RESEARCH ARTICLE

Parental Effects on Children Regarding Interactions with Outgroups: Parent-Child Similarities in Migrant and Host Groups in Türkiye

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of parents on children regarding intergroup relations. For this purpose, the study focuses on the similarities children have with their parents in terms of social relations between migrant and Turkish children in Türkiye. The theoretical frameworks guiding the study involve Allport's prejudice model and Bandura's social learning theory, as well as other field studies. Due to the relations between majority and minority groups often being based on an asymmetrical power relationship, this study has adopted a critical perspective. For this reason, the study uses the critical ethnography approach, a qualitative research design. The study discusses its findings within the scope of the themes of young children's group awareness and preferences, learning prejudice, sensitivity to implicit (non-verbal) behaviors, and parent-child similarities in intergroup friendships. As a result, the research shows that parents have a deep influence on children regarding intergroup relationships, with similarities existing between a parent and child. On this basis, the study concludes the need to consider parental effects and plan possible interventions accordingly in order to positively support the course of relations between the two groups.
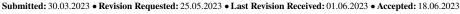
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For decades, researchers (Allport, 2016; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) have engaged in an intense debate on intergroup relations, with the concepts of prejudice and contact seen to be at the center of studies focusing on intergroup relations. As places where different groups meet and contact frequently occurs, schools are like a laboratory that allows for the study of intergroup interactions. With the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) guaranteeing the right to education for all, the opportunity has occurred for different groups to come together through education (Article 26.1.2). Access to education as a fundamental human right that also brings diverse groups together is the most important component of social development (Dryden-Peterson, 2010, p. 10). In addition to this justification, the fact that providing an appropriate education for different ethnic groups implies a legal responsibility and a moral obligation is important to emphasize (Stewart, 2012, p. 172). However, access to this right has often been difficult for migrant communities and brought social problems.

While migrant children's access to education is critical to the cohesion of host and migrant communities (Cerna, 2019; Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2015; Yılmaz, 2021), the forced encounter between a host community and newcomers in education has raised numerous issues based on social and cultural differences. While the value of having positive relationships between local and migrant families in schools has become increasingly evident, various studies have also documented the presence of widespread hostile relations between the two groups, and this is particularly traumatizing for migrant families (Dryden-Peterson, 2017, p. 1). Factual findings show that exclusionary attitudes and behaviors make the migrant group's ability to adapt to school and thus to the new society challenging (McBrien, 2005, pp. 349–350; Şeker & Sirkeci, 2015, p. 127); this can even lead to undesirable consequences such as dropping out of school in some cases (Şeker & Sirkeci, 2015, pp. 127–130; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2016; Yılmaz, 2021, pp. 91–92). This has led to the need to examine the reasons for these attitudes and behaviors.

An ongoing debate is found in the literature regarding the role of families in shaping attitudes toward outgroups, with contradictory research results found on this issue. Acock and Bengtson (1980, p. 501) pointed to studies that focus on parent-child differences due to the "generation gap" between parents and children in terms of attitudes and values. Some studies (Allport, 2016; Meeusen, 2014; White & Gleitzman, 2006) have concluded a positive relationship to exist between the attitudes of parents and their children. Aboud and Doyle (1996) found a strong relationship between perceived parental attitudes and children's behavior. Rodriguez-Garcia and Wagner (2009, p. 518) pointed to the existence of a bidirectional interaction between parents and children regarding intergroup relations. In other words, children are not only passive recipients of parental attitudes in the process of interacting with an outgroup

but are also active subjects who influence their parents' attitudes and behaviors. Sinclair et al. (2005) emphasized that the level to which children resemble their parents is directly proportional to the level at which they identify with their parents. Although research results vary, central importance is understood to have been attributed to the influence of parents on children regarding intergroup relations.

Studies on the social relations between local and migrant groups in Türkiye continue to increase. These studies focused on the context of Türkiye have mostly addressed issues such as trauma, language acquisition, acculturation, resilience, and discrimination (Özer et al., 2013; Özer et al., 2017; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015; Şeker & Sirkeci, 2015; Taştan & Çelik, 2017; Yılmaz & Sağıroğlu, 2022). Although these topics of discussion constitute important topics that determine the direction of intergroup relations, the need exists to examine the effects families have on intergroup relations more closely, especially in the context of Türkiye. The studies conducted in this context should also be noted to have generally adopted short-term research approaches based on data being collected once or a few times. Therefore, using long-term research methods to examine the effects families have on intergroup relations in Türkiye will make significant contributions to the field. Based on the knowledge that one of the primary determinants of intergroup relations is the family environment (Allport, 2016; Castelli, 2007), this study aims to examine the parental effects on the relationships between migrant and host community students by examining parent-child similarities. In this context, the study will discuss prejudices and contact experiences (e.g., group and friendship preferences), which are determinants in the intergroup interactions of migrant and Turkish children in Türkiye, in the context of parents' influence on their children. For this purpose, the study is based on the theoretical frameworks of intergroup contact and social learning, as well as on practical and theoretical discussions in the literature. The study's Introduction will continue by presenting the conceptual framework that includes Allport's (2016) prejudice model and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, followed by a review of current research then the respective Methodology, Findings and Discussion, and Conclusion sections. The study's main findings show that parents influence young children's group awareness, ingroup and outgroup preferences, and prejudice acquisition. Another key finding of the study is related to children's reactions to their parents' implicit behaviors toward outgroups. In addition, the findings on parent-child similarities regarding intergroup friendship relationships indicate important results, with parents playing a formative role in shaping their children's intergroup relationships and similarities with their parents regarding attitudes toward outgroups.

