

ADAPTATION OF RESIDENTIAL INTERIORS FOR LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME SYRIANS LIVING IN SULTANBEYLI, TURKEY (1)

Özge CORDAN*, Talia ÖZCAN AKTAN

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1. This study is based on the research project titled "Determining Housing and Interior Design Principles and Developing Design Proposals Suitable for Modern Life and Cultural Conditions to Facilitate the Adaptation of Syrians Under Temporary Protection" run by Dr. Özge Cordan and approved by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) with grant number 118K441. As one of the output of the project, a thesis study with the same title as the project title was completed. Dr. Özge Cordan is the supervisor of the thesis study and, Talia Özcan Aktan is the writer of the thesis.

2. This human right is guaranteed by international conventions, such as Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations [UN], 1948) and Article 11/1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations Human Rights [UNHR], 1976).

* *Corresponding Author*; Department of Interior Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, TURKEY.

INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest forced mass migrations of the twenty-first century originated in the Syrian Arab Republic due to political conflict, which was turned into a civil war (Kavas et al., 2019). Syrian migrants are therefore considered refugees who were involuntarily displaced from their homelands. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "[o]ver 5.6 million people have fled Syria since 2011, seeking safety in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, and beyond". Turkey, which does not consider Syrians refugees, gave them temporary protection in 2014 (Directorate General of Migration Management [DGMM], 2022), and also hosts the largest number of Syrians—currently more than 3.6 million (UNHCR, 2022).

This mass displacement has affected countless people, eliciting studies on education, social services, health, legal processes, etc. by various institutions and NGOs that deal with Syrians. These studies reflect the perspectives of various disciplines, and some deal with Syrians' need for housing, which is one of the most basic human rights guaranteed by international conventions (2). It is imperative to solve this basic need in a more humane way that supports coexistence and strengthens interaction and cohesion. In other words, Syrians' housing issues have the potential to either unify or segregate people in terms of relocation. On the other hand, besides social and economic ones, cohesion policies cannot be achieved without considering spatial dimensions (Erdoğan, 2018).

The housing needs of Syrians who live in different parts of Turkey and whose numbers are greater than those living in refugee camps and reception centers have become increasingly significant in urban areas—more than 98,5% of Syrians have dispersed to different urban areas in Turkey (DGMM, 2022). The Syrian workforce constitutes the backbone of the Turkish economy in many locomotive sectors, such as construction (Cengiz and Tengüç, 2021) and textiles (Dursun and Nizamoğlu, 2021).

In this respect, it can be said that their settlements in urban areas were also supported by the authorities. Therefore, their housing needs must be solved in a long-term, on-site, and economical way to support coexistence and cohesion, instead of building new residences in areas isolated from the local community, specifically for urban areas. This can provide a sense of community between Syrians and local inhabitants and affect their sense of belonging, residential satisfaction, and well-being in relocation. In this sense, micro- and macro-scale studies and policies for solving Syrian's housing issues are needed. While finding solutions to Syrian's housing need on a macro-scale requires addressing the issue at political, urban, and architectural scales, it is also possible to seek a solution to this need on a micro-scale regarding homemaking in relocation. Additionally, there is not enough studies regarding Syrians' transcultural homemaking practices in Turkey.

Thus, the study focuses on finding a micro-scale solution to the housing issue of lower- and middle-income Syrians living in Turkey within the existing residential areas from the viewpoint of the interior design/architecture discipline. The research explores the housing needs of low- and middle-income Syrians, how they use and adapt their current residential interiors to their needs, and how existing interiors can be adapted to improve residential satisfaction. The Sultanbeyli district in Istanbul was chosen as the case for this study. The field study was conducted with the voluntary participation of Syrian families who live in apartment buildings within the borders of the Fatih neighborhood in Sultanbeyli. The data were collected and analyzed using multiple methods for acquiring holistic information about Syrians and their culture, housing needs, and homemaking practices, thus enhancing the creditability of the study. Accordingly, the purpose of the study is to develop a framework for designers and researchers to adapt existing residential interiors to meet the needs of low- and middle-income Syrians living in Turkey. This framework is based on determining housing and interior design principles and sub-principles and explaining them using a set of indicators. Besides developing a framework for adapting existing residential interiors, the study provides theoretical and practical contributions to the literature regarding the homemaking practices and housing needs of low- and middle-income Syrians living in Turkey and to stakeholders (e.g., designers, researchers, developers, politicians) to achieve economically, culturally, socially, and physically supportive habitats in the existing built environment.

To this end, the second part consists of a literature review and investigates the idea of home, homemaking, and housing adaptation appropriate to the user's needs, specifically focusing on refugee and migration studies. The third part comprises the method and details the case study settings, the study participants, data collection procedures, the materials and instruments, and the data analysis. The fourth part provides data analysis obtained through ethnographic and visual methods from Sultanbeyli. The fifth part discusses the study findings and details the proposed framework based on housing and interior design principles, sub-principles, and indicators. The conclusions provide limitations, implications, and suggestions for future research.

HOMEMAKING DURING (FORCED) MIGRATION

Migration, whether voluntary or forced (Tataru, 2020), and housing studies are interrelated due to the human factor. While homes for immigrants have become more common in the migration literature (Mazumdar, 2009), there is limited research related to Turkey. Housing studies for immigrants and refugees are often related to the meaning of home (Taylor, 2015), place attachment, belonging, residential satisfaction (Esentepe and Günçe, 2019), and homemaking practices (Bocagni and Brighenti, 2017; Bilecen, 2017) during relocation.

