

Recognizing the value of Kindergarten by refugee parents and developing forms of collaboration with teachers working in Kindergartens of Reception and Identification Centers

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Abstract

The present paper, which utilizes theoretical models and typologies to determine the frameworks of school-family collaboration, aims, on the one hand, at investigating the recognition of the value that the Kindergarten employs by refugee parents as well as the work provided by teachers to their children and, on the other hand, highlighting the forms of cooperation developed between refugee parents and teachers working in the Kindergartens of Reception and Identification Centers in 5 islands of the Eastern Aegean. The research was conducted in September 2019 using a semi-structured interview, involving 9 students of the Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education of the University of Patras in the context of the Research Project entitled: "Early Childhood Program II– Creative Employment Program in the Aegean Islands". The research also includes thirteen refugee parents (ten mothers and three fathers) who originate mainly from Afghanistan. The research results showed that refugee parents recognize the multiple benefits that Kindergarten offers to the cognitive and psychosocial development of their children, and they appreciate the work provided by teachers working in the Kindergartens of Reception and Identification Centers. Furthermore, forms of cooperation between refugee parents and teachers are formulated with reference to the child focusing on the development of his/her various skills in the context of the educational process.

Keywords: Refugees; Cooperation; Kindergarten; Reception and Identification Centers

1. Introduction

The socio-political and economic changes that have taken place since the 1990s have contributed to the gradual transformation of Greece from a sending country to a host country of refugee/migrant populations through their influx of countries experiencing socio-political and economic problems, such as Afghanistan and Syria (Baldwin-Edwards, 2004; Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2005; Papanikolaou, 2009).

The 'refugee issue' has been central to the 'sphere' of Greek and European public dialogue since the beginning of 2015, culminating in the period August 2015-March 2016. Refugee flows to the Mediterranean, heading to Greece and Italy, have seen a significant increase since summer 2015. At this time, the bulk of the refugees¹ were directed from Turkey to Greece through the islands of the Eastern Aegean. In particular, according to official data of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 817,175 people crossed the Greek-Turkish border in the

Aegean during 2015-2016 (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017).

With the closure of the borders and the European Union-Turkey Agreement in March 2016, around 60.000 refugees were trapped in Greece. At the same time, it raised the demand for thousands of refugees to move to northern Europe, which, in turn, led to the strategic management and deployment of this population in permanent structures. Following the European Union-Turkey Agreement, the number of refugees stabilized at around 60.000 and was maintained until February 2017. Since then, this number has been declining due to the intensification of family reunification and relocation rates in other countries. However, European countries' reluctance to implement part of the agreement on the relocation of large numbers of refugees from Greece and Italy has exacerbated their sense of being trapped (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017).

Furthermore, following the conclusion of the agreement between the European Union and Turkey in March 2016, a peculiar status was formed, which made the stay of refugees in the Eastern Aegean islands compulsory. As a result, the refugee population of the islands has almost quadrupled between March and October 2016. The largest number of refugees was found in Lesbos and Chios. Since May 2016, there has been a significant increase in the number of refugees in Samos and Kos (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017).

The basic structures of the islands, mainly in Moria of Mytilene and in Souda and Vial of Chios, were and are problematic. Moreover, the conditions on these islands are extremely difficult, which is still the case today. However, this does not seem to be the case with the open hospitality structure set up relatively early by the Municipality of Lesbos, the "Kara Tepe" Hosting Center, as it is one of the best conditions and management of camps in the country (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), responsible for assisting States in responding to refugee crises and providing assistance to refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, advocates for refugee education as a right in the context of the 1951 Convention. The 'agenda' for the protection of refugee children, and therefore the Action Plan of the Administrative Commission in October 2002, underlines the importance of education as a 'protection tool' for these children (UNHCR, 2003, 2011).

In particular, it is argued that the provision of education promotes the overall development of the child's personality but also the right to play and create through participation in cultural activities. In addition, education helps build the child's self-esteem and self-determination, and lays the foundations for social cohesion by building healthy social development environments for themselves (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2019; UNHCR, 2003, 2011).

In addition, education is a key 'pillar' of escape in difficult socio-economic and political situations, such as that experienced by refugee families in their countries of origin. Providing education is considered extremely important because it provides an opportunity for children and their families to begin the process of 'healing' wounds and to develop their skills and abilities to maintain a balanced and harmonious framework of coexistence in structures where they are hosted (Sinclair, 2001).