Conceptual Framework

Allport's Model of Prejudice

Prejudice has been defined as a state of intense dislike (antipathy) based on erroneous and inflexible generalizations. Prejudices may be directed toward a group as a whole or toward an individual for being a member of that group (White & Gleitzman, 2006, p. 247). According to Allport (2016, pp. 33–36), when one talks about prejudice, one usually thinks of racial prejudice. According to Allport, the two main components of racial prejudice are hostility and rejection, and the basis of rejection is categorical. In other words, the group rather than the individual is taken into consideration, and individuals are blamed for being a member of their group. Therefore, individual differences are ignored, and individuals encounter hostility or exclusion due to possessing the objectionable characteristics of the group to which they belong.

Answering the question of how prejudice is learned, Allport (2016, p. 341) emphasized the influence of the home to be primary and children to adopt the ready-made ethnic attitudes from their parents. In other words, even if children have no racial tendencies, they still learn prejudices from their elders over time. This process occurs through the young child identifying with the elders of the family before learning what hate means (p. 57). Pointing to the parental influence on children's practices regarding rejecting outgroups, Allport emphasized a direct transfer to occur from the words parents use and the feelings and ideas they have to their children's attitudes.

According to Allport's (2016) model of prejudice, prejudice in children is acquired through the processes of learning, conformity, and contact. Accordingly, learning means that parents freely express their views about outgroups, and children associate a racial label with an emotion. In later years, the feelings and identifying marks of each category are generalized to the entire outgroup. Conformity means that children become aware of the family's social norms regarding outgroup members and the behaviors and attitudes that are expected of them. As a result of the desire to identify with and be approved by these groups, children eventually conform to these norms. The final mechanism for learning prejudice is intergroup contact (Rodriguez-Garcia & Wagner, 2009, p. 517). According to the results of the meta-analytic study conducted by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006, p. 766), intergroup contact contributes to reducing outgroup prejudice.

Studies on the contact hypothesis have emphasized the importance of positive contact for reducing prejudice (Allport, 2016; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Children who have positive intergroup contact experiences are claimed to trust their personal experiences over their parents' intergroup attitudes and positive experiences to reduce prejudiced parent-child similarities (Meeusen, 2014, p. 46). Therefore, although children's positive intergroup contact experiences function as a buffer against parental resemblance

regarding prejudices, they should be emphasized to not eliminate parental influence. As Maykel Verkuyten (2002, p. 561) rightly pointed out in this regard, the role of both positive contact as well as negative contact should not be overlooked. In this context, while children's positive contact experiences with the outgroup does distance them from parental attitudes, the probability of resembling a parent can be said to increase regarding negative contact experiences.

Although an inversely proportional relationship exists between positive contact experience and negative prejudices toward outgroups, the determining role of the at which children identify with their parents is useful to keep in mind. According to a study conducted by Sinclair et al. (2005), children who identify with their parents at a high level develop very similar racial attitudes, whereas the prejudices of children with low levels of parental identification overlap less with their parents' attitudes. The results of a meta-analysis measuring the relationship between parents' and children's prejudices (Rodriguez-Garcia & Wagner, 2009) support Allport's general assumption that parents' and children's intergroup attitudes are interrelated. The parental role having a privileged position in Allport's bias model based on the asymmetry in the parent-child relationship is remarkable in terms of showing the direction of the relationship.

The literature that is focused on parent-child interactions regarding prejudice started with Allport, who argued that prejudice begins at home (as cited in Verkuyten, 2002, p. 561) and is acquired through implicit behaviors rather than being taught directly (as cited in Sinclair et al., 2005). Another theoretical framework that is closely related to this kind of indirect transmission was put forward by Bandura (1977). The following sub-section presents the background of social learning theory and its relevance to this research and also describes the social development issues related to parent-child interactions.

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory

The second theoretical background on parent-child similarities regarding interactions with outgroups is provided by social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), which assumes that indirectly acquired behavior is learned through practice. Social learning theory argues that learning occurs through social processes such as observation, imitation, and modeling (Nabavi, 2012, p. 6). According to this theory, misconceptions about nationalities, ethnic groups, gender roles, and other aspects of life are modeled by the social environment. The concept of modeling, which is at the heart of the theory, refers to the fact that children often imitate their parents' thoughts and behaviors, whether the parents want them to or not (White & Gleitzman, 2006, p. 249).

Bandura's central claim is that much of human learning is fundamentally social. As children imitate the behaviors of the individuals around them and their behaviors are reinforced by modeling, they consolidate cognitive functions that become a fundamental part of their personality (Allan, 2017, p. 6). According to this theory, learning occurs through one's interactions with others in a social context. People develop similar behaviors by observing the behaviors of others, after which people assimilate and imitate this behavior, especially if their observational experience is positive or if the observed behavior includes rewards. According to Bandura (1977, pp. 27–28), imitation involves the actual reproduction of observed motor activities.

Social learning theory suggests that children develop beliefs and behaviors by imitating people who are important to them (Bandura, 1977). This view is consistent with Allport's (2016) viewpoint that children adopt their parents' view with the expectation of affection and approval, thus making the home the most important source of ethnic prejudice. Therefore, both theoretical approaches converge on the idea that children's prejudices are closely related to the beliefs their parents express and the degree to which children identify with their parents.

Current Research

The rise of anti-immigrant sentiments and hostility and discrimination against migrants is a common phenomenon in almost every host country (Stephan et al., 1999, p. 2221). As a minority group, migrants are generally known to make up the communities most frequently exposed to negative attitudes, stereotypes, and discriminatory behaviors (Meeusen, 2014, p. 47). As the main studies shaping the debates in this field have frequently emphasized, the negative prejudices migrant groups experience vary according to the frequency of contact with residents in the new place (Allport, 2016; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), and thus the social conditions.

Social conditions in the new host country are shaped under the influence of elements such as family, neighborhood, school, public and non-governmental organizations, culture, and religion at varying levels from nearest to farthest (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The influence of the family environment in which the child takes part should be noted to be more direct and deeper. Allport (2016, p. 341) emphasized the first six years of life to be critical in the development of all social attitudes and also pointed out the deep influence the family has on children.

