

# Inclusive Leadership and Counseling in Schools: Asylum Seekers Students\*

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**Abstract:** This is a multiple case study and aimed to examine school administrators' and psychological counselors' inclusive activities for refugee students in schools. In the study, a semi-structured interview form was used to gather the data, and analyzed with the comparative situation analysis method. With the analysis of the responses given during the face-to-face interviews conducted with school administrators and psychological counselors, the data acquired related to the inclusive activities of school administrators and psychological counselors were collected under two categories: a) Inclusive views of school administrators on refugee students and b) Inclusive views of psychological counselors on refugee students. This study's findings revealed that refugee students have security anxiety due to war, conflict, and violent environments and face academic failures and difficulties in establishing healthy dialogues due to language problems. The participants stated that they could not establish communication with most refugee students' families and had limited information about their life outside school. Considering the results of the study; it can be recommended to create an information network at schools containing all experiences, educational experiences, familial status, and financial losses faced by refugee students before, during, and after immigration.


**Keywords:** Inclusive education, leadership, psychological counselor, asylum seeker students

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## Introduction

School administrators and psychological counselors who keep in touch with all stakeholders at schools, mainly undertake the mission of gathering these stakeholders around specific goals. The stated mission includes facilitating children's intellectual and personal development, ensuring social balance, and designing spaces based on cultural characteristics. Inclusive education, which focuses on cultural diversity and characteristics, is also a tool that prioritizes children's social, cultural, and emotional experiences (Bornman & Rose, 2010). The use of diversity in schools and the potential based on this, or the elimination of the barriers that arise, is largely based on understanding effective leadership in schools. Effective leadership in schools includes stakeholders' inclusion and their involvement in all decisions affecting the school (Pugh, Every, & Hattam, 2012). Active, fair, and inclusive leaders in schools are also responsible for creating multi-purpose learning environments and solving the problems based on this (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Waldron, McLeskey, & Redd, 2011; Cosier, Causton-Theoharis, & Theoharis, 2013; Causton-Theoharis. and Kasa, 2011; Lewis, 2016).

It is seen that the objects attributed to inclusive leadership in schools are to ensure social justice, to ensure the full participation of all stakeholders, and to create inclusive learning environments (Lewis, 2016). Schools, which reflect the diversity based on the political, social, cultural, and economic dynamics that are imposed today, are places where inclusive leadership has become essential. One of the important causes and effects that increase this diversity is the intense migration experienced. The phenomenon of refugees and asylum seekers, which is one of the important consequences of these migrations, has given the school the mission of being prepared for diverse perspectives and putting them into practice (Fazel, Reed, Panter-brick and Stein, 2012; Rousseau, Drapeau, & Platt, 2004; Sujoldzic, Peternel, Kulenovic and Terzic, 2006).

Schools that are unable to turn the immigrations into an opportunity substantially face learning difficulties, negative attitudes, maltreatments, unprepared teachers, standard evaluations, and lack of parental participation (Schoolleidersregister PO, 2016). Schools that have managed to become structures that stabilize refugee and asylum seeker children's uneasy lives are places that manage to become learning spaces open to new interactions. Also, schools that facilitate these children's intellectual and personal development, try to achieve socio-economic balance, and share various cultural characteristics, are areas that approach being inclusive environments (Berry, 1997).

Today's education systems and schools adopt the concept of inclusive education, which is a response to diversity, and abandon the practice of educating disadvantaged groups by separating them from other students as in the past. In schools where diversity is embraced and brought to life, differences are accepted as a force (Education Queensland, 2005).

It is highly regarded that refugee and asylum seeker children's educational experiences, which is an important indicator of the diversity in schools, are used in solving the problems to be experienced in the inclusive education process (Legova, 2011; Reakes, 2007). The success rates of aid programs based on students' educational experiences, teaching-learning practices, the school's administrative structure, and changes in the education program are high (Dijkshoorn, 2016). In addition to all these dynamics, it should not be forgotten that psychological counseling staff to be assigned in schools and partnerships to be established with other institutions are also therapeutic services for students (Beirens, Mason, Spicer, Hughes, & Hek, 2006; Block, Cross, Riggs, & Gibbs, 2014; Hughes & Beirens, 2007; Pugh, Every and Hattam, 2012; Sidhu and Taylor, 2009; Taylor and Sidhu, 2012).

Surveys such as that conducted by McBrien (2005) have shown that the loss of family members, violent incidents, and memories of those left behind affect children's mental and psychological state cause traumatic reactions. In addition to the pre-migration experiences of these children, there are frequent cases of companion, racial conflict, post-migration violence, loss of parents or single-parent care, insecure asylum environments, and insufficient financial support (Fazel, Reed, Panther-brick, and Stein, 2012; Wilson, Murtaza, & Shakya, 2010). Due to all these, it should not be forgotten that these children have and will have seriously problematic behaviors and low academic achievements (Strekalova & Hoot, 2008). To alleviate and solve these problems, it is stated that the support to be given to parents, raising awareness of peers, and establishing healthy communication with them will be in favor of positive school experiences (Fazel Reed, Panter-brick, & Stein, 2012). Also, the vision of "quality education for all" expressed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in its Education Strategy for the 2010-2012 academic year suggests that conscious and healthy relationships to be established between families and schools are vital for the solution of the problems experienced and to be experienced (UNHCR, 2012).