In the context of Greek social reality, the right to education, as a fundamental human right, is respected and promoted by the Greek state. Under European and national law, every child and, in particular, every refugee child has the right to education. Ensuring the right of newcomers in the country refugee children to education since the beginning of 2016 has been a key issue for the Ministry of Education (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017).

Refugees are not a homogeneous group, as they include people of different nationalities with different socio-cultural characteristics, as well as different educational and economic capital. The living conditions of refugees vary considerably depending on the Hosting Center and the region in which they were found. Within this constantly changing environment, the Ministry of Education undertook, in March 2016, to formulate a plan for the integration of refugee children in education in order to contribute to their wider social integration (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017).

The Institute of Education Policy supports the design of the Ministry of Education, which aims at the educational integration of refugee children, taking into account the particular context of the current refugee crisis which, in turn, reflects the particular educational needs of these children. In particular, refugee children have been out of school for a long time after being forcibly removed from their country of origin. The majority of refugees remain in accommodation centers. So, the prospect of relocating to another country is a major demand for most of them (IEP, 2016).

The gradual restoration of a sense of security and stability, elements that contribute to the development of children, is a major concern of the Greek state for refugee children. Basic security issues and developmental needs make clear the reasons why attending Kindergartens within the accommodation centers is considered to be the optimal transitional solution for preschool children (IEP, 2016).

In particular, in the absence of classrooms in the school districts close to the accommodation centers, a large number of children would be forced to move daily to and from school buildings, more or less over long distances, which is particularly detrimental to the physical health of children. In addition, the attendance of children in Kindergartens scattered around the accommodation centers would make it difficult and/or inhibit the ability of mothers to participate in their children's activities, even having a mediator role. This is important for the development and educational integration of young children, given that direct cooperation between parents and teachers, on the one hand, fosters a climate of mutual trust and, on the other hand, enhances children's sense of security and accelerates their learning rate (IEP, 2016).

In the context of the review of the scientific literature, it is found that the research interest in the relationship and cooperation developed between the school and the families of different socio-cultural environments focuses mainly on: a) the impact of parents' ambitions/expectations and the cooperation they develop with teachers on their children's learning path (see: Levine-Rasky, 2009; Li, 2004; McClure & Walker, 2000; Rätty, 2006; Toldson & Lemmons, 2013). And b) socio-economic and cultural factors that influence parent-teacher cooperation (see: Keyes, 2002; Sandberg & Vorinen, 2008; Symeou, 2002, 2007).

The present paper seeks to contribute to scientific literature by investigating the recognition of the value that the Kindergarten hires by refugee parents and the work provided by teachers to their children, as well as by highlighting the forms of cooperation developed between refugee parents and teachers employed in the Kindergartens of Reception and Identification Centers in 5 islands of the Eastern Aegean.

The paper begins with the literature review on the effects of school-family collaboration on students, parents and teachers, followed by the presentation of widely used theoretical models and typologies of school-family collaboration. There follow the research questions and the methodology, and, next, the results are presented and analyzed. The study closes with the section of the discussion and conclusions.

2. Effects of developing school-family collaboration on students, parents and teachers

In recent years, there has been a strong research interest in issues related to school-family collaboration, and attempts to introduce theoretical models and typologies to highlight the positive effects of collaboration between the two stakeholders on children's psychosocial and physical development as well as their learning path (Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Symeou, 2003).

The harmonious frameworks of cooperation between school and family tend to have a positive impact on the triptych: pupils, parents and teachers. In particular, cooperation between parents and teachers tends to alleviate the mutual prejudices they may have regarding their role in the educational process, but also to provide a reciprocal framework for understanding their expectations for the benefit of the students' educational path (Chan, 2012; Georgiou, 2000; Mylonakou-Keke, 2009).

It also seems that cooperation between school and family encourages the child to develop positive attitudes and dispositions regarding the learning process, as well as to help improve his/her self-image, classroom behavior and school performance (Epstein, 1995, 2001; Lewis, Kim & Bey, 2011; Symeou, 2003). Developing a harmonious framework of cooperation seems to improve the attitude parents take toward school by positively evaluating the work that teachers provide for the benefit of children's learning. On the other hand, teachers have the opportunity to get to know the culture of the family better, but also to show respect and understanding to the beliefs and values held by parents (Lewis et al., 2011; Symeou, 2003; Terrén & Carrasco, 2007).

The review of scientific literature identifies theoretical models and typologies that appear to differentiate the framework of school-family collaboration, such as Joyce Epstein's spherical model or overlapping spheres of influence model (1995, 2001) and Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem model (1979).

