workshop activities. My life is touched by her teaching philosophy, and I wish I can touch others' lives, too.

My sincere thanks also go to dear Betül Kasırğa, who helped me improve this curriculum with her precious ideas and guidance.

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Introduction

EXA is a therapeutic intervention where “people can heal through the use of imagination, physical and mental movement, connection, playing, being present, and the various forms of creative expressions for self-expression and sociability within the community” (DeMott et al., p.154). Furthermore, EXA is a multi-arts approach that integrates different art forms with a focus on developing self-expression and creativity in a group setting. Although EXA has its roots in interventions with trauma survivors in psychotherapy, some activities and experiences of EXA can be used in everyday settings. This guide is designed so that more people – Syrian refugees in Turkey in particular – can benefit from EXA.

In this study, the researcher used some aspects of instructional design to create an eight-week EXA-based curriculum to help improve the SEL skills of Syrian refugee students in a group setting. To this end, eight weekly sessions are designed to keep the students away from the challenges that negatively impact their ability to improve SEL skills through the strategy called “decentering.” This strategy simply aims to provide the students with an alternative world where they are encouraged to leave their habitual world experiences in a non-judgmental environment. Comfort zones have important roles in our lives; however, they can become isolating and restrictive. For Syrian refugees, too much reliance on comfort zones can prevent them from getting involved in social interaction with others.

In the imaginary space of EXA, the students use novel narrative genres to share their stories with others in the form of non-verbal communication approaches. These approaches include music, dance/movement, theatre, painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture. Using these approaches stimulates them to get actively involved in social interaction and helps them safely explore what happens when they

leave habitual word experiences. Accordingly, experiencing such interactions in a non-judgmental environment can also gradually help students recognize they have within them the capacity to face real-life challenges and guide them to regulate unintended reactions occurring due to their negative emotions. These are essential factors that enable Syrian students to improve their sense of belonging towards the group and build healthier friendship ties with other group members

It is important that the curriculum provides the students with a safe, caring, non-judgmental environment, especially to avoid situations that could cause stress or anxiety. For this reason, the activities in this curriculum are introductory and focus on being in the playful, imaginative space. They are not designed to serve as a therapeutic intervention. Instead, the author of this curriculum provides a baseline of information on how to implement EXA activities with a group of students with a traumatic background in an educational context. Thus, one intention of this guide is to encourage more widespread use of EXA. In line with this aim, the following **tips and key messages** are provided to support the efforts of any educator who wishes to facilitate this curriculum and its activities.

Role of the facilitator. As facilitators, we can only invite the students to share their processes and give them space so that they may connect with their inner world. During the activities, it is strongly suggested to avoid judging their actions, thoughts, and feelings. Besides, we need to focus on what they share with the rest of the class rather than making subjective inferences from what they do or what they say. Lastly, the facilitator should prefer to step back and allow them to progress on their own in the group setting unless they need instructional support.

Being in the playful, imaginative space. The activities in this curriculum are designed to help students enjoy themselves and feel free to express themselves.

Although the students are still teenagers, it is good to bear in mind that they are still children and need spaces where they can act freely and make noise as much as they want. This aim is important because, above all, each student gets involved in the activities to be happy and enjoy a good time. Keeping them happy will gradually increase their enthusiasm and willingness to the activities.

Physical space. Make sure you have an open space that is private and secure.

- Students need to be able to express themselves without worrying about outsiders watching or walking in on them.
- They also need room to dance and express themselves.
- Student creations can be displayed in this space. This might help them develop a sense of belonging to their space and the community. In addition to being decorative, showing their artwork can give them a sense of accomplishment and supports their self-confidence. Alternatively, if space needs to be made available for other programs, students can store items in the “treasure chest” they create.

Seating. Make sure each student has a chair, plus have a few extra seats available.

- When students are asked to dance or move about, these chairs should be moved to the sides of the room.
- When students are asked to sit down, place the chairs around a circle.
- Please remove extra chairs and put them aside to avoid gaps and ensure a connected circle with a student in each seat.

Tables. It will be good to have tables at the sides of the room to store working materials, which can be used as a workspace.

Music. The material list of the activities often includes a smartphone and speaker. These are to have music playing in the background during the sessions. Listening to music during the workshop activities can also help students improve their state of mind, leading to an increase in serotonin levels and a sense of calm. In some cases, the music is used for dance or movement. This music therapy creates a feeling of cohesion or social connectedness among the students. Accordingly, each song taking place in the curriculum playlist was meticulously selected from the previous workshops where the originator of the integrated art curriculum attended and sorted out in a manner to address the aims mentioned above (see Appendix E).

Dancing. Several of the activities in this curriculum involve dance and active movement. Some students may be hesitant to express themselves in front of others. The prescribed speaking points in the activities provide ideas that help the facilitator develop a supportive and respectful atmosphere and encourage expression. It is especially important for the facilitator to dance and move around. This is a good way to show the group that they can act like a fool and enjoy themselves. The students need to apprehend that there is nothing to shame about it.

Adjust as needed. Each activity includes “suggested modifications” that provide ideas and suggestions to integrate activities or different strategies when facing potential challenges or different situations.

Keeping a diary. The students will keep a diary to write or draw something about what they learned in each activity and how it made them feel. Keeping a diary helps them remember their thoughts and feelings about the experiences they gain throughout the curriculum, which keeps their memories fresh and makes the learning outcomes permanent by consolidating the positive emotions resulting from periodically reading the diary. Independent of the students, the facilitator can also

regularly keep a diary to assess the progress that the students make throughout the curriculum. Besides, the facilitator can also take both photos and notes during the activities for each session. Later on, the facilitator can compile those materials chronologically and organize an exhibition at the end of the curriculum to inform the stakeholders about its effect on the students. Organizing an exhibition is also a good way to visualize the whole process that those students experience. However, it is essential to bear in mind that getting written permission from each student's parents is required to present photos and artwork related to the activities in the exhibition.

Assessment. Begin each session with questions that are listed in the warm-up. These questions encourage students to talk about themselves. Additionally, each activity has a “Harvesting” section that helps the facilitator monitor the students’ progress. In a sense, they serve as a formative assessment used to provide immediate feedback to them. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the students are not graded or evaluated. Lastly, it can be meaningful to give a certificate to each student who fully attends all sessions.

The Curriculum Organization

The curriculum is comprised of eight sessions; ideally, one session can be done per week. They are designed to build upon each other by introducing, developing, and enhancing students' Expressive Arts experiences. A scope and sequence, including the rationale, aims, and theoretical underpinnings of each session, are provided in the Appendix. Each session is divided into four activities: warm-up, bridge, main, reflection. These sections are described below.

Warm-up activity. The warm-up is the opening activity of a session. The activity consists of two parts, in general. In the first part, the facilitator, including:

- How are you?
- How was your week?
- Is there anything you would like to share with us before starting?

This phase can be regarded as a form of pre-assessment where the teachers can assess students' current mood by encouraging them to talk about themselves.

Considering the students' answers, the facilitator can decide whether the students are mentally ready for the following three phases of a session. If there is no problem or some depressive feelings with the students, the facilitator can smoothly move on to the next phase. Otherwise, the facilitator can change the schedule and utilize different activities or simply finish the week's session in a short time if needed. Briefly, this phase sets the course of the session.

The second phase serves as a transition between the warm-up activity and the bridge activity. The facilitator's main aim in this activity is to make all students mentally ready for entrance to the alternative world. Since the following three units address the abstract concepts in general, the facilitator needs to embody these

abstract concepts for the students to develop an understanding of such concepts in the next phase.

Bridge activity. This is the first place where the students open their eyes to the alternative world. Since this world is their safe zone where they can freely elicit their emotions and act without thinking, the bridge activity stimulates them to eliminate unnecessary thoughts belonging to the real world and purify their minds. On the other hand, such expectations may seem too much, and it is likely challenging for the students to meet these expectations at once. Considering this issue, bridge activity is where the facilitator is expected to provide much more instructional support than other activities. The facilitator can explain the instructions with examples; they can be an active participant in the activity or pair the students with each other. The reason behind this endeavor is to make them emotionally ready to achieve poiesis in the main activity.

Main Activity. This phase is composed of two different elements, including poiesis and mimesis. Poiesis refers to shaping one's world by giving shape to an artwork. In other words, poiesis is a process that makes all students artists who create artwork find existential meanings in their lives. One way to achieve poiesis is to provide an environment for mimesis. The term mimesis simply refers to the imitation of the attitudes and desires of others; the thing being imitated is nature.

According to Plato, artists cannot create anything new; their artwork is the imitation of nature, and nature is the reflection of the ultimate truth. In this context, it is apparent that what the artists do is to re-reveal something that has already been in nature. Considering that all activities in this curriculum are art-based activities, there is a need to change the students' perceptions and put nature at the center to imitate it. To this end, this phase consists of the individual or communal activities that students

attend to experience the diverse elements of nature so that they can discover the characteristics of their personalities as a reflection of nature. Doing this can help them achieve poiesis in the main activity, helping them regulate their intense emotions overall.

Reflection. This is the last but the most important phase of a session. Thus far, the students have a variety of experiences in the alternative world that address specific aims and objectives. Reflection activity is when the students safely return to the real world and respond to what these experiences mean to them and what kind of positive effects these experiences have on them. To this end, the students are encouraged to create specific artwork, such as mandala, collage, as a way of self-reflection. In this aspect, this unit can be regarded as a phase that raises students' awareness of their self-concept. Another criterion that is essential as much as self-reflection is others' emotional reaction to this reflection, which is called an aesthetic response. Providing an aesthetic response means that "I see you, I care about you, and I value what you do without judging your artwork." Considering its meaning, such an aesthetic response helps the presenters to realize that they are in a safe zone where nobody judges their feelings and thoughts. Instead, everybody is here to carefully listen to them and appreciate the way they express themselves. This is such a good way to make both feel individuals of worth, also strengthening the solidarity and team spirit among the students.

SESSION 1

“Finding happiness in your treasure chest”

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in 2019 indicated that almost 45% of Syrian refugees in Turkey are composed of Syrian children aged five through 18. This is a vulnerable population who was displaced from a country in war and had to start a challenging life in a new country with different challenges. Moreover, the victimization that they are exposed to in the school setting adds more weight to an already unendurable burden that they mentally have. Unfortunately, exposure to community victimization puts these students at greater risk for emotional distress. Therefore, they are unlikely to manage their intense emotions in constructive ways, which may cause them to become verbally or physically aggressive towards their peers or/and teachers. Apparently, these students need to learn how to respond to a highly charged situation in a way that defuses impulsive actions and emotions. In response to this need, they must first recognize and identify emotions in a safe environment.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: The first main skill that this session was associated with SEL is relationship management, relationship building in particular. This is the first session where the students develop new social connections by meeting each other. In the first part of the session, the students are primarily encouraged to leave their comfort zones and collaboratively create a safe zone where they can develop a sense of belonging to the community. Another SEL skill addressed in this session is self-awareness. After they create a safe zone together, they participate in the activities in the second part that

help them gain an awareness of their emotions and bodies. Being aware of what is emotionally going on inside the body and taking control of body movements are initial requirements of developing self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a sub-skill of self-awareness and plays an important role in how we perceive a situation and how we behave in response to that situation.

