Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools (2023), **33**, 62–77
doi:10.1017/jgc.2021.22

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Comparison of levels of bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience among Syrian refugee students and Turkish students

Mehmet Akif Karaman

Department of Educational Sciences, Kilis 7 Aralık University, Kilis, Turkey
Corresponding author. Email: makaraman@gmail.com

(Received 13 July 2020; revised 10 August 2021; accepted 10 August 2021; first published online 10 September 2021)

Abstract

This study aimed to examine bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience levels of both Syrian refugee students and Turkish students at an Islamic religion-based high school for boys. The sample included 289 students. One hundred and forty-three (49.50%) of the participants were Syrian and 146 (50.50%) were Turkish students. The mean age of the participants was 16 years ($SD = 1.30$). This study found that the level of bullying among refugee students was higher, and the level of achievement motivation was lower than for Turkish students. However, there was not a significant difference with regard to resilience scores. In terms of grade level, 9th-grade students reported lower scores of bullying than 10th- and 12th-grade students. The results indicated that bullying, resilience, and the demographic information of nationality (Syrian and Turkish) were significant predictors of achievement motivation. In addition, the relationship of resilience with achievement motivation was the same strength for both groups when separately analysed. These findings may help school counsellors, teachers and administrators to raise awareness in schools about issues such as forced migration and refugee psychology, trauma and its effects, bullying, low motivation, and problems faced by refugee students in general.

Keywords: Achievement motivation; bullying; resilience; Syrian refugee students; Turkish students

The goal of this study is to examine the relationships among bullying, resilience, and achievement motivation in Syrian refugee students and Turkish high school students. The number of Syrian children and youth has increased in Turkish K–12 schools and colleges. Due to the migration process, culture shock, language barriers, poor economic conditions, and host culture's attitudes toward displaced people, refugee students face problems of low academic success, low level of motivation, absenteeism problems and bullying (Cerna, 2019; Demir, 2019; Karaman & Ricard, 2016).

The Current Situation of Syrian Refugee Students

Historically, Turkey has accepted immigrants and refugees from different countries, and it is currently hosting more Syrian refugees than any other country (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2019). Over the past 9 years, Turkey has opened its doors to more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2019), and over half of these refugees are under the age of 18.

Hosting such a large number of refugees has created serious pressure for some institutions in Turkey, including the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). According to a MoNE (2019) report, out of almost 1,050,000 school-aged refugee children, the number of children enrolled across preschool

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through to high school is 646,231. Therefore, only 61% of school-aged students are continuing their education.

Since most of the refugees reside in border cities, there is a higher density of refugee students in schools in these provinces. In fact, the number of refugee students in some classrooms and schools is higher than Turkish students. When schools with a high enrolment of refugee students are compared to schools with lower rates of enrolment of refugee students, it is observed that there are absenteeism problems, gang activities, decrease in academic success, and increase in bullying rates (Amaç & Yaşar, 2018; Demir, 2019; Yaşar et al., 2020; Yüce & Doğan, 2020). The MoNE has taken precautionary steps to address these situations (e.g., inclusive education), which also affect the adaptability of the students. Since 2016, inclusive education has been adopted, in which almost all refugee children were taken from temporary education centres established in camps and cities and included in the public schools with domestic students (Yaşar et al., 2020). In addition, the Project on Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Turkish Education System (PICTES) was launched within the framework of the agreement with the European Union (EU). Although all these efforts have demonstrated positive results, there are still many factors before and after migration, such as disruption of school or work (Earnest et al., 2015), moving multiple times (Weine, 2011), culture shock (Karaman & Ricard, 2016), and stigma and discrimination (Asıcı & Karaman, 2020) that affect the motivation, achievement, resilience and adaptation of Syrian refugee students.

Although there have been studies on Syrian refugees both internationally, and specifically in Turkey (e.g., Amaç & Yaşar, 2018; Chammay et al., 2013; Karaman & Ricard, 2016), the number of studies on refugee children is small, especially for Syrian refugee children and youth. This study was conducted in a border city where the Syrian refugee population density is higher than other cities and almost half of the student population in schools comprise Syrian refugee children. Teachers, parents and education administrators stated that Syrian refugee students need help with motivation, achievement, adaptation, language, and bullying (Asıcı & Karaman, 2020; Demir, 2019; Yaşar et al., 2020). Hence, this study aimed to examine achievement motivation, resilience, and bullying levels of both Syrian refugee students and Turkish students at an Islamic religion-based high school.