A house is a physical unit that defines and limits space for household members (Lawrence, 1987). Home refers to the interaction between people and place and has symbolic, intangible, and invisible aspects, according to scholars such as Dovey (1985), Lawrence (1987), and Mallet (2004). Home, as an idealized concept, provides territory, privacy, security, control, familiarity, and self-achievement to its residents to perform their social and daily life activities for private and public zones. Home plays an important role in identity formation, the socialization of the household, cultural norms and values, memories, and people's desires and hopes for the future (Kabachnik et al., 2010). Thus, home is a place of reproduction of culture, identities, and traditions (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002).

The meaning of home is redefined in the case of forced migration. Home can simultaneously be a "place of refuge and a safe haven" and "a place of alienation and discrimination" (Taylor 2015, 18). Solidarity networks, cultural affinities, kinship relationships, and religious and ethnic factors are determinants that push or pull people to a particular place in the migration process. The loss of home is traumatic for forced migrant populations and involves the loss of property, income, daily life activities, relationships, and self-identity. Because of these losses, most migrants attempt to remake home, which represents the home and homeland lost or left behind (Kissoon, 2015). There is a material link between past and present living environments (Levin and Fincher, 2010). Ralph and Staeheli (2011) explained this situation as simultaneously living here and there. In this sense, immigrants value both "heritage and receiving culture" (Titzman et al. 2015, 407). Thus, home becomes a blended place with new cultural interactions and acquisitions for its residents.

As a multi-layered and complex process, transcultural homemaking practices of immigrants in relocation are an ongoing attempt (Taylor, 2015) for symbolic reproduction of previous home (Bocagni and Brighenti, 2017; Fadlalla, 2011) and for ensuring social and daily life activities for users' needs. Home, in this regard, refers to a place where complex interactions between previous and present living environments and conditions occur (Liu, 2014). Living conditions during relocation are important for immigrants. While residential satisfaction and quality affect attachment bonds (Fornara et al., 2019), migrants who do not have residential attachments perceive their current residences negatively compared to their previous ones (Anton and Lawrence 2014). In this sense, residential satisfaction is associated with the relationships that household members have with their previous and present homes (Gronseth et al., 2016).

Besides symbolic and material processes, transcultural homemaking practices include alterations and adaptations (Bilecen, 2017). People arrange housing environments to satisfy their values, needs, and wishes over time (Altman and Gauvain, 1982) and make adaptations to settings (Zeisel,

2006) for turning their residences (house) into meaningful and familiar places (home). Adaptation, which is the alteration of an existing space for new uses (Brooker, 2016), depends on both situational (environment, architectural shell, space) and individual (culture, identity, etc.) variables (Kosic, 2002). Thus, the housing environment can be adapted through appropriation to make a place one's own (Graumann, 2002). Appropriation is essential for expressing culture, habits, preferences, tastes, and memories. Boccagni (2020) defines the multiple means of housing appropriation as "improving the space," "enabling the cultural reproduction," "privatizing the space," and "beautification" (Boccagni, 2020, 9).

Spatial adaptation requires flexible and adaptable loose ties in housing design (Rapoport, 2005). Flexibility maximizes space use and allows alterations according to users' changing needs (Till and Schneider, 2016; Moxon, 2011). Cultural adaptation requires cultural continuity (Gronseth et al., 2016). Lifestyle, which is the most concrete indicator of culture (Rapoport, 2005), maintains cultural continuity and gives crucial insight into people's kinship and social relations, activities and activity systems, family structure, roles, status, and identity (Rapoport, 2005). Furthermore, privacy, which allows the interaction between individuals and groups at different comfort levels (auditory, olfactory, visual, spatial, etc.), shapes both physical aspects and spatial elements as indicators of sociocultural adjustments (Ünlü, 1998) and ensures gender-segregated space use for Muslim societies in public and private zones (Zalloom, 2019). Religion is another important factor that plays an essential role in homemaking for providing continuity with migrants' previous lives (Fredericks and Nagy, 2016). Identity-based adaptation practices, such as beautification, are effective ways of personalization. To create a familiar home environment, objects such as furniture and decorations play an important role in the symbolic construction of homeland (Bilecen, 2017), carry special meanings (Ureta, 2007), and recall the previous experiences of feeling at home (Brun and Fabos, 2015). While furniture helps cultivate a sense of home for migrants (Rottmann, 2020), transitional objects such as decorative items, goods, and photographs brought from immigrants' homelands to new residences for personalization (Glusac, 2015) are other important indicators of an individual's home experience (Neumark, 2013).

Therefore, refugee/immigrant residences should ensure sociocultural and spatial adaptations to meet the residents' needs in the process of homemaking during relocation for feeling at home, sense of familiarity, belonging, and identity. The housing adjustment capacity and economic status of immigrants are also very decisive factors for homemaking in relocation, specifically for Syrians who work in the lowest levels of the economy in Turkey (Rottmann, 2020), belong to low- and middle-income classes (Kavas et al., 2019), and need low-cost housing (Ismail, 2015).

METHOD

Based on the literature review, this study aimed to acquire holistic information regarding low- and middle-income Syrians' homemaking practices and housing adaptation for residential interiors according to their culture, habits, and needs. Thus, the study intended to develop a framework for designers and researchers to adapt existing residential interiors appropriate to Syrians' housing needs. The field study was conducted in Sultanbeyli, Istanbul, and multiple research methods and techniques were used for data collection and analysis.

3. The Sultanbeyli Municipality developed the SUKOM database to facilitate social cohesion between Syrians and local inhabitants (Kavas et al., 2019).

4. Since the necessary permission for the technical measurements of the houses could not be obtained from the landlords in the first round, a second-round site visit was carried out. There were no inconsistencies or discrepancies affecting the study results between the two rounds of visits.