Activity Plan 1

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- The students will use adjectives to express their feelings when they meet each other.
- Through this activity, the students will jointly create a safe zone where they can develop a sense of belonging.

Materials: Laptop and projection machine

Preparation: To begin, the facilitator greets everyone with a warm smile and says “welcome” while they are entering the room. When everybody is in the room, the facilitator initially asks everyone to put their belongings in the corner of the room and then move unnecessary chairs to the room’s backside. The aim is to have as many chairs as the number of people in the room. Then, the remaining chairs are located around a circle, and everyone sits on a chair.

After the facilitator makes sure that everyone is ready to listen to him, they can start talking. They give a presentation about the scope of the curriculum, the

content of Expressive Arts therapy, and its implementation. Later on, they answers all the questions that the students ask about the briefing.

Sharing space:

- If there is no question left, the facilitator asks everyone, one by one, to tell their name with an adjective whose initial letter is the same as the initial letter of their name. (e.g., Amazing Ali)
- Everybody is asked to repeat the previous names with their adjectives before telling their own names with a specific adjective.
- This continues until the last one tells their name with its specific adjective after repeating all previous names and related adjectives.

Harvesting: Since it is the first time the students get together, they are not so likely to know so much about each other. Considering the possibility that they might feel uncomfortable the first time they enter the classroom, the facilitator must primarily present them with an environment where they are encouraged to develop a sense of belonging. Although the activity's main aim is to make them perfectly repeat the names of all students, the point that the facilitator must take into consideration is the synergy arising among the students. In other words, the facilitator will conduct informal observation to check the levels of enthusiasm and willingness by considering their body language.

Suggested modifications: It may be really hard for some people to keep the names and the adjectives in mind. Given this issue, the facilitator can bring a softball, and students can learn the names of their friends by throwing the ball. In this context, the one who holds the ball is expected to throw it to someone after saying his name. Thus, someone can easily learn others' names while enjoying a good time.

Activity Plan 2

Bridge

Activity type: Meditation

Time: 10 minutes

A recommended song: Yann Tiersen – Comptine d’un autre été – l’après-midi

Expressive objectives:

- The students will use their imagination to describe the happy characteristics of their treasure chests.

Materials: Smartphone or laptop and speaker

Preparation: The students are asked to stand up and move the chairs to the edges of the room so that they can walk easily in the room without hitting any barrier.

Sharing space:

- When everyone gets together around a circle, the facilitator primarily explains what the treasure chest for happiness is.
 - The treasure chest is a metaphor that is used to embody specific emotions, such as happiness. There are diverse treasure chests that keep different emotions inside, and each chest also has a key. If someone wants to elicit the desired emotion, they need to unlock the chest. On the other hand, doing this is not as easy as it seems. This is because most of us do not exactly know the locations of those treasure chests. Now, you are ready to detect where our treasure chest for happiness is.
- Later on, the facilitator turns on the song and asks the students to walk around. While they are walking, the facilitator asks a set of questions for the students to gain a deeper understanding of the metaphor, including:

- What color is your treasure chest?
- How is its appearance?
- Is it big or small?
- Is it hard or soft?
- Is it smooth or rough?
- Is it wet or dry?
- When you knock on the chest, what sound does it make?
- Now, come close and use your nose and smell it. How does it smell?
- Now lick it, and imagine how does it taste?
- Is it sweet or sour?
- They will keep walking while deeply thinking about those questions. Those questions are all related to the five senses. This is because using the five senses enables students to embody the chest while exploring it. Otherwise, this activity with abstract concepts would make no sense to them.
- After exploring the treasure chest's outer surface enough, volunteers will share their thoughts and feelings about this experience at the end of the activity.

Harvesting: There is no need for the facilitator to employ a specific method to assess how well they follow the instructions. The facilitator will give importance to how the volunteers express themselves while talking about their exploration processes.

Suggested modifications: Considering the number of students, this activity can be held as a meditation activity if the room is not large enough. While the students are sitting on the floor, they can close their eyes to feel the moment much better. They can put one hand over their hearts while taking deep breaths to relieve themselves.

Doing this helps them fully concentrate on the exploration of their existing emotions, happiness in particular.

Activity Plan 3

Main activity

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: Hussain Al Jassmi – Boshret Kheir

Expressive objectives:

- The students will observe the effects of the liberated energy on their bodies by dancing.
- They will share their experiences and feelings eliciting from those experiences by considering the changes in their body.

Materials: Smartphone or laptop and speaker

Preparation: The students come together around a circle.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator draws their attention and says:
 - Okay, you have just learned all characteristics of the treasure chest for happiness inside all people. However, you have not opened it yet. There is a great amount of energy inside it. Just close your eyes and feel that energy. It is drifting in the chest like a colorful dragon and waiting for being free. Now, it is time to set the energy free. You will open your treasure chests with the key and liberate the energy. Are you ready?

- The facilitator plays the music and asks the students to follow the rhythm of the music by dancing.
 - Now, you have just liberated energy. Just feel it, all energy flows towards your hands, and your hands are full of energy. It would be best if you allowed the energy to control your hands. Come on, shake your hands.
 - Energy has started to flow into your wrists. Shake your hands and move your wrists at the same time.
 - Energy cannot be stopped, and now it came to your elbows; so, move your elbows.
 - Now, the next station is your shoulders. Let's see how well you are moving your shoulders.
 - Just go with the flow. Move your body like a baby bird.
 - It is time to move your head slowly. First right, then left, up and down. Yes, that is perfect. Try to move your mouth, nose, and ears. Is there anybody that can move their ears?
 - Now, your legs are captivated by the energy. Jump, jump, jump. Non-stop.
- Before the song is over, the facilitator asks the students first to slow down, listen to their heart rhythms and then take deep breaths and calm down.
 - Okay, now stretch your hands and legs. Let's get together around the circle once more.
- The facilitator encourages the students to talk about the experience. In this context, the students are stimulated to share how they feel and what they think about this activity with the rest of the class.

Harvesting:

- Before the activity ends, the facilitator asks the last question to the students:
 - After you opened your treasure chests, energy has spread all over the body, and you danced. But I really wonder, so please tell me where the point that energy started to flow to your hand is in your body.
- The volunteers will answer this question. Detecting the resource of the drive that gets them to dance enthusiastically will help them comprehend the purpose of the activity. Since the purpose is to guide them to gain awareness of their bodies, this is the initial step for them to take control of their emotions in regard to being comfortable while socializing with others.

Suggested modifications: Some students might not have danced in front of others before, which can cause them to feel uneasy. If so, there is a high risk of students shy away and be reluctant for this activity. In such a case, it is strongly recommended that the facilitator should not rush into movement and dance activity, and they takes their time patiently to make the students feel comfortable enough to participate. One solution to that issue is simply extending the warm-up phase to build a trust relationship within the group in the right manner. If that is not applicable, the students are encouraged to close their eyes while dancing. Another suggestion is that the facilitator can go near those students and start dancing in front of them. The facilitator can exaggerate their movements and leaned shoulder to shoulder. After a while, the students are likely to bring their shoulders up to bear the energy coming from the facilitator. This is a good way to understand their feelings better and encourage the students to join the game if they want.

Activity Plan 4

Reflection

Activity type: Visual artmaking

Time Slot: 30 minutes

A recommended song: Amira Medunjanin – Cula Jesam da se dragi zeni

Expressive objectives:

- The students will design a tangible object that represents those inside the treasure chest.
- They will explain what those objects are meant to them.

Materials: Laptop, speaker, cardboard, scissors, glue sticks, crayons, play dough, handmade papers, yarn, a wooden treasure chest.

Preparation: The students bring back the chair in the middle of the room and create a circle again. Finally, they sit on the chair.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator gives the instructions:
 - Well, this is the last activity of the session. So far, we explored the outer surface of that chest, we found its location, and we liberated the energy by opening the chest. However, we forgot to look at what is left inside the treasure chest after the energy is gone. Then, it is time to discover whether there is anything else inside it.
- The students are requested to imagine that they are looking at the inside of the chest. There must be something in it that the students can associate with happiness. At this point, the facilitator must clearly state that it is not important to draw good – the activity does not require any artistic skills.

Otherwise, some students will likely be stressed out to try to come up with a good drawing and focus on that instead of the natural creating process.

- Later on, the facilitator wants them to imagine what that object is. The facilitator gives them some time to imagine that object with a good drawing and focus on that instead of the natural creating process.
- When time is up, they come to the table and pick the necessary materials to make the object they imagine. It is good to remember that the facilitator can bring more materials such as glitter, fabric, and stickers in certain shapes like eyes, animals, letters, etc.
- During the creating process, the facilitator can tell the students to feel free to draw wherever they want to – on the floor, at the table, etc. Secondly, they are requested to exchange the materials with each other.
- When they create the objects of happiness, they will respectively present their objects to the rest of the class.
- After each presentation, the others are expected to show their reactions to the object by providing an aesthetic response, such as making a gesture or taking a pose.
- At the end of the activity, the facilitator puts a wooden chest in the middle of the class and says:
 - Okay, well-done everyone. Now, as you see, this is our treasure chest, and you will keep your objects of happiness inside it. For each session, you will put your works into it whenever we made something in this workshop. If you want, you can paint and decorate the chest.

- Before closing the session, the facilitator reminds the students to keep a diary to write or draw something about what they experienced in the workshop and how it made them feel.

Harvesting: There are four criteria the facilitator should take into consideration, including the materials that the students pick, the objects that they made, the way that they present the object, and the aesthetic responses they provide for each presentation. Especially, here the chosen materials by a student matter- for instance, if one chooses only to use a pencil among all different colorful materials, this might point out that this person tends to be shy or put others' needs before theirs. The thing the facilitator is looking for these four criteria is how well they can reflect students' feelings and thoughts about the session. In other words, the facilitator will not assess how perfect they made the object or whose aesthetic response is much better, as always.

Suggested modifications: The students can have difficulties while making objects or presenting them. The facilitator can provide instructional assistance unless they does not manipulate students by trying to impose their own ideas. If they want, the facilitator can put all objects on the table and take a photo of the students with those objects. Later on, the facilitator can frame this photo and hang it somewhere in the room, which can also increase the students' sense of belonging.

SESSION 2

“Turn over a new leaf in an alternative world”

In the alternative world of EXA, participants are stimulated to use all their senses and increase their awareness and perceptions of themselves and each other. In this framework, they are expected to become more responsive to the needs of their inner souls as well as the life in the outer world. One way to activate all senses in the art-making process is to use the novel narrative genres to share their stories with others in the form of non-verbal approaches. Those approaches help participants define themselves through symbols coming from a combination of their senses and imaginations, illustrating both feelings and acts of that symbol will not as hard as taking control over their acts and emotions. This is because those symbols do not have suppressed traumatic experiences as participants have. Therefore, students can safely access, process, and reflect in a manner that elicits the feelings of those symbols' inner souls through role-playing. Over time, they are also expected to find the courage to follow the same steps to regulate their own intense emotions.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: The main of the session is related to help-seeking, which is one of the sub-competencies of self-management. Accordingly, the activities in the session are designed in relation to the purpose of guiding the students to define themselves through symbols that they put into artwork and dance. Those symbols guide students to gain new perspectives to externalize their thoughts and feelings without words, especially when expressing the experiences verbally does not work. Secondly, another skill that the session is associated with SEL is social awareness, empathy in

particular. In this sense, the session aims to build empathy among students by helping them create a trusting environment for sharing to take place. In this trusting environment, students are expected to work together, observe other students' acts and understand others' views and feelings.