Bullying and Refugee Youth

As highlighted in the bullying literature (Asıcı, 2019; Ba et al., 2019; Caravita et al., 2016; Fandrem et al., 2009; Sparks, 2016) and recent reports (Cerna, 2019; Kilis Directorate of National Education, 2018), rates of bullying have increased across the world. Bullying has been defined in many ways by different researchers. Olweus (1993) described bullying as an expression of interpersonal power through aggression and violence. Pişkin (2002) defined bullying as a form of aggression where one or more students deliberately and constantly annoy students who are less powerful than themselves, and the victims are unable to protect themselves. In the literature, there is also a definition for ‘immigrant bullying’. Scherr and Larson (2010) defined bullying as ‘targeting another’s immigrant statues or family history of immigration in the form of taunts and slurs, derogatory references to the immigration process, physical aggression, social manipulation, or exclusion because of immigration status’ (p. 224).

Bullying can be observed in different types and levels of schools and in different grades (Sparks, 2016). For example, Ayas and Piskin (2011) found that 11th-grade students bully more than 9th-grade students. However, in another study, Lapidot-Lefler and Dolev-Cohen (2015) found that there was no difference in bullying scores among high school grade levels. It should not be ignored that both studies were conducted in different cultures. In this sense, considering that there has been little research of different cultures and classes with a high rate of Syrian refugee students, and especially at class levels, it is essential to address bullying according to grade level.

Bullying is a threat to the health of schools and wellbeing of children. Bullied children are at risk of social adjustment problems (Chan & Wong, 2017), internalised stress (Eşici, 2013; Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015), suicidal thoughts and mental health issues (Caravita et al., 2016; Rigby, 2005; Tanrikulu & Campbell, 2015). These problems can be even more difficult for displaced refugee students. For example, Demir (2019) interviewed Syrian refugee high school students and their teachers and found that Syrian refugee students were at increased risk of being bullied due to language barriers, cultural differences, and adults' political attitudes and prejudices. In addition, teachers stated that students' prejudice against each other caused ganging and friction between students. This caused Syrian refugee students in particular to experience social adjustment problems and stress. Therefore, some Syrian families did not want to send their children to schools because they thought their children would be exposed to bullying and have concerns with the Turkish classmates (Demir, 2019; Gencer, 2017).

In another study, Caravita et al. (2016) collected data from 598 Italian and 173 immigrant and refugee students. When the researchers examined rates of bullying, they found that immigrant and refugee children were subject to 6.5% more bullying than domestic students, and stated that anti-immigrant prejudice played an important role in this result. Both studies (Caravita et al., 2016; Demir, 2019) had in common that prejudices and cultural differences were factors that could trigger bullying. In both studies, the numbers of domestic students were higher than immigrant and refugee students. With the increase in the number of studies on Syrian refugee students in schools, different internal and external factors, which cause or trigger bullying, can be revealed.

Bullying affects individuals, families and schools, as well as the whole society (Al-Ali & Shattnawi, 2018). Moreover, bullying can affect refugee children and youth psychosocially more than their domestic peers. Bullying is a risk for social adjustment, stress and mental health. Therefore, any steps taken to prevent bullying in schools will improve not only refugee students' but also domestic students' motivation, achievement, and adjustment.

Resilience and Refugee Youth

Resilience is a topic that has been studied for many years and remains popular in the literature. Resilience is important because it describes how individuals overcome difficulties and stressful and negative life experiences, and remain standing (Demir & Aliyev, 2019; Masten & Reed, 2002). In the context of immigration, this concept is particularly relevant since refugees face major life changes, such as moving, living in a new culture, educational disruptions, and language barriers (Karaman & Ricard, 2016; Yaşar et al., 2020).

Researchers, institutions, government bodies and nonprofit organisations have been particularly interested in the resilience of refugees and immigrants both in Turkey and other countries (e.g., European Union, United States) because resilience is a protective factor for mental health and psychological concerns (Karaman & Ricard, 2016; Moore & Woodcock, 2017; Pieloch et al., 2016) and a facilitating factor for adaptation to society (Demir & Aliyev, 2019; Kızılkan, 2018; Yüce & Doğan, 2020). The most important sources of resilience for refugee children and their families are peer support and a sense of community (Pieloch et al., 2016).

Few studies have examined the resilience of refugee youth. One such study by Gez (2018) investigated the association between resilience and social support in Syrian children and adolescents in Turkey. The researcher found a moderate relationship between resilience and social support, stating that family support was a significant predictor of resilience. Moreover, participants' level of resilience was negatively affected by domestic and school violence. In another study with refugee youth, Moore and Woodcock (2017) found that resilience was a protective factor against depression and anxiety. In addition, students who had higher resilience were less engaged in bullying behaviours while students who had lower levels of resilience were more likely to be victims of bullying.

There are major stressors affecting refugee children and youth during premigration (e.g., loss of family, exposure to war), migration (e.g., disruption of school or work, living in migration camps), and postmigration (e.g., stigma and discrimination, culture shock; Pieloch et al., 2016). Children and youth develop different strategies to overcome these stressors. Sleijpen et al. (2017) found that refugee youth boosted resilience by (1) acting autonomously, (2) performing at school, (3) perceiving support from peers and parents, and (4) participating in the new society.