Allport (2016, pp. 61–63) stated that children in every group are viewed as a member of the group to which their parents belong and that children can understand group membership at an early age. Although some studies addressing parental influence on

the attitudes and behaviors children determine toward outgroups have pointed to the importance of adolescence, a rich volume of literature has shown that children gain intergroup preferences from the age of three (Castelli et al., 2008, pp. 1504–1505; Nesdale, 2001). Various theoretical discussions have also revealed that parents play important roles in the emergence of attitudes and behaviors such as ingroup favoritism, dislike, or exclusion of outgroups (Allport, 2016; Bandura, 1977; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Studies examining intergroup relations assume that attitudes such as prejudice, exclusion, and discrimination are shaped starting from childhood and learned within the social context in which the individual is found (Allport, 2016; Sinclair et al., 2005). Although personality is generally claimed to be embedded in a social context, the consideration exists that social determinants should be examined more closely in terms of the development of attitudes and behaviors toward outgroups.

Research on the role of parents as one of the most influential actors in a child's social environment regarding how they shape children's intergroup attitudes is contradictory. Although the results of a series of studies by Luigi Castelli et al. (2007, 2008, 2009) and from Meeusen's (2014, p. 52) studies on the subject have revealed a positive relationship between parent and child attitudes, other research results did not confirm this (Aboud & Doyle, 1996; Davey & Norburn, 1980). Still other research has found children with parents who have low-level prejudices to have high-level prejudices (Castelli et al., 2009, p. 586). In addition, another study (Sinclair et al., 2005) should be noted to have shown a directly proportional relationship to exist between children's ability to identify with their parents and their positive attitudes towards the outgroup. Various studies conducted in Türkiye (Çelik & İçduygu, 2018; Taştan & Çelik, 2017; Yılmaz, 2021) have shown most migrant children to face undesirable behaviors such as peer bullying, exclusion, and discrimination in schools due to their membership to the migrant group. For this reason, some migrant children become alienated from the school climate (Şeker & Sirkeci, 2015), which hinders their adaptation to the new place. As a result, migrant children's interactions with the local group decreases or disappears as they become confined to their own group and in some cases drop out of school. These studies conducted in Türkiye point to prejudices as one of the important reasons for the exclusionary attitudes of students belonging to the local group. Although studies (Allport, 2016; Meeusen, 2014) are found to have suggested that prejudiced attitudes toward outgroups develop from childhood through elements of socialization, the impact of implicitly and explicitly prejudiced parental behaviors on children has not received sufficient attention (exceptions being Baron & Banaji, 2006; Castelli et al., 2008; Sinclair et al., 2005). Furthermore, the effects of the social environment in which children are embedded on the development of group preferences, personal attitudes, and the behaviors children exhibit regarding intergroup relations have rarely been addressed in primary school children. Based on the discussions in the literature, this study feels a consideration of the ethnic identity of the group to need to be included in the research, as well as the social environment, group preferences and experiences such as contact with the outgroup, and prejudice acquisition.

Building on the existing literature, importance is given to taking a closer look at determining the level and direction of the relationships between local students and migrant students. On this basis, the article examines the interactions local students have with migrant students in terms of parental influence. To examine the effects parents have on the social relations between migrant and local students, the study seeks answers to the following questions based on various theoretical approaches and field data:

1. How do children from the host and migrant communities shape their awareness of and preferences for in- and out-groups?
2. How do parents' prejudiced attitudes toward outgroups affect their children?
3. How do parents' implicit and explicit attitudes toward outgroups affect their children's attitudes?
4. How do parents' relationships with the outgroup affect their children's intergroup friendship experiences?

Methodology

This study utilizes the qualitative research design of critical ethnographic research to focus on parental influence in the interaction between migrant and Turkish students in Türkiye. Thomas (1993, p. 3) stated that critical ethnography is a style of analysis and discourse embedded in traditional ethnography and referred to this approach as "intellectual rebellion." This is because critical ethnography focuses on grasping the meaning of social relations in a value-laden and judgmental manner, rather than in a descriptive manner as in traditional ethnography (Madison, 2005, p. 4). In other words, this approach helps to ask what something might be rather than describing what it is (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2005). Thus, critical ethnographers' aim is to change the culture they are studying rather than to describe it.

Critical ethnography is a research approach that allows researchers to look beyond surface appearances (see the section Sensitivity to Implicit (Non-Verbal) Behaviors), thereby enabling them to address issues such as social injustice, power, identity, and discourse. This approach focuses on understanding and critiquing social structures and systems. Critical ethnographic research should be emphasized for its ability to contribute to eliminating the oppressive influences that lead to unnecessary social domination in intergroup relations (Carspecken, 1996). This means that critical ethnographers contribute to emancipatory knowledge and social justice discourses (Madison, 2005, p. 5). Consequently, critical ethnography proceeds from an open framework that seeks to use knowledge for social change, either by shifting consciousness or by invoking a call to action (Thomas, 1993, p. 4). Due to similar

shared value orientations, this study aims to contribute to social theory by examining parent-child similarity in social relations between migrant and host communities.

Critical ethnography pays special attention to the study of culturally oppressed or discriminated social groups (Madison, 2005) and is considered a highly relevant approach for this research and its focus on intergroup (host and newcomers) relations. Critical ethnographic studies often collect qualitative data that highlight subjects' voices, experiences, and perspectives. Adopting critical ethnography enables the examination of social relations with the other (Thomas, 1993), thus allowing this research to examine and discuss the influence parents have on their children regarding the interactions between migrants and locals. The study has been conducted with the help of data obtained as a result of intensive long-term field research.