Activity Plan 5

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 15 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- The students will describe their moods through a specific color.
- They will explain their personality traits through the season that they like at most.

Materials: None

Preparation: They will put their belongings to one edge of the class and move unnecessary chairs edges of the room as a weekly routine. Lastly, they will place their chairs around a circle.

Sharing space:

- After everyone sits on their chairs, the facilitator asks several questions, including:
 - How are you?
 - How was your week?
 - Which color are you today and why?

- After they answer these questions, the facilitator asks the last question of the activity:
 - Now, please tell me what your favorite season is like?
- They tell their favorite seasons by explaining the reasons.

Harvesting: In this activity, the facilitator will utilize a different strategy to find out about their current mood and the traits of the students. Accordingly, the facilitator will ask them to assess their current mood and traits through the color they chose and the characteristics of their favorite season. The facilitator will check whether they make a connection between them in an intended manner.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator can use visual aids. For example, they can hang various photos related to each session on the board to facilitate their thinking process.

Activity Plan 6

Bridge

Activity type: Visual artmaking

Time: 20 minutes

A recommended song: Constantino Carrara – Game of thrones

Expressive objectives:

- The students will make a representative object to express their favorite season.
- They will appraise the work of their friends through an aesthetic response.

Materials: Smartphone, speaker, cardboard, yarn, crayons, watercolor paint set, glue, scissors, sticks

Preparation: Since the students will individually keep sitting during the activity, there is nothing specific for them to do in the preparation process. Meanwhile, the facilitator puts the activity materials on the table.

Sharing space:

- Before the facilitator plays the music, they asks each student to think of a specific object representing their favorite season.
- When the students are ready, the facilitator asks them to come and pick the materials on the table to make the object they imagined.
- Meanwhile, the facilitator turns on the music.
- While they are making that object, the students are expected to share the materials with their peers.
- After they made the objects, the facilitator encourages them to present the object to the rest of the class by explaining why they preferred to do it.
- After each presentation, others are expected to give an aesthetic response to value the artwork and the endeavor of the presenter. At this point, it is important to bear in mind that here aesthetic response is not the point but the creation. Therefore, students should know what you mean by the aesthetic response. Otherwise, if someone's artwork is commented as being ugly or meaningless, this detracts them from the anticipated curriculum outcomes.

Harvesting: The facilitator will regard neither the objects they choose to make nor their appearances. They can even make an imaginary object that does not exist in nature. The important point that the facilitator should consider is the reason that the students make those objects. The facilitator will strive to perceive whether those objects mean anything to their creators.

Suggested modifications: If there is a limited time for the rest of the activities, the facilitator asks them to draw pictures of the objects rather than making them.

However, considering the aim of the following activity, drawing a picture will not be as effective as making it.

Activity Plan 7

Main activity

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 30 minutes

A recommended song: Mark Eliyahu - Journey

Expressive objectives:

- The students will dramatize the acts of the object they made to develop a sense of empathy.
- Through the sense of empathy, the pairs will experience how to work together in the group setting.

Materials: Smartphone and speaker

Preparation: The facilitator requests everyone to move the chairs to empty sides of the room so that they can freely dance without any barriers. After that, everyone comes back and gathers around a circle.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator gives clear instructions about what the students should do.
 - Okay, you did a great job, and I am looking at the beautiful objects, and I can say that I am really impressed.
 - Now, please take your object and stick it over your heart.
- The facilitator turns on the music.

- When you feel ready, please close your eyes. Now visualize your object. It is right in front of you. Look at it, how does it look like? Now slowly come closer to it. Maybe you want to hug it. Now try to feel it. You being are one- you are transforming into it. How does it feel? How does it feel to be this object?"
- Now just imagine that you are looking at the world from the eyes of the object that you made.
- Now, it is time to explore your object. To do this, please remember how we explore the outer surface of our chest of happiness. So, while doing this, consider these questions including:
 - a.) Is the object that you made solid or liquid?
 - b.) Is it soft or tough like a rock?
 - c.) How is its surface? (Smooth, thorny, sticky, etc.)
- The facilitator stops talking for a while and gives them time to explore their objects while listening to music.
- When time is up, the facilitator pauses the music.
- They open their eyes and become ready for new instructions.
 - You explored pretty many things about your objects. Now, it is time to move your objects.
 - It does not matter what your object is. It can be a leaf, a single drop of rain, or a tiny snowflake. It is okay.
 - Now, imagine again that acting as if you were that object.
 - You are independently drifting in the air.
 - After a while, you will start to fall down the ground due to gravity.

- I will re-play music again, and I want you to dramatize how that object will fall to the ground by dancing.
- Do it in slow motion, and please just feel the moment.
- In line with this instruction, the facilitator re-plays the music, and the students dance as if they are drifting in the air. Later on, they start to fall down to the ground slowly.
- After they landed the ground, the first phase of the main activity will be completed.
- Secondly, the facilitator randomly pairs them with each other.
- In this concept, the pairs are requested to dance together in harmony, and the choreography reveals as a result of the collaboration between the pairs.
- Each pair is expected to finish their dancing with a common aesthetic response.
- Finally, everyone gets around a circle again and shares their ideas about their experiences.
- At this point, the facilitator should especially ask them how they feel when they work with someone in collaboration.

Harvesting: In this activity, they are encouraged to look at life from the eyes of the inanimate object. Mostly, it can be quite challenging for us to act or think like somebody else. To achieve this, we need to develop a sense of empathy and caring attributes to the world outside of us. To this aim, the facilitator will conduct informal observation to give importance to their non-verbal communication tools, including body language, gestures, and mimics when they individually dance. In the second phase of the activity, the facilitator should especially ask them how they feel when

they work with someone in a collaboration. Their answer to this question will be another criterion that the facilitator will observe.

Suggested modifications: In the beginning, while they are exploring the characteristics of the object, it may be hard for them to keep concentrating on the task. They can simply laugh or open their eyes. To prevent them from doing this, the facilitator makes some modifications to keep them on the task. For example, the facilitator can request them to touch their faces with their hands and move their hands around their faces and their hairs. Since they will imagine their faces and hairs as the surface of the objects they live inside, this is a good way to embody abstract concepts for the students. Secondly, they do not have to plan a choreography while dancing with their pairs. The only thing that they can take into consideration is to dance in harmony with their pairs. The students should be informed about this before dancing together.

Activity Plan 8

Reflection

Activity type: Drawing mandalas

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: Nessi Gomes – All related

Expressive objectives:

- The students will draw mandalas as a way of self-reflection about this activity.
- They will explain what the symbols forming their mandalas mean to be in their own reality.

Materials: Smartphone or laptop, speaker, drawing paper, crayons, sticker

Preparation: The students bring back the chairs and place them in such a way that the chairs form a circle in the middle of the class. Later on, they sit down and become ready for the instructions.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator primarily explains what mandala is and why they will draw a mandala in this activity.
- Secondly, the facilitator asks them to stick the object that they made in the middle of the paper and draw the mandala around the object.
- Then, the facilitator will explain the reason behind doing this.
 - The reason for putting the object at the center is that these objects represent your life. Since drawing mandala refers to a life journey within the individual viewer, the objects represent the heart that initiates the journey. In other words, the energy that forms your mandala comes from that object in the middle of the paper.
- After everything is clear, the students come and pick papers and crayons to draw a mandala.
- When they sit down and are ready for drawing, the facilitator opens the music and allows them to draw.
- Each mandala is expected to have a name.
- After everybody finishes drawing, the facilitator asks everyone to present their mandalas one by one. During the presentation, they are requested to explain their mandalas in detail.

Harvesting: Although we, as human beings, maintain to live in the same body for a lifespan, most of us do not know any remarkable thing about the home that they live in. This is because we are not mainly responsive to the needs of the psychological

needs of our bodies. Drawing mandala is a way of first thinking deeply about such needs and then fulfilling them. Through mandalas, the students should figure out why they put that object in the middle of the mandala and the symboling meanings of those objects. To answer these questions, they need to speak to their inner voices privately through the facilitator's guidance. The outcome of that speech will form the essence of their mandalas, and the point that the facilitator will check is how well they visualize those speeches on their mandalas. The way they present their mandalas will give insight into the facilitator about this consideration.

Suggested modifications: Since they are unlikely to know about the mandala, the facilitator may want to show a pair of plain mandala pictures as a sample. However, this can prevent them from using their creative skills; so, it is not recommended. As a second option, the facilitator can simply inform the students about what mandala is and how to form it through a PowerPoint presentation.

SESSION 3

“Gaining awareness of the personal and social zones”

In daily life, people mostly have trouble using proxemics in their interactions with others. Proxemics basically refers to the amount of space that people prefer to have while communicating with each other. In other words, when we engage in conversation with someone we love, we prefer to stand closer. Whereas we tend to stand further back if that person is someone we do not know well. There are four distinct proxemics zones that influence the way we interact with others in daily life. Those proxemics are respectively inmate, personal, social, and public distance. Gaining an awareness of the differences between zones and drawing their borders accordingly can help people prevent misunderstandings. Otherwise, no matter how good our body language is, being unaware of violating someone's personal zone might make that person uncomfortable and unsafe. Given this issue, all of us need to learn how to use proxemics in the right manner.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: The activities in this session are designed to help students to understand how to organize their proxemics according to their interactions with different people and how the organization of the proxemics affects their behaviors, communication, and social interaction. Understanding the role of proxemics in their lives helps students develop more effective social awareness and self-management skills.

What is meant by developing those skills is showing respect for others' personal space and using body language to express their discomfort if someone invades their personal space without permission.

Activity Plan 9

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 10 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- Students will share whether there is any art discipline they are keen on.

Materials: None

Preparation: Since it is the third session, the students will inherently know what to do when they come to class. Even if the facilitator is late, they can do the weekly routine without waiting for the instructions.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator will follow the same steps of the warm-up activity of the second session.
- What is different is that the facilitator will ask each of them specifically which art activity that they love at most rather than asking about their favorite weather.
- Since the rest of the activities in the third session requires much more time, the warm-up activity consciously has been kept short.

Harvesting: Since the following three activities require so much effort and total presence, this activity is important for the students to get rid of unnecessary thoughts

irrelevant to this session. At the end of the activity, the facilitator will check whether they are mentally and physically ready for other activities by considering their mood and body language.

Suggested modifications: No modification is needed.

Activity Plan 10

Bridge

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: The Black-Eyed Peas – Let's get started

Expressive objectives:

- The students will individually dance according to three-dimensional proxemic zones existing in the social setting.

Materials: Smartphone and speaker

Preparation: The chairs are move to the edges of the room, and then the students get around in a circle.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator gives some information about the activity that they will make in detail. One note is that facilitator should better explain those proxemics. Otherwise, students can feel a bit confused. Given this issue, the proxemics was divided into three main categories in this activity.
 - Well, there are three different zones that people have in their daily lives. In the literature, they are known as proxemics. You can think of them like nested circles, and nobody can enter those zones without your permission.

