

## Expectations of Syrian Refugee and Turkish Parents Living in Gaziantep from Preschool Teachers in the Context of Inclusive Education

### Gaziantep'te Yaşayan Suriyeli Mülteci ve Türk Ebeveynlerin Kapsayıcı Eğitim Bağlamında Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinden Beklentileri

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to comparatively reveal what parents of both Syrian refugee and Turkish children in a multicultural educational environment expect from preschool teachers in the context of inclusive education. This study was designed as a phenomenology study from qualitative research designs. In this study, conducted using the interview technique, the views of Syrian refugee and Turkish parents with preschool-age children on their expectations from teachers in the context of inclusive education were examined. The study group consisted of 20 parents, 10 Turkish parents and 10 Syrian refugee parents living in Gaziantep city centre, selected by snowball sampling method. According to the results, it was determined that the expectations of Turkish and Syrian parents overlapped in some points, while in some cases they diverged. When the parents' expectations from the teachers were analyzed, it was concluded that Syrian refugee parents had expectations mainly related to language. In contrast, Turkish parents had expectations mostly related to the affective characteristics of the teacher.

**Keywords:** Inclusive education, foreign children, parent expectations, preschool education

**Öz:** Bu araştırmanın amacı, çok kültürlü bir eğitim ortamında yer alan hem Suriyeli mülteci hem de Türk çocukların ebeveynlerinin; okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden kapsayıcı eğitim bağlamında neler beklediklerini karşılaştırmalı olarak ortaya koymaktır. Bu çalışma nitel araştırma desenlerinden fenomenoloji çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Görüşme tekniği kullanılarak yapılan bu çalışmada, okul öncesi eğitim çağındaki çocuğu olan Suriyeli mülteci ve Türk ebeveynlerin kapsayıcı eğitim bağlamında öğretmenlerden beklentilerine yönelik görüşleri incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu kartopu örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilen ve Gaziantep şehir merkezinde yaşayan 10 Türk ebeveyn ve 10 Suriyeli mülteci ebeveyn olmak üzere toplam 20 ebeveyn oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın sonucunda Türk uyruklu ve Suriye uyruklu ebeveynlerin beklentilerinin bazı noktalarda örtüştüğü görülürken, bazı durumlarda ise ayrıştığı tespit edilmiştir. Ebeveynlerin öğretmenlerden beklentilerine bakıldığında Suriyeli mülteci ebeveynlerin daha çok dil ile ilgili; Türk ebeveynlerin ise daha çok öğretmenin duygusal özellikleri ile ilgili beklentilerinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kapsayıcı eğitim, yabancı uyruklu çocuklar, ebeveyn beklentileri, okul öncesi eğitim

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## Introduction

Inclusive education is a philosophy and practice based on human rights, social justice, and a system of thought that advocates for children with special needs to be educated with their peers in regular classrooms. It was first used to educate individuals with special needs in the Salamanca Declaration (Dede, 1996). Mitchell (2015) extends this conceptual framework and emphasizes that inclusive education goes beyond children with disabilities and targets all children needing exceptional support. Today, inclusive education is accepted as an understanding that defends the equal right to education for all students, considering differences in language, religion, gender, culture, ethnicity, etc. Therefore, inclusive education emphasizes the importance of providing environments that enable each individual to receive education under the same conditions as their peers (Education Reform Initiative [ERI], 2016). Inclusive education, which includes various aspects such as vision, curriculum, assessment, teaching, learning, admission, access, support, resources, and leadership, emphasizes the process of meeting the diverse needs of all learners and promoting their participation in learning, culture, and communication while reducing rejection within the education system and minimizing attrition for all children (Ehsaan & Shahid, 2016; Peng, 2008). Today, inclusive education has become more than just about

mainstreaming students, including girls, migrants, refugees, individuals with low socio-economic status, and religious and ethnic minorities.

Inclusive education is essential in advocating that all children receive education equally and exercise their rights equally. Inclusive education will ensure that every child has access to education and that discrimination between individuals is eliminated (Öztürk et al., 2017). Inclusive education aims to provide equal opportunities for all children, including those with special needs, and underlines the importance of guidance and counselling programs in supporting individual students (Pautina et al., 2020). According to Ainscow and Cesar (2006), inclusive education should take a much broader perspective, becoming a reform that promotes diversity and aims to eliminate social exclusion. The need for inclusive education to ensure full participation and access to quality learning opportunities for all children, including children with disabilities, is emphasized by researchers, who also recommend developing strategies for empowerment and skills development (Bombardelli, 2020). The importance of teacher training and empowerment to effectively support students with learning disabilities in inclusive classrooms is emphasized (Prinsloo, 2001). In short, the main goals of inclusive education are to provide equal opportunities, eliminate social exclusion and support the individual needs of all students in learning