According to a report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018), one of the factors that differentiates the resilience level of immigrant and refugee children from domestic children is the age at which the student migrated or fled. The report indicated that if students migrated or fled at a younger age, their levels of resilience were significantly different than their domestic counterparts. These results show that children, who are the future of societies, should be taken into consideration and their needs should be met appropriately.

Achievement Motivation and Refugee Youth

The value of achievement and the meaning that people attribute to it varies culturally. This is mostly due to the different sources of motivation for people living in different cultures (Karaman et al., 2017). Achievement motivation is 'a personality disposition which compels individuals to fulfil their own internalised standards of excellence' (Lew et al., 1998, p. 98). The theory of achievement motivation, which was conceptualised by McClelland (1951), identified three distinct needs: (1) a need for achievement, (2) a need for affiliation, and (3) a need for power.

Achievement motivation is related to resilience (Arora, 2015), locus of control, life satisfaction (Karaman & Watson, 2017), hope (Herrero, 2014), and adaptation to school (Demir, 2019). Many refugee students come from less developed countries and their education is interrupted because of the migration process. This inevitably affects students' future expectations, relationship with society, and needs. However, if strategies and implications that increase achievement motivation can be implemented, performance of refugee students may result in higher academic achievement (Otey, 2015), school belonging (Demir, 2019; Ibañez et al., 2004), life satisfaction (Karaman & Watson, 2017), and resilience (Arora, 2015).

In a study of Central American refugee adolescents, Suarez-Orozco (1989) found that refugee children were more motivated to achieve than other ethnic groups because they saw educational achievement 'as the key route to economic and social success' (p. 1). However, this is not always the case. For example, in another study, Sohotte (2002) examined relocated Montserratian students' achievement motivation and educational success. The researcher found that students' level of achievement motivation was lower than before relocation because of in-school and out-of-school factors.

Acculturation is another important factor that affects achievement motivation levels of refugees and students from different ethnic backgrounds. For example, Chen (2019) found that the level of academic and achievement motivation in Chinese immigrant students who were acculturated was higher than their American peers. On the other hand, in another study, Urdan and Munoz (2011) found that Hispanic refugee children had lower success and motivation than Caucasians. The authors stated that cultural identity was associated with motivation. Therefore, an improved understanding of what factors predict and affect achievement motivation of refugee students can help researchers, educators and schools to boost psychological and social drivers of success.

Purpose of the Study

Based on the literature review, this is the first study to examine the relationships among bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience. There are several important reasons why this study included these variables. First, surprisingly, there is a lack of research examining how refugee children and youth's levels of bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience interact although there are increasing numbers of refugee and immigrant students in today's classrooms (Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services [BRYC], 2011). Second, one of the keys to success is achievement motivation (Karaman et al., 2020). Achievement motivation is a concept that can be measured and observed in thoughts and behaviours (Smith et al., 2020), based on McClelland's (1961) need for achievement theory. One of the objectives of education is to create successful and motivated individuals (Karadağ et al., 2015). This goal is essential and a right for every individual living in society. Bullying threatens school health, student achievement and social adjustment. At this point, it is important to understand the level at which the bullying behaviour of both domestic and refugee students affects their achievement motivation. Last, Syrian refugee students and their families have faced many difficulties in the process of forced migration, settling and adapting to Turkey, whether or not they were subjected to internal conflicts. It was hypothesised that these experiences had an impact not only on the levels of resilience of refugee students, but also on domestic students, since they witnessed the conflicts via media. Arora (2015) found a positive association between achievement motivation and resilience. In other words, when one of the variables increased, the other one increased as well. Therefore, the current study aimed to contribute to the current understanding of the associations among bullying, which is an expression of interpersonal power through aggression and violence, resilience, which defines individuals who overcome difficulties and stressful and negative life experiences, and achievement motivation in Syrian refugee students and Turkish high school students. The current study aimed to add new and scientific information to the literature to fill the gap and help practitioners in the field. The following research questions were addressed to better explain the purpose of the study:

1. Are there significant differences between Syrian refugee students' and Turkish high school students' levels of resilience, bullying, and achievement motivation?
2. Are there significant differences in rates of bullying of students in different grades?
3. Do resilience, bullying (victim and bully), and nationality (Turkish or Syrian) predict a significant percentage of the variance in achievement motivation among high school students?
4. Is there a difference in model fit between Syrian refugee students and Turkish high school students for the predictive model regressing resilience and bullying (victim and bully) on achievement motivation?

Methods

Procedures

The university Ethics Board and the Directory of National Education of the city approved this study, which was conducted in one of the Syrian border cities in the south of Turkey. Many Syrian refugees have immigrated to the city since the Syrian internal conflict began in 2011. Currently, the city is hosting more refugees in terms of population density compared to other provinces in Turkey. As a result, almost 40% of students enrolled in K–12 schools are Syrian refugees.