- The first one is your private zone. That zone entirely belongs to you. The people who can enter this zone are those who have an intimate relationship with you, such as family members, close friends.
- The second one is the medium zone, where you more officially talk to people whom you know.
- The name of the last one is the large zone. The people that you allow to enter this zone are those that either you barely know, or you do not know at all. These people include ones sitting near you on public transportation or the students you see every day at the school but are not your friend.
- Today, we will discover all of these zones.
- Before dancing, the facilitator tells them what to do and then plays music.
 - We will now start to discover our private zone, which is relatively smaller than other zones.
 - Let's start dancing. Slowly move your hands, arms, body, legs, and head, but please do not stretch your hands and feet forward for now. Keep your hands close to your body, and do not raise to your feet. Can you do it?

Come on; I want to see who can dance this way. We are the laziest animal in the world, we want to dance, but we do not want to make so much effort.
 - Now it is time to speed up, just follow the rhythm of the music, start moving by dancing. I want you to move your feet, stretch your hands forward. Open your chest and let the energy flow all over your body. You should use your hands more effectively. But do not exaggerate; we have not been driven crazy yet. We should wait.

- Now, we enter our large zones; we can go crazy as you want. Feel your body is shaking. Directly, just jump as much as you can. I want to see who can jump at the highest point. Imagine that there is an apple tree in front of us. Why do not we just collect those apples? Come on, reach the top of the tree. Jump and stretch your hands as much as you can. Turn around yourself by dancing and just go with the flow.
- After the music ends, the activity reaches closure. Meanwhile, the facilitator observes the dance and gives feedback based on what has emerged during the dance session.
- After the activity, the students are requested to talk about their ideas and feelings related to the experience that they just had.

Harvesting: The main aim of this activity is to help them gain awareness of social zones. They need to know that nobody can touch them without their permission, or they cannot touch anybody without their permission. They are requested to compare and contrast the characteristics of these zones. At the end of the activity, their answers should address these objectives, which is the criterion that the facilitator should consider.

Suggested modifications: Before the music is over, the facilitator can ask them to randomly pass through one zone to another by dancing. For example, while they are dancing according to the requirements of the large zone, the facilitator can ask them to turn back to the private zone, and they can dance this way. After a while, the facilitator can also ask them to turn back to the large zone, and they can skip the middle zone while dancing. As a second option, the facilitator can give them free time to move in whatever zone they want to and have some time there.

Activity Plan 11

Main activity

Activity type: Clay work

Time: 30 minutes

A recommended song: Ludovico Einaudi – Una Mattina

Expressive objectives:

- Students will work in pairs to write a story about a clay statue they created together by expressing their first impression of the zone that they share with their pairs.

Materials: Smartphone and speaker, packets of clay, a large cover

Preparation: The facilitator lays a large cover on the ground. The facilitator randomly pairs them. The pairs sit down on the floor, and the facilitator gives a packet of clay and a glass of water to each pair. The size of the clay should be big enough so that pairs can easily be engaged in the activity. In this activity, one kg of clay for each pair will be most possibly enough to work together. Apart from randomization, the facilitator can also ask them to be pairs – there are methods for grouping like asking them to wander in the room and find someone with whom they feel a connection, etc.

Sharing space:

- When everybody is ready to listen, the facilitator gives a briefing about the activity.
 - Remember how you danced in the last activity.
 - Now, I want you to think deeply about how you felt during the activity.
 - You will close your eyes and cooperatively shape the clay with your partner. While you use your fingers to shape it, let your feelings move

your fingers since your fingers are full of huge energy coming from your feelings right now. Did you remember “the treasure chest for happiness”?

- Another thing that you are expected to do is follow the music's rhythm, just feel the moment.
- Pairs close their eyes, and the facilitator opens the music. Each partner starts to shape one side of the clay.
- Before music ends, the facilitator allows them to know about time as coming to an end.
 - Let's finish in 2 minutes.
- When the music ends, the facilitator asks them to open their eyes and look at what they made together.
- The facilitator gives them some time to talk about the artwork that they have just made.
- The facilitator also asks them to give a name to that unique (original) name and to create a background story related to that artwork.

Harvesting: The facilitator will conduct informal observation to respond to the group dynamics of each pair and the harmony in the groups without any interruption. Besides, their willingness and enthusiasm are other criteria that the facilitator will pay attention to.

Suggested modifications: No recommended modification.

Activity Plan 12

Reflection

Activity type: Creative expression

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- Students listen to each other's stories about clay statues.
- They provide an individual aesthetic response for each artwork.

Materials: None

Preparation: No need for preparation. A quick transition between the main and the reflection activity can be made. On the other hand, the facilitator maybe gives them some time to wash their hands before the reflection activity.

Sharing space:

- When they are ready for the presentation, the facilitator asks each group to show their artwork to the rest of the class.
- Later on, they are stimulated to explain the object's name and what that name means. The meaning of that name will refer to the background story of that object. (For example, the name of the object is Firavunus Kevgiryán, the name means the place where the first fish, stepping on the land, ate the last dinner at sea before reaching the land, according to certain theories related to the evolution.)
- Meanwhile, each time a pair shares their objects and the stories of those objects with the rest of the class, the others are requested to provide an aesthetic response to appreciate the efforts of pairs.
- When the activity is over, the facilitator brings the treasure chest, and they put their objects into that chest.
- Before closing the session, the facilitator encourages them to talk about their overall experience related to this activity.

Harvesting: The facilitator will assess the improvement of their creative skills while presenting their objects with their background stories. They will also pay attention to role distribution between the group members. Thirdly, they are requested to relate the content of the main and reflection activity to what they did in the bridge activity when they talk about their feelings and thoughts before closing the session. To this end, the facilitator can guide them by asking the pop-up questions. Lastly, the way the others analyze the objects and their background stories and their aesthetic responses to the presented object are other criteria that the facilitator will consider.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator can stimulate them to put their objects together to create a single artwork belonging to the whole class. In this aspect, this artwork belongs to the whole class. Doing this can be beneficial in regard to strengthening friendship ties.

SESSION 4

“Developing mindfulness about the inner self.”

People sometimes have some trouble with describing their experiences and sharing feelings with words. In the imaginary space of EXA, those kinds of experiences are represented by symbols that come from a combination of the five senses and imagination of individuals. In this sense, participants are encouraged to use symbols to create an artistic expression of their inner worlds. Therefore, using symbols help them communicate their feelings that were not previously available to them. Furthermore, communicating their feelings and explaining them through different art forms help them raise awareness of their bodies in its sensation, coming and going of intense emotions. In this sense, EXA is an effective means for people to recognize the emotions and their impacts on themselves, especially the one with the “self.” Exploring the “self” also provides people with a clearer understanding of how to take control of their emotions and thoughts.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: The main SEL skills that this session addresses are self-awareness and self-management. Accordingly, this session combines the benefits of meditation training within the structure of the EXA framework. Engaging in meditation provides a safe environment where the students concentrate on their “inner self” to evaluate their own characters, feelings, and thoughts through different symbols taking place in the activities. Being mindful of the self helps the students also have an enhanced ability to effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience, leading to the mitigation of certain emotions like anxiety, stress, and anger.

Activity Plan 13

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 15 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- The students will imagine what kind of tree they would be.
- They will compare their traits with the characteristics of the tree they want to be.

Materials: None

Preparation: The same weekly routine.

Sharing space:

- When everyone sits on the chairs, the facilitator asks routine questions.
- They also asks the students to define their moods through a specific color (for example, today I feel yellow because ...)
- In the second phase of the activity, the facilitator asks them to imagine what kind of tree they would be if they were a tree.
 - Are you a shrub or a long tree like a giant sequoia?
 - Are you a thin tree such as a pine or a large tree such as a willow?
 - Where do you live? (in a desert, in the forest, in the city, etc.)
 - Imagine what kind of leaves that you have, are your leaves are thorny or large and smooth, or do you not have any leaves?
 - Think about what kind of creatures you welcomingly host?
 - Imagine what kind of fruits you have?

- The facilitator can increase or reduce the number of questions according to the moods of the students.

Harvesting: In this activity, the facilitator will not measure the level of their botanical knowledge. Instead, the facilitator will guide them to evaluate their traits through the characteristics of a tree. Integrating with a tree and assessing their personality via a tree will help them know themselves much better. In line with these expectations, the facilitator will check whether the characteristics of the trees that they chose corresponds to anything in their inner realities by considering their interpretations.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator does not have to give a specific tree type to embody the concept questions. In case that the facilitator gives certain tree names, they can support the questions by showing the photos of these trees. Although doing this may limit students' imagination, but also help students to remember the types of trees.

Activity Plan 14

Bridge

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 15 minutes

A recommended song: Cirque du Soleil - Alegria

Expressive objectives:

- Pairs will jointly choreograph and reflect on a dance that simulates how two different kinds of trees change over the seasons

Materials: Smartphone and speaker

Preparation: The same weekly routine continues.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator explains what the students are expected to do.
 - First, you will randomly be matched with each other, and each group member will perform the seasonal changes in the tree that they imagine, meaning that since you will imagine different kinds of trees, your moves during the choreography will be different. In this sense, diversity in the movements will enrich the content of the choreography.
- After they are paired, each pair cooperatively creates a choreographed dance to show the seasonal changes in the tree they imagined in the warm-up.
- After the pairs decide what to do, the class will stand in two rows with one partner on each side, so they form a corridor between them.
- The facilitator will turn on the music.
- When the music begins, the pair at the front of the line will walk together down the corridor between the other pairs of students. As they walk, they should dramatize their dance moves.
- Each group that has just performed will be added to the end of the corridor, and this activity will continue until the last group performs their choreography by passing through the corridor.

Harvesting: In this activity, regardless of the choreographed dance that each pair performed, the students are requested to relate these seasonal changes with the changes in their mood when they interpret their thoughts and feelings about the activity.

Suggested modification: The facilitator can let them decide to become a pair with someone that they want. However, in this case, some of them can be excluded, which should be avoided. Therefore, randomization can be seen as the best option to form

groups. In this sense, the facilitator can employ different strategies to create groups randomly. As a second option, if someone has no partner, the facilitator can take the initiative and partner with the unpaired one.

Activity Plan 15

Main Activity

Activity type: Meditation activity

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: Andrew Bird – Gypsy Moth

Expressive objectives:

- Students will reflect on symbols they envision during guided imagery.

Materials: Smartphone and speaker, cushions

Preparation: The facilitator distributes everyone a cushion. They sit over the cushions on the floor and take a meditation position.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator will request them to close their eyes and concentrate on their chests' movements by taking deep breaths. Doing this helps them purify their minds from unnecessary thoughts. Getting rid of such thoughts makes them relieved and ready for the activity.
- After they listen to their own breath sounds for a while, the facilitator plays the music and starts speaking.
 - Now, you are in the middle of the forest. You are looking around, but you cannot see anything but long trees.
 - You hear a sound, a beautiful sound that you have not heard before. Raise your head and look up.