environments. Recently, especially since 2011, there has been an increase in projects and practices for migrant students in inclusive education practices in Turkey due to intensive migration from Syria. In parallel with this, studies on inclusive education have gained weight. Due to Turkey's long border with Syria, there are a large number of Syrian migrants in some provinces (Özcan, 2018). The number of Syrians in Turkey is stated as 3 million 622 thousand 486 people as of October 2022. The number of Syrian refugees living in Gaziantep is 464,599 (Refugees Association, 2022). In the early 2000s, studies were carried out for individuals who were placed in camps built in border regions. However, in the following years, more comprehensive educational activities have started for Syrian refugees who settled in various provinces of Turkey, especially as of 2014 (Özcan, 2018).

According to the statement made by the Ministry of National Education on June 8, 2021, there are 35,707 Syrian children in preschool education (Refugees Association, 2022). Syrian children have access to all levels of education. In order to ensure equality of opportunity in preschool education, many institutions are working to ensure that Syrian children receive education in the same environment as their peers. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is one of the leading institutions carrying out these efforts. MoNE's most well-established work in this regard is the Inclusive Education Project. Launched in 2011 with the support of UNICEF, the project consists of three phases. The first phase includes the support provided to Syrian teachers under the title "Training of Syrian Teachers" (MoNE, 2017), while the second phase includes the support provided to Turkish teachers under the title "Training of Teachers with Foreign National Students in their Classrooms" (MoNE, 2018). In the last phase, ten more training modules were added to the projects with the support of UNICEF and Erciyes University. Thus, the project became more detailed and was developed under "inclusive education". With the Inclusive Education Project, the professional development of teachers was supported, as well as their social, emotional and personality development. In this way, it was aimed to provide a holistic education (MoNE, 2022).

Education has a significant impact on the development of countries. If developments are expected in a country regarding politics, economy and society, it is necessary to address education first. The first and essential education step is preschool education (Baran et al., 2007). Children's experiences in the preschool period determine their behaviours towards school, learning and abilities, which in turn affect their school success. Children with positive experiences in this period develop positive attitudes towards learning, school and their abilities. In case of negative experiences, on the other hand, the child may develop problems that will affect his/her entire educational life. In addition, it is known that children who have negative experiences in this period have low self-esteem, show low achievement in later life and exhibit more behavioural problems. For a child to grow and develop healthy and positive attitudes towards learning, it is necessary to create an environment where quality cognitive stimuli, rich language interactions, and positive social and emotional experiences are offered to the child and the child's independence is supported. This is only possible with a healthy family environment and a qualified preschool education (MoNE, 2013). In addition, teacher characteristics are one of the main determinants of preschool education quality and children's development. Children only explore and take advantage of learning opportunities in supportive environments where they feel

valued, loved and safe. The most critical component of this supportive environment is the consistent and secure relationship between the teacher and the child (MoNE, 2013).

In Turkey, research on Syrian refugees and inclusive education has been conducted with teachers, school principals and parents (Bozkır et al., 2020; Çalamak & Erdemir, 2019; Durmuş, 2022; İli, 2020; Özcan, 2018; Özoruç & Sığırtmaç, 2020; Tanrikulu, 2017; Taştekin et al., 2016; Tümkaya & Çopur, 2020; Ünal & Aladağ, 2020; Ünay et al., 2021; Yalçın & Simsar, 2020). Studies are also conducted abroad on Syrian refugees and inclusive education (Brun & Shuayb, 2020; Cohen, 2019; El-Jabali, 2019; Madziva & Thondhlana, 2017; Stanek, 2017). These studies conducted in our country and abroad are mainly aimed at revealing what the problems related to inclusive education are and what the solutions to these problems are.

Ünal and Aladağ (2020) conducted a study on expectations regarding inclusive education with teachers working in primary education institutions where it is implemented and who have inclusive students in their classes. This study determined the educational practices and problems for inclusive students, teachers' expectations and solution suggestions for inclusive education. Similarly, Yağan (2020) included the opinions of teachers, foreign and Turkish students and their parents about the everyday experiences and future expectations of Turkish and foreign students. While the expectations of Turkish and foreign students and their families were evaluated comparatively in this study, the expectations and opinions of teachers were also reached. Doğrul and Akay (2019) included a study comparing Turkish and Syrian parents' views and expectations regarding preschool education. In this study, while the views of families from two different cultures on preschool education were similar, there were differences in their expectations for preschool education.