While the study was in the idea stage, a high school principal at a religion-based boys' high school contacted the researcher and asked for help with bullying and low academic achievement in his school. This contact prompted this study into the rates of bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience among the students at this school. The principal, school counsellor and a volunteer teacher who is also Syrian helped the researcher during the data collection. There were 720 enrolled students in the school (290 Syrian, 430 Turkish). Family meetings were conducted in the first week of April 2019 at the school, and families were informed about the study. A permission form in Arabic and Turkish languages was distributed, and participants who had parental consent were included in the study. Instruments were distributed to volunteer research participants. The data were collected in the first week of May 2019.

Participants

Participants in the study were from an all-boys' Islamic religion-based high school. There are important reasons this study involved high school students. First, all refugee students were born in Syria and experienced migration. They obtained their primary school diplomas in Syrian schools. Some 9th- and 10th-grade students also attended secondary school but could not finish it due to conflict and civil war. Adolescents experience migration differently than children and adults (Gez, 2018).

Developmentally, they are in puberty, and this time of life includes important bio-social changes. Hence, considering these changes and the effects of migration processes, high school years may be challenging academically, socially and emotionally for these students. Second, high school is the final station before college education, and most students and families try to make the most of this period to enter good schools. Therefore, the level of achievement motivation and resilience becomes more important. Last, educators who work with refugee students have observed high rates of aggressive behaviours and low levels of motivation and academic success.

An a priori power analysis using G*Power 3.0.10 (Faul et al., 2009) was used to calculate the minimum sample size needed. Using F tests as the test family for linear multiple regression, R^2 deviation from zero as the statistical test, a high level of power of 0.95 (Cohen, 1992), a medium effect size as $f^2 = 0.15$, and a .05 alpha level, the target sample size for this study was reported to be 119. The sample included 289 students. One hundred and forty-three (49.50%) of the participants were Syrian and 146 (50.50%) were Turkish students. The mean age of the participants was 16 years ($SD = 1.30$) with one participant failing to respond to the demographic query. Participants reported their grade levels as follows: 9th grade ($n = 90$, 31.1%), 10th grade ($n = 109$, 37.7%), 11th grade ($n = 63$, 21.8%), and 12th grade ($n = 25$, 8.7%). Two students did not respond to this demographic query. There was no difference between the age and grade level of the Syrian and Turkish boys.

Measures

A demographic form was designed to collect data related to participants' age, grade levels, family background and nationality. To measure students' achievement motivation, resilience and bullying, the Achievement Motivation Measure Turkish form (AMM; Karaman & Smith, 2019), Brief Resilience Scale Turkish form (BRS; Haktanir et al., 2016), and Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire Turkish form (B/VQ; Tıpırdamaz Sipahi & Karababa, 2018) were used.

Achievement Motivation Measure

The AMM was developed by Smith et al. (2020) and adapted and validated to Turkish by Karaman and Smith (2019). The instrument is a self-report measure estimating level of achievement motivation in 13 items across two factors, based on achievement behaviours and thoughts in the context of McClelland's (1961) high achieving individual. The AMM uses a 5-point, Likert-type response format with values ranging from 0 (*Never*) to 4 (*Always*). Smith et al. (2020) reported a moderate Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .82 for the original AMM. Karaman and Smith (2020) reported a similar score of Cronbach alpha coefficient, .83. For the current study the Cronbach's alpha coefficient score was .78. Since the AMM was developed for individuals above 18 years old, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to confirm that the instrument was suitable for use with the study's data. The CFA results revealed that the two-factor, 13-item model had an acceptable fit with the data; $\chi^2(62) = 111.26$, $p < .01$, $\chi^2/df = 1.79$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .90, goodness of fit index (GFI) = .94, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .05, 90% CI [.04, .07], and standardised root mean squared residual (SRMR) = .05.

Revised Olweus Bully/Victim questionnaire

The revised B/VQ was developed by Olweus (1996) and translated and validated in Turkish by Tıpırdamaz-Sipahi and Karababa (2018). The self-report questionnaire measures students' experiences of bullying and victimization. The questionnaire consists of 39 questions and two factors. In this study, a 16-item senior-classes subscale was used. The B/VQ uses a 5-point, Likert-type response with values ranging from 1 (*This has not happened to me in recent months*) to 5 (*Happened several times a week*). Previous studies (Sacco, 2002) showed that the B/VQ had a moderate reliability score of .80. Tıpırdamaz-Sipahi and Karababa (2018) reported a similar score with Cronbach's alpha of .81. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient score was .79.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, VIF, and bivariate correlations for scores among scales used as predictor and criterion variables ($N = 286$)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	VIF
1. AMO	*	.32*	.07	−.10	.17*	–
2. Resilience		*	.20*	.08	.02	1.05
3. Victim			*	.72*	−.14**	2.20
4. Bully				*	−.22*	2.19
5. Nationality					*	1.05
M	31.09	18.27	20.64	20.99		–
SD	8.01	3.53	6.41	6.92		–
α	.78	.73	.75	.79		–