- You see a bird with colorful wings, and it is looking at you, as well. It is acting as if it tries to communicate with you.
- It drops something from its mouth, and you grab it in the air.
- Put that thing in your pocket and look up again. However, you did not see anything. It disappeared. Where is the bird?
- You need to find it. To this end, you start to run. There is no path or something like that. You have to run through trees. Run as fast as you can but watch out; I do not want you to crash a tree and get injured.
- Look around while running; maybe the bird is hiding somewhere behind the trees. You do not want to miss it.
- Now, you are both tired and thirsty. What will you do? You need to drink water. Are you helpless?
- You noticed that your shoelaces are untied; you need to tie them again to keep moving. You bend over to tie them. Meanwhile, you hear a river sound. Tie your shoelaces quickly and stand up again. You need to drink water. In response to this need, you start walking again although you are so tired.
- Now, you have just got out of the wooded area. You come to the river near a beautiful waterfall in the rocky mountains. Immerse your hand in the water and feel how cold water it is. You do not have time to drink the water slowly. Therefore, immerse your head in the cold water. Now, you are free to drink the water of the whole river. Come on, start drinking.
- Your belly is now full of water. Raise your head again, and look, you see that bird opposite the side of the river. The bird is singing again for you.

- You should cross the river to catch the bird. How will you do it? Take your shoes and socks out and put your bare feet into the cold water. You start walking in the river, now just feel the tiny stones in the riverbed, you are crossing the river by stepping on the stones.
- Well done, you finally set your feet on land again, and interestingly enough, the bird did not move or disappear. It is waiting for you.
- Come close to the bird and take the object out of your pocket.
- That object belongs to that beautiful bird. Just hand it to that bird.
- It grabs the object with its mouth.
- He flies again, and you are looking at it until it disappears again.
- Now, smile and wave goodbye to that bird.
- The song is over, and the facilitator keeps talking:
 - Now, it is time to wake up but first, take deep breaths again and slowly open your eyes after a while.
- After they open their eyes, the facilitator distributes a glass of cold water to everyone since they can be thirsty at the end of the journey.
- Later on, the volunteer students will talk about how they feel during their adventures.

Harvesting: Although all students go on the same adventure and overcome the same obstacles in this adventure, what this adventure means to them will be absolutely different. This is because the main hero of this adventure is different for each student. In line with this fact, each student is requested to interpret this adventure after speaking with their inner voice via the facilitator's guiding questions.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator can use different nature sounds according to the context of the story rather than one specific song. For example, when the

students arrive at the river to drink water, they can listen to the flowing river sound.

This can help them to concentrate better on the task. Apart from that, the story can be extended or shortened according to the time and mood of the students.

Activity Plan 16

Reflection

Activity type: Collage work

Time: 35 minutes

A recommended song: FORESTT – To the sea

Expressive objectives:

- Each student will design a collage work to express insights and understanding of their experiences during the session.

Materials: Newspapers, magazines, colorful paper, scissors, glue

Preparation: The students will sit on their chairs again, and the facilitator puts the materials on the table.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator primarily explains what collage work is.
 - The collage work can contain written communication forms such as sentences and punctuation marks apart from pictures and visual symbols.
- Then, they asks everyone to remember the object dropped from the bird's mouth.
- After the students remember what kind of object they carried in their pocket, the facilitator asks them to reveal that object in the middle of the paper by using newspaper and magazine pieces.

- Secondly, the facilitator also asks them to decorate the rest of the paper by considering the energy elicited through their feelings and ideas related to the main activity.
- When it is done, the students are expected to present these collages by explaining their parts in detail.
- Whenever someone finishes their presentation, others are requested to provide an aesthetic response to each other, as usual.
- Finally, the facilitator requests them to hang their collage works all over the walls in the room before closing the session.

Harvesting: The collage work enables the students both to embody their experiences and elicit their feelings related to the previous three activities. Considering its functions, the shape of the object they draw at the center of the collage and the decoration surrounding the object will give an idea to the facilitator about the effects of the adventure on the students. Secondly, they are also expected to make their collage works clear to everyone by explaining the underlying meanings of the symbols that form the collages in detail, including what that object means to them. Their explanations will help the facilitator to check to what extent the aims of the session are fulfilled. As an example, the object, as a concept, refers to a metaphor that takes the students from the habitual world to an alternative world and safely brings them back to the habitual world again at the end of the journey.

Suggested modifications: If the facilitator observes that some of the students had some difficulties in regard to keeping on the task in the previous activity, this activity may turn into group work.

SESSION 5

“I believe therefore I am”

Hundreds of thousands of refugee children with their families have had to flee with their families to neighboring countries to avoid the destructive effects of the civil war in Syria. Although Turkey's resettlement program can provide a sense of safety and relief for Syrian refugees, it is not the end of the story. Instead, it is just a beginning. Unfortunately, the fate of these children will continue being surrounded by a cycle of hopelessness, fury, and marginalization unless their current oppressive path cannot be altered. Their path can be changed only when they dream of changing it. In this aspect, dreaming of a brighter future is the first step to make it possible. One way to keep them faithful to break the cycle of hopelessness is to support their dreams without judging them. Being heard and understood by others can help these children to have the belief that they can achieve influence over the conditions that negatively affect their lives. As a result, building belief in their own capacities strengthens their self-efficacy. An increase in their self-efficacy level guides them to perceive a situation better and learn how to cope with that situation better.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: The main skills that this session is associated with SEL are self-awareness and relationship management. This session primarily aims to stimulate the students to think about their dreams and share those dreams with the rest of the class. Secondly, it helps them gain awareness of the force inside them through tree and wind metaphors. In this framework, the force can be regarded as the combination of all

positive stimuli that activate people to pursue their dreams, including enthusiasm, will, perseverance, courage. Lastly, they are expected to relate the force inside them with the dreams that they have. Being mindful of the force inside them refers to confidence in their abilities.

Activity Plan 17

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 15 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objective:

- The students will express the effect of the current weather on their mood.

Materials: None

Preparation: There is nothing that the students are expected to do except for the routine.

Sharing space:

- After the students answer the simple questions, including how they are and how was their week, the facilitator asks the following question based on the weather.
 - e.g., Today, the weather is rainy and cold a bit. How do you feel in the rainy weather? Do you like rainy weather?
- The facilitator encourages them to support their feelings with specific reasons through follow-up questions as long as he is sure that these reasons are not directly related to traumatic experiences. To this end, the facilitator may

prefer to ask relatively more structured questions like the question given above.

Harvesting: Our body is an open system, meaning that our interaction with the environment and communication with people around us positively and negatively affect us. Being aware of this fact helps us detect the problem's source and cope with that problem accordingly. Talking about the effects of the weather on us is just an example that the facilitator can employ to raise their self-awareness. In this aspect, the facilitator will evaluate whether they get the main idea of the activity by considering their interpretations.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator can vary those questions by adhering to the context and the mood of the students. Apart from the daily weather, they can ask about their daily routines, an interesting aspect of their traits, their favorite course in school, etc.

Activity Plan 18

Bridge

Activity type: Play activity

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- Each student will play a game in which they share their biggest future dreams with their peers.
- They will explain why the content of their future dreams has changed that much during the activity.

Materials: A small bell

Preparation: All chairs are moved to the edges of the room, and then the students get together around a circle.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator gives the instructions.
 - I want you to think about what the activity is you would like to do at most in the future. Please try to feel free as much as you can while imagining it.
- The facilitator gives them some time to think, and after a while, they start walking in the room.
- When the facilitator rings the bell, they stop.
 - Now, please look around and talk to the person who is the nearest to you. I want both of you to share your dreams in one minute.
- After they share their future dreams, they will exchange their dreams, meaning that each student will be the other guy's dream carrier.
- In the next round, they will share the dream they get from their pairs instead of their own dreams.
- When time is up, they will keep walking, and the facilitator will ring the bell again after a while.
- In this case, the new pairs will also exchange the dreams that they get from their previous pairs.
- This cycle will continue a few times more.
- At the end of the activity, everyone will gather together around a circle.
- The facilitator will randomly ask someone to share the latest dream that they gets.
- When that student shares this dream, the facilitator will ask who the actual dream owner is.

- When the dream owner is found, the facilitator will ask that student whether his dream is changed compared to its original version. Since that dream is transmitted from person to person many times in a short time, its content is likely to be changed quite a lot.
- Similar to that student, the facilitator will ask others to share the dreams that they have and then try to match the dreams with their real owners.
- Meanwhile, other students are also requested to compare the latest version of their dreams with their original versions.
- In the end, the volunteer students share their ideas and feelings related to the activity.

Harvesting: People do not want to dream about the future if they are sure that those dreams will not come true. However, when the dream turns into a belief, nothing stands in the way of realizing that dream. Then, people should not hesitate to dream, no matter how big it is. In this aspect, this activity aims to stimulate students to dream about the future without any hesitation via a play activity. To this end, it is crucial to make dreaming of becoming an enjoyable action. Accordingly, the facilitator will assess the level of their enthusiasm and happiness by considering the changes in their body language during the activity.

Suggested modifications: At the beginning of the activity, if someone says that she does not have a big dream, the facilitator can explain what makes a dream bigger. In this aspect, the facilitator can stimulate them to associate their current feelings, desires, and ideas with any dream that they have. Secondly, if the dream owner cannot be found, the facilitator should not insist on finding that person.

Activity Plan 19

Main activity

Activity type: Meditation

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: Sound of strong howling wind

Expressive objectives:

- Students will simulate the three different growth stages of a tree through dance and will empathize with this tree as it withstands hardship such as strong winds.

Materials: A finger bell

Preparation: Before moving to the next activity, the facilitator checks the readiness level of the students by asking certain questions, including:

- As you remember, we had some tree-themed activities in previous weeks. Although we did a great job, I need some clarifications.
- For example, do we know what a tree is or what are the essential elements that make a tree a tree?
- The students should at least say root, leaves, and trunk while defining a tree.
- After the facilitator gets some satisfactory answers, they become ready to experience the main activity.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator primarily asks the students to make the circle larger in a manner that they do not touch each other when they horizontally open their arms.
- After it is done, the facilitator gives instructions for the activity. Accordingly, the activity consists of three different phases. In each phase, they will

illustrate a tree in different forms including, a sapling, a young tree that bears fruit, and an old tree with strong roots, and in each form, they are requested to act as if they resist strong howling wind.

- In the first phase, the facilitator plays music and says:
 - Okay, now we are familiar with being a tree. First of all, take a tree posture.
- Here, the facilitator gives them a starting point for standing like a tree. There is a yoga pose called “Vrikshasana”/tree pose in English. The first phase can start with that pose, and the students can change it to a different standing form in accordance with the next instructions.
 - Do not forget that you are just tiny; close your eyes and feel the sound of strong howling wind. It is blowing hard, and you are resisting. I want to see that wind is trying to tear your leaves. Where are your leaves?
 - Move your arms up and down, right, and left.
 - Now, it is determined to remove your roots from the soil. No matter how strong it is, I want you to stand up, come on, just show me how durable you are.
- In line with the instruction, the students are here expected to move their bodies back and forth. They can also raise their feet up to act as if they have great difficulty in the windy weather.
- The same steps are also taken for the following two phases. However, the older the trees become, the easier they can resist strong wind.
- The facilitator must give the instructions in the following steps accordingly.
In other words, they should move relatively less in the following two phases

while resisting. The instructions given by the facilitator should give insight into this criterion to the students.