The literature emphasizes the importance of understanding parents' expectations of teachers. Bıkmaz and Güler (2000) found that parents in private and public schools expected teachers to be loving, understanding, and compassionate, but their expectations of teachers' professional characteristics were low. Kupiec (2019) found that teachers often adopt an instrumental model of cooperation with parents, imposing principles on parents and expecting them to make efforts in areas where they are not professionally prepared. Tatar and Horenczyk (2000) investigated parents' expectations of teachers. They found that mothers generally have higher expectations of fairness, help and support than fathers and that female students have higher expectations of help and competence for their parents. Finally, Dozza and Cavrini (2012) examined parents' perceptions of teacher efficacy. They emphasized the importance of teachers' knowledge, enthusiasm, and ability to motivate students, involve parents, respect diversity, and manage the classroom effectively. The findings regarding parents' expectations of teachers emphasize the importance of understanding and meeting parents' expectations for effective parent-teacher collaboration.

These studies also indicate that there has been a recent increase in the number of Syrian children enrolled in preschool education. It is seen that the studies conducted so far are related to recommendations to teachers, teachers' perceptions and attitudes, policies, family participation, administrators' opinions, the experiences of Syrian children in preschool classrooms and studies to understand the peer culture they create, problems and interventions (Özger & Akanser, 2019; Şayan, 2022; Tuncer, 2020). When the relevant literature is

examined, there are studies on parents' expectations from preschool teachers and educational institutions (Çetinkaya et al., 2021; Cui et al., 2016; Konca, 2020). However, there is no comparative study on the expectations of families from different cultures whose children receive preschool education from teachers in the context of inclusive education. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to comparatively reveal what parents of both Syrian refugee and Turkish children in a multicultural educational environment expect from preschool teachers. Knowing what these parents expect from teachers in the context of inclusive education will benefit teachers in self-evaluation, evaluating all aspects of educational environments and organizing teaching methods. In the study, the question "What are the expectations of Syrian refugee and Turkish parents living in Gaziantep from teachers in the context of inclusive education?" was sought to be answered.

## Research Model

### Method

This study was designed as a phenomenology study from qualitative research designs. A semi-structured interview technique was used in the study. Semi-structured interviews are a method that enables both fixed-choice answers and in-depth exploration of the relevant field (Büyüköztürk et al., 2022). In this study, which aims to examine parents' expectations regarding inclusive education, this technique was preferred for the participants to express their opinions in detail.

According to Lester (1999), phenomenological research aims to understand subjective experiences and gain insight into people's motivations and actions. *Phenomenological research* is defined as an approach that seeks to understand the meaning, structure and essence of lived experiences through the participants' perspectives. According to Knaack (1984),

phenomenological research is conducted to explore subjective experiences, gain insights, analyze root meanings, and understand human behaviour from the participants' perspective. In the current study, phenomenology was utilized as it was aimed to reveal the expectations of parents from families in the context of inclusive education through their own subjective experiences and understandings.

### Working Group

The study group of the research consisted of 10 Turkish and 10 Syrian refugee parents whose children attend preschool education institutions in Gaziantep, and they were selected by snowball sampling method. Some children attend an independent state preschool, and some attend a preschool within a primary school. In the snowball sampling method, a reference person related to the subject of the study is selected, and other people are reached through this person (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). Preferring snowball sampling in research provides advantages in terms of cost and efficiency and is a valuable method for finding hidden populations (Johnson, 2014). Drăgan and Isaic-Maniu (2012) state that snowball sampling is helpful for minority populations and provides flexibility in determining the sample size. Atkinson and Flint (2001) emphasize that snowball sampling is adequate for accessing hidden and hard-to-reach populations. The reasons underlying the preference for snowball sampling in this study are similar to the literature. Snowball sampling was preferred because Syrian refugee families are in small groups; they tend not to integrate with the majority of society due to their lack of language skills, and it is not easy to interact with them because they are not involved in the family participation process. The study group was reached through the parents in the institutions where one of the researchers worked.