Although there were many researches about the children in need of special education, which is the emergence and focus of inclusive education, few of them focused on school administrators and psychological counselors working the refugee and asylum seeker students. So it is necessary to do deep research on administrators and counselors who will directly affect the integration of refugee and asylum seeker students, who are among the disadvantaged groups, to education environments (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2014).

Studies on inclusive leadership and counseling focused on social justice, cultural awareness, open-mindedness, emphasis on learning and classroom practices, collaboration, and shared leadership roles (Ryan, 2006; Devecchi & Nevin, 2010; Causton-Theoharis & Kasa, 2011; Mac Ruairc, Ottesen. and Precey, 2013; Causton & Theoharis, 2014). It is crucial to profoundly reveal school administrators and psychological counselors' inclusive activities aimed at refugee students whose number has reached millions at schools in Turkey. Depending on these purposes, the study

seeks to address the question, "What are the inclusive leadership and counseling approaches aimed at refugee students at schools?"

## Method

### Research Design

The qualitative research method was used to profoundly understand the inclusive activities of school administrators and psychological counselors. Discovering and understanding activities based on inclusive education are the main phenomenon of this research. Based on the nature of the main phenomenon (activities based on inclusive education), it was considered that it would be ideal to use qualitative methods in revealing complex details about emotions, thoughts, and feelings that are difficult to express or obtain in-depth information with classical methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The method used in the study was a multiple (collective) case studies. A multi-case study requires examining more than one case when examining a phenomenon, the universe, or general conditions of the research (Stake, 2000). Also, studies examining multiple situations are based on the argument that events do not have a single and unique truth (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Besides, the multi-case study method used in the research is thought to serve the purpose, as it describes the process and outputs for all situations in more detail.

### Study Group

In this study, the snowball sampling method, which is among purposeful sampling methods, was used. This allowed to determine the inclusive activities of school administrators and psychological counselors in the school that places refugee students in the center, the effectiveness of their communication with other stakeholders, and their thoughts on the determination and solution of the problems related to academic success in school in a holistic manner (David, 1998; Nord, Brimhall, & West, 1997). This sampling method aimed to present a comparative analysis of school administrators and psychological counselors' opinions based on experiences and foresight in schools with refugee students of different ages, gender, class, country, culture, and socio-economic levels.

The following stages were used when choosing the participants: a) Sharing of participation materials with officials at the regional level b) Sharing participation materials with school administrators and psychological counselors in schools where refugee students are concentrated, and c) Selection of the most suitable school and participants after pre-interviews with volunteers in schools where research materials are shared.

After the participants were identified, the processes of distributing consent forms, obtaining approvals of the participants, and determining the schedule of face-to-face meetings were followed. It is believed that the participants' voluntary desire to participate in the research will positively affect the quality of the communication they have established with the researcher in the process and the sharing of their experiences regarding the research problem that the research focuses on. Following all these processes, the final participants comprised three school administrators and two psychological counselors in a secondary school in Aksaray. Participant names have been changed to pseudonyms. Detailed information for the participants are presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 1.**

*Information about School Administrators*

School Administrators' Pseudonyms	Position	Age	Year of Seniority	Previous Field	Year of Seniority in Previous Field	Year of Seniority regarding Refugee Students	Major Problems regarding Refugee Students in Past Years
Servet	School Principal	55	33	Classroom Teacher	12	10	Adaptation problems experienced by students from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan
Abdullah	Vice-principal	53	30	Classroom Teacher	9	8	Financial difficulties and adaptation problems
Yasin	Vice-principal	40	17	Technology and Design Teacher	15	5	Communication and adaptation problems with refugee students and their families

**Table 2.**

*Information about Psychological Counselors*

Psychological Counselors' Pseudonyms	Age	Year of Seniority	Years of Experience with Refugee Students	Major Problems regarding Refugee Students in Past Years
Gül	45	20	5	Communication problems with refugee students and their families
Şefika	36	12	5	Multidimensional problems experienced; communication, the indifference of families, financial difficulties, and adaptation problems

**Interviews**

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which are considered a strong way to understand people. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in office rooms or psychological counseling rooms. The meetings were decided with the participants and scheduled in their school. The meetings lasted between 60 and 90

minutes. Interview questions focusing on inclusive leadership and counseling activities for refugee students are provided in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Each interview was recorded and written in detail, considering that it will facilitate the subsequent data analysis process.

The researcher conducted each interview. Five single-participant interviews consist of open-ended questions designed to examine participants' inclusive leadership and consulting activities. Guiding questions were also used during the interviews to elaborate and clarify the participants' answers.