- At the end of the activity, the volunteer students share their ideas about how they feel during the main activity.
- Besides, the students also ask them whether they feel any energy that reveals inside while trying to stand up. If any, the student encourages them to explain in detail.

Harvesting: There is a famous quote from the Star Wars movie, which is “May the force be with you.” The Jedis in the movie need to concentrate on the force to feel and awaken it. Not only Jedi but also all of us have that force waiting for being awakened. We need that force at the maximum level to realize our dreams. In response to this need, the facilitator will assess how well they elicit that force while handling hardship in this activity by considering their thoughts and feelings. Besides, the facilitator will also check whether they gain awareness of their will and perseverance through tree and wind metaphors by observing their movements during the activity.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator can ask them to imagine one specific tree and request them to illustrate the movements of the tree according to three different wind types that have different speeds. In this case, the facilitator can turn up or down the music volume according to the wind type. In this manner, the students can concentrate on the task much better.

Activity Plan 20

Reflection

Activity type: Creative writing

Time: 35 minutes

A recommended song: Alex Cuba & Pedro Capo - Suspendidos en el Tiempo

Expressive objectives:

- The students will present a “Yes, I can” poem that they write
- The students will provide an aesthetic response to each other’s poems.

Materials: Paper and pencil

Preparation: All chairs are moved to the edges of the room except one. The students with a pencil and blank paper go and sit on the chairs.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator gives the instructions:
 - Thus far, we shared our dreams with the rest of the class, and we acted like a tree in three different forms that stand up by resisting strong wind.
 - In other words, all of us have a dream, no matter how big it is, and when the strong wind blew, we had a purpose. Our purpose was not to collapse, and I can proudly say that we achieved it. Please do not forget that we are strong, and we can do whatever we want.
 - Now, I request you to write a poem titled “Yes, I can.” No matter how long it is, I want to hear how you feel while resisting the strong wind. Please intensely focus on the force that is revealed inside you during the main activity.
 - Imagine the characteristics of that force, meaning that I want to know whether it totally flows to all parts of your body or was the force just accumulated in one specific part of your body.
 - What is more, I want to know whether that force reveals again when you handle an issue, or it was an exception to this activity.
 - Now, come on, the stage is yours.
- The students write their poems by considering the instructions above.

- When they are done, they get together around a circle again.
- Meanwhile, in the right middle of the circle, there will be a chair.
- After the facilitator opens the music, the students will start turning around the circle.
- The one who feels ready will step up onto the chair and read out aloud the poem that they has just written. After students read their poems, others will provide an aesthetic response, and they will get off the chair.
- All students will repeat the same action as long as they want to do that.
- Before closing the session, the facilitator encourages them to talk about the experience and explain how they feel.

Harvesting: The facilitator will observe to what extent those students determine the relationship between their dreams and the criteria they must develop to realize those dreams. In this sense, their poems titled “Yes, I can” will give insight into the facilitator about their emotional development and improvement of their self-esteem.

Suggested modifications: The facilitator can ask them to write just a stanza. In this sense, everyone will be given equal time to read his poem. Second, they may have difficulties in writing a poem in Turkish. Therefore, it can be better to allow them to write that poem in their mother tongue. However, it is a tough decision since it may be a problem for the facilitator to understand what they read. In this sense, they can write something so simple in Turkish as a third option.

SESSION 6

“Accept and love yourself as you are.”

Martin Luther King JR. says that “darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that” (Ulrey, 2021, p.3). Similar to this consideration, according to the studies, when we love people around us and make an effort to make them happy, the reward system in the brain is activated and substantially reduces the levels of stress hormones, cortisol in particular. Furthermore, there is a common belief that our relationship with ourselves sets the tone for our relationships with other people. In other words, love starts inside us and spreads all over the world from us like a butterfly effect. One way to accomplish it is to accept ourselves as individuals of worth, despite all differences and deficiencies that we have. In this sense, dancing can be used as a love-based approach through which people physically love their bodies while performing their dance moves. This is a good way to love themselves as they are and explore the effects of the emotions on their body movements.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: The SEL skills that this activity address is self-awareness and self-management. Regarding this aim, the activities in this session are first designed to help Syrian students learn how to approach their bodies. In this sense, this session incorporates dancing activities as a love-based approach through which the students develop mindfulness about the association between their emotions and body movements. Being mindful of the effects of emotions on body movements can

gradually help them alleviate their intensive emotions to control their unintended reactions.

Activity Plan 21

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- The students will explain their observations about the “awakening of nature.”
- They will create a story with four photographs to visualize their observations and feelings about the changes taking place in nature.

Materials: None

Preparation: The same weekly routine will be done.

Sharing space:

- Aside from the same routine questions, the facilitator can ask them the following:
 - Have you observed any seasonal changes taking place in nature?
 - What sorts of feelings or ideas does awakening of nature rise in you?
- After they gave answers to those questions, the facilitator will give a different instruction.
 - I appreciate your answers, but now It would be better to answer this question in a different way. I want you to visualize your thoughts and feelings with four different immobile poses. You can also consider them to be four different photographs that you create.

- Although these poses are different, they must be a continuation of each other.
- In other words, your poses should tell us a story that has a beginning and an end.
- Before doing that, I will give you two minutes to get ready for answers and performance.
- This is not a big deal. You can improvise. The important point is the story and how you visualize the story.
- Meanwhile, others are expected to guess what the story was about. We will compare your predictions to the explanation of the performer.
- When you are ready, we can get started.

Harvesting: Since the students have internalized diverse elements of nature inside them so far, they are likely to answer those questions by combining them with their personal realities and visualize their answers with a story made up of four different photographs. On the other hand, the facilitator should disregard the quality of the story or the appearance of the photographs. Instead, they should take into consideration the coherence between the four photographs and the story that the photographs tell us. Second, the prediction of the others about the content of the story and their support to the speaker will be another criterion the facilitator will check. Their supports and attention to the story can be regarded as an indicator of team spirit and solidarity among the students.

Suggested modifications: This session can be held in the fall season. In this manner, the facilitator can modify the questions in accordance with the time that the session will be held.

Activity Plan 22

Bridge

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 20 minutes

A recommended song: Faun - Federkleid

Expressive objectives:

- Students will dance and talk about how their body language and moves are changed according to the requirements of each phase.

Materials: Smartphone, speaker, and a small bell

Preparation: All chairs will be moved to the edges of the room, and then, they will get together around relatively a large circle.

Sharing space:

- Before playing the music, the facilitator gives instructions:
 - Today, you will release emotions and acknowledge our body language by dancing. Your dance will consist of three different phases, and the transition between the phases will be done with the sound of the bell.
 - In the first phase, you will dance like ballet dancers. In other words, you will gently move your hands and your feet. Just imagine that you are a leaf. You are big, smooth, and very green, and also smell so good. However, the wind has just taken you off your branch, and you started to drift on the air. You are slowly falling down to the ground. You've already done this. Therefore, I know that it is straightforward for you.
 - In the second phase, the first time, I want you to dance as you wish, meaning that you will not illustrate the movements of something else. Instead, you will just be yourself. Enjoy your time while dancing.

- In the third phase, just imagine that you are on Mars. Meanwhile, you are wearing a spacesuit, and it is so heavy. It would be best if you made so much effort to move. Therefore, you must take a hard step on land and move your hands and bodies more rapidly. Otherwise, you can fly. I know that many of you can prefer flying to walking, yet you do not want to fly for this activity, okay?
- The facilitator plays music, and they start dancing like a ballet dancer. Then, the facilitator rings the bell after a while, and they move on to the second phase and later the third phase.
- After each phase is repeated, they will calm down and talk about the experience that they have just had.

Harvesting: Our mood has both a positive and negative effect on our body language. In this activity, the students are requested to realize this fact through dancing at different speeds. The facilitator will check whether their feelings and thoughts about the experience address this relationship.

Suggested modifications: The Mars story may not be the story that fits the dance of the third phase the best. Therefore, the facilitator can change or modify the story. What is important is that the students should be stimulated to dance by hitting the ground hard, moving their hands and bodies more rapidly. In the end, it is important for them to associate these dance moves with feelings and emotions. As a result of gaining awareness, they can see both the good and bad sides of their feelings by means of the intensity of the strength they apply while dancing.

Activity Plan 23

Main Activity

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 20 minutes

A recommended song: Bruce Brubaker - Opening

Expressive objectives:

- Students give themselves pats on the back and hugs to develop a sense of self-love and appreciation

Materials: Smartphone and speaker

Preparation: A quick transition between the bridge and the main activity will be provided by giving an inspiring speech. In this manner, the facilitator will say:

- Okay, you have already explored many things by acknowledging certain emotions and imitating the movements of some living species, trees, and animals in particular. What is more, you have just gained consciousness about the association between your feelings and your body movements. As you see, you achieved many things, but you skipped something really essential. All of these past experiences in previous sessions are directly related to your bodies. Your bodies are your safety houses that host a set of emotions. However, have you ever thought about whether you really appreciate your bodies for what it serves you? Here is the interesting thing, the secret of the universe is love. Love is the ultimate truth. Every single living creature needs to love and to be loved. One of which is your bodies. I think that it is time to value your bodies in a manner that it deserves.

Sharing space:

- After the speech, the facilitator gives a briefing.

- I know that this is a unique experience and loving your own body can be harder than it seems. On the other hand, you may not be aware that each of you looks like an uncut diamond, so you are so precious. Please do not forget; we get what we believe we deserve. We deserve the best of everything. To get the best of everything, we primarily appreciate ourselves. In this framework, loving our bodies is a good start.
- The facilitator plays the music and asks them to close their eyes.
 - Do not worry, since all of you closed your eyes; nobody is watching you, meaning that there is nothing to be ashamed of while loving yourself.
 - Let's start with our hands. First, let one hand hold the other with love and appreciation. While loving, sense your skin and vessels under the skin, touch your fingers and nails. Remember what you did while you were exploring the chest of happiness. What were the characteristics that you paid attention to? Please, do not worry; it is not the hand of a stranger. Instead, it thoroughly belongs to you. Therefore, feel free while exploring every single detail over your hands. Just go with the flow and follow the rhythm of the music.
 - The students will follow the same steps for other parts of the body, including their arms, elbows, shoulders, necks, hairs, faces, torsos, hips, upper legs, lower legs, and feet.
 - You are expected to allocate at least 50 seconds for each part. However, you should relatively allocate more time for your faces compared to other parts. This is because the face hosts four senses out of five senses.
- At the end of the activity, they will talk about this experience and its effect on them.

Harvesting: Since the activity is a love-based approach, the facilitator will consider the way the students love their bodies. Through informal observations, they will give importance to their facial expression while they love themselves. Besides, the facilitator will specifically ask how they feel after they love their bodies. The answers to these questions will give a hint about their personal and emotional development.