3. Models and Typologies of School-Family Collaboration

3.1 Joyce Epstein's spherical model or overlapping spheres of influence model

According to Epstein's model (1995, 2001), there are three overlapping spheres of influence: the family, the school and the community, which are in constant interaction. The child is placed at their intersection point. Above these spheres are forces that influence the distance that distinguishes one from the other, such as the attitudes of teachers to issues of parental involvement in the educational process. This model focuses on the need to develop school, family and community partnerships with a focus on child development as a whole, and on improving their school performance (Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, Jansorn & Van Voorhis, 2002; Georgiou, 2000).

According to Epstein's typology, there are six types of parental involvement that can effectively contribute to shaping school-family collaboration. These are, in particular, the following types of engagement: (a) parental responsibility; (b) communication with the family; (c) voluntary participation of parents in school activities; (d) parental involvement in home-learning activities; (e) involvement of parents in decision-making regarding education; and (f) development of cooperation with the community (Epstein et al., 2002; Lewis et al., 2011; Symeou, 2003).

3.2 Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem model

According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecosystem model, school and family are considered parts of the same system exhibiting interactions and interdependencies. To engage in child development needs (itself) to be studied as part of the wider environment in which it develops and interacts. The individual is channeled into different contexts-systems throughout his life from which he experiences and exerts influence. All humans are part of a subsystem that includes many smaller subsystems. This model is composed of concentric circles, with the largest circle comprising the *macrosystem*, that is, all people, and the smallest circle comprising the person. Between these two cycles there are other cycles that contain the *micro-system*, the *meso-system* and the *extracellular* system (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Georgiou, 2000; Ryan, 2001).

In particular, the *microsystem* includes structures and frameworks with which the child interacts, such as family, friends and school. The relationships that are formed, are directed to and from the child. For example, parents can influence the child's belief system. Accordingly, the child may also influence his/her parents' beliefs. Strengthening the interactions between the structures of these systems contributes to the proper development of the child. The *mesosystem* includes the links between the structures of two or more microsystems of the child, such as the relationships that are formed between the teacher and the student's parents. The *extracellular* system contains frames and structures where the child does not come into direct contact; however, its development is affected, as it is associated with some structure in its microsystem. Finally, the *macrosystem* contains structures and frames that are considered more distant from the child. It refers to cultural values and norms that tend to influence parents about how to educate their child (Georgiou, 2000; Ryan, 2001).

4. Research questions – Methodology

This paper deals with the answer to the following two research questions:

- What is the recognition of the value of the Kindergarten by the refugee parents, as well as the work provided by the teachers to their children attending the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers?
- What are the forms of cooperation between the parents of refugee children coming to the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers and the teachers working with them?

The research was conducted in September 2019 using the semi-structured interview and included 9 students of the Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education of the University of Patras. It is noted that these students participated in the Research Project entitled: "Early Childhood Program II - Creative Employment Program in the Aegean Islands" and worked in Kindergartens of Reception and Identification Centers in 5 islands of the Eastern Aegean (Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos), aiming at the creative employment of refugee children.

Regarding the year of study of the research participants, one student completed the 2nd year of postgraduate studies, six students completed the 4th year of undergraduate studies, one student completed the 3rd year of undergraduate studies and one student completed the 2nd year of undergraduate studies. Regarding the English language level of the students, participated in the research, two students have Lower, six students have Proficiency and one student has English language teaching proficiency.

The research also includes thirteen refugee parents (ten mothers and three fathers) who originate mainly from Afghanistan. During a one-day meeting which took place in the Kindergarten of the Reception and Identification Center in Samos and organized with the permission of the administration of Samos in September 2019, the refugee parents were asked, in the presence of an interpreter and one of the two researchers of the present study, to express their views about what the Kindergarten can offer to their children and whether they think it is important for their children to attend it. Moreover, the refugee parents were asked to express their views about the work provided by the teachers employed in the Kindergarten of the Reception and Identification Center in Samos.

For the conduction of this research, we developed an appropriate schedule of semi-structured interview questions divided into thematic areas (Bell, 2005; Creswell, 2016; Iosifides, 2003), which include: (a) the description of the composition of the population and the conditions prevailing in the Reception and Identification Centers where the refugee families reside; (b) outlining the social characteristics of refugee children coming to Kindergartens where students are employed; and (c) the cooperation that students develop with parents of children attending Kindergarten: (c.1) The recognition of the value of the Kindergarten by the parents of the refugee children and the work provided by the teachers working in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers; (c.2) Forms of cooperation developed by students with parents of children attending Kindergarten.