## **Data Analysis**

The inclusive activities of school administrators and psychological counselors are among the categories that emerge during the analysis of the relevant findings and interview data. Also, attention was paid to gathering information about the general situation of the participants at the school as data and reporting. The analysis process first started with analyzing the interview data and the determination of the categories. Categories for the participants' inclusive roles were determined as a result of multiple examinations and in-depth analysis of the data.

To examine each participant as a whole in their own category, the data of the interviews conducted with the participants was written and coded line by line and was subjected to the comparative case analysis method of Miles and Huberman (1994). In the following process, it was aimed to compare the codes revealed and to clarify them by defining them under specific categories. Also, the consistent comparison method was used to compare, rearrangement, and exclude the codes that enabled the emergence of different categories in the process (Charmaz, 2000). This coding process also ensured that the data were reviewed continuously, according to the participants' opinions. The process was continued until the final categories of the data were determined. The data were carefully examined through the cross-controlled coding process, and the coding has been tried to be understandable (Barbour, 2001).

## **Verifiability**

Response validity (Creswell, 2002) and participant confirmation (Janesick, 2000) methods were used to confirm the findings. Details of the findings were provided to the participants via e-mail to confirm the validity of the answers. Participants were asked to clearly indicate which parts of the findings were in line with their own views and which were not. Besides, in the verification of the findings, the confirmation of the participants was used. With the participant's confirmation, it is also aimed to receive the participants' feedback for their direct quotations and their consent for the use of these quotations. Approvals of the accuracy, validity, and use of the summary of findings were obtained from all participants.

## **Limitations and Scope of the Study**

Although the research was based on frequently used qualitative research methods, the validity of the findings has certain limitations. The study's main limitation is that it was based on the inclusive activities of school administrators and psychological counselors towards refugee students. The semi-structured interview form used in the study enabled an in-depth analysis of the participants' inclusive activities.

The study's secondary limitation is that long-term relationships with the participants were not established. Multiple interviews would be more ideal than a single meeting with each participant. However, the data obtained at the end of the research on the participants' inclusive activities and the participants' feedback on this made us think that the process should be further elaborated. Also, it was seen that the generalizability level of the findings of the study was limited by the nature of the participants. The findings of the study were based on five participants including the school administrators and psychological counselors in a city center. It was observed that the occupation, seniority, types of experience, age, their experiences with refugee students, and the contexts of the problems they have experienced varies. These reasons may have limited the generalizability of the study.

## **Findings**

The interviews focus on the refugee students' general situation and participants' inclusive activities for these students. The importance of this study, regarding the integration of refugee students who migrated to Turkey for various reasons and whose number is increasing in schools, was also expressed by the participants. The categories determined to reveal the participants' views on inclusive leadership and counseling for refugee students were grouped under the following headings: a) School administrators' inclusive views towards refugee students, b) Psychological counselors' inclusive views towards refugee students.

### **Inclusive Views of Psychological Counselors on Refugee Students**

It should be kept in mind that the number of refugee students at school is among the factors that affect and affect psychological counselors' inclusive activities. For this purpose, it is seen that the participants have different expressions about the number of refugee students, and it can be argued that this is due to the dual education (morning-noon) at school. Examples of the views of the psychological counselors on the subject are given:

"Right now, we have eight refugee students who were in the afternoon group, my group (Gül)."

"I am telling for the 7th and 8th grades, as a morning group student, we currently have four refugee students in our school (Sefika)."

It is among the expressions that refugee students' livelihood, communication with friends, and course success are negatively affected by the security problems they experience. In addition, the language problems these students experience limit their communication with the school components. Refugee students' reluctance to learn Turkish was attributed to the presence of these students in Turkey for a transition to a third country.

"These students cannot speak Turkish very well, and their teachers say this over and over again. Students see themselves as guests here; According to them, there is no need to learn Turkish. For this reason, the Iraqi student establishes more friendship with the Iraqi and the Syrian student with the Syrian (Gul)."

It is among the statements that refugee students define themselves as foreigners and victims of war in the school environment and do not have a future goal. The belonging problems of refugee students and uncertainties regarding the future obscure their future goals.

"These students always see themselves as foreigners at school. For example, I call them and talk in a warm environment, what do you think, what do you want to do about the future. They have no idea about the future (Gul)."

It is stated that refugee students do not have an incompatible and disturbing attitude in the school environment, but at the same time, they do not have an attempt to show themselves and be successful. It is also among the statements that it is not known what these students do outside of school due to the lack of communication with the refugee students' families. It can be said that these students only revealed their presence in school physically; that they were perceived as foreigners and thought they were foreigners affects their situation.

"These students do not have adaptation at school, nor do they have disturbing behavior fighting and quarrels. They intimidate themselves. They say we exist as well, but we exist only as images, we exist as flesh (Gul)."