**Table 1.** Demographic information of the parents participating in the interview

Nickname	TC/SYRIAN	Profession	Age	Proximity	Education Status	Employment Status	Monthly Income	Total Children	Age of the child	Social Support
TC1	Turkish	Cook	44	Father	High school	Working	8000 tl	4	51 months	No
TC2	Turkish	Housewife	27	Mother	License	Not working	Not fixed	3	54 months	No
TC3	Turkish	Housewife	31	Mother	High school	Not working	7000 tl	2	50 months	No
TC4	Turkish	Housewife	30	Mother	Middle school	Not working	10000 tl	3	51 months	No
TC5	Turkish	Housewife	34	Mother	Associate degree	Not working	10000 tl	1	4 years old	No
YB1	Syrian refugee	Housewife	35	Mother	License	Not working	Not fixed	2	5 years old	No
YB2	Syrian refugee	Housewife	27	Mother	Undergraduate student	Not working	Not fixed	2	67 months	No
TC6	Turkish	Housewife	36	Mother	Associate degree	Not working	9000 tl	2	53 months	No
YB3	Syrian refugee	Housewife	37	Mother	Primary school	Not working	Not fixed	5	70 months	No
YB4	Syrian refugee	Housewife	23	Mother	Middle school	Not working	Not fixed	5	63 months	No
TC7	Turkish	Teacher	32	Mother	License	Working	Did not specify	1	64 months	No
YB5	Syrian refugee	Housewife	31	Mother	License	Not working	7000 tl	2	58 months	No
YB6	Syrian refugee	Freelance Accounting	41	Father	Phd	Working	Not fixed	4	50 months	No
YB7	Syrian refugee	Freelance Accounting	36	Father	Master's degree	Working	20000 tl	2	57 months	No
TC8	Turkish	Housewife	34	Mother	License	Not working	Variable	2	63 months	No
YB8	Syrian refugee	Tailor	31	Father	Primary school	Working	6000 tl	5	5 years old	Yes
YB9	Syrian refugee	Factory Worker	30	Father	License	Working	Minimum	3	5 years old	Yes
YB10	Syrian refugee	Housewife	35	Mother	Primary education	Not working	Did not specify	6	50 months	No
TC9	Turkish	Housewife	25	Mother	Primary school	Not working	Not fixed	2	65 months	No
TC10	Turkish	Housewife	44	Mother	Primary school	Not working	10000 tl	5	71 months	No

In Table 1, while T.C. refers to Turkish participants, SA refers to Syrian refugee participants. Social support refers to the economic assistance they can receive from municipalities, aid organizations, associations or relatives.

### **Data Collection Tool**

In this study, in which a semi-structured interview technique was used, the interview form was developed by the researchers based on the idea of inclusive education in preschool. The draft form created by the researchers was finalized by a qualitative research specialist and an early childhood education specialist after receiving expert opinions. Then, a pilot study was conducted on 2 participants, and it was decided that the interview form was appropriate, the questions were understandable, and the study duration was ideal (See Appendix 2). Participants were also asked to complete a demographic information form (See Appendix 1).

### **Data Collection**

First, ethics committee permission from Hasan Kalyoncu University was obtained (19.12.2022-27805). After the ethics committee's permission, the informed consent form was sent to the participants, and the volunteer participants were identified. Interviews lasting 25-30 minutes were conducted with each participant. These interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participants' homes, at the participants' workplaces and school. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder with the participants' permission. As a result of the interviews, an average of 23 minutes of audio recording was obtained for each participant. Participants were informed that their names would be expressed with codes and that their information would never be shared.

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, the data collected through interviews were transcribed, and then content analysis was used to analyze the data. Büyüköztürk et al. (2022) mentioned that there are several methods related to content analysis. One is to capture the vital information the interviewee wants to say and thus ensure that only that information is included in the research. Information that is not necessary and outside the subject of the research is not included. In content analysis, an analytical approach, the data obtained from the participants are synthesized and relevant categories and themes are reached. According to Ravindran (2019), the basic steps of content analysis, such as data preparation, reading and reflection, coding, categorization and theme development, should be followed when analysing qualitative research. While analyzing the data of this study, participants were first assigned a pseudonym. Syrian refugee parents were assigned pseudonyms such as YB1 and YB2, while Turkish parents were assigned pseudonyms such as TC1 and TC2. Then, coding was carried out in line with the answers given by each participant regarding the expectations; categories were formed from these codes and themes were reached from these categories.

### **Trustworthiness**

The concepts of reliability and validity in quantitative research are replaced by the concept of trustworthiness in qualitative research.

Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria provide the trustworthiness of the research (Arastaman et al., 2018). In this study, tactics that support the honesty of the participants were used (each interviewee was allowed to refuse to participate in the research). In this way, the research was conducted only with participants who sincerely wanted to contribute to the data collection process and were ready to offer their opinions of their own free will.

Another factor is inter-coder reliability. The two researchers in this study coded the data independently using the same data set and then held a meeting to reach a consensus on the coding. Different codes were discussed, and finally, a consensus was reached. Thus, definitions were made more precise. Dependability is another factor that strengthens the study. In this context, the findings must be written as clearly and in detail as possible for the study to be reproducible. In this study, the detailed explanation of the research process ensures this. Finally, regarding the sample size, the aim was to reach data saturation in the research. The data obtained were analyzed continuously, and when the responses started to repeat each other, it was inferred that data saturation was reached and the data collection process was terminated.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study's limitation is the need for an interpreter during the interviews with foreign national parents and obtaining information through translation. At this point, the possibility of misunderstandings due to translation was included as a limitation of the study since it is a situation that is not in the researchers' hands.