Data Sources

The data in this article were obtained through 40 weeks (1 academic year) of participant observations in a primary school with numerous migrant students (n = 632 in the morning, n = 850 in the afternoon). To examine the subject in depth and detail, a school where migrant students study together with locals was chosen as the study group. Accordingly, selecting a school within the scope of the study was influenced by the fact classes have varying proportions of migrant to local students, which allows for examining intergroup relations at different levels. When considering the possibility of affecting the relations between the two groups, having a difference in the distribution of migrant and local students according to classes is felt to be important. As a matter of fact, some of the classes in the school included in the scope of the research have more local students, while others have more migrant students. In addition, the presence of classes consisting entirely of migrant or local students was also noted as a factor that increased the noted diversity.

Open-ended and purposeful observations covered all the days spent at school to understand the routines, daily conversations, and interactions that make up the school's culture. The data also include formal elements of participatory observation, such as in-class observations and observations of parent-teacher-student interactions as students were leaving and being picked up from school, of teacher and parent meetings, of the aftermath of football tournaments, of official ceremonies, and of school trips and fundraisers. Alongside the participant observations and unstructured interviews, the study conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with Turkish parents (n = 7), refugee parents (n = 6), teachers (n = 4), and school administrators (n = 2), each lasting approximately 1 hour. Focus group interviews were also conducted with a group of six teachers. In the individual interviews, participants were asked questions about children's awareness of the in- and out-groups, prejudices, group preferences, factors affecting their attitudes and behaviors toward the out-group, and their preferences for friendships. In the focus group interview, discussions were held on the data obtained from the field observations and the individual interviews held with the other participants. The analytical strategy used for data analysis involved the development of a coding system consisting of the emic codes that emerged inductively from the participants and the ethical codes that were compiled deductively from the literature (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). All interview and observation notes were coded line by line (Miles & Huberman, 1994) using the NVivo12 qualitative software program. The study adopted a triangulation strategy and compared various data sources to interpret the findings. In line with the triangulation strategy, diversity was ensured by using different data collection techniques (i.e., observations and interviews) and by obtaining data sources from different actors (i.e., administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other school employees). While the data presented here are necessary "snapshots" of experiences in the school, these data also refer to the interviews and interactions with school stakeholders as observed over an academic year.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings from the fieldwork and discussions relating these findings to the literature. After first describing the findings on school demographics, the study goes on to present the findings under the themes of young children's group awareness and preference, learning prejudices, sensitivity to nonverbal (implicit) behaviors, and parent-child similarities regarding intergroup friendships, as well as the discussions based on these findings.

School Demographics

The neighborhood where the school included in the scope of the study is located is inhabited by a low-income local population who intend to move out of the neighborhood when their economic opportunities increase. In addition to the locals, this neighborhood hosts a dense migrant population due to its proximity to the city center, favorable living conditions, shopping, housing, job opportunities, and easy access to work. Like the neighborhood, the school noteworthily hosts a high number of migrant students (n = 1,482 for the morning and afternoon classes).

The families of the local and migrant students at the school have predominantly low income and education levels. According to the information obtained from the interview with the school principal, a small number of migrant families had previous professions in their homeland such as teachers and lawyers. All the local and migrant families in the school are Muslim. Arabic is the mother tongue of almost all migrants. In addition, all the migrant parents who participated in the study were born outside Türkiye (generally born in Syria), while most of the children were born in Türkiye. The remaining small number of migrant children had migrated to Türkiye as infants or at a very young age. These findings were deemed valuable, as they provide the opportunity for a comparison between migrant children and parents in terms of Turkish language skills and adaptation to Turkish culture, which are important factors in the interactions with the local group. In addition, consideration of the migrant parents' Turkish language skills is also important, as it deeply affects their children's level of participation in education (e.g., following homework, attending parent meetings, class visits), frequency of contact with the host community, and neighborly/friendly relations.

Another demographic finding that affects the interaction between the two groups is the occupational status of the parents. Almost all migrant and local parents are employed in the service sector. None of the few migrant and local parents with professional skills are employed in managerial positions or professions requiring high skills and qualifications. That migrants and locals aspire to similar jobs and that all of the migrants and a significant part of the locals stay in rental homes have been understood to deeply affected the relations between the two groups.

Young Children's Group Awareness and Preferences

Consistent with the results of the widespread literature (Lam et al., 2011; Neblett et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2003), the data obtained within the scope of this research show that primary school-age children belonging to the migrant or host community have in- and out-group awareness. As Lam et al. (2011, p. 858) emphasized, outgroup awareness in children should be noted to be more strongly explainable by social and environmental factors than children's cognitive level.

Focusing on the factors affecting children's group awareness, the data show parents' conversations about the out-group at home to be effective. Although the children do not directly participate in these conversations, those who do witness these conversations at home should be noted to be influenced by the content of these conversations. The following statements recorded during the focus group interview with the counselors of the school where the research was conducted confirm the impact conversations at home have on children:

Outside of school, parents talk a lot about how they cannot tolerate the presence of Syrians. In other words, the attitude of the parents at home is like this; don't sit with Syrians, they are dirty, the Syrian stole your pen, or Syrians fight a lot. Since they make these kinds of discourses a lot at home, this inevitably affects the children. When we talk to the children from time to time about after getting in a fight, they share things like "It was a Syrian who beat me while studying" or "Turks beat us." So actually, the child does not know this as Turks and Syrians. But we observe it as a reflection and expression of those conversations at home. (School counselor, M. S.)

If the parents had not spoken negatively about Syrians at home, nothing negative would have spread to the school. (School counselor, A. H.)

I also take care of 12th graders in another school. They are aware of ethnic identity. But the children here do not have such a thing. When we talk about Syrians, they are not prejudiced, they do not make an evaluation based on identity. But as the conversation progresses, we realize that the source of their negative sentences about their Syrian peers is the conversations at home. (School counselor, H. N.)