In the context of the interview process, the answers of the students who worked in Kindergartens of Reception and Identification Centers in 5 islands of the Eastern Aegean were tape recorded having their prior consent. The answers of the refugee parents transcribed in detail and they were translated into English language by the interpreter who was present with one of the two researchers during the one-day meeting which took place in the Kindergarten of the Reception and Identification Center in Samos (Robson, 2007). We then transcribed the interviews and utilized the qualitative content analysis technique to analyze the data obtained from conducting the research using the semi-structured interview and taking the 'theme' as a unit of analysis (Creswell, 2016; Krippendorff, 2004).

5. Presentation and Analysis of the Results

The presentation of the research findings, referring to the qualitative analysis of the research material resulting from the decoding of the semi-structured interview data, is based on the axes identified above.

5.1 Description of the composition of the population and the conditions in the Reception and Identification Centers where the refugee families reside

According to official data of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for 2019, the distribution of the population of refugees who entered the following 5 islands of the Eastern Aegean is as follows: Lesvos: 13.137, Chios: 3.464, Samos: 5.325, Leros: 2.196 and Kos: 3.898. Moreover, refugee arrivals by sea reach 29.709, refugee land arrivals reach 8.889, while total refugee arrivals reach 38.598 (Mediterranean Situation – Situations – UNHCR, 2019).

The percentage distribution of the countries of origin of the refugees who entered the Greek state by sea is as follows: 38.8% (9.935 people) of refugees come from Afghanistan, 20.6% (5.260 people) come from Syria, 9.5% (2.422 people) come from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 7.8% (1.989 people) come from Iraq, 6.6% (1.687 people) come from Palestine, 1.9% (483 people) come from Iran, 0.3% (70 people) come from Kuwait, 0.2% (53 people) come from Pakistan, 0.1% (18 people) come from Algeria, while 14.4% (3.673 people) of refugees come from other countries not geographically defined (Mediterranean Situation – Situations – UNHCR, 2019).

According to interviewees, conditions in the Reception and Identification Centers, where refugee families reside, are difficult, either less or more per island, as far as their accommodation and sanitation are concerned. The following comment made by a student who worked in Leros is characteristic:

Living conditions are not good... Families stay in containers... They are not, in general, the proper hygiene conditions for a child to grow up... They are dirty enough... There is, however, some infrastructure. That is, the children are in a particular part of the Reception and Identification Center and have put the same countries of origin on the same side... These families try as much as possible to maintain hygiene, e.g. wash their clothes... (Interview1 - I.1).

In fact, in the case of Samos, Chios and Kos, the research participants argue that families stay apart from containers in tents because of the constant arrival of refugees, which makes their living conditions extremely difficult. Thus, the following statement of a student working in Kos is characteristic:

There are many difficulties in living conditions for refugees... People stay in containers, but a lot of them stay in tents they have made themselves... As time passes, more refugees arrive and have nowhere to stay... (I.7).

Also, a student who worked in Chios points out:

Conditions where families live are not good at all... Families stay in containers and tents... There are a few things inside the containers, such as pillows and mattresses... Outside the containers there are cartons, newspapers, insects... It's dirty outside the scenes... That is, it is difficult to get people to sleep there in such conditions... (I.3).

5.2 Outlining the social characteristics of refugee children coming to Kindergartens where students are employed

Concerning the countries of origin of children attending the Kindergartens in the Reception and Identification Centers, the research subjects stated that refugees originate mainly from Afghanistan but also from African countries, such as Congo, while the number of children originating from other countries are comparatively smaller (in particular: Syria, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Palestine and Eritrea). Thus, it is characteristic the following statement of a student who worked in Chios, who points out:

We have four children who come from Afghanistan, four from Congo, two from Iraq, one from Palestine and one child from Eritrea (I.4).

Also, a student working in Lesvos states characteristically:

Most children come from Afghanistan, that is, twenty-five children, four from Iraq and one from Iran (I.8).

From the data analysis obtained from the present research, the number of children enrolled in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers, students are employed, tends to vary per island. Specifically, according to the data of the research participants, the number of children enrolled in Leros is thirteen, in Lesvos is thirty, in Chios is twelve, in Samos is thirty and in Kos is eighteen.