### **Findings**

This study, conducted to determine the expectations of Syrian refugee and Turkish parents living in Gaziantep from preschool teachers in the context of inclusive education, reached three different themes. The first one is "expectations for developmental areas," the second one is "expectations for inclusive practices," and the third one is "expectations for teachers' professional competencies." Table 2 shows the themes and subheadings of these themes.

### **Expectations for Development Areas**

In the interviews, three subheadings were reached in line with this theme. These are expectations for self-care skills, expectations for supporting social-emotional development and expectations for language development. Regarding the development of self-confidence, the parent coded YB5 expressed his expectation as *"If it strengthens self-confidence, this is the most important thing"*, while the parent coded TC6 regarding the support of communication and self-confidence said, *"Let me tell you in terms of my own daughter, frankly, I think for my own daughter. You know, because she has a timid structure, she is always waiting to be called. Some other children have it, but some do not, and I saw that in the last program I attended. I wonder if something extra should be done for timid children. I'm thinking about it. I want them to support speaking more."* He expressed his expectations from the teacher.

**Table 2.** Parents' expectations from preschool teachers

Expectations for Development Areas	Expectations for Inclusive Practices	Professional Expectations from Teachers
<p><b>Expectations for Self-Care Skills</b> Support with eating</p>	<p><b>Anti-Discrimination Attitude</b> Non-discrimination Fairness</p>	<p><b>Expectations for Primary School Readiness</b> Preparing for primary school</p>
<p><b>Expectations For Supporting Social-Emotional Development</b> Supporting the development/support of social skills Developing/supporting self-esteem Supporting communication</p>	<p><b>Expectations for Harmonization</b> Promoting a sense of trust Support with adaptation Organizing activities to support the integration of children</p>	<p><b>Expectations for Affective Characteristics of Teachers</b> Love, tolerance, listening, consideration of individual differences Gentle Compassion, patience Interest</p>
<p><b>Expectations for Language Development</b> Supporting communication Effective use of body language by the teacher while communicating Supporting language skills/increasing activities for this purpose Teaching other foreign languages</p>		<p><b>Positive Discipline Approach</b> Positive education of children instead of fear-oriented education</p> <p><b>Making Activities</b> Events to take forward Doing activities Play and painting</p> <p><b>Teacher Family Cooperation</b> Sharing information about the child</p>

Regarding expectations for self-care skills, the parent coded TC1 said, "I mean, our expectations from teachers, for example, my child never eats at school, the teacher never helps. Unfortunately, in that regard, the child goes hungry and comes back hungry. I mean, if he only eats something in his diet, he doesn't eat anything else. So we cannot achieve this at home. I mean, it is also because of his other sisters, but we want him to eat there. There, too, if he doesn't eat, the teacher doesn't do anything."

Regarding language development, TC3, "I mean, it is very important that he/she can communicate well with other children." IC2, "I mean, it is about language." PT3 "Language... M's speech is a bit slow, and we want to make it easier for him to speak Turkish. We ask the teachers to facilitate him by explaining when the teacher deals with him because, after that, he says he does not know the meaning of the Turkish words. So he will show this sign, come and talk. Without going slowly, the teacher does so; when he says "come", you know, because the teacher marks it, he knows the meaning of "come", but some words, but he memorizes the word without knowing it. For example, when the teacher talks about something, he explains it with body language. To help a little bit. This is the most important thing I want."

### Expectations for Inclusive Practices

Two sub-dimensions were found in the theme of expectations from teachers for inclusive practices. The sub-dimensions of this theme are anti-discriminatory attitudes and expectations for adaptation. Regarding an anti-discriminatory attitude, TC7 said, "I want to be treated equally and without discrimination among friends. This is already enough." YB6: "The most important thing is comfort, I mean, we need to be together at school, at school, in sports. This is the most important. The

main thing is that Arabs, Turks, Kurds are all one nationality. This is actually the most important thing. We need it without any difference." IC8: "There is no problem with education. But the teacher discriminates. I want children to be treated fairly."

"It's just that, I mean, some activities are just chatting with their friends, I mean, if they do an activity, children talk to each other more. For example, for example, this friend of mine will tell you what he does and what he likes. Activities to integrate children." P4 "It's just that they are strange (in the sense of foreign, small) and my child is a bit scared, he doesn't know anything. Especially on the first day, he goes there, comes back home, he is scared. I just say trust, how to trust him, I mean children trust, children to feel trust at school to feel trust, so they will be fine. So I expect if teachers just trust." PT7 stated their expectations: "I want him to adapt to his class and school and I want him to support him."