Suggested modifications: During the activity, touching their hips and legs may be hard and notably embarrassing for both male and female students. In this case, the facilitator should simply respect their beliefs and not force them to touch such parts of their bodies. Here, the main point is to show them this is not something to be ashamed of. Therefore, the facilitator should make this clear initially and display the acts during the activity to show them it is doable and okay to do. Besides, the students can select a private zone for themselves in the room in the scope of this activity, and they can go and love themselves in different edges of the room by keeping away from the community. Last, the facilitator can utilize a bell instead of giving the instruction verbally to the transition between the body parts.

Activity Plan 24

Reflection

Activity type: Mandala activity (Spiral mandala)

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: Souad Massi – Le Bien et le mal

Expressive objectives:

- The students will draw a spiral mandala that represents themselves and their relationship with their bodies.

Materials: Smartphone, speaker, colored paper, crayons, yarn, glue, scissor

Preparation: As usual, the students bring chairs back and place them around a circle. Then, they sit on the chairs and become ready to listen to the facilitator.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator will primarily explain what a spiral is, and the explanation is supported with visual aids.
 - In this framework, the spiral represents a life cycle, and the spot at the center of the spiral refers to the self. In this manner, the rest of the spiral is shaped according to the individual's attitudes, meaning that the more an individual knows, loves, and values himself, the closer to the perfect shape of the spiral becomes. I know that it is really hard to understand. Just imagine that you threw a stone into the lake. What happens?
- The facilitator allows the students to answer it.
 - Yes, a circle quickly takes place over the sea, and much bigger circles start surrounding the first one in a short time. However, please do not forget that the one who makes those circles reveal is the stone that you threw. In this story, the stone refers to the self, and these circles represent your perceptions about life, and your perceptions also tremendously affect others' attitudes to you.
 - Well, you have just learned that the starting point of the spiral is the self. Therefore, please remember your interaction with your body in the last activity and think about what kind of feelings or ideas elicited as a result of this interaction. Then, let these feelings and ideas form the starting point of the spiral. To this end, put your crayon on the center of the paper, close your eyes and just draw without thinking. I am sure these feelings and ideas will guide you. For the rest of the mandala, just think

about the characteristics of your body. You have already touched your vessels and caressed your own hairs. You know pretty many things about your body. Therefore, the rest of the spiral will represent your body.

- In the end, please do not forget to give a name to your spiral.
- The students will form the spiral mandala in line with the facilitator's instructions, and when it is done, they will share what they drew with the rest of the class by explaining both its name and the underlying meanings of the lines that they drew.

Harvesting: The role of the spiral mandala in self-expression was explained above. Considering its function, the facilitator will evaluate the spiral mandalas that they drew and the way that they present them. These criteria will give the facilitator an idea about the improvement of their emotional intelligence.

Suggested modifications: There is no recommendation for this activity.

SESSION 7

“We are social creatures who need each other”

We, as human beings, have different desires, thoughts, and needs since we have different backgrounds. However, we believe in the same dream that says there is a world where everybody lives together brotherly and in peace. To realize that dream, we should initially learn how to increase our responsible decision-making skills. They are a set of skills that help individuals make caring and constructive choices about how to behave based on social norms. Those skills basically include demonstrating open-mindedness, making a reasoned judgment to navigate a challenging situation, promoting solidarity attitudes, and developing empathy to see the issues from the opposing viewpoint. They are particularly important to analyze the consequences of our individual actions on ourselves and others around us. One suggestion to increase those skills is to provide an environment where individuals collectively share their experiences by dancing. When individuals reciprocally dance, they strive to understand the movements of their pairs and connect to their way of moving. Apart from dancing, collectively shared experiences like art-making can be regarded as another medium to help them observe others' actions, see issues from various perspectives and consider how others' actions impact them.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: This session is designed as a symbolic way of describing how to increase the students' decision-making skills. In this aspect, students are expected to socialize with their peers in such a way that they develop an understanding of what it means to make choices that are personally, socially, and ethically responsible. The activities in

this session are also aimed at prioritizing solidarity and cooperation between the students who engage in collective action to achieve a common goal.

Activity Plan 25

Warm-up

Activity type: Playing a game

Time: 20 minutes

A recommended song: Miriam Makeba – Pata Pata

Expressive objectives:

- Students will play “The unseated” game where they compete for a seat.
- The seated players act collaboratively not to defeat in the game.

Materials: Smartphone and speaker

Preparation: There will be 13 chairs, and these chairs will be placed according to the row seating layout.

Sharing space:

- After each student sits on a chair, the facilitator asks the routine questions.
- When it is done, the facilitator gives the directions about the game that they will play together.
 - As you see, we have got one chair that nobody sits on. In the scope of this activity, we will play a game called “Unseated.” To exemplify, this is a different version of “musical chairs.” What is the difference in this game is, I will strive to sit on this chair as the first unseated player, and you are challenged to prevent me from sitting there.

- To this end, one of you has to sit on this chair before I do. When one of you sits on this chair before I do, that student's previous chair will be available for me, and my new purpose will be sitting on that chair.
- This round will continue until I sit on an available chair, and when I do that, the last one who left that chair to prevent me from sitting on the other chair will be our new unseated player, and the game will restart in a manner that it will be played three or four times at most.
- The play has only two rules. One of which is that the unseated player has to walk at average speed rather than running. Whereas this rule is not valid for others, meaning that they can run if they want. Considering this rule, you will have plenty of time to change your seat. Therefore, there is no need to push each other. I do not want you to crush each other with the ambition to win while running to the unseated chair.
- The essence of the game is communication and keeping calm.
- Well, if everyone is ready, shall we get started?
- At the end of the activity, the facilitator asks them whether they like the activity and share their opinions about the activity. Here, it is especially important to ask this question to those who fail to sit down although trying.

Harvesting: In the game, seated players have to act collaboratively, which requires team spirit and solidarity. In other words, they will help each to prevent the unseated player from seating a chair. Therefore, through informal observation, the facilitator will assess how they act as a group to win the game and how they take initiatives when needed.

Suggested modifications: The gap between the chairs can be larger to keep the students away from danger. Otherwise, they can get injured by hitting a chair while running.

Activity Plan 26

Bridge

Activity type: Dance and movement

Time: 20 minutes

A recommended song: Luis Fonsi - Despacito

Expressive objectives:

- The pairs will reflect the dance moves of each other like a mirror.
- They will convey their opinions about their dance moves, harmony with their pairs, and feelings originating from the experience.

Materials: Smartphone and speaker

Preparation: The chairs will be moved to the edges of the room, and there will be nothing in the middle of the room except for the students.

Sharing space:

- The students will be paired randomly.
- The activity will be composed of three phases.
- In the first phase, one of the pairs will dance, and the other one will reflect the dance moves of that person like a mirror, meaning that whatever one guy does, the other one will strive to imitate the same moves.
- In the second phase, the pairs will do vice versa. The one who serves as a mirror will be a dancer, and the other one will be a mirror.

- The last phase will be a mix of the previous phases, meaning that all students will be both a dancer and a mirror during the third phase. However, the role distribution and transition between these two distinct roles will be up to pairs and group dynamics.
- For example, one of the pairs can dance for two minutes and become a mirror only for 20 seconds. In comparison, the other one can serve as a mirror for 2 minutes. These are all related to group dynamics.
- In other words, they will not be assigned to one specific role before dancing. When the facilitator re-plays the music, one of the pairs will start dancing, and the other one will imitate their dance moves. Later on, the mirror guy is expected to stop imitating and take over the leadership at any time that they feel comfortable. In case the management changes hands, the previous dancer is expected to serve as a mirror. The important thing here is that they will not stop dancing to change their roles. Instead, this change will take place while they are dancing.

Harvesting: After the phases are completed, they get together around a circle, and the facilitator asks a variety of questions, including:

- How did you feel on the dance floor?
- Which phase was your favorite?
- In which phase do you feel more comfortable?
- In the third phase, how did you specifically feel when you decide to take over the leadership?
- What can you tell about your group dynamics?
- What are the factors that determine the group dynamics?

- The dance based on the partnership can be regarded as a way of communication.
- You danced together in harmony. Just think about other social settings in daily life. Is there any other social setting that you must maintain harmony?
- The volunteer students will answer these questions, and their answers will be criteria that the facilitator considers in the evaluation process.

Suggested modifications: The way that the facilitator pairs the students is depended on his preferences.

Activity Plan 27

Main activity

Activity type: Visual artmaking

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: Estas Tonne – Cosmis Fairytale: Dimensions

Expressive objectives:

- Each group will collaboratively make a marionette.
- The groups will jointly write a scenario.

Materials: Magazines, newspapers, yarn, scissors, glue, wooden sticks, buttons, crayons, clothes in different colors.

Preparation: If there is no objection, this activity will be held with the same pairs. The pairs will detect the most appropriate place in the room for themselves and go there.

Sharing space:

- In this activity, the pairs are requested to cooperatively make a marionette by using some of the materials written above.
- Notably, there is no restriction for the students while making marionettes. In other words, they can make a marionette of anything that they imagine.
- After the facilitator gives the instructions, the pairs come to the table and get the materials they need.
- During the activity, these materials will be exchanged among the pairs.
- Meanwhile, the facilitator can play a song to make them feel relief while working.
- After the pairs completed their marionettes, they are also requested to both give a name to their marionettes and jointly write a short story in a manner that they can use their marionettes to perform their scenario by using non-verbal communication tools.

Harvesting: In this activity, they will jointly make a marionette and write a creative scenario. While they are engaging in the activity, the facilitator will observe the role distribution among the group members. The role distribution should be in a manner to increase solidarity and cooperation in the group. This happens only if each student socializes with the group members at the highest level. Therefore, the facilitator will secondly assess their active involvement in group work through informal observation.

Suggested modifications: There is no further recommendation for this activity.

Activity Plan 28

Reflection

Activity type: Creative drama

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- Each group will dramatize their scenarios by using their marionettes.

Materials: Marionette

Preparation: A quick transition between the main and reflection activity can be done since this activity is the continuation of the previous one.

Sharing space:

- In this activity, the groups will silently dramatize the story that they wrote by using their marionettes
- After the performance of each group, others will first provide an individual aesthetic response, and then volunteers among them will guess what the story was about.
- Later on, the pair that has just presented explains both what the story was really about and the reason behind writing such a story.
- Before closing the session, the volunteers also share their overall thoughts and feelings about today's session.

Harvesting: Each group member will be responsible for controlling one specific part of the marionette in this activity. In other words, each of them can be regarded as a cog in the wheel. Accordingly, one problem resulting from one student can cause the whole exhibition to ruin. Therefore, their willingness and enthusiasm level should be at a high level so that they can perform in harmony, which is the criterion that the

teacher will consider. Next, the facilitator will also observe whether others get actively involved in the evaluation process of each presentation. This is important for all students to show that they value the works and efforts of their peers.

Suggested modifications: There is no modification for this activity.



SESSION 8

“We are the precious parts of the whole”

Thus far, the students have been experiencing various activities that stimulate them to take control of their actions, regulate their extreme emotions and achieve personal and collective goals. To make these learning outcomes become permanent, they also need to become a leader in all aspects of their lives. However, being a leader does not mean manipulating everyone's actions or taking all responsibilities to achieve a goal. Instead, it refers to collaborating with people from different backgrounds with distinct abilities and personalities in harmony. To this end, they need a caring, safe, and democratic atmosphere where nobody judges any mistake but praises all efforts. One way to provide such an atmosphere is group works. In such a case, working for the benefit of the group can help students see a problem from different perspectives and increase their creative problem-solving skills. However, when groups are expected to present or perform something, the facilitator should make an effort to minimize competition and passion for the win. Instead, the facilitator must prioritize teamwork, solidarity, and friendship. In such a case, the students can enthusiastically take the initiative to engage in the problems that the group handles.