Note: VIF, variance inflation factors; AMO, Achievement motivation.
*$p < .01$, **$p < .05$

Brief Resilience Scale

Smith et al. (2008) developed the original BRS to measure an individual's ability to overcome difficult situations. The BRS was translated and validated in Turkish by Haktanir and his colleagues in 2016. This 5-point, Likert-type assessment yields a single scale score based on participant responses that range from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*. The scale consists of six items, and possible scores range from 6 to 30, with higher scores indicative of a greater perception of resilience. Smith et al. reported internal consistency estimates ranging from .80 to .91. Haktanir et al. (2016) reported an alpha coefficient of .80 for the BRS among first-year college students. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .73.

Preliminary Analyses

First, descriptive statistics and alpha coefficients were computed for each instrument used in the study (see Table 1). Next, the assumptions of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and multiple linear regression models were tested. To assess the assumption of normality, box plots were inspected and a Shapiro-Wilk goodness-of-fit test was computed and its results interpreted. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality ($W < 0.01$) indicated the data was not normally distributed for all measures. However, box plots showed that the data was normally distributed. In addition, the skewness values were analysed for each variable (Victim = −.44, Bully = −.54, Resilience = .31, Achievement motivation = .40) and the values were considered acceptable to prove normality (Beaver, 2012). To assess the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity, standardised residual plots were inspected. To assess for multicollinearity, bivariate correlations and variance inflation factors (VIF) were examined (see Table 1). The results of these preliminary analyses indicated no evidence suggesting these assumptions had been violated.

Results

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to answer research question 1. The analysis examined the effect of nationality (Turkish or Syrian) on levels of achievement motivation, bullying (victim and bully), and resilience. An alpha level of .05 was utilised. Assumption for homogeneity of covariance (Box's $M = 54.22$, $p < .001$) was not met. Therefore, Pillai's trace was reported instead of Wilks' lambda since it was more robust than the other statistics to violations of model assumptions (Olson, 1974). A statistically significant effect was identified between nationality and the four dependent variables,

Table 2. Predictors of achievement motivation

	Model 1		Model 2	
Variable	*B*	95% CI	*B*	95% CI
Constant	19.73**	[14.63, 24.83]	18.05**	[12.82, 23.26]
Resilience	.70**	[.44, .95]	.69**	[.43, .93]
Victim	.25*	[.05, .45]	.24*	[.05, .44]
Bully	−.31**	[-.49,.-13]	−.27*	[-.45, −.09]
Nationality			2.27*	[.51, 4.03]
R^2	.14**		.16*	
ΔR^2	.13**		.15*	

Note: $N = 289$. CI = confidence interval.
$^*p < .05$. $^{**}p < .001$

Pillai's $V = .074$, $F(4, 284) = 5.64$, $p < .001$. Approximately 7% of the variance in the model was accounted for in the combined dependent variables across nationality, yielding a small effect.

Between-subjects' effects were inspected and it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between groups in terms of achievement motivation, victim and bully variables. However, there was not a significant difference based on resilience scores. Based upon these results, estimated marginal means were reviewed (see Table 2), and it was found that while Turkish students had higher achievement motivation scores than Syrian refugee students, Syrian refugee students had higher bully and victim scores than Turkish students.

To answer research question 2, another one-way MANOVA was conducted. The analysis examined the effect of grade levels (9th through 12th) on levels of bullying (victim and bully). Assumption of homogeneity of covariance (Box's $M = 13.92$, $p = .135$) was met. A statistically significant effect was identified between grades and the two dependent variables, Wilks' $\lambda = .943$, $F(6{,}564) = 2.78$, $p < .05$. Approximately 6% of the variance in the model was accounted for in the combined dependent variables across grades, yielding a small effect. A Tukey post hoc analysis was conducted to determine how the grade-level differences were manifested across the dependent variables. In terms of the victim variable, the results indicated that 10th-grade students had higher scores than 9th-grade students ($M_{\text{difference}} = 2.63$, $p = .002$). In the bully variable, 9th-grade students had lower scores than 10th-grade ($M_{\text{difference}} = -3.46$, $p = .002$) and 12th-grade students ($M_{\text{difference}} = -4.41$, $p = .022$).