The statements that other teachers and students in the school value the refugee students and try to win them and do not perceive them as foreigners are striking. The fact that, students and teachers at the school are aware of the negativities experienced by the refugee students and their attempts to eliminate these negativities can be shown as an example of their efforts to win the refugee students.

"I heard many times that Turkish students say, "We are trying to talk to them, we try to get them among us, if they have any needs we try to meet them." Some Turkish students even said, "We learned that this friend did not have breakfast, we bought something with our own money; we buy bagels, toast or whatever else they want." Some teachers share their dialogues with refugee students with me, and they are concerned about recruiting refugee students (Sefika)."

It is pointed out that most of the families of refugee students have never visited the school, and the school administration does not have home addresses and phone numbers that are necessary to communicate with these parents. It is among the expressions that healthy and continuous communication cannot be established with parents who are in contact with the school due to language problems. The lack of constant and healthy communication that cannot be established with the parents of



refugee students can be attributed to the priorities parents give to their children's education, economic inadequacies, and constant address changes.

"The families of the refugee students in my school never come to school. Most of them don't even have addresses or phone numbers; we can't reach them in any way. We can only identify their homes if any students are living close to them (Gul)."

While the other stakeholders of the school want to help the refugee students and their families financially, since the refugees isolate themselves from society, there are negative perceptions arise about refugees among other stakeholders and the opinions that these individuals are temporary. Negative opinions about refugees can be attributed to the increase of these individuals' visibility everywhere, attribution of judicial cases in daily life to the actions of these individuals, and unfair generalizations for these individuals.

"In general, when I look at the images of refugee students at school and in society, I think they are excluded. At first, people express their good intentions, but as the number of these people increases, they start to be seen everywhere, and some of these people become a beggar, some do other bad things, and they start to say that we were better without refugees (Sefika)."

The psychological counselors stated that in addition to focusing more on the detection and solution of negative events, they are also like a pillar that resists negativity. It can be considered that psychological counselors emphasize that they are in a supportive position for every shareholder in the school, based on the refugee students, who are expressed as vulnerable, in eliminating the problems encountered and conducting education-training activities more effectively.

"We can think of my role in the school as the pillar and support of many problems and negativity, in terms of refugee students. Here, what the negativities are and their determination, the preparation of students for exams, application processes, or can be considered as our responsibilities towards teachers and administrators (Sefika)."

It was stated that the schools and classes where refugee students are located are not suitable for these students. It is also striking to note that these students' language problems not only negatively affect their academic achievement but also do not comply with the principle of equal opportunities in education. It can be stated that the biggest handicaps of refugee students from benefiting from the opportunities of inclusive education are language deficiency and the inequality of opportunities these students experience in every sense.

"Before the child learns Turkish, the teacher tries to teach the Social Studies course, how can a person who does not speak Turkish understand the Social Studies course? In other words, the environment these children are in is inefficient. I think there is no environment for these students to be included in our school. Education and training should be based on equal opportunities and facilities, but while even this cannot be achieved, which coverage are you talking about? (Gul)."

Due to a large number of students and many problems experienced in the school, no separate planning could be made. It was also among the expressions that the communication problems, timidity, and unwillingness of the refugee students are among the obstacles for different planning. The student density in schools, the difference in student needs expressed as disadvantaged, the insufficient number of psychological counselors, and the lack of knowledge and experiences that can appeal

to all disadvantaged groups may also negatively affect all students' use of psychological counseling services.

"In our school, separate planning can be made for refugee students, but it is really difficult at this stage because I have 400 students, and I cannot make separate planning for refugee students while I have 400 students. We encounter different problems at school. These are children of broken families, refugee students, children who experience violence, and different reactions from their families; these increase our work intensity (Sefika)."

In addition, the refugee students come from war and a complicated process, they try to resist the problems that have been borne by their immigration to a different country, making them like a snowdrop. It is noteworthy that despite the migration of refugees to different countries to get away from the problems they experience, they are faced with different and multiplied problems in the countries they migrate to. They have to be strong to overcome these problems, but at the same time, this situation makes them fragile; schools are one of the places where they cannot hide that they are very fragile.

"The coverage of the refugee students in our school, when it was heavy stormy snow in the past, but when a snowdrop comes out of that snow, I compare these students to that snowdrop. You have to be strong it's snowing but you're also rare and fragile (Sefika)."

It was stated that there is a common understanding among the stakeholders in the school on the basis that each individual is respected, and the psychological counselors make efforts to establish and maintain this understanding. It should not be forgotten that this understanding has mostly settled between the refugee students and other students. However, the refugee students' timidity still stands as a major obstacle to the full settlement of this understanding. Language problems, problems of belonging, and dreams of transition to a third country may be the basis of the shyness experienced by refugee students.

"The refugee students in our school are not the students who cause problems; they are intimidated and in the profile of "let me sit at the back of the class, don't interfere with me and just let me come and go". Actually, our students have accepted and recruited them, but refugee students are very shy (Gul)."