### Professional Expectations from Teachers

Under this theme, five sub-dimensions were found: expectations for primary school readiness, teacher's affective characteristics, positive discipline approach, conducting activities, and teacher-family cooperation. In this context, the expectations for primary school readiness were as follows: PT7 "To prepare him/her for the first grade." TC9: "I don't expect anything from teachers because they do everything necessary. I mean, they are very helpful, but I expect him to be a little more prepared for starting primary school." "For example, when I was in Syria, they started reading and writing in kindergarten. That is how it is."

Responses to the expectations regarding the affective characteristics of the teacher: TC4 "Let me say, love. I would say more love, such as tolerance, hugging, listening, and understanding what you say. Each child has different

characteristics. I think they should act according to their characteristics." PT5 "To do it kindly." TC5 "Compassion. Right now, I am talking according to my son's age; of course, since I cannot see further, since I have not experienced it, my first child is already my first child. Compassion is a moderate approach. I wish patience, patience. What else can I say to our teachers?" PT10 "Um. I mean. Care." TC10 "We are satisfied now, I mean, we have no problems. You know, B. is more on top of it because of his hearing, I'm sure our teacher is already doing what he needs to do. I expect him to be more active with B. For example, I expect him to be more active in his speech. For example, I would like him to be more interested in B. while B is doing his lesson.'

Regarding expectations for a positive discipline approach, TC6 said, "I saw and heard the children making threatening statements (they are watching us with a camera) while talking among themselves. It was a situation that shook my confidence to hear them talking like the principal is watching you on camera, use less napkins. I think it would be better if videos about saving and wasting are explained with educational information instead of such a conversation."

In the dimension of doing activities, YB5 said, "For example, playing games, practising with them, taking a

nap, things like that. Painting, painting can be more educational." TC8 "I would like my child to move forward. TC5 said, "I think he is young right now, so I will not say education at first because he is only four. Of course, education is involved, but it is more important for her to socialize and do activities. Also, the fact that he is under the tutelage of a person like a teacher will allow him to deal with our child more professionally. We are face-to-face with our children a lot. Therefore, it would be best for me if the teacher gave basic education and did activities. Of course, for my child as well." IC7 said, "We want the teacher to give us regular information about the child's education and general situation. We want her to tell us what we should consider about the child. " They expressed their expectations for teacher-family cooperation.

### Comparison of Expectations of Syrian Refugee and Turkish Parents

The following table compares Syrian refugee parents' and Turkish parents' responses regarding their expectations from teachers.

**Table 3:** Comparison of Syrian Refugee and Turkish parents' responses

Turkish Parents' Answers	Syrian Refugee Parents' Responses
<b>Expectations for Development Areas</b>	<b>Expectations for Development Areas</b>
Expectations for self-care skills	Expectations for self-care skills
Support with eating	-
<b>Expectations for Supporting Social-Emotional Development</b>	<b>Expectations for Supporting Social-Emotional Development</b>
Development of social skills	Improving self-esteem
Ensuring socialization	Supporting self-esteem
Supporting social skills	-
<b>Expectations for Language Development</b>	<b>Expectations for Language Development</b>
<b>Supporting Communication</b>	<b>Supporting Language Skills</b>
-	Activities to develop language skills
-	Using the teacher's body language effectively while communicating
-	Teaching other foreign languages
<b>Expectations for Inclusive Practices</b>	<b>Expectations for Inclusive Practices</b>
Anti-discrimination attitude	Anti-discrimination attitude
Non-discrimination	Anti-discriminatory attitude
-	Fairness
<b>Expectations for Harmonization</b>	<b>Expectations for Harmonization</b>
-	Organizing activities to support the integration of children
-	Support with adaptation
-	Promoting a sense of trust
<b>Professional Expectations from Teachers</b>	<b>Professional Expectations from Teachers</b>
Expectations for primary school readiness	Expectations for primary school readiness
Preparing for primary school	Preparing for first grade
-	Supporting literacy
<b>Expectations for Affective Characteristics of Teachers</b>	<b>Expectations for Affective Characteristics of Teachers</b>
Love, tolerance, listening, consideration of individual differences	Giving confidence
Compassion, patience	The teacher is kind
Relevance	Interest
<b>Positive Discipline Approach</b>	<b>Positive Discipline Approach</b>
Positive education of children instead of fear-based education	-
<b>Making Activities</b>	<b>Making Activities</b>
Supporting and doing activities	Play games and drawing
Events to take forward	-
Teacher-family cooperation	Teacher-family cooperation
-	Sharing information about the child

Table 3 shows that the expectations of Syrian refugee and Turkish parents from preschool teachers differed in some sub-dimensions while they overlapped in others. While the Turkish parents expressed the expectation for self-care skills, Syrian refugee parents did not have such an expectation. It is seen that both groups have expectations about supporting their social-emotional development. It is seen that both Turkish and Syrian refugee parents have expectations under the sub-heading of anti-discrimination attitude. Expectations regarding adaptation were expressed only by foreign national parents. It was observed that both groups had expectations for language development. Within the scope of supporting school readiness, Turkish and Syrian refugee parents had expectations from teachers. Only Turkish parents had expectations of positive discipline. While both groups had expectations regarding activities, only Syrian refugee parents expressed their expectations regarding teacher-family cooperation.