A two-step hierarchical multiple regression was conducted on achievement motivation scores based on resilience, bullying (victim/bully), and nationality (see Table 2) to answer research question 3. When the criterion factors were inspected, two categories emerged, psychological (resilience and bullying) and identity (nationality). Therefore, in the first step, resilience, bully and victim were added to the model as predictor variables, with achievement motivation as the criterion. In the first model, the predictor variables explained a significant portion of the variance in high school student achievement motivation, $F(3, 285) = 15.71$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .142$ ($\Delta R^2 = .133$). Nearly 86% of the predicted model was accounted for by resilience, $rs = .86$. In the final step, nationality was added to the model as a predictor variable to determine the extent to which identity improved the prediction of achievement motivation. The linear combination of these four predictor variables explained a significant portion of the variance in high school student achievement motivation, $F(4, 284) = 13.63$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .161$ ($\Delta R^2 = .149$).

Following Cohen's (1992) recommendation that unique contributions to the overall variance of a model are indicated by ΔR^2 values $\geq .02$, the computed ΔR^2 value of .017 in this study indicates that the nationality variable is not a significant contributor of high school student achievement motivation. A post hoc power analysis indicated that power was sufficient for this study, $1\text{-}\beta > .95$; and, given the sample size of $n = 289$, statistical significance was detected for medium effect sizes, $f^2 = .15$.

Table 3. Summary statistics, correlations and multiple regression weights from Turkish and Syrian refugee students

	Turkish students (*N* = 146)					Syrian refugee students (*N* = 143)				
Variable	*M*	*SD*	*r* with AMO	B	β	*M*	*SD*	*r* with AMO	B	β
AMO	32.41	7.86				29.73	7.96			
Resilience	18.34	3.61	.34**	.76*	.35	18.19	3.46	.32*	.51*	.22
Victim	19.74	7.50	−.05	.09	.09	21.57	4.92	.32*	.54*	.33
Bully	19.42	8.06	−.13	−.24**	−.24	22.60	5.05	.05	−.23	−.15
Constant				21.20*					13.82*	

Note: AMO, Achievement motivation.
$^{**}p < .05$, $^{*}p < .01$

To address the final research question, a series of simultaneous multiple regression analyses were run to examine the relationships between achievement motivation, resilience, bullying (victim/bully), and nationality and compare the models derived from Turkish high school students and Syrian refugee high school students. Table 3 shows the univariate statistics, correlations of each variable with achievement motivation, and the multiple regression beta weights for each of the two student groups. For Turkish students this model had an $R^2 = .15$, $F(3, 142) = 8.19$, $p < .001$, with resilience and bullying having significant regression weights and resilience seeming to have the major contribution ($\beta = .76$). For Syrian refugee students this model had an $R^2 = .17$, $F(3, 139) = 9.63$, $p < .001$, with victim and resilience having significant regression weights, and victim seeming to have the major contribution ($\beta = .54$). Comparison of the fit of the model (resilience and achievement motivation) from Turkish and Syrian students revealed that there was no significant difference between the correlation values, $Z = -.198$, $p = .42$.

Discussion

It was hypothesised that there would be significant differences between Syrian refugee students' and Turkish high school students' levels of resilience, bullying, and achievement motivation. Moreover, it was hypothesised that there would be significant differences in rates of bullying of students in different grades. Another hypothesis was that resilience, bullying (victim and bully), and nationality (Turkish or Syrian) would predict a significant percentage of the variance in achievement motivation among high school students; and when two regression models were created for each nationality, there would be a difference model fit between Syrian refugee students and Turkish high school students.

The current study found that while Turkish students had higher achievement motivation scores than Syrian refugee students, Syrian refugee students had higher bully and victim scores than Turkish students. This finding was not a surprise because Caravita et al. (2016) also found that immigrant and refugee students were more often the victim of bullying when compared to their Italian counterparts. Moreover, in another study, Fandrem et al. (2009) reported that there was a strong association between affiliation-related aggressiveness and bullying towards others among immigrant boys in Norway. These findings supported the current study's result and school administrations' and teachers' observations. Demir (2019) conducted a qualitative study at the school where the current study conducted and reported that Syrian refugee students had more aggressive behaviours toward their Syrian friends. When teachers talked with Syrian refugee students about bullying behaviour, students stated they were not bullying; rather, they were joking with each other.

In terms of achievement motivation, Turkish students had higher achievement motivation than Syrian refugee students. This finding was consistent with the previous studies. For example, Sohotte (2002) also reported that Montserratian refugee students' achievement motivation significantly decreased after resettlement to the United Kingdom. In the current study, the students' biggest problem was the language (Biçer & Alan, 2017, 2020; Karaman & Ricard, 2016). The Syrian refugee students' native language is Arabic and the official education language is Turkish. Most of the students stated they had difficulty understanding the courses (Demir, 2019). This may cause students to lose their motivation, resulting in low academic achievement.