It was stated that refugee students are generally not exposed to disrespect and exclusion at school, are accepted at school and in the classroom, and refugee students who speak Turkish well are not even perceived as foreigners. Other students were informed about these students during the placement of refugee students in their classes. The fact that refugee students are not exposed to disrespect and exclusion at school can be attributed to stakeholders' all stakeholders' tolerant attitudes towards these students, and the excessive similarities shared with refugee students as language problems are solved.

"I did not witness the problematic situations and moments of disrespect of the refugee students at the school. They are not problematic students anyway. I have never witnessed Turkish students disrespecting the refugee students either. On the contrary, Turkish students love these students very much. As I said, they do not exclude these students because they love them, and at the same time, the whole class does not want these students to isolate themselves (Gul)."

### ***Inclusive Views of School Administrators on Refugee Students***

The school where the administrators work is in a central location in the city and is the only school where dual education (morning-afternoon) takes place. In addition to the students' generally low socioeconomic level, it was stated that approximately 30 refugee students were from disadvantaged groups. In addition to being in the center of the city, the school where refugee students take place also has different variables through which all stakeholders of the school direct their energies. The expressed variables may negatively affect the planning and making an effort that puts them in the center.

"This Secondary School is a school at the center of the Aksaray. Families at every socioeconomic level live around this school and constitute the school's target audience. According to our findings, there are more than 60 broken family children in our school whose parents live separately. Our school starts with the morning call to prayer and ends with the evening prayer. So it is a dual education school. Being in the center of the city, we are in a place open to all kinds of danger. We currently have around 30 Syrian, Iraqi, Iranian, and Somali refugee students in our school (Servet)."

The roles of the school principal and vice-principals in the school are subject to legal obligations, and they use the administrator or leader qualification depending on the conditions and the circumstances of the school principal. It was stated that school administrators do not have much administrative ability to act due to being stuck between legal obligations regarding their roles in school and the responsibilities assumed for sudden situations.

"As a school principal, Am I an administrator or a leader in this school? This varies according to the situation and conditions. The Ministry of Education is a ministry that determines what an administrator and a teacher should do. But despite all this, my position at school is sometimes directed to being an administrator, generally a manager (Servet)."

School administrators state that refugee students are unwilling to participate in classes and games, and they point to communication problems as the reason for this. The fact that, these students are forced to work due to crowded families and their negative attitude towards school is among the main reasons for these students' absenteeism towards school. It was stated that these students preferred to sit alone in the back rows of the class or next to other refugee students. Also, it was stated that these students and their families prevent the practice of studying in different classes to eliminate the communication problems of these students. It can be considered that the economic inadequacies experienced by refugee students negatively affect their adaptation, attendance, and belonging to the school. Besides, preventing refugee students from separating from each other and participating in educational activities in different classes can be attributed to the fear experienced by these students and their families as strangers and prejudices against the inability to communicate by being alone.

"When you observe the children playing at school from a distance, you can see that the refugee students are not participating in the games as in the classes. I mean, when I only look at the play and mischief of immigrant children with Turkish students, or when I look at the reports and complaints from teachers about them, I can see that these students are not without problems. Refugee students are extremely absent; how do you integrate them? (Servet)."

It was stated that there is no separate education plan for refugee students, but the teachers simplify the subjects so that these students can understand, and they allocate time for one-to-one education for these students. It was also stated that psychological counselors and other teachers collaborated regarding the situation of these students at school. Continuing the support provided at school for the social, psychological, and academic needs of refugee students under the school administration and teachers' initiative may make us think that the process is not success-oriented.

"In our school, there is no separate planning for the refugee students, as our teachers say, but they try to facilitate lessons for these students, a little simpler, a little more without getting into the details. But of course, there is no obligation that teachers will take care of these students individually. So we do not have a different program; every teacher is trying to do all this conscientiously (Yasin)."

Volunteers among the refugee students are given duties in national celebrations, competitions, fairs, and festivals held at the school. It was stated that disputes between refugee students and Turkish students are resolved in active cooperation with psychological counselors, the school administration, and parents. It was also stated that the different cultural structures of refugee students affect how and to what extent the behaviors such as love, affection, etc., should be shown. It can be stated that the activation of refugee students in sports, arts, and cultural activities strengthens their bonds of belonging to society and school.

"I believe that refugee students should be supported in social, cultural, and sports aspects. For example, we have Somali students playing on our school football team. Thanks to these students, our school football team is currently one of the teams with the highest number of cups in Aksaray. We give roles to these children in national celebrations, local liberation days, charities, or TÜBİTAK science fairs, science exhibitions, and other social activities that our school does (Abdullah)."

According to school administrators, inclusive education is like a halay dance (Anatolian folk dance) in which everybody holds the same rhythm to the same music, regardless of color, race, religion, or gender. It can be considered that from the expression of inclusive education among school administrators, the cultural codes of every society are effective, and the concepts related to these cultural codes differentiate the conceptualization of the inclusive education understanding.