### Conclusion and Discussion

This study aimed to obtain the expectations of both Turkish and Syrian refugee parents, whose children attend preschool education institutions, and preschool teachers. It was observed that parents in both groups had similar expectations from preschool teachers, such as preparing their children for primary school, ensuring children's socialization, and having positive affective characteristics for children. In the study conducted by Cui et al. (2016), it is seen that parents expressed their views on the dimensions of love, respect, patience, and preparation for primary school. Research supports these expectations and suggests that developing a sense of trust in refugee children is very important for inclusive education. According to Veck and Wharton (2021), young refugee children show much healthier progress in all areas of development in inclusive and trusting school cultures where they feel listened to and welcomed. Block et al. (2014) found that children in schools that adopt an inclusive education philosophy achieve much higher achievement scores. Bešić et al. (2020) argued that inclusive education practices that promote trust and support for refugee children, especially when supported through language acquisition, achieve successful outcomes and play an important role in developing a sense of belonging in children.

The parents' opinions, such as trust, love, patience, interest, preparing children for primary school, ensuring children's socialization show that when the preschool period is considered, parents express their opinions in line with the needs of this age period for their children. When we look at the main objectives of preschool education, ensuring children's physical, mental and emotional development and acquiring good habits, preparing them for primary school; creating an everyday upbringing environment for children from unfavourable environments and families; ensuring that children speak Turkish correctly and beautifully (MoNE, 2013) come to the forefront. In this context, the expectations of families overlap with the principles of the preschool education program.

In the statements given by Turkish national parents regarding their expectations of teachers, expectations for the affective characteristics of the teacher ranked first, followed by supporting their social-emotional development and having them do activities. Syrian refugee parents' expectations for language development ranked first. Afterwards, expectations for adaptation, expectations for the affective characteristics of

the teacher, preparing children for primary school and supporting their social-emotional development were observed. In the study conducted by Doğrul and Akay (2019), it was seen that parents had similar expectations regarding foreign language teaching, primary school preparation and adaptation. Syrian refugee parents' expectations for teacher-family cooperation and language expectations indicate that they have different expectations from Turkish parents. The fact that Turkish parents included statements indicating that they have expectations for self-care skills and positive discipline understanding draws attention as points where they differ from Syrian refugee parents.

Studies show that parents' expectations are in the direction of supporting developmental areas, increasing social activities, preparing their children for primary school and cooperating with families. Erşan (2019) examined parents' views on their expectations from preschool education institutions and teachers. Parents expressed their opinions as preparation for primary school, social activities, learning by doing, foreign language education, positive attitude towards the child, cooperation with the family, providing a good education, effective communication, being a good model, and being away from violence and pressure. This study observed that parents expressed similar expectations from the teacher regarding preparation for primary school, positive attitude towards the child, foreign language education, and cooperation with the family. The study conducted by Konca (2020) is similar to the results of this study in that teachers should be patient, recognize individual characteristics and be tolerant. In the study by Çetinkaya et al. (2021) on the expectations of parents from preschool institutions and the status of preschool institutions in meeting these expectations, it was found that parents' expectations from teachers were positive attitude towards the child, providing good education, effective communication, being a good model, and being away from violence and pressure. The positive attitude towards children and adequate communication dimensions found in this study are similar findings.

This study concluded that Syrian refugee parents had expectations mainly related to language, while Turkish parents had expectations mostly related to the affective characteristics of the teacher. The fact that Syrian refugee parents have expectations primarily related to language shows that they expect their children to communicate, adapt, and integrate in the early period. These findings also point to the need to conduct school studies focusing on language acquisition, which is an essential step in the adaptation process for refugee children.