Another important finding was the significant differences in bullying scores of students in different grades. The results showed that 10th-grade students were more often the victim of bullying compared to 9th-grade students, and 9th-grade students had lower scores on the bully scale than 10th- and 12th-grade students. In the literature there is no consistency in terms of bullying based on grade levels. For example, Öztürk et al. (2014) investigated bullying cases and found that there were no significant differences with respect to grade levels. On the other hand, Sparks (2016) stated that higher grades were bullied less than lower grades since higher grades took leadership positions and gained social power. In parallel with Sparks (2016), Ayas and Piskin (2011) also found that 11th-grade students bully more than 9th-grade students. Hence, if the findings of the current study are evaluated within its own conditions, one possible reason could be the time spent at the school. For instance, 9th graders were freshman and new to the school. The first year of school is a period when students get to know each other and adapt to school. This transition period is usually expressed as a time in which the students are calmer and get to know the school (Urdan & Munoz, 2011). In addition, considered developmentally, the 9th-grade students are in the early stage of adolescence, while the higher grades are in a later stage. In the current study, all participants were male and masculine traits were more likely to occur in adolescence in the higher grades (Murshid, 2018). Moreover, studies conducted with girls and boys also showed that male students had higher levels of bullying than females (Ayas & Piskin, 2011; Urdan & Munoz, 2011). Vaillancourt et al. (2009) stated that bullied boys produced more testosterone than their nonbullied peers. Therefore, another reason for higher bullying scores could be masculine behaviours in 10th- and 12th-grade students.

The current study also showed that resilience, bullying, and nationality were significant predictors of achievement motivation, explaining an overall 11% of variance. In the second model, nationality had the strongest relationship with achievement motivation, and resilience had the second strongest relationship. This means that achievement motivation was related to both psychological and identity variables. Research (Karaman et al., 2017; Karaman & Watson, 2017; Trumbull & Rothstein-Fisch, 2011; Verkuyten et al., 2001) has shown that the level of achievement motivation changes from culture to culture. This may be a reason affecting the achievement motivation of Syrian refugee students and Turkish students. In another study, Arora (2015) reported that there was a positive and significant relationship between resilience and achievement motivation, and achievement motivation was a predictor of resilience. Resilience is basically the power of self-recovery. If students can increase their levels of resilience, they may also increase their level of achievement motivation.

The focus on achievement motivation and its predictors may result in an understanding of personality and cultural differences between Syrian refugee students and Turkish students. The results of this study indicated that while resilience, bullying, and victimisation were significant predictors of achievement motivation for Syrian refugee students, only resilience and bullying were significant predictors for Turkish students. In addition, to know whether resilience works equally effectively for Turkish and Syrian refugee students, the relationships between variables were compared (bullying was not included since it was not a significant predictor of achievement motivation for both groups). The results indicated that there was no statistical difference between the Syrian and Turkish students' regression models. A possible explanation of this could be that while Syrian students experienced the migration and settlement process, Turkish students also observed this process, experienced refugee issues (e.g., kinship was established through marriages, some started businesses together, rented their houses, and celebrated same religious days) and witnessed when their city was bombed by the terrorists on the other side of the border in 2016 and 2018. Therefore, it is possible that Turkish students' and Syrian refugee students' regression models did not differentiate.

Understanding how refugee students' and host culture students' identical belongings and psychological factors affect their achievement motivation may help policy makers, educators, school counsellors, and families to establish a secure school climate. Using the findings of the current study, stakeholders can make changes to curriculums based on inclusive education, target areas of achievement motivation to increase academic success, and develop resilience-based activities to improve school climate and consolidate friendships and social relationships among students. As a result, students' academic success, level of adjustment, and cultural awareness may increase.

It is possible that one of the reasons for the prevalence of bullying among Syrian students is the inability to understand what bullying is. As noted by Demir (2019), students refer to bullying behaviour as 'joking with each other'. Therefore, students and their families should be taught what bullying is by organising psychoeducation meetings. Finally, resilience was an important factor for both groups and had significantly triggered the achievement motivation. Although there are different alternatives to increasing resilience, positive youth development (PYD) models used in different cultures and school levels for many years can be useful. These programs, based on the resilience model, can be developed both to deal with bullying and to increase the achievement motivation.

Implications for School Counsellors

Multicultural approaches in counselling have been conducted in the United States for a long time. However, it is not possible to say the same thing for Turkey. When the literature was reviewed, it was found that there is a very small number of practices and research on multicultural approaches in Turkey. This situation started to change after more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees fled to the country. Two big projects — UNICEF's Inclusive Education and PICTES — included school counsellors and aimed to improve their multicultural skills.

First, not only school counsellors in Turkey, but also school counsellors in other countries hosting refugees need to understand what it means to be a refugee, the problems of refugee students, and why it is important to continue education for refugee children. Many refugee students hardly speak the host country's language (Biçer & Alan, 2017). Therefore, when school counsellors meet with a refugee student, they should be aware of language barriers. If school counsellors have difficulties communicating with students or their families, they should contact a translator. There are bilingual teachers in the schools with a high refugee student population, and counsellors can get their help as well.