According to the research subjects, out of the total number of refugee children enrolled in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers per island, the vast majority of them come to the Kindergarten daily, with the ages of these children ranging from 4 to 5 years. However, there is a limited number of children aged 6 to 8 years who also come to these Kindergartens.

5.3 Cooperation that students develop with parents of children attending Kindergarten

5.3.1 The recognition of the value of the Kindergarten by the parents of the refugee children and the work provided by the teachers working in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers

The interview data analysis shows that refugee parents recognize the safety of their children in the Kindergarten, as well as the opportunity to play and express themselves creatively through activities carried out within the daily program where exploiting various thematic such as "Colors", "Insects" and "Sea". The following statement made by a mother who comes from Afghanistan is characteristic:

I come to the Kindergarten every day in order to leave my child. I feel like my child is in a safe place where he can play and have a good time... I am interested in being informed when visiting the Kindergarten about the activities carried out in the daily program... The teachers have informed me about a variety of activities, such as the first letter of the children's name with plasticine, about rainbow paintings, about "bee" making using recyclable materials... (Mother 1- M.1).

Also, another mother who comes from Afghanistan states:

I come to the Kindergarten and I leave my child. I trust the teachers. The Kindergarten provides my child with safety. I ask the teachers what my child learns, about the activities carried out in the daily program, about the games the teachers play with children... The teachers let me know about the themes they are dealing with, such as "Colors", "Insects" and "Sea", the first letter of the children's name by drawing it and coloring it on cardboard... The teachers let me see the constructions they make with my child, such as "fish"...(M.4).

Moreover, the interview data analysis shows that some parents, in the context of the information they seek to have with teachers working in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers, recognize among the benefits of Kindergarten the opportunity for their children to come into contact with incidents of emergent reading and writing, as well as enhancing their oral speech (Papoulia-Tzelepi, 2001; Stellakis & Kondyli, 2004; Teale & Sulsby, 1989; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) as part of their involvement in activities, such as role-playing games.

The following statement of a mother who comes from Afghanistan is characteristic:

I am interested in being informed about language activities that are carried out in the Kindergarten... The teachers showed me, for example, tabs with the name of each child who is able to identify and write as he/she can... The teachers also informed me about the activity they did with the role-playing games where children played animals. I think that this activity can contribute to the enhancement of children's spoken language...(M.6).

A mother who comes from Afghanistan states characteristically:

I recognize that the Kindergarten teachers offer a lot to my child... In particular, my child acquires many skills through various activities carried out in the daily program, such as creating the first letter of his name with plasticine, writing his name as he can... I have asked the teachers if my child learns basic words in Greek, such as "Good Morning" and "Good Night"... I put a lot of emphasis on that... I volunteered to tell a fairy tale to the children in the classroom after consultation with the teachers... (M.8).

Another mother who comes from Afghanistan mentions:

I realize that my child has the opportunity to learn basic words in Greek attending the Kindergarten... Moreover, my child has the chance to acquire early writing skills, such as writing her name as she can... I offered my help to the teachers, who invited me in the classroom, writing the children's names in their native language, that is, in Arabic...I also participated in storytelling activities...(M.10).

Based on the two above interview extracts, it could be argued that parents recognize in their teachers' work the opportunity of acquiring their children early writing skills as well as enhancing their spoken language through linguistic activities carried out in the context of the educational process in Kindergarten, including the voluntary participation of mothers through storytelling and teacher assistance to write children's names in their native language (Kondyli & Stellakis, 2006; Teale & Sulsby, 1989).

5.3.2 Forms of cooperation developed by students with parents of children attending Kindergarten

The analysis of the interview data highlights the existence of a harmonious framework of cooperation between parents of children attending the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers and the teachers employed in them.

In particular, the development of cooperation between the two stakeholders is focused on: (a) informing parents about the behavior of their children at the micro-level of Kindergarten classroom; (b) informing parents of the activities carried out in the context of the educational process; and (c) voluntary participation of parents, after consultation with teachers, in language activities such as storytelling and songs in their native language.

The following interview extract from a student who worked in Samos is representative:

Parents ask us about their children's behavior in the classroom... We make sure to let them know about the activities we do with children as they are interested in learning if they are creative and develop skills... Some mothers have come to class, whom we have invited and gladly accepted, and have told fairy tales to children... Once again they sang songs with children... (I.5).

Also, according to the research subjects, some parents hold discussions with teachers working in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers focusing on prospects for their educational future in Greece, and in particular their children's schooling expectations in Greece.