"I think inclusive education is like a Halay (Anatolian folk dance). In the "halay", everyone plays arm in arm. The halay, which I try to simulate for the inclusion of everyone in school, the fact that everybody goes arm in arm, and everyone dances to the same music with the same movements, regardless of economic, social, color, and gender, is an example of inclusive education for me (Servet)."

It was stated that although Somali students, one of the refugee students, are perceived differently due to their skin color, other refugee students are not perceived differently. It was stated that healthy dialogues based on respect, love, and mutual understanding occur at school in general. It can be stated that different perceptions about refugee students at school are based on students' physical characteristics; prejudices against individuals perceived as foreigners may be formed by different variables in the future.

"Iraqis, Iranians, Afghans, etc., these students are very similar to our students with face types, but Somali students may be perceived differently because of their skin color. Students who don't know

each other come to our school from very different neighborhoods and villages. For this reason, the students in our school generally think that Syrian, Iraqi, and Afghan students are from here, so there is no different understanding against them in the first place (Servet)."

It was stated that there was no disrespect or exclusion in the school towards refugee students, and other students adopted these students in lessons and games after a certain period. It was also stated that teachers are making great efforts to win these students. The prevention of adversities that may occur at school against refugee students can be attributed to the school administration's fulfillment of legal obligations and the ability to persuade Turkish students to adhere to these obligations.

"I witnessed something like this in our school, in the first terms; some Turkish students said we could not get along with them. The principal's response was, "Is this your father's property? This is a state school; these are the guests invited by the state to our country. If the state took this student here, this student will also study here; this is not your father's property." In other words, our response was to clearly show the facts to those who react by saying: "We don't want these here." When a clear message was given that "if they came to this country, received this right, and enrolled in this school, they would also benefit from this right," then there was no reaction came from the children (Yasin)."

It was stated that other stakeholders of the school admitted refugee students, and these students are not perceived as different from other students. It was stated that refugee students are also encouraged to participate in all activities addressed to the entire school and that these activities aim at cultural meetings, cohesion, and agreement. Organizing activities where refugee students can come together with all students and make equal use of the facilities available in the school can be regarded as a sincere step in achieving inclusive education.

"In fact, as a person who sees all the problems of this school, I sincerely say this as a witness to all the parent, teacher, peer relationships, and play performances. We strive to provide these students with the opportunities given to each student without distinguishing them from our regular students (Servet)."

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results obtained in order to reveal the views on inclusive leadership and counseling for refugee students in the schools were evaluated by comparing them with national and international studies. According to the results, it can be stated that both school administrators and psychological counselors focus on the solution of negative cases in the schools. It was often repeated that a large number of students in the school and communication problems with refugee students prevent them from planning for these students. Besides, it was stated that the classes in which refugee students are placed, prevent these students from participating in the education and training processes, which causes many problems from communication problems to course failures. These students' language problems limit their communication with other stakeholders in the school. Also, the unwillingness to learn Turkish in these children can be attributed to the fact that they stay in Turkey for a transition to a third country. These results are considered among the main causes of many negativities, from the refugee students'

mental health to their academic success due to social alienation, effects of stress due to resettlement sites, and multiplied effects of previous traumas (Correa-Velez et al., 2010).

The negative experiences of refugee students in the environments of war, conflict, and violence were among the main causes of psychological problems as well as security anxiety. Also, the stated problems cause these students to reduce their school presence only to physical existence and to be perceived as foreigners. In addition to what has been stated, both the immigration of these students to a new country and the adaptation problems they experience in this country increase these students' vulnerability. It is noteworthy that refugees' problems continue exponentially in the second countries, and schools are one of the places where refugee children cannot hide their fragility due to the problems they face. Depending on these results, studies are confirming that strong dialogues with refugee students and their families increase the self-esteem and self-confidence of these students to some extent (Birman, Trickett, & Buchanan, 2005; Quinton, 2013; Block et al., 2014). Also, the connections between home and school can be strengthened through communication offices to be established in schools and translators to be employed there (Block et al., 2014; Quinton, 2013). Besides all this, it is very difficult for schools to become inclusive places without largely solving problems such as difficulty in learning a new language by a refugee or asylum seeker students, adapting to a culture they are not familiar with, interruption of education, and the deterioration in family structures. It should not be forgotten that to alleviate all these negativities and to protect the mental health of these students, there is a need for psychological counselors and psychologists, who are experts in the field and who are familiar with the cultural codes of these students (Fazel et al., 2012).

Arguably the understanding of respect and tolerance adopted by all shareholders in the school and the classroom is reflected in concrete lives by taking care of each student without discrimination. The fact that refugee students were not exposed to disrespect and exclusion at school can be attributed to stakeholders' tolerant attitudes in the school towards these students, and the excessive similarities shared as the language problems of refugee students are solved. Related to these results, Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007) also demonstrated that a high level of belonging to the school and healthy dialogues to be established in these environments create an environment for a low level of depression and higher self-efficacy.