School counsellors may reinforce rapprochement and friendship between students through activities in weekly class visits. In addition, nature-based activities (see Kilburn, 2012) may help students to collaborate and consolidate a sense of unity. For example, school trips are an important opportunity to make this happen. Seminars and workshops related to careers and universities can increase students' achievement motivation. If students hold on to a purpose they can imagine, they will participate more often in purposeful activities and tend to show achievement in their classes.

School counsellors can provide advice to teachers in schools on the issues faced by refugee students, such as forced migration and refugee psychology, trauma and its effects, and other problems (Chammay et al., 2013). The duties of teachers related to refugee students are not only to assist their learning process but also to protect them from bullying, increase their motivation, listen to their problems, find solutions for their personal problems, and guide them in and out of school (Yaşar et al., 2020). Hence, school counsellors should have more information about students by collaborating with teachers. School counsellors' efforts may help refugee students to be motivated, resilient and successful.

As stated in the discussion, PYD models can be useful for reducing bullying and increasing resilience. PYD approaches and models based on developmental or ecological systems address the individual in a contextual relationship in the familial network, school and community layers in which they are intertwined (Lerner & Lerner, 2013). These models have been used in other countries and cultures for many years (e.g., Lerner & Lerner, 2013; Weiss et al., 2013), but there is a limited number of resources for Turkish school counsellors to access information about these models. In this sense, a PYD model can be developed for schools with a high concentration of refugee students, enabling both

Turkish school counsellors and counsellors in other countries to benefit. For example, the 4-H model could be adapted for this purpose; 4-H represents (1) Head, (2) Heart, (3) Hands, and (4) Health (Arnold & Silliman, 2017). 4-H programs teach young people the importance of adding value to society, their country and the world with a sense of duty; the model refers to the system of values as a roof. 4-H programs are collected by targeting PYD pedestals (e.g., bonds with caregivers, self-managed project studies, leadership for young people; Arnold &Silliman, 2017). Both Turkish school counsellors and school counsellors in other countries could adapt these approaches based on their school and community needs.

Limitations

The present study may have been influenced by several factors. First, the participants were from only one school in a city bordering Syria, and all of them were male. However, most of the previous studies have involved both males and females. Therefore, the results of this study can be generalised only to Syrian refugee students and Turkish students who study in Islamic religion-based high schools. Second, in addition to the data being collected at one school, this school had already recognised bullying and achievement motivation as issues. Another limitation could be related to the low reliability score of the BRS. The instrument was selected since it had widespread use in the field of resilience research. It was found that item 1 (‘I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times’) had a low coefficient. A second analysis was run without item 1 and the results did not change significantly. As a result, the analyses were run with the six-item BRS. Last, demographic information except for nationality was not included in analyses. However, it is possible that some demographic data could help interpret the results. Hence, it may have prevented more inferences from the results.

Recommendations for Future Studies

As the refugee population in the world is increasing year by year, more studies are needed to understand the factors affecting psychological, social, educational and economic developments in the societies where they live. The following suggestions were obtained from the findings of the current study and may shed light on future studies. First, the current study was conducted in an Islamic religion-based boys’ high school, which included high numbers of Syrian refugee students compared to other schools in the city. A different study including both female and male Syrian refugee students and Turkish students would help better understand the nature of bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience with regard to gender differences.

Second, this study was one of the first studies that predicted the achievement motivation level of refugee and domestic high school students with the variables of resilience and bullying. Other studies might use different variables such as grit and familial factors to predict achievement motivation. Third, researchers from other countries and cultures could contribute to the literature by repeating this study with students from different ethnicities and backgrounds. If comparative studies are repeated with larger and different groups, it may be easier to understand whether the results are persistent or changeable. In addition, students in different grades were compared based on the bullying scores, and there were significant results among 9th, 10th and 12th graders. Since there are different findings on this in the literature, it may be useful for future research to make such comparisons taking into account developmental periods. Although Turkish and Syrian students share similar geographies, beliefs and some cultural elements, their perspectives on life may be different. At this point, focusing on studies where these differences can be identified can be useful in understanding the needs of Syrian refugee students both in Turkey and in different countries. Especially the disasters affecting humanity such as COVID-19 could be examined by taking into account the distance education opportunities of refugee students, communication problems in the process, and the economic situation of families.

Acknowledgments. None.

Financial support. This research received no specific grant from any funding agency, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflicts of interest. None.

Author note. Mehmet Akif Karaman was a faculty member at Department of Educational Science in the Kilis 7 Aralık University when the article was submitted, and is now at the Liberal Arts Department in American University of the Middle East, Kuwait.

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Cite this article: Karaman MA (2023). Comparison of levels of bullying, achievement motivation, and resilience among Syrian refugee students and Turkish students. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools* **33**, 62–77. https://doi.org/10.1017/jgc.2021.22