The following interview extract from a student who worked in Samos is characteristic:

Parents told us that they want their children to attend Greek school, Kindergarten and Primary school, to learn the culture of their host country and start integrating into that country's environment... Also, they can have contact with the Greek language in order to facilitate them in a functional way in their daily lives... (I.6).

According to the above interview extract, Greek school education projects, in the context of parents' expectations of their children attending it, as a 'vehicle' for social inclusion and familiarization of children with the host country's culture, which tends to be in line with the findings of a series of studies (see: Li, 2004; St-Hilaire, 2002; Stevenson & Willott, 2007; Støren, 2011; Terrén & Carrasco, 2007).

6. Discussion and conclusions

The analysis of the interview data shows that the living conditions of refugee families coming from different countries, and mainly from Afghanistan, in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers in 5 islands of the Eastern Aegean (Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos) are difficult (Scientific Committee in Support of Refugee Children – Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, 2017). Refugee children coming to the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers appear to come mainly from Afghanistan. From the total number of refugee children enrolled in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers per island, the vast majority of them tend to come to the Kindergarten daily, with the age of these children ranging from 4 to 5 years.

Concerning the answer to the first research question, it is found that parents recognize the value of Kindergarten and appreciate the work of teachers (Lewis et al., 2011; Symeou, 2003; Terrén & Carrasco, 2007) recognizing, in particular, providing their children with a safe environment as well as the opportunity to play and express themselves creatively through their participation in a variety of activities carried out in the context of the educational process (IEP, 2016; UNHCR, 2003, 2011). In fact, some parents recognize in the teachers' work employed in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers the ability to gradually familiarize their children with emergent reading and writing incidents as well as enhancing their oral speech (Stellakis & Kondyli, 2004; Teale & Sulzby, 1989; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998), for which they are made aware of by teachers. This is because these parents prioritize their importance in the education provided to their children, which could be linked, inter alia, to their expectation that their children will attend Greek Primary School school.

As far as the answer to the second research question is concerned, there are many forms of cooperation between refugee parents and teachers working in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers that are based on a harmonious collaborative framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Georgiou, 2000; Ryan, 2001). These forms mainly focus on: (a) informing parents about the behavior of their children in Kindergarten classroom, (b) informing parents of the activities carried out in the educational process, and (c) voluntary participation by parents, after consultation with teachers, mainly on language activities (Epstein, 1995, 2001; Epstein et al., 2002; Lewis et al., 2011; Sosa, 1997; Symeou, 2003). The development of a positive climate of cooperation between parents and teachers aimed at the cognitive and psychosocial development of children tends to be in line with the findings of a series of studies (see: Levanda, 2011; Levine-Rasky, 2009; Serpell & Mashburn, 2012; Seyfried & Chung, 2002).

Finally, the following conclusions emerge from the present research work:

- Refugee parents seem to recognize the value of the Kindergarten and the work provided to their children by the teachers employed in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers. In particular, the Kindergarten is perceived by parents as a place that provides their children with security, as well as the opportunity for play and creativity through activities carried out within the daily program. In addition, the Kindergarten is hired by some parents as a transitional educational 'bridge' in order for their children to attend Greek Primary school (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2019).
- The formation of forms of cooperation on the basis of a harmonious framework between refugee parents and teachers working in the Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers tends to 'bridge' the two

differentiated socio-cultural stakeholders. Children are the focal point of this collaboration by projecting the multiple benefits they can derive from participating in activities carried out in the context of the educational process in Kindergarten, such as acquiring language skills.

The findings of this qualitative research, although they are not generalizable, are interesting because they reveal, on the one hand, the dimensions of Kindergarten recognition by refugee parents who come to Kindergartens of the Reception and Identification Centers, as well as the work provided by teachers, and, on the other hand, they bring to light the forms of cooperation developed between the two bodies of socialization and education of children (Giddens, 2002).

Concluding this endeavor, we believe it would be worthwhile to conduct a similar research on the parents of refugee children studying in Refugee Education Reception Facilities of our country in order to highlight further dimensions of the issue we attempted to reach.

Note

1. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the 1951 Treaty, a "refugee" is "a person located outside the country of his or her nationality or the country of habitual residence and on the grounds of justifiable fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, social class or political beliefs may or may not wish to enjoy the protection of that country, or for fear of prosecution, to return to it" (UNHCR, 2010, p. 14, Article 1A).

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