Research generally reveals that integration programs for migrant students in Turkey have been neglected. Tösten, Toprak, and Kayan (2017) found that Syrian refugee students in Turkish public schools face challenges such as post-traumatic stress disorders, difficulties in understanding and communicating in the classroom, crowded classrooms, and lack of teacher participation in decision-making processes. Akar (2010) identified challenges faced by schools in immigrant communities, such as resource scarcity, overcrowding, low academic achievement, intercultural problems, and lack of parental awareness. Aydın, Gündoğdu, and Akgül (2019) emphasized the importance of integrating Syrian refugee children into the national education system and the need for education and training that promotes refugee integration and multiculturalism. Collectively, these findings suggest that integration programs for migrant students in

Turkey have been neglected. Research provides recommendations for integration programs for migrant students based on an ecological approach. Şimşek, Kurt, and Kula (2020) propose a school-based integration program for immigrant students in Turkey using the Ecological Systems Approach to address the multidimensional nature of school adjustment. Serdarević and Chronister (2005) emphasized the usefulness of an ecological framework for conducting cross-cultural psychological research with immigrant populations and the importance of collaboration between families and teachers.

Similarly, Stebleton (2011) applies Bronfenbrenner's human ecology framework to understand the needs of immigrant college students and suggests strategies for academic advising. Salinas (2007) examines the educational experiences of immigrant children and emphasizes the importance of nurturing educational experiences, social capital and family values for academic success. These articles emphasize the importance of considering ecological factors and context in designing programs to support immigrant students' integration and academic success. In line with the findings of this study, the importance of implementing collaborative systematic adaptation programs between teachers and parents becomes much more straightforward.

Research shows that parents have generally positive attitudes towards inclusive education, but there are some differences in their expectations of teachers. Stevens and Wurf (2020) found that parents believe that inclusive education benefits their children but that teachers must be better prepared to support children with special needs in inclusive classrooms. Paseka and Schwab (2019) found that parents perceived more inclusive teaching practices when their children attended inclusive classrooms, but there was no difference in resource perceptions between inclusive and regular classrooms. Lui et al. (2015) found that knowledge and perceived social norms influence parents' attitudes towards inclusion. Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert (2010) also found that most parents had positive attitudes towards inclusive education but had concerns about the availability of services and individualized instruction in regular schools. Parents generally expect teachers to be well-prepared to support children with special needs and value well-coordinated, individualized educational programs. In conclusion, this study and other studies investigating parents' expectations (Cui et al., 2016; Çetinkaya et al., 2021; Doğrul & Akay, 2019; Erşan, 2019; Konca, 2020) found that parents' expectations from preschool teachers and preschool education institutions vary according to their priorities, but primarily their expectations are based on the philosophy of inclusion.

## Recommendations

### Suggestions for Researchers

This study was conducted using a qualitative method. Researchers are recommended to conduct a more comprehensive study using quantitative methods with a larger sample group.

### Recommendations for Teachers

Based on the research, teachers are recommended to include activities for both groups that will enable children and parents to mingle. Teachers are also recommended to be more collaborative with families to learn their expectations and increase family involvement activities.

## Recommendations for Policymakers

It is recommended to include projects for foreign parents with preschool-age children and their children to support them in speaking Turkish before they start school.

It is recommended that collaborative systematic adaptation programs be developed and implemented between teachers and parents to include all children and parents in the classroom environment.

## Author Contributions

Both authors planned the study and conducted the literature review together. The first author contributed to the data collection process. The first and second authors carried out the descriptive analysis together. The authors also contributed to the article's writing and read and approved the final version of the study.

## Ethical Declaration

This study was conducted with the approval decision taken at the Hasan Kalyoncu University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics meeting 2022/53, held on 15.12.2022.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

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## Attachments

### Appendix 1. Demographic Information Form:

Proximity to the child:                      Mother                      Father  
Age of the mother:  
Father's age:  
Mother's education level:  
Father's education level:  
Mother's employment status:    Not working    Working  
Occupation:  
Father's employment status:    Not working    Working  
Occupation:  
Your monthly income:  
Total number of children:  
Age of the child in the study:  
Gender:  
Number of child:  
Your level of social support:  
1) I do not receive social support.  
2) Wife  
3) Parents  
4) Relatives  
5) Neighbour  
6) Health personnel  
7) Other.....

### Appendix 2. Interview Questions:

#### *Questions for Syrian Refugee Families*

How is your school life going?  
What are the challenges you face at school?  
How are your child's friendships (who does your child play with the most, is he/she opens to communication, can he/she mixes with Turkish children?)  
What do you think your child needs most at school?  
What are your expectations from teachers in terms of your child's education?  
In your opinion, how is your child's communication with his/her teacher at the school he/she attends?

#### *Questions for Turkish Families*

How is your school life going?  
There are Syrian refugee children in your child's class; what are the difficulties you face at school in this context?  
How are your child's friendships (who does your child play with the most, is he/she opens to communication, can he/she mixes with foreign children?)  
What do you think your child needs most at school?  
What are your expectations from teachers in terms of your child's education?  
In your opinion, how is your child's communication with his/her teacher at the school he/she attends?