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Istanbul residents' perceptions of Syrian immigrants' use of the green spaces

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Abstract
The aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of the people of Istanbul regarding Syrian immigrants and their common use of urban green spaces. The causes of conflicts that Istanbul residents and Syrians immigrants have experienced in green spaces are also addressed. An exploratory sequential design was used, being one of the mixed methods in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are used together. Semi-structured interviews and content analysis were conducted for the qualitative part of the study. For the quantitative part, data were collected from 389 people in Istanbul with a survey consisting of Likert-type scale questions. Explanatory factor analysis was performed on the obtained data-set. As a result, it was found that Istanbul's citizens have problems with Syrian immigrants in urban green spaces due to differences in activities, they expect Syrians to speak Turkish in mutual communication, and they do not want to interact with this group due to their negative attitude towards Syrian immigrants. More detailed research should be conducted to reduce the conflict between these groups. In addition, this study reveals that conflicts have increased due to the lack of green spaces, and an increase in green spaces may be proposed as a solution.
Keywords: immigrants, urban green spaces, conflict, perception

Introduction

Migration is the displacement of a person or group of people across an international border or within a state for economic, political, or social reasons, regardless of duration, structure, and reason (IOM, 2009; Tekeli and Erder, 1978). The total population of immigrants who have left their home countries to live in another country was previously determined as 280 million and this number increases every year (UN, 2022).

One of the cornerstones of the present study is Syrian migration, which has dramatically affected Turkey in the past few years. According to data from the UNHCR (2019), the total number of Syrians in Turkey has exceeded 3,600,000 people.

One of the most important issues in studying Syrians in Turkey is that 92% of Syrian immigrants live in cities (Erdoğan, 2017) and the cultural, social, and linguistic differences between them and the local people create problems in the sharing of common areas. However, from another point of view, interacting with

diverse people helps individuals become a part of society and creates a sense of acceptance (Putnam, 2000). The fact that the common areas in city offer people with different social and ethnic origins the opportunity to interact with each other shows how important these areas are in terms of creating social cohesion (Marshall and Stole, 2004; Beckley, 1994). Urban green spaces, which are among these common areas, have an important place in such studies in order to help resolve potential conflicts, reservations, ignorance, and discrimination (Peters et al., 2010; Jay and Schraml, 2009; Nesdale and Todd, 2000).

When sufficient green spaces are offered to people in cities, social cohesion increases between groups due to the feeling of comfort that people enjoy while using these areas and the increase in people's familiarity with each other as a result of their frequent use of such areas. However, due to the lack of sufficient green space and cultural differences between groups, friction may also arise in urban green spaces between groups (Gentin, 2011).

Especially for individuals aged 10-17, outdoor activities are an important way to make new friends. Offering the possibility of increased social cohesion on behalf of future generations, the coexistence of diverse individuals belonging to this age group in urban green spaces including immigrants should be encouraged to provide positive returns (Seeland et al., 2009; Peters et al., 2010).

Interactions in parks are often of a cursory nature and it is seen that people do not want to be in intense communication with people they do not know. However, the idea has emerged that people still feel good because they share the areas that they have adopted with other groups and that even cursory communication comforts or satisfies them. Familiarity with the area created by situations resulting from attachment to green spaces allows people to act more flexibly in establishing relationships (Peters et al., 2010).

The concepts of social inclusion and exclusion lie at the root of the problems created between local people and migrating people in the social, economic, and spatial senses with the intense wave of migration from Syria to Turkey. Among the places where the concepts of social exclusion and inclusion are experienced most intensely are urban green spaces (Bal Kızılhan, 2019).

In order to understand the variables in intercultural green space preferences, it is necessary to understand the concept of images of nature. Images of nature are conceptual reflections of discourses about nature and previous experiences. It is known that the nature of the region in which a culture is formed has an effect on the formation and continual changes of that culture. Accordingly, it is obvious that there is an inseparable relationship between culture and nature and that people from different cultures have different interactions with nature or different expectations of it (Buijs et al., 2009; Van den Born et al., 2001).

In order to show the role of cultural differences in the formation of nature images, it should be noted that many different phenomena play roles in nature shapes when details are examined apart from religion, living conditions, education, and rural-urban divides (Makhzoumi, 2002; Buijs et al., 2009; Van Koppen, 2000).

With the world's increasing urban population, the ecological and social importance of urban green spaces is also steadily increasing (Öner et al., 2007; Konijnendijk, 2005; Dirik, 2001). In the present study, it is important that the Sultangazi Mimar Sinan Urban Forest and Kemerburgaz Urban Forests located in the study area have the characteristics of urban green spaces and that social interactions between Syrians and local people take place in these areas.