Inadequate or negative inter-group relations in the neighborhood were noticed to be one of the serious barriers that prevent children from contacting the outgroup. Negative experiences such as not sharing the playground in the neighborhood and not being included in the games played on the street have also emerged as practices that negatively affect the frequency of contact with the outgroup. The lack of positive intergroup contact in the neighborhood brought the determining role of parental conversations at home regarding children's awareness of the outgroup back to the agenda. The quotes obtained during the interview with a 3rd-grade teacher at the school provide clues about the level of mutual recognition between the two groups:

They have been living in the same neighborhood for 5-6 years. They do not know each other's foods; they don't know anything about each other. I gave this as homework. I said, "Syrians will learn a Turkish dish, and Turks will learn about a Syrian dish and come and tell us about it." I can say nothing came from it, because the Syrians couldn't share or explain anything with the Turks, and the Turks couldn't explain anything to the Syrians. Lastly, some Turkish students talked about hummus as a Syrian dish. Some Syrian students also explained olive oil stuffing and beans as Turkish dishes. When I asked, "Where did you find it?", they said, "We found it on the Internet." Although they live in the same neighborhood, they asked the Internet rather than each other. Neither side communicates with the other, and the communication between the two groups does not continue outside of school. Without continuity outside of school, positive things are limited to school. (Class teacher, S. H.)

As stated in the research conducted by Neblett et al. (2008, p. 200), neighborhood experiences should be underlined to play a critical role in guiding parents' socialization efforts with outgroups and to indirectly affect children's group awareness. Therefore, the ability to sustain positive experiences gained at school in the neighborhood is thought to be important for recognizing outgroups. The findings are consistent with the conclusions of Lam et al. (2011, pp. 845–846), who examined the racial awareness of young children and found adults to be more willing to discriminate between groups, to prefer the ingroup, and to influence their children

in this way. Therefore, the close connection between children's awareness of the outgroup and the social-environmental influences that occur within the family needs to be emphasized.

Group preference, which is closely related to group awareness, is mostly in-group for individuals belonging to the host community, whereas in the migrant community, it is twofold: in-group and out-group. On one hand, parents and children belonging to the migrant community want to keep their in-group ties strong, while on the other hand, they try to impose themselves on the dominant group (outgroup). The findings related to the effort to both preserve one's own culture and learn about the host culture are supported by the following interview notes:

The sister of a student in my class started 1ˢᵗ grade this year. Her mother asked me to help her not to put her daughter in a class with Syrians. She told me that she did not want her daughter to be in the same class with Syrians. She did not share with me any reason for this attitude. This parent was one of my favorite parents and her daughter was a very neat and tidy student. Even though I did not approve of this parent's attitude, I talked to the school administration. As a result, I caused this student to be placed in a class with local students away from Syrian students. (Class teacher, S. H.)

I did something. For example, while I was working on the subject of Our Money, I showed pictures of our coins and made a statement about them. Then, when I showed them the banknotes and coins used in Syria, the Syrian children were incredibly happy. They also want to see something from their own culture... There is a Syria at home, of course. In other words, these people do not break with Syria but also maintain their ties with Syria in their homes. In other words, even though they live in Türkiye, they do not raise their children entirely with Turkish logic. Their relatives come from there, they go there during the holiday, maybe they send them money, or maybe have dependents there. (Class teacher, M. F.)

The members of the migrant group are often ostracized by the dominant group and both move away from their group and cannot be included in the host community. As can be understood from the field note below, individuals belonging to the migrant group should be underlined to resultantly face a deep loneliness in which their existing in-group social capital is also put at risk:

I have one Turkman student. For example, he was trying to mingle with the Turks in the 1st grade. I don't have any Turkish male students in my class this year. More precisely, there were some in the first semester, and this child was left alone. I already have 8 Turkish students (girls). Even though this student knew Arabic in the first grade, he said that he didn't know or understand. But as far as I observed, he understood and spoke silently from time to time. His family was just like him. His mother preferred the group with Turkish parents in the parent WhatsApp group. (Class teacher, M. F.)

There were many reactions from Turkish families when Syrian families wanted their children to make friends with Turkish children. They said, "They should not sit with my child," or "They should not do anything together." This time, they started not sharing their belongings. They were fighting for space in the classroom: "Teacher, their sitting in my spot," or "Their bag is on my desk!" We had to work hard to overcome these problems. (Class teacher, H. C.)

As a result of the observations, ostracism was noted to turn into a reason to get together with other excluded students for those who'd encountered exclusionary attitudes and behaviors. This situation included not only migrant students but any excluded students. In the observations made during the fieldwork, Syrian and Turkish students who'd been excluded for whatever reason were noted to sit together at the back of the class, play games together during breaks, and share their food during snack and lunch times.

Exclusionary or acceptance-oriented practices towards in-group and out-group interactions are parallel between parents and children. In other words, local parents excluding migrant parents who want to be accepted by the local group both in the neighborhood and at school similarly get reflected in the interactions between their children. This finding is consistent with various research results pointing to the parental influence leading to ingroup preferences and outgroup dislike in children (Allport, 2016; Bandura, 1977; Meeusen, 2014). Moreover, this result is also in line with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which includes social processes such as observation, imitation, and modeling. In the observations that were made, children from both groups who imitate and become like their parents were observed to influence the direction and shape of intergroup interactions.

The level of in-group identification was also observed to differ for migrant and local students due to various reasons. In the observations that were made, distinctive features such as high Turkish language skills, academic success, sportive success, and taking part in official ceremonies for migrant students drew attention as factors that had increased interactions with the outgroup. This finding is confirmed by the following quote obtained from an interview:

For example, the parents learn what to do sometimes in collaborative activities by talking to each other, and sometimes by looking at each other's children when they cannot understand each other. These activities increase the communication between the two groups, as they learn a lot from each other in the joint activities within the school. In the reading festival, maybe during the domestic goods week on April 23 (National Sovereignty and Children's Day), these kinds of things had a positive effect, because they had to communicate in these activities. (Class teacher, F. T.)

Field notes showing activities that increase contact frequency to also increase the level at which they identify with the outgroup were noted as another important finding of this study. For example, the shared joy and sorrow of local and migrant students in the same group at a football match, academic activities, or an official commemoration ceremony were noted as activities that paved the way for identifying with the outgroup. These activities were also noted as moments when negative parental influences toward the outgroups diminished.

Learning Prejudice

The findings in this section are based on Allport's (2016) argument that socialization processes, as well as parents in particular, are effective in the acquisition of prejudice during childhood. In addition, the findings support the claim that parental attitudes shape children's social identities and values in line with social learning theory (Bandura, 1977).

Children's group awareness is formed through the messages they receive from their parents, and the relationships they establish with the out-group are largely shaped by parental attitudes. The effects parents have on intergroup interactions at school were embodied in various ways in this study. In the classroom observations, the parents were understood to influence the attitudes of local students who did not want to sit in the same row as a migrant child. The parents of these children were found to have similar experiences in their neighborhood relations and to be unable to communicate with migrant families in the neighborhood. Extreme cases of verbal and physical attacks to get migrants to move out of the neighborhood were even found:

A Turkish neighbor starts a fight every night on the pretext that we do not want Syrians in this neighborhood. He has no reason. He just doesn't want Syrians there. For example, he sometimes drinks alcohol and wine and shouts at our door that this neighborhood doesn't want Syrians. He does the same thing whenever he drinks wine. Once at night while we were sleeping, the man broke our window and ran away immediately. The police come, looked, and left. Then the man came again, not alone but with a group. Like the mafia. We were very scared, and my brother stayed with us for 3-4 days. We found another house; we will move to a house in another neighborhood. What is our crime? What guilt do we have on our hands? My child sometimes goes out in front of the door. He comes back in 2 minutes without stopping for long. He goes through the same thing in the classroom. For example, his friends force him to sit in the back row. They always send him to the back row. They treat my child as a second-class human being. (Migrant parent, S. K.)

The findings from the interviews with the parents of local children who exhibited exclusionary attitudes in the classroom and who couldn't explain why their child should not sit in the same row with a migrant or why they avoided contact with migrant families in the neighborhood support Allport's (2016) prejudice model as a typical example of prejudiced attitudes. The findings are in line with the results from various studies (Epstein & Komorita, 1966, p. 643; Meeusen, 2004, pp. 46–49; Rodriguez-Garcia & Wagner, 2009, p. 517) that found children to learn prejudiced attitudes at home.

The remarkable finding was revealed that recorded the children of local parents who'd avoided establishing neighborly relations with migrant families in the neighborhood and excluded them to resort to physical violence against migrant children in the classroom and after school for no reason. The following quote shared on the subject concretizes this finding:

Last year, many of my Syrian students told me that there was a neighborhood gang of Turks who beat them up after school. People were waiting at the school gate saying, "I'm going to beat up Syrians" or something like that. Or for example, I had a lot of students who came to me saying, "I want to go to the park after school, but the Turks don't let us go there, they beat us up there," or another example where the mothers of Syrian children often don't allow them to leave the house, because when they go out on the street, they are afraid the children will run into the neighborhood gang. (School counselor, H. N.)

The findings show that both migrant and local children are significantly affected by their parents' attitudes. This impact on children should be emphasized to lead to a serious problem in terms of intergroup relations, such as the exclusionary practices of the local group and the isolation of the migrant group. This assessment supports the research conclusion of Towles-Schwen and Fazio (2001), who found parental prejudice to be an important factor influencing childhood contact experiences. Similarly, other research results (Rodriguez-Garcia & Wagner, 2009, p. 521) suggested that parents have a significant influence on children's racial attitudes and that parental attitudes have critical importance. The study by Pettigrew and Tropp (2011) supports these results by revealing a positive relationship between perceived parental attitudes and children's attitudes toward outgroups.

The existing literature coincides with the major claim of this research that prejudiced attitudes and behaviors are transferred from parents to children as an indicator of parent-child similarities. When evaluated collectively, the findings are supported by various research results confirming the claim that prejudice is learned in the home environment (Epstein & Komorita, 1966; Meeusen, 2004; Rodriguez-Garcia & Wagner, 2009). In addition, the findings overlap with the results of studies (Allport, 2016; Meeusen, 2014) that have shown individuals to agree with the in-group about prejudices. Based on this, the study evaluates taking into account the effects of the home environment on interventions to be vitally important for reducing negative prejudicial behavior.

Sensitivity to Implicit (Non-Verbal) Behaviors

This study scrutinized every parental behavior to examine parent-child similarities regarding interactions with outgroups. Therefore, special attention was paid to parents' sensitivity toward implicit (nonverbal) behaviors in intergroup interactions. The study considered revealing how implicit or explicit displays of related attitudes and behaviors affect children to be important for revealing the social justifications of prejudices that affect the direction and intensity of the interactions with out-groups. In this context, the field study meticulously examined the implicit attitudes and behaviors of local and migrant parents toward the individuals in the outgroup.

Some local parents were observed to interact with migrant parents or students using exclusionary gestures and facial expressions, to often avoid eye contact with them, or to tend to communicate with them by increasing physical distance at various places and

times at school (e.g., parent-teacher meetings, official celebrations). The students of these parents were observed to not make friends with the migrant students, to not want to sit in the same row with them, and in some cases to have behaviors that amount to physical bullying.

One in-class observation noticed that a male Turkish student named M. S. sitting in the second row was constantly standing in front of the Syrian students sitting in the back row so that they could not see the board. When the teacher noticed this, he sent M.S. to the back of the class. Although M. S. was punished by being sent to the back row, he continued to disturb the Syrian students sitting there. In an informal interview with the classroom teacher, the teacher stated that M. S.'s parents were constantly coming to the school to complain because he was constantly fighting with Syrian students. The teacher shared, "Despite all the explanations I made, the parent was pointing to Syrian students as the source of the problem." The negative prejudiced attitude of this Turkish parent was noted to have turned into a problem that had reinforced M. S.'s behavioral disorder. In the in-depth interview with M. S.'s mother, she said, "The child is a child after all, how else can you feel? Love the created for the creator's sake. I mean, they are children, after all, what can we do." The sharing of this statement was recorded as a significant finding pointing to the effect of implicit parental attitudes contradicting the content of the teacher-parent interview.

In the interviews with local parents, some were observed to share statements about accepting the individuals in the migrant group. For example, some parents were recorded as saying, "I tell my child to be friends with them and to not hurt them." However, during the observations made during official celebrations, meetings, and in-class parent visits, these parents were noted to exhibit behaviors that contradicted their statements in the interviews. Similarly, the students of these parents were also observed to exhibit attitudes and behaviors that excluded and marginalized migrant students both within and outside of the classroom. These findings are supported by Castelli et al. (2009, pp. 589–590) and Baron and Banaji (2006, pp. 56–57), who found children to be influenced by their parents' non-verbal behaviors at a very early age regardless of their positive verbal behaviors. This result is consistent with research findings showing parents' positive verbal expressions to not mitigate the effects of negative nonverbal behaviors.

Experiences reflecting the parent-child similarities regarding their interactions with external groups were also observed in the migrant group. In this context, migrant parents' timid or assertive behavior when communicating with teachers, local parents, or students were noted to be similarly imitated by their children. These findings show that children are sensitive to their parents' implicit behaviors toward outgroups. In parallel with this finding, Castelli et al. (2007, pp. 353–354) stated in their research that parents' verbal reactions do not affect children and that parental attitudes as perceived by children have deeper effects rather than parents' verbal reactions. On this basis, one can argue that parents' implicit behaviors are an important determinant of children's attitudes toward outgroups.

The data obtained from the field study and the evidence from studies in the literature (Baron & Banaji, 2006; Castelli et al., 2007, 2008, 2009; Sinclair et al., 2005) show that children tend to adopt parents' implicit behaviors more easily. Parents' implicit behaviors should be underlined to be more easily noticed by children and to be more effective regarding the attitudes children form. On this basis, emphasizing the sensitive importance of looking beyond the verbal expressions of parents and taking their implicit behaviors into account are useful for making a positive contribution to children's intergroup relations.

Parent-Child Similarities in Cross-Group Friendships

Examining parents' and children's attitudes and behaviors regarding intergroup friendships will provide an opportunity to explicitly assess parent-child similarities regarding their interactions with outgroups. As Pettigrew and Tropp (2011, p. 48) emphasized, intergroup friendships are shown to be one of the most powerful tools for reducing negative attitudes toward the outgroup and to be even considered very important because these generalize to other outgroups with which one is not in contact.

The migrant and local families were observed to exhibit different tendencies in choosing friendships due to the differences in the cultural characteristics and conditions of the two groups. The field data show that parents have a strong influence on the tendencies toward migrant and local students friendly relationships. Although very rare, the children of local parents who had positive relationships with migrant parents were observed to have positive friendships with migrant children. Based on these findings and in line with Meeusen's (2014, p. 52) research, a strong link should be emphasized to exist between intergroup friendships in terms of children's and parents' tolerance of the outgroup.

The children of local parents who had contact with migrant families not only at school but also in the neighborhood were found to make friends with migrant children in the neighborhood. This finding is in line with Edmonds and Killen's (2009, pp. 7–8) research findings, which show that when parents have intergroup friends, children can more easily participate in intergroup relations and become socially competent in this regard. On the other hand, children of parents who perceived migrants as a threat and stated that they did not want to be in the same school with them were highly motivated to establish in-group friendships. These children were observed to not interact with migrant children except in compulsory situations, as well as to even avoid joint activities in the classroom and to bully them when the teacher wasn't watching.

In the interviews with the migrant parents, all of them shared that they wanted their children to make friends with local students. However, the data obtained during the interviews revealed the migrant parents' inadequate contact with the outgroup and experiences of negative contact to have created a sense of exclusion among migrant parents. Similar to the migrant parents who had difficulties and reservations in communicating with local parents, their migrant children also had problems communicating with local children. The observations witnessed such examples as not being able to participate in local students' games, being expelled from the playground by local students, or being exposed to verbal and physical violence and recorded these as concrete findings.

When evaluating the findings collectively, the frequency of contact parents established with the outgroup and parents' prejudices toward the outgroup were understood to have profound effects on children's intergroup relationships. Meeusen's (2014, pp. 48–49) dealing with parent-child similarity in friendship relations between groups reached a similar conclusion. Accordingly, Meeusen emphasized that when parents have intergroup friends, their children will be "better adapted and socially competent" at involving themselves in intergroup relationships. Knowing that an ingroup member has interacted positively with an outgroup member may reduce anxiety about future interactions with the outgroup and provide the perception that interacting with the outgroup is accepted by the ingroup. That the expected positive effect would be higher if this ingroup member was a parent is not difficult to predict.

The results on parent-child similarities regarding outgroup friendship relations do not fully coincide with the research results from Smith et al. (2003, p. 161), who found educational environments that bring together students from different ethnic groups to ensure the development of positive attitudes in terms of intergroup friendship relations in children. However, the current study's data indicate the expected positive outcomes in intergroup interaction to be unachievable simply by bringing the two groups together. As Allport (2016) emphasized, the fact that the frequency of positive contact can help eliminate the negative prejudices that start in the family and the fact that healthy interactions with outgroups can only be experienced in this way are worth remembering.

One risk that is present is that the difficult conditions in which migrant families find themselves may be exacerbated by the exclusionary effects of the local group. Limited opportunities for contact with the locals will lead to the risk of the migrant group being isolated and feeling lonely. For this reason, having parents, especially from the host community, exhibit accepting attitudes and behaviors toward migrants is vitally important. Based on this understanding, the study evaluated that meeting different groups in schools should be seen as an opportunity and that interventions should be planned to reinforce this with positive experiences.

Conclusion

This study has examined the intergroup interactions between migrant children and Turkish children in Türkiye while focusing on parental influence. In addition to Allport's (2016) model of prejudice and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, the field research examining intergroup contact and prejudice as discussed in this study has provided an important theoretical framework for examining children's attitudes toward outgroups. This study has within the same research topic noteworthily examined the attitudes of parents and children from the host and refugee communities toward outgroups. This contributes to developing a holistic understanding of the social relations between dominant and minority groups. Sensitive attention was paid to the role and influence parents have on children regarding their intergroup interactions. In addition, special attention was paid to the family environment, especially to parental influence, as a determinant of how children experience intergroup prejudice and contact.

Another feature that distinguishes this study from others in the field is the research method it adopted. The study deemed critical ethnographic research to be necessary for revealing and examining the parents' implicit behaviors, because the verbal expressions parents shared regarding their attitudes and beliefs toward outgroups was considered to be confirmable by directly observing their behaviors in the natural environment. In addition, the study has concluded the critical ethnography method to be appropriate for approaching the reflections of the asymmetrical relationship the dominant group established with minority migrants in terms of the relationships between their children. The critical ethnographic method is based on a long-term association with the participants in the field and should be noted to provide a unique experience for examining and making sense of the relations between the migrant and local groups through participant observations, as well as through structured and unstructured interviews.

The field data from this study show that parents have a highly determinative role in their children's intergroup relations. Parents' prejudices toward the outgroup and the frequency of contact were observed to similarly manifest in their children. The study has analyzed its findings under four main headings in order to examine parental influence regarding the interactions with outgroups more closely. These headings are young children's group awareness and preferences, learning prejudices, sensitivity to implicit (nonverbal) behaviors, and parent-child similarities regarding intergroup friendships.

The study found the primary school students that were included in the study to have in-group and out-group awareness. In line with the results of various studies in the literature (Lam et al., 2011; Neblett et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2003), this awareness had emerged due to the influence of their parents rather than from direct contact with the outgroup. Another area of experience

where parental influence on their children was deeply traced concerned children's group preferences. In line with Allport's (2016) and Bandura's (1977) theoretical frameworks, the results regarding group preferences were in the form of in-group favoritism for local students. The migrant students' group preferences took the form of imposing themselves on the out-group and consequently distancing themselves from the in-group. These results are in line with Davey and Norburn (1980, p. 59), who concluded that minority groups direct their feelings of dislike not toward the host community but to another minority group. Migrant individuals who are unable to be accepted to the dominant group due to exclusionary attitudes and who distance themselves from their group in the interim are understood to face a deep loneliness that expresses isolation from both groups. Undesirable attitudes and behaviors originating from the local group should be emphasized to cause the migrant group to withdraw into itself and to constitute a risk factor that makes migrant children continuing their education and adapting to the new society difficult.

The children's prejudices towards the outgroup were understood to have been transmitted from their parents. Parents' conversations within the family were also observed to affect the children, both in terms of their group awareness and preferences toward the outgroup, as well as their prejudices toward the outgroup. One of the striking results of the study is that children can easily recognize and tend to adopt their parents' implicit behaviors. In parallel with this result, the results from Sinclair et al. (2005, pp. 287-288) also showed a high correlation to exist between parents' implicit prejudices and their children's prejudices, with a negative correlation present between parents' and children's explicit prejudices. Although the parents stated having a positive approach in their verbal expressions, marginalizing attitudes were also encountered in the children of parents who used body language to exclude individuals belonging to the migrant group. Therefore, the study has concluded that children resemble their parents regarding their friendship relations with the outgroup.

The results related to parent-child similarities contradict the results from Aboud and Doyle's (1996, p. 380) research. Their study on the relationship between children's racial attitudes and mothers' racial attitudes concluded no strong correlation to be present between the two. According to them, the reason for this result was that children acted in the opposite direction of their mothers because they had the perception that their mothers were masking their real attitudes. Because parents try to hide their attitudes about outgroups, children resort to their cognitive competencies to make sense of the similarities and differences about the outgroup. As a result, Aboud and Doyle stated that parents are not the sole source of children's interactions with outgroups; instead, children's cognitive aspects are what is important. They also stated that children rarely imitate the exact words or actions they observe (p. 382). In conclusion, Aboud and Doyle emphasized children's cognitive aspects to have a decisive role in their interactions with outgroups. However, the current study has evaluated children's use of their cognitive capacities as a competence for imitating their parents rather than for challenging their parents in regard to their interactions with outgroups. As a result, the research understands that children can easily recognize their parents' implicit behaviors. In addition, parents with prejudiced attitudes despite saying they are not exclusionary have children with similar attitudes and behaviors. As Rodriguez-Garcia and Wagner (2009, pp. 521–522) found, family-based influences, being at the heart of a healthy intergroup interaction, should be considered for increasing contact and reducing prejudices. Therefore, the delicate importance of taking parents into account in any attempt is worth emphasizing in order to positively shape the course of intergroup relations. This is followed by emphasizing how positive developments in intergroup relations at school may be hindered in the family environment.

In summary, the results from this Türkiye-focused study have revealed that parents' outgroup attitudes significantly influence the attitudes of their primary school-age children. These results show that parents continue to be the primary source of children's acquisition of prejudiced attitudes toward the outgroup. In this context, the need exists for studies that will examine how parental attitudes are transmitted using a longitudinal approach over similar sample groups or different age groups. In addition, future research should not be limited to the effects of parents. This study has also evaluated the need to exist for studies that consider peers, teachers, and/or social groups separately regarding the transmission of attitudes.

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