Number of students: 12

Age Level: 6th/7th/8th grades

Duration: 90 minutes

Aim: This session has two main aims. One of which is to help the students develop problem-solving skills through group-based activities. To achieve this aim, they should initially believe that they are capable of solving the problems that they face. To this end, the first activity is designed to guide them to believe in themselves while

facing a problem. In the second and third activities, they are expected to develop a collective consciousness. What is meant by collective consciousness is to develop an understanding of when to step in and when to step back according to the group dynamics, to achieve a particular goal cooperatively. Regardless of the common aim of the first three activities, the last activity aims to stimulate the students to reflect on how they interpret the progress that they made throughout the eight weeks by visualizing it via painting.

Activity Plan 29

Warm-up

Activity type: Orientation

Time: 15 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- The students will select a superpower that they would like to have and explain why.
- The students will compare their natural powers to the superpowers that they wish to have.

Materials: None

Preparation: Since this is the last session of the program, the facilitator might give a rose to each student as a gift. After they get their gifts, they will follow the steps in the weekly routine.

Sharing space:

- In the first phase, the facilitator asks the routine questions to the students.

- In the second phase, the facilitator asks them what superpower they wish they had and why?
 - Well, I will give you three minutes to think about what superpower you would like to have.
 - Now, just close your eyes and imagine you are a superhero.
 - Keep imagining and find an answer to the following questions:
 - a. What are the problems that the superhero wrestles with?
 - b. Do you think you will be flawless when you get that superpower?
 - c. Is there any problem that is generated by the superpower you have?
 - d. Do you think all people around you will keep loving you when you are gifted?
 - Come on, you have got three minutes, and I would like to get answers when the time is up.
- After each student explains their superpower by answering the following questions, the facilitator will lead a discussion.
- During the discussion, they will brainstorm why those superpowers can cause different problems, and if they bring about different problems, why we call such powers “super.”

Harvesting: At the end of the activity, the facilitator will check whether their perceptions about their natural powers change after they realized superpowers also have some deficiencies and problems. They need to value their natural powers despite their deficiencies. That is the message that the students are requested to highlight.

Suggested modifications: In the preparation process, each student can enter the class by showing their favorite dance moves, and the facilitator can also accompany them on dancing. Later on, the facilitator can give roses to them.

Activity Plan 30

Bridge

Activity type: Dance and movement activity

Time: 20 minutes

A recommended song: Madonna - Vogue

Expressive objectives:

- Students provide an aesthetic response to the pose they strike when the music stops their dancing.

Materials: None

Preparation: The chairs are moved to the edges of the room, and the students get together around a circle to dance.

Sharing space:

- When everyone is ready to listen to the facilitator, they can give the instructions to the students.
- According to instruction, the activity will consist of four phases.
- In the first phase, after the facilitator turns on the music, each student starts dancing individually.
- After a while, the facilitator pauses the music, and the students are requested to freeze and turn into a statue in a manner to provide an aesthetic response.
- On the other hand, there is no specific way to provide such a response. After the music stops, the students can take any pose they want when they freeze.

- In the second phase, every two students who are nearest to each other at that moment will be matched randomly before the facilitator re-plays the music, and the pairs will dance mutually.
- After a while, the facilitator will stop the music again, and the pairs will give a common aesthetic response when they freeze. However, they do not have to provide such responses at the same time. For example, one person can immediately take a pose, and the other one strives to take a pose in a way that there will be aesthetic harmony between them.
- Before the facilitator re-plays the music, every two pairs nearest to each other at that moment will be matched, meaning that there will be three different groups of four.
- The same steps will also be taken in the third phase, and when the music stops, all students will dance in a group.
- All students freeze by taking a pose when the music ends, and a common choreography will reveal.
- If there is no objection, the facilitator will take a photo of this choreography and distribute that photo to each student.
- This can be seen as a remarkable gift. This is because whenever the students look at this photo, apart from their diaries, they can remember both their memories at the workshop activities and the progress that they made throughout the program.

Harvesting: At the end of the activity, the facilitator will ask them to interpret the choreography that was jointly made and their roles (contributions) in that choreography.

- He will also ask the following questions including:

- In which phase do you feel more comfortable?
- In which phase do you enjoy at most?
- In which phase do you believe that you express yourself at most?
- When the number of group members gradually increased, how did this affect your expression on the dance floor?
- You can consider the expression to be your creative skills, your mood while dancing, your inspiration from the acts of other group members, and of course, group dynamics.
- These are the sample evaluation questions for this activity.

Suggested modifications: Each time the groups freeze and take a (common) pose, the facilitator can give them some time to look at the poses of members of other groups. This can help each student increase the level of enthusiasm for the activity since they can comprehend that the important thing in this activity is how they express themselves rather than how they look while expressing themselves.

Activity Plan 31

Main activity

Activity type: Creative drama

Time: 25 minutes

A recommended song: None

Expressive objectives:

- Through sketching individually and as a group, students will illustrate how games people play change and remain the same over time.

Materials: None

Preparation: Before the activity, the facilitator will ask several questions to the students, including:

- Do you like playing the game outside?
- What is your favorite game that you play outside?
- Which one do you prefer, playing a game outside or playing a game on a computer?

After the volunteers talk about the games, the students will be divided into three different groups of four. The groups will randomly be formed. Apart from randomization, the facilitator can apply different strategies to form the groups.

Sharing space:

- The facilitator explains that groups are requested first to write a sketch that gives insight into the games people play for sports and leisure in different time periods and then cooperatively perform it in three minutes.
- There will be three different time periods, including the stone age, 21st century, and the space Age.
- The facilitator will randomly share out the time periods among the groups.
- At this point, the groups can find out which time period they are responsible for by picking a paper on which a specific time period is written.
- For example, one group is expected to perform what kind of games children could possibly play in the stone age.
- After each group's performance, others will provide an aesthetic response, and volunteers among them will interpret both of the sketches.
- In the last phase of the activity, the facilitator will give all students some time, and they will perform a common sketch that shows the games of all three time periods in harmony.

- The sketch they jointly perform will give insight into what would happen if a child from the stone age wants to play a game with a child from the space age. Therefore, the students are expected to focus on the conflicts between the characters from different time periods.

Harvesting: Finally, the facilitator will ask several questions to assess their thoughts and feelings about the activity, including:

- In which sketch do you enjoy performing more, the first one or the second one?
- How do you evaluate your contribution to group work while preparing the sketch and performing it?
- During the activity, you both performed and watched the performance of others, is there any difference between these two actions? Please consider your feelings while comparing them.
- These are the sample evaluation questions for this activity.

Suggested modifications: The groups may not tell other groups which time period they are responsible for performing. Given this issue, the group members may perform the sketch without talking to each other, which makes the sketches more attractive. This is because the other group members need to concentrate more on the sketch to detect which time period it was about.

Activity Plan 32

Reflection

Activity type: Painting

Time: 30 minutes

A recommended song: K'NAAN – Waving Flag

Expressive objectives:

- The students will cooperatively create a picture on the cloth that represents all the experiences that they have had throughout eight weeks.
- Each student will individually interpret the progress they made by considering his own painting part on the cloth.

Materials: A large white cloth, large nylon, finger paint with different colors, white t-shirts

Preparation: The facilitator lays large nylon on the ground and gives each of them a white t-shirt. After the students put on the t-shirts, they will take the large white cloth and cover it over the nylon on the ground. Later on, they will sit on the nylon, and the facilitator will distribute them the finger paints.

Sharing space:

- After the students are ready to listen, the facilitator gives instructions.
 - Well, this is the last activity of the whole program. I am delighted to meet the little shining diamonds like you. Thus far, we have experienced 31 different activities, and we learned many things. Now, I want you to think deeply about some criteria, including:
 - What do you think about how your journey started at the beginning of the program?
 - Did the program have any effect on your self-development?
 - What do you think about your group?
 - How did you contribute to the group?
 - What did you get from the group?
 - Now please close your eyes for a while and think about these questions.

- Open your treasure chest for happiness and let the energy spread all over the body one more time. That energy is also a symbol of your journey. Therefore, it will help you remember what you did so far in this curriculum.
- When they are ready, the facilitator turns on the music, the students open their eyes, and each student starts to paint one side of the white cloth with finger paint.
- After the white cloth is completely painted, all students will stand up and provide an aesthetic response jointly.
- Later on, the volunteers will explain what the shapes that they made on the cloth refer to and why they used those colors to paint.
- Last, the same steps will be taken to evaluate the whole picture. In other words, the volunteers will interpret the whole picture and how they feel when they look at that.
- Before closing the session, the facilitator will encourage them to hang the cloth on the wall, and they will take a photo together in front of the pictured cloth on the wall.

Harvesting: The cloth they jointly paint will give insight into the learning progress they made in eight weeks. Throughout the workshop activities, it is always emphasized that they are unique with all their differences. In this aspect, they are first expected to show what makes them precious and unique via painting. Secondly, after the facilitator listens to the explanations of each student, they will conclude whether they develop a sense of being a group that can feel like a community at the end of the day by looking at the whole picture. Considering the whole picture is important in regard to assessing how unique individuals are bound together into

collective units. These are the two main criteria that the facilitator will take into consideration in the evaluation process.

Suggested modification: Before closing the session, the students may walk around the room one last time, and while walking, they can smile and wink at each other as a way of saying goodbye.



APPENDIX E: Recommended Playlist

SINGER	SONG	DURATION
Yann Tiersen	Comptine d'un autre ete – l'après-midi	2:26
Hussain Al Jassmi	Boshret Kheir	3:46
Amira Medunjanin	Cula Jesam da se dragi zeni	3:12
Constantino Carrara	Game of thrones	4:45
Mark Eliyahu	Journey	4:30
Nessi Gomes	All related	6:11
The Black-Eyed Peas	Let's get started	3:50
Ludovico Einaudi	Una Mattina	9:16
Andrew Bird	Gypsy Moth	6:34
FORESTT	To the sea	5:05
Alex Cuba & Pedro Capo	Suspendidos en el Tiempo	3:34
Faun	Federkleid	4:18
Bruce Brubaker	Opening	5:40
Souad Massi	Le Bien et le mal	2:57
Miriam Makeba	Pata Pata	3:32
Luis Fonsi	Despacito	4:42
Estas Tonne	Cosmis Fairytale: Dimensions	9:37
Madonna	Vogue	4:54

K'NAAN	Waving Flag	3:45
Rosemary Standley & Sylvain Griotto	Porque Te vas	2:48
Osman Altun & Mani	Helbe Helbe	3:07
Lindsey Stirling	Rountable Rival	3:23
Faun	Tanz Mit Mir	3:02
Saad Lamjarred	Ghaltana	4:00
Idir	Ma montagne	2:31
Saad Lamjarred	Salina Salina	4:38
Amira Medunjanin	Cula Jesam Da Se Dragi Zeni	3:11