The use of urban green spaces together with the host community may cause some disagreements and incompatibilities. On the other hand, these disagreements and incompatibilities in urban green spaces offer clues about what problems exist and form a basis for concrete studies and solutions that can be pursued to

create social cohesion. In this context, it was deemed valuable to carry out this study in Istanbul, which is among the provinces with the highest numbers of Syrian refugees in Turkey, in order to support solutions to the problem of integration. In this context, the aims of the study were identified as follows:

1. To determine what kinds of perceptions (positive or negative) the people of Istanbul have when they engage in recreational activities with Syrian immigrants in the green spaces of the city, and

2. To determine the views and thoughts of the people of Istanbul in order to reduce the social conflict that arises as a result of the use of urban green spaces by Syrian immigrants.

Material and Methods

Study area

Since Istanbul is widely considered to be the place with the highest living conditions in Turkey, for people moving both within the country and from abroad as refugees due to its social and economic opportunities (Aksu et al., 2022), the city has received intense immigration. According to data published by the Refugees Association (2020) on its website, this number of Syrian immigrants in Istanbul was stated as 492,013.

The study area encompasses participants living in the Eyüpsultan, Fatih, and Arnavutköy districts of Istanbul who use local green spaces. These three districts were selected due to differences in their economic welfare levels and the high number of Syrian immigrants that they have received. According to Yılmaz et al. (2019), districts in Turkey may be divided according to different socio-economic development rankings. In this context, the districts in Istanbul are among the first three socio-economic rankings, and the districts of Fatih, Eyüpsultan and Arnavutköy were selected considering those rankings. Fatih is among the top-ranking districts in terms of development level, while Eyüpsultan is among the second-ranked and Arnavutköy is among the third-ranked districts. Another basis for the selection of these districts was the high ratio of their immigrant populations to the general population of the districts. Survey questions were asked to Turkish citizens living in Fatih, Arnavutköy, and Eyüp regions.

Sample Size and Data Collection

The participants of this study were selected by maximum variation sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods for qualitative research.

In this study, in order to obtain qualitative data, questions were asked to people off different ages, genders and economic conditions in Fatih, Arnavutköy, and Eyüpsultan, and according to the results, inferences were made about what to focus on in the quantitative part of the work. In addition, in administering the survey, the necessity of participants being 18 years or older was taken into consideration.

The sample size of the study was determined by considering the general populations of the Fatih, Eyüpsultan and Arnavutköy districts. Since the total population in the study area was 1,090,997 (Erdoğan, 2017), the standard error formula was used with the central limit theorem in determine the sample size:

$n = \pi \times (1 - \pi) / (e / Z)^2$ (Equation 1)

Here, n is sample size, π is variance value, e is margin of error, and Z is the confidence limit (Kurtuluş, 2004).

Considering the sample size according to Equation 1, the number of individuals to be selected from among a population of approximately one was $n = (0.5 \times 0.5) / (0.05/ 1.96)^2 = 384$. Thus, in total, the survey was conducted with 389 people to provide a sufficient sample size.

In the qualitative phase of the study, the data were collected using by one-on-one interview technique. Semi-structured interviews were used in order to ask additional questions, re-ask questions about subjects that were not fully explained, provide flexibility to the participants and gain in-depth answers (Altunışık et al., 2010).

The interview questions, prepared in line with the purpose of the study were developed by taking into account previous studies related to the perceptions and attitudes of citizens of Turkey toward Syrians. Furthermore, the perceptions of local people in Europe and the United States regarding the use of green spaces in cities by immigrants were also taken into consideration by examining the findings of previously conducted studies. Interviews were conducted with 20 people between March 5-12, 2020 in Eyüp, Fatih and Arnavutköy.

After the one-on-one interviews, the qualitative data collection part of the study was completed and the analysis of the obtained data was initiated. Each participant was identified by a code such as F(1), C(2), C(3), C(4), C(5), C(6), C(7), C(8), F(9), F (10), K(11), K(12), ……..., K(19), K(20), and so on. The answers received during the interviews were transcribed without any changes.

The content analysis method was used to analyze the interview records, which were read one by one by the researcher.

In the analysis process, first, the codes were read twice and any meaningful concepts underlined. A total of 280 meaningful concepts were revealed, some consisting of only a word, some a sentence, and some a few sentences. The obtained data were first coded to divide them into meaningful parts. The parts that formed a meaningful whole in themselves were identified by the researcher. Data from different categories that were related in terms of meaning were brought together. As a result, 68 codes emerged.

An item pool was created by converting the meaningful concepts obtained from content analysis of the obtained qualitative data and the codes formed by their combination into scale expressions. This item pool, obtained with the help of expert opinions, was combined using similar questions. Questions that were thought to be inappropriate for the purpose of the study were removed and 46 statements emerged.

The scale used in the study consisted of five demographic questions and 46 five-point Likert-type statements. For the Likert-type statements, participants were asked to score them from 1 (''I strongly disagree'') to 5 (''I strongly agree'').

While this study was being carried out, some limitations were encountered and resolved by applying other methods. One of the limitation is that the survey could not be conducted face-to-face in urban green space due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had an impact around the world. The method used to solve that problem was to create a survey form on Google Forms and administer that survey to participants via certain social media and other internet platforms and the data were collected in that way. The survey was carried out between March 14 and May 01, 2020. The fact that the survey was delivered to participants online meant that a younger and more educated audience took part in the survey study. Another limitation encountered is that, before this work, there were not sufficient resources in Turkey regarding urban green space and immigration. The fact that such a study was being conducted for the first time in Turkey led to some methodological difficulties.

Data Analysis

The 5-point Likert-type scoring method was used for the survey. The reliability of the data obtained from the surveys was tested using Cronbach's - alpha. In addition, explanatory factor analysis (EFA) was applied to obtain significant variables. Şafak (2012) was utilized in the method section of the study.

A reliability test was applied using SPSS for Windows for reliability analysis of the perceptions of the people of Istanbul regarding the use of green spaces by Syrian immigrants. For the reliability test, alpha (α) was used and if the variable was deleted, the alpha coefficient of the reliability methods was used.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient or the general reliability coefficient for the perceptions of the people of Istanbul regarding the use of green spaces by Syrian immigrants, based on 46 variables, was 0.702. This value is accepted as reliable in terms of scientific studies conducted in this way. Furthermore, seven items were excluded from the structure as their factor weights did not exceed 0.4.

In this study, principal component analysis and factor analysis were performed to achieve the determined objectives. In addition, since it was thought that there was a relationship between the factors, it was decided to use the direct oblimin technique, an oblique rotation technique. After the rotation process, the factor weights of the items were examined.

Results

Characteristics of the Participants

The demographic characteristics of the 389 participants of the survey are presented in Table 1 under the headings of gender, age, occupation, education level, and residence. As seen in Table 1, the amount of participation between men and women was kept similar in order to facilitate measurements of perception based on gender. While the rate of female participants was 52.3%, the rate of male participants was 47.7%. When age, as another demographic feature, was examined, it was seen that the majority of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 34 years at a rate of 64%.

When the education level was evaluated in Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of the participants had received education to the level of bachelor degree level at a rate of 57%. Participants with graduate education accounted for 21%of the sample. Finally, when the proportions of participants were examined according to their place of residence, the highest numbers of participants were from Fatih at a rate of 43%.

Participants' perceptions of Syrians'utilization of urban green spaces

The distribution of local people's perceptions of Syrians' use of urban green spaces is given in Table 2. There are statements for which one of the options marked by some participants differs greatly from the other options.

From these expressions, for the statement "I communicate with Syrians in urban green spaces to socialize", 51.5% of the participants chose the option "I strongly disagree (1)''. For the statement ''When I see inappropriate behavior by Syrians in urban green spaces, I exhibit a different attitude from my attitude toward Turkish citizens'', it is seen that the option of ''I strongly disagree (1)'' was marked by 55.9% of the participants. For ''I am disturbed by the Syrians' lack of attention to cleanliness in urban green spaces'', the option of ''I strongly agree (5)'' was marked most often at a rate of 50.8%.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants.

Factor	Demographic Features	Participants	
		Frequency (n)	Percentage
Gender	Female	204	52.3
	Male	185	47.7
	Total	389	100.0
Age, years	18-24	37	10.0
	25-34	249	64.0
	35-44	65	17.0
	45-54	20	5.0
	55+	18	4.0
	Total	389	100.0
Occupation	Teacher	45	11.5
	Doctor	4	1.0
	Engineer	81	20.8
	Architect	21	5.4
	Lawyer	13	3.3
	Nurse	4	1.0
	Worker	62	15.9
	Cashier	2	0.5
	Unemployed	28	7.3
	Student	17	4.4
	Retired	9	2.4
	Academic	8	2.0
	Journalist	7	1.8
	Housewife	15	3.9
	Other	73	18.8
	Total	389	100.0
Education Level	Primary School	2	1.0
	Middle School	11	3.0
	High School	42	11.0
	Associate Degree	32	8.0
	Bachelor Degree	218	57.0
	Master Degree	84	21.0
	Total	389	100.0
Residence	Fatih	167	43.0
	Arnavutköy	125	32.0
	Eyüp	97	25.0
	Total	389	100.0

As is further seen in Table 2, in response to ‘‘I am disturbed by the harassment, teasing, etc. behaviors of Syrians in urban green space’’, the option of ‘‘I strongly agree (5)’’ was selected by 50% of the participants. In response to “I am disturbed by Syrians begging in urban green space” 50.3% of the participants marked “I strongly agree (5)”.

When Table 2 is further examined, it is seen that the statement ‘‘I am uncomfortable with the use of hookah by Syrians in urban green area’’, the option of ‘‘I strongly agree (5)" was 56.7%. For the statement ‘‘Citizens of Turkey should learn Arabic, even if only a little’’, the option of ‘‘I strongly disagree (1)" was 52.6% of the participants. For ‘‘Municipalities should work towards the social cohesion of Syrian children in urban green space’’, the option of ‘‘I strongly agree (5)’’ was 50.5%.

Table 2. Distribution of local people's perceptions of Syrians's use of urban green spaces.

Statements	Participants											
	Frequency (n)						Percentage					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	1	2	3	4	5	Total
I think it offer social diversity to benefit from urban green spaces with Syrian immigrants.	98	32	86	55	118	389	25.1	8.2	22.1	14.1	30.5	100
I feel pity when I encounter Syrian immigrants in urban green spaces.	100	61	116	68	44	389	25.6	15.6	30	17.4	11.3	100
I feel happy and peaceful because Syrian immigrants benefit from urban green spaces.	94	47	95	60	93	389	24.1	12.1	24.6	15.4	23.8	100
I feel unhappy and restless because of the benefits of Syrian immigrants in urban green spaces.	155	55	73	36	70	389	40	14.1	18.7	9.2	17.9	100
I cannot communicate with Syrian immigrants in the green spaces of the city due to language problems.	56	29	97	73	134	389	14.4	7.4	24.9	18.7	34.6	100
I do not communicate with Syrians in the green spaces of the city because I have nothing in common with them.	67	32	87	55	148	389	17.2	8.2	22.3	14.1	38.2	100
I do not communicate because I am afraid of Syrians in the green spaces of the city.	168	56	83	28	54	389	43.3	14.4	21.3	7.2	12.8	100
I cannot communicate with Syrians because Syrians do not want to communicate with other people in the green spaces of the city.	156	65	104	29	35	389	40.3	16.7	26.7	7.4	9	100
I do not communicate with anyone because I want to spend time alone in the green spaces of the city.	99	37	101	75	77	389	25.6	9.5	25.9	19.2	19.7	100
I communicate with Syrians to help Syrians in the green spaces of the city.	129	73	108	51	28	389	33.3	18.7	27.7	13.1	7.2	100
I communicate with Syrians in urban green spaces to socialize.	200	74	67	25	23	389	51.5	19	17.2	6.4	5.9	100
I communicate with Syrians to warn them about their wrongdoings in urban green spaces.	129	66	81	46	67	389	33.3	16.9	20.8	11.8	17.2	100
When I see Syrians acting inappropriately in urban green spaces, I do not intervene.	106	72	108	61	41	389	27.4	18.5	27.7	15.6	10.8	100

Table 2 (continued). Distribution of local people's perceptions of Syrians's use of urban green spaces.

When I see Syrians acting innapropriatelya in urban green spaces, I warn them by speaking to them.	63	60	121	73	72	389	16.2	15.4	31.3	18.7	18.5	100
When I see Syrians acting innapropriately in urban green spaces, I consult security officials.	105	56	96	66	66	389	27.2	14.4	24.6	16.9	16.9	100
When I see Syrians acting innapropriately in urban green spaces, I exhibit a different attitude from my attitude toward citizens of Turkey	217	39	52	28	53	389	55.9	10	13.3	7.2	13.6	100
I feel uncomfortable when Syrians speak loudly in urban green spaces.	68	39	71	56	155	389	17.4	10	18.2	14.4	40	100
I am disturbed by Syrians' lack of attention to cleanliness in urban green spaces.	44	30	66	52	197	389	11.3	7.7	16.9	13.3	50.8	100
I am disturbed by the harassment, teasing, etc. behaviours of Syrians in urban green spaces.	55	38	54	48	194	389	14.1	9.7	13.8	12.3	50	100
I am disturbed by Syrians begging in urban green spaces.	46	37	69	42	195	389	11.8	9.5	17.7	10.8	50.3	100
I am disturbed by the fact that Syrians do not comply with the relevant rules in urban green spaces.	37	33	63	66	190	389	9.5	8.5	16.2	16.9	49	100
I am uncomfortable with the fact that Syrians are a part of our lives, including in urban green spaces.	143	48	57	40	101	389	36.9	12.3	14.6	10.3	25.9	100
I am uncomfortable with Syrians spending time in groups in urban green spaces.	105	57	59	46	122	389	26.9	14.6	15.1	11.8	31.5	100
I am uncomfortable Syrians using hookahs in urban green spaces.	53	19	53	44	220	389	13.6	4.9	13.6	11.3	56.7	100
I am uncomfortable with Syrians barbecuing in urban green spaces.	60	39	63	49	178	389	15.4	10	16.2	12.6	45.9	100
I do not think that Syrians are different from citizens of Turkey in terms of their attitudes toward urban green spaces.	81	48	68	63	129	389	20.8	12.3	17.4	16.2	33.3	100
I think that Syrians do not leave urban green spaces clean after using them.	34	39	98	61	157	389	8.7	10	25.1	15.6	40.5	100

Table 2 (continued). Distribution of local people's perceptions of Syrians's use of urban green spaces.

I think Syrians damage sports equipment in urban green spaces.	102	62	110	39	76	389	26.2	15.9	28.5	10	19.5	100
I do not think that Syrians cause more damage to equipment/tools/benches in urban green spaces than citizens of Turkey.	71	47	99	50	122	389	18.2	12.1	25.4	12.8	31.5	100
I do not think that Syrians harm equipment/tools in urban green spaces.	67	60	145	59	58	389	17.2	15.4	37.4	15.1	14.9	100
Citizens of Turkey should show empathy towards Syrians in urban green spaces.	57	28	101	73	130	389	14.6	7.2	25.9	18.7	33.6	100
Citizens of Turkey should learn Arabic, even if only a little.	204	58	67	28	32	389	52.6	14.9	17.2	7.2	8.2	100
Syrians should be taught Turkish.	39	20	72	74	184	389	10	5.1	18.5	19	47.4	100
As citizens of Turkey behave appropriately in urban green spaces, Syrians adapt.	75	30	65	84	135	389	19.2	7.7	16.7	21.5	34.9	100
It is necessary to know that citizens of Turkey have priority rights as hosts in urban green spaces and that Syrians are guests.	130	42	70	41	106	389	33.6	10.8	17.9	10.5	27.2	100
Nothing should be done to establish good relations between the two groups in urban green spaces; it should simply be known that Syrians are equal.	92	46	101	59	91	389	23.6	11.8	26.2	15.1	23.3	100
In urban green spaces, municipalities should place information boards in Arabic for Syrians.	170	41	67	53	58	389	43.8	10.5	17.2	13.6	14.9	100
Municipalities should increase security measures toward Syrians in urban green spaces.	69	62	105	55	98	389	17.7	15.9	27.2	14.1	25.1	100
Job opportunities should be offered to people who speak Arabic in urban green spaces.	99	42	97	74	77	389	25.6	10.8	24.9	19	19.7	100
Municipalities should work towards the social cohesion of Syrian children in urban green spaces.	36	15	66	76	196	389	9.2	3.8	16.9	19.5	50.5	100

Table 2 (continued). Distribution of local people's perceptions of Syrians's use of urban green spaces.

Activities such as festivals and bazaars should be organized within the framework of the participation of Syrians in social cohesion in urban green spaces.	87	29	97	69	107	389	22.3	7.4	24.9	17.7	27.7	100
In order for Syrians to contribute to social cohesion, work on daily life should be done before urban green spaces.	34	13	101	69	172	389	8.7	3.3	25.9	17.7	44.4	100
The reason why Turkish citizens and Syrians have problems in urban green spaces is cultural difference.	44	36	88	85	136	389	11.3	9.2	22.6	21.8	35.1	100
The reason why citizens of Turkey and Syrians have problems in urban green spaces is the lack of green spaces.	158	65	81	35	50	389	40.8	16.7	20.8	9	12.8	100
The reason why citizens of Turkey and Syrians have problems in urban green spaces is the language difference.	98	71	107	63	50	389	25.1	18.2	27.7	16.2	12.8	100
The reason why citizens of Turkey and Syrians experience problems in urban green spaces is the media (social, visual and written media).	82	51	111	73	72	389	21	13.1	28.7	18.7	18.5	100

Factor Analysis Findings

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and Barlett sphericity test results were examined to determine the suitability of the data structure of the scale developed in this study. The KMO coefficient of these expressions regarding the perceptions of the people of Istanbul regarding the use of green spaces by Syrian immigrants was found to be 0.913. This value is considered high for factor analysis suitability. Based on the factors included in the EFA results, the definitions of the codes given to the expressions are presented in detail in Table 3. Explanations of the abbreviations given to the factors are also presented in detail in Table 3.

As a result of EFA, the factor weight value of each item was found. It was decided to exclude items with factor weight values below 0.40 from the scale. When items were included in the scale factor analysis together with items whose factor loadings did not exceed 0.40, it was seen that the KMO coefficient of the expressions was 0.932. The factor loadings obtained as a result of EFA are presented in detail in Table 4.

After conducting EFA, it was seen that the items in the scale could be gathered according to interrelated factors. The 46 Likert-type items included in the survey were decreased to a total of 39 as a result of EFA and were gathered within 10 dimensions.

Table 3. Expressions Used in Factor Analysis.

Factors	Statements	Definitions
Factor 1: NTAGSE Negative thoughts about the green space experience	NTAGSE1	I am disturbed by the fact that Syrians do not pay attention to cleanliness in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE2	I am disturbed by the fact that Syrians do not comply with the relevant rules in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE3	I am disturbed by the harassment, teasing, etc. of Syrians in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE4	I am uncomfortable with the use of hookahs by Syrians in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE5	I think that Syrians do not leave the urban green species clean after using them.
	NTAGSE6	I am uncomfortable with Syrians begging in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE7	I am uncomfortable with Syrians barbecuing in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE8	I feel uncomfortable when Syrians speak loudly in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE9	I am uncomfortable with Syrians spending time in groups in urban green spaces.
	NTAGSE10	I think that Syrians harm sports equipment in urban green spaces.
Factor 2 : PTAGSE Positive thoughts about the green space experience	PTAGSE1	In order for Syrians to contribute to social cohesion, work on daily life should be done before urban green spaces.
	PTAGSE2	Activities such as festivals and bazaars should be organized within the framework of the participation of Syrians in social cohesion in urban green spaces.
	PTAGSE3	In urban green spaces, municipalities should work towards the social cohesion of Syrian children.
	PTAGSE4	Citizens of Turkey should show empathy towards Syrians in urban green spaces.
	PTAGSE5	When I see Syrians acting inappropriately in urban green spaces, I exhibit a different attitude from my attitude toward Turkish citizens.
	PTAGSE6	I feel pity when I encounter Syrian immigrants in urban green spaces.
	PTAGSE7	As citizens of Turkey behave appropriately in urban green spaces, Syrians adapt.
Factor 3 : BFPGSE Behavior in the face of problems in the green space experience	BFPGSE1	When I see Syrians acting inappropriately in urban green spaces, I warn them by speaking to them.
	BFPGSE2	When I see Syrians acting inappropriately in urban green spaces, I do not intervene.

Table 3 (continued). Expressions Used in Factor Analysis.

	BFPGSE3	I communicate to warn Syrians about their wrongdoings in urban green spaces.
Factor 4 : CSASI Communication style or approach of Syrian immigrants	CSASI1	I cannot communicate because Syrians do not want to communicate with other people in the green spaces of the city.
	CSASI2	I do not communicate because I am afraid of Syrians in the green spaces of the city.
Factor 5 : FR Fundamental rights	FR1	Syrians should be taught Turkish.
	FR2	Municipalities should increase security measures towards Syrians in urban green spaces.
	FR3	It is necessary to know that citizens of Turkey have priority rights as hosts in urban green spaces and that Syrians are guests.
	FR4	Nothing should be done to establish good relations between the two groups in urban green spaces: it should simply be known that Syrians are equal.
Factor 6 : SCGE Sources of conflict in the greenfield experience	SCGE1	The reason why citizens of Turkey and Syrians have problems in urban green spaces is the language difference.
	SCGE2	The reason why citizens of Turkey and Syrians have problems in urban green spaces is the lack of green spaces.
	SCGE3	The reason why citizens of Turkey and Syrians experience problems in urban green spaces is the media (social, visual and written media).
	SCGE4	The reason why Turkish citizens and Syrians have problems in urban green spaces is cultural difference.
Factor 7 : CSPI Communication style of the people of Istanbul	CSPI1	I cannot communicate with Syrian immigrants in the green spaces of the city due to language problems.
	CSPI2	I do not communicate with Syrians in the green spaces of the city because I have nothing in common with them.
	CSPI3	I communicate with Syrians in urban green spaces to socialize.
Factor 8: EGSE Empathizing in the green space experience	EGSE1	I do not think that Syrians cause more damage to equipment/tools/benches in urban green spaces than citizens of Turkey.
	EGSE2	I do not think that Syrians harm equipment/tools in urban green spaces.
Factor 9 : CE Cultural Elements	CE1	Citizens of Turkey should learn Arabic even if only a little.
	CE2	In urban green spaces, municipalities should place information boards in Arabic for Syrians.
	CE3	Job opportunities should be offered to people who speak Arabic in urban green spaces.
Factor 10 : DSAFOG Desire to stay away from other groups	DSAFOG1	I do not communicate with anyone because I want to spend time alone in the green spaces of the city.

This 10-factor structure explained 64.371% of the total variance. Considering the factor weights in Table 4, it is seen that these values vary between 0.422 and 0.905. Considering that factor weights between 0.30 and 0.60 are at moderate levels, and between 0.60 and 1 are at high levels, it was noted that 14 of the 39 items in the scale are acceptable and the remaining 25 items are highly acceptable.

Table 4. EFA Results of Variables regarding Istanbul People's Perceptions of Syrian Migrants' Utilization of Green Spaces.

Factors	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance	Factor weights	Communalities	Alpha coefficient when variable is deleted
Factor 1: Negative thoughts about the green field experience	11.167	28.634			
NTAGSE1			0.851	0.815	0.682
NTAGSE2			0.848	0.790	0.687
NTAGSE3			0.826	0.626	0.687
NTAGSE4			0.739	0.623	0.689
NTAGSE5			0.707	0.687	0.688
NTAGSE6			0.671	0.581	0.691
NTAGSE7			0.668	0.610	0.692
NTAGSE8			0.648	0.658	0.690
NTAGSE9			0.508	0.805	0.691
NTAGSE10			0.496	0.602	0.692
Factor 2 : Positive thoughts about the green space experience	3.147	8.068			
PTAGSE1			0.802	0.622	0.697
PTAGSE2			0.767	0.683	0.706
PTAGSE3			0.515	0.697	0.699
PTAGSE4			0.508	0.682	0.708
PTAGSE5			0.480	0.505	0.697
PTAGSE6			0.452	0.490	0.697
PTAGSE7			0.437	0.587	0.706
Factor 3 : Behavior in the face of problems in the green space experience	1.872	4.799			
BFPGSE1			0.865	0.750	0.699
BFPGSE2			0.767	0.662	0.705
BFPGSE3			0.662	0.666	0.690
Factor 4 : Communication style or approach of Syrian immigrants	1.724	4.420			
CSASI1			0.711	0.609	0.687
CSASI2			0.651	0.604	0.689
Factor 5 : Fundamental Rights	1.385	3.551			
FR1			0.831	0.696	0.694

Table 4 (continued). EFA Results of Variables regarding Istanbul People's Perceptions of Syrian Migrants' Utilization of Green Spaces.

FR2			0.588	0.631	0.687
FR3			0.452	0.521	0.695
FR4			0.432	0.562	0.708
Factor 6 : Sources of conflict in the greenfield experience	1.344	3.447			
SCGE1			0.829	0.715	0.694
SCGE2			0.447	0.558	0.699
SCGE3			0.427	0.521	0.705
SCGE4			0.422	0.514	0.689
Factor 7 : Communication style of the people of Istanbul	1.202	3.081			
CSPI1			0.741	0.615	0.693
CSPI2			0.591	0.631	0.695
CSPI3			0.437	0.625	0.704
Factor 8 : Empathizing in the green space experience	1.171	3.004			
EGSE1			0.873	0.717	0.704
EGSE2			0.654	0.580	0.706
Factor 9 : Cultural Elements	1.083	2.776			
KU1			0.808	0.696	0.705
KU2			0.756	0.694	0.707
KU3			0.638	0.652	0.705
10 : Desire to stay away from other groups	1.010	2.591			
DSAFOG1			0.905	0.824	0.700

Discussion and Conclusion

Looking at the age distributions in this study, it is seen that the participation rate of individuals between the ages of 25 and 34 years was 64%, and it is also known that most surveys are conducted with individuals from this age group. Gentin et al. (2019) and Seeland et al. (2009) explained that younger individuals interact more with immigrants in green spaces. Based on that information, it is possible to say that the younger population in this study also interacts more with immigrants or is more active than older individuals.