According to the results of the study, school administrations have no detailed information about refugee students, who will enroll in school or are already enrolled, and to prepare them for the future, there is no information about the characteristics, experiences, achievements, interests, and talents of these students. Also, refugee students' belonging problems and the uncertainties about their future obscure these students' future goals. Regarding these results, Taylor and Sidhu (2012) also demonstrated that a responsible, strong, and collaborative leader must provide the necessary support to the refugee students and coordinate the entire process. Numerous studies have revealed that the quality of leadership affects all school dimensions, guide

in creating an effective vision for the school and teaching-learning processes (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Leithwood & Riehl 2005; Reyes & Wagstaff, 2005). In addition, the importance of active and supportive leadership has been emphasized in the implementation of long-term inclusive policies for refugee and asylum seeker students to continue their education in a stable manner and to be employed in the future (Hamilton & Moore, 2004; Arnot & Pinson, 2005; Christie & Sidhu, 2002).

All participants emphasized that legal obligations determined the structure, effectiveness, and flexibility of their roles at school. School administrators refer to legal obligations and responsibilities assumed for sudden situations and express that their administrative ability is limited. Also, the prevention of negativities that may occur against refugee students in the school was attributed to the effectiveness of the school administration's legal obligations and the compliance of Turkish students with these obligations. Depending on these results, most educational institutions are not able to solve the problems of refugee students might be associated with the failure to carry the participative and inclusive understanding into action as an integrated model (Block et al., 2014). Also, the fact that politicians, educators, and researchers take into account the experiences and needs of refugee children affects the identification and support of their cognitive, social, and emotional development (Mistry, Biesanz, Chien, Howes, & Benner, 2008; Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2007).

It may be argued that many psychological, sociological, and academic problems, from the language problems of refugee students to their inability to participate in school activities, can be solved with participatory and inclusive leadership in the school. Related to these results, secure and positive relationships with refugee and asylum seeker students are among the factors that directly affect participation and academic success (Komarraju, Musulkin, & Bhattacharya, 2010; Zengaro & Zengaro, 2016). In addition to these, the intercultural understanding that feeds refugee students' worthiness and sense of belonging should not be overlooked (Hek, 2005; Matthews, 2008; Rutter, 2006). Accordingly, meeting the cognitive, social, and emotional needs of these students may also facilitate their becoming active citizens by merging with a larger segment of the society (Isik-Ercan, 2012).

The fact that refugee families prevent attempts to distribute them to different classes to prevent refugee students from sitting in classrooms with their own nationalities or alone may indicate that the culture of consultation between shareholders in the school is not established. Continuous and healthy communication that cannot be established with the parents of refugee students can be attributed to parents' priority to their children's education, to economic inadequacies, and to constantly address changes. Also, the economic inadequacies negatively affect the adaptation, attendance, and belonging of these students.

The families of refugee students, which stand as an obstacle to love school and socialize with other students, are also among the main reasons why these students are employed on the streets and are often referred to as absentee students at school. Also,

the negative opinions about refugees can be attributed to the increase in these individuals' visibility everywhere, the fact that the judicial cases experienced in daily life are mostly tied to the actions of these individuals, and unfair generalizations made for these individuals. Studies in line with these results also emphasize that refugee students' education interruptions directly affect their adaptation to society and their acceptance as marginal (Humpage, 2001; McBrien, 2005). Also, the failure of refugee students in the fields of reading, mathematics, and science was attributed to their absenteeism and low graduation rates (OECD, 2006).

Although there was no separate planning for the refugee students in the school, it was stated that the teachers were directed by the school administrators to deal with the refugee students one-on-one during the remaining time of the lessons. Continuing the support provided at school for the social, psychological, and academic needs of refugee students under the school administration and teachers' initiative may suggest that the process is not success-oriented. Considering these results, schools can be considered not only a places that teach reading and writing, but also environments where the student learn participation, communication, social relationships, belonging, and discovers themselves and others (Matthews, 2008).

Directing refugee students to become participatory, responsible, and active individuals in school activities is an important goal that school administration, psychological counselors, and other teachers agree on. Psychological counselors, as well as other stakeholders, are in a supportive position for the refugee students, who are expressed as vulnerable, in reaching the determined goals, eliminating the problems encountered in the school, and carrying out education-training activities more effectively. In this context, inclusive leadership and the connections to be established with teachers and other shareholders are important for students' academic and cultural development (Karatzias, Chouliara, Power, & Swanson, 2006). Kanu (2008) argues that the reasons for the alienation that refugee students experience in schools were the continuous interruptions in education, inconsistent services, inadequate educational support, and the types of discrimination exhibited by school staff. Among the difficulties that refugee students faced, culture shock and socio-economic problems negatively affect them in school participation and becoming active individuals (Suarez-Orozco, M. Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

The definition of inclusive leadership, which will be implemented in schools, as everyone keeping the same rhythm to the same music without being subjected to color, religion, and gender discrimination, is an example that this type of leadership can be blended with cultural codes. Cultural codes of each society were effective in the expression of inclusive education among school administrators, and the concepts related to these cultural codes differentiate the conceptualization of the inclusive education understanding. Taylor and Sidhu (2012) describe inclusive education for refugee students as basing all dynamics in school on respect, love, and tolerance. Besides, schools that value inclusive and good practices need an inclusive leadership approach that actively supports refugee students' positive aspects and discourses. In



addition to all these, it should not be forgotten that in order to support refugee and asylum seeker students, prevent their exclusion, and ensure their psychological well-being, psychological counselors who are experts in their fields are required (Muji et al., 2007).

It was stated that the special situations of refugee students were taken into account, and the school practices were based on respect, love, and understanding. In addition, it should be kept in mind that the density of students in schools, the difference in student needs, the insufficient number of psychological counselors, and the lack of knowledge and experiences that can address all disadvantaged groups also negatively affect the use of psychological counseling services for all students. It was stated that in cases where school belonging is felt at a high level in children and adolescents, self-esteem and motivation levels also increase (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; Sujoldzic et al., 2006). Also, it was stated that education based on supportive understanding prioritizes enhancing the individual's resilience and potential as well as encouraging active participation and inclusion (Downey, 2007). It should not be forgotten that with the participation of refugee students and their families in all decision-making mechanisms in the school, the inclusiveness of official and latent programs at school will increase (Due, Riggs, & Augoustinos, 2016). Taylor and Sidhu (2012) also argue that targeted policies or program support for refugee students will increase inclusiveness, and a successful implementation process based on these will be established. In addition, cultural adaptation problems, poverty, bad housing, absenteeism towards school, and psychological problems are among the factors that make the implementation process difficult (Betancourt et al., 2015; Coll & Magnuson, 2014; Moinolnolki & Han, 2017). All these negativities mentioned were among the reasons for the problems related to participation and healthy social relations among refugee students, as well as interrupting the education life of refugee students (Porche, Fortuna, Lin, & Alegria, 2011; Watson, 2009).

It can be argued that the sharing of different experiences and cultures at school is important, and the best indicator of this is the cultural richness displayed at fairs or social activities held at the school for all students. It can be stated that the activation of refugee students in sports, arts, and cultural activities strengthens their bond of belonging to society and school. In addition, organizing activities where refugee students can come together with all students to increase their belonging to society and school and make equal use of all students from the facilities available in the school can be considered a sincere step in achieving the success of inclusive education. Regarding these results, it was stated that an inclusive understanding that addresses different cultures in schools has great contributions to students' adaptation processes (Amthor & Roxas, 2016). Also, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel associating the curriculum and the cultural context of the school with the cultural world of the students at home is an important component of the process (De Capua & Marshall, 2010; Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, & Henderson, 2013; Morrison & Bryan, 2014). Besides all these, it is very important that orientation programs, parent workshops, and professional development programs for teachers in schools sensitive to

refugee students are stable and transformed into an institutional role (Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009; Xu, 2007).

Based on the results of the study, recommendations to researchers and practitioners are as follows: An information network can be created for refugees in schools, including all experiences before, during, and after migration, educational backgrounds, family situations, and financial losses. In schools, a communication network that is kept up-to-date with law enforcement officers' knowledge can be established for healthy and continuous communication with refugee students and their parents. Psychological counselors can be supported with the necessary training to be aware of the psychological, cultural, social, economic, and historical dynamics of refugee students and all disadvantaged groups and keep this knowledge up to date. This is an important issue for future research. Researchers in the field can conduct long-term observations that reveal how inclusive leadership and counseling processes for refugee students.

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## Appendix-1

### Interview Questions for Psychological Counselors

1. Can you explain your role in the school?
2. How many refugee children receive education in your school?
3. What are the refugee students' characteristics, compatibility status, communication levels with friends, and course success?
4. How do they define themselves?
5. How do they adapt to the environment at school and outside of school?
6. How do their friends and teachers see them?
7. How is school-family cooperation?
8. How are their images in society?
9. How do you contribute to inclusive education in your school, and what are your examples for this?
10. Do you make a separate plan for the education of refugee children in your school?
11. What do you think inclusive education looks like?
12. How do you improve mutual understanding in your school?
13. How did you react when you witnessed moments of disrespect or exclusion to the refugee students at your school, and what preventive measures did you take to prevent this from happening again? Could you please give some examples?





## Appendix-2

### Interview Questions for School Administrators

1. Can you explain your role in the school?
2. Can you tell us about your school?
3. How do you contribute to inclusive education in your school, and what are your examples for this?
4. Do you make any extra planning for the education of refugee children in your school?
5. What experiences do you have with the inclusion of refugee children in your school?
6. What does inclusive education look like to you?
7. How do you improve mutual understanding in your school?
8. How did you react when you witnessed moments of disrespect or exclusion of the refugee students in your school, and what preventive measures did you take to prevent this from happening again? Could you please give some examples of this?
9. How would you deal with the inclusion of different experiences, histories, or different cultural backgrounds in your school?