It was seen that some options were marked at higher rates for some of the items in the survey excludingthe questions about demographic characteristics. Among these, "I communicate with Syrians in urban green spaces to socialize" received the answers of "1" or "2" at a rate of 70.5% (Table 2). This shows us that urban green spaces are places where local people did not want to interact with other groups. Kabaklı Çimen and Ersoy Quadir (2018) also showed in their study that local people do not want to interact with Syrian immigrants in social areas in the city because they had negative thoughts about Syrian immigrants. It can be said that this situation translates similarly into urban green spaces.

Important results were also obtained for ‘‘I am uncomfortable with the use of hookahs by Syrians in urban green spaces". For this statement, the options of ‘‘5’’ and ‘‘4’’ were marked by a total of 68% of participants. A similar situation regarding the use of hookahs and other substances in green spaces was discussed by Gentin (2011). This situation was seen to create problems between immigrants and local people. Peters et al. (2010) also revealed conflicts between ethnic groups due to differences in green space activities, and it is seen that such situations creates conflict in Istanbul in the same way.

‘‘Citizens of Turkey should learn Arabic, even if only a little’’ was scored as ‘‘1’’ or ‘‘2’’ at a combined rate of 67.5%, While ‘‘Syrians should be taught Turkish’’ was scored as ‘‘5’’ and ‘‘4’’ at a combined rate of 66.4%. The distributions of answers for these two items reveal that the local people expect Syrian immigrants to speak Turkish in urban green spaces in the event of any mutual communication.

Dai (2011) stated that green spaces are generally located in areas where privileged people live and that such groups do not welcome people who come to these areas from outside. In the present study, for the statement ‘‘It is necessary to know that citizens of Turkey have priority rights as hosts in urban green spaces and that Syrians are guests’’, the options ‘‘5’’ and ‘‘were marked by combined total of 37.7% of the participants. It was concluded that most of the local people think that green spaces are privileged spaces and that they have priority in these areas.

Another item from the survey was “Municipalities should work towards the social cohesion of Syrian children in urban green spaces”. The options of ‘‘5’’ and ‘‘4’’ were marked by 70% of the participants in total. Jay and Schraml (2009) and Kloek et al. (2015) revealed that the children of immigrant families born in Europe adapt to the culture of the host region faster than the older generation. Based on this, it is possible to say that local people in Istanbul think that second-generation Syrians can adapt more easily.

Inspired by studies conducted in Germany, England, the United States, and the Netherlands (Kloek et al., 2015; Buijs et al., 2009; Gentin, 2011; Jay and Schraml, 2009; Woolley and Amin, 1999; Byrne, 2012) the present study is a pioneer for other studies of this type to be carried out in Turkey. With the guidance of the present study, different perceptions among groups in terms of the use of urban green spaces can be determined in future studies and things to be done to reduce the conflicts between groups in the use of urban green spaces can be discussed.

In Turkey, studies are being carried out in many different fields such as education or health for Syrian immigrants. In terms of urban green spaces, however, this is the first such Turkish study to be conducted on the situation of Syrian immigrants.

Previous studies showed that urban green spaces help increase familiarity among the individuals using the areas (Jay and Schraml, 2009). In this context, it would be beneficial to organize events such as bazaars and festivals that will increase the familiarity of between the two groups of immigrants and locals in the secure setting of urban green spaces.

Previous studies also found that local people have more in common with second-generation immigrants in terms of activities in urban green spaces, as the children of immigrants, or members of the second-generation immigrant population, adapt more easily to the host society (Peters et al., 2010). It is also known that children who enjoy the use of green spaces while they are developing will see benefits in the later stages of their lives (Mustapa, et al., 2019). Based on this fact, the creation of activities for the adaptation and development of Syrian children in urban green spaces will benefit the harmony of these two groups in the long run.

Another situation that causes conflict between local people and Syrian immigrants is the differences in the activities in which they engage in urban green spaces. It was seen in the present study that the most striking activities were the use of hookahs and barbecuing. Limiting these activities to certain areas and banning them in all other green spaces may be considered a solution.

Pollution in green spaces seems to be another cause of conflict. In this context, the establishment of strict rules to reduce littering in green spaces and the employment of officials to monitor frequently visited places such as parks and recreational areas are important both in terms of the preservation of nature pollution and social cohesion.

One of the biggest reasons for conflict in urban green spaces is seen to be the scarcity of green space. Istanbul is at the bottom of the list among major cities of the world with its green space of 2.2% (World Cities Culture Forum, 2018). In this context, due to the scarcity of urban green spaces, the demand cannot be met and causes conflict between groups. In order to reduce such conflict, increasing the number of urban green spaces is presented as another possible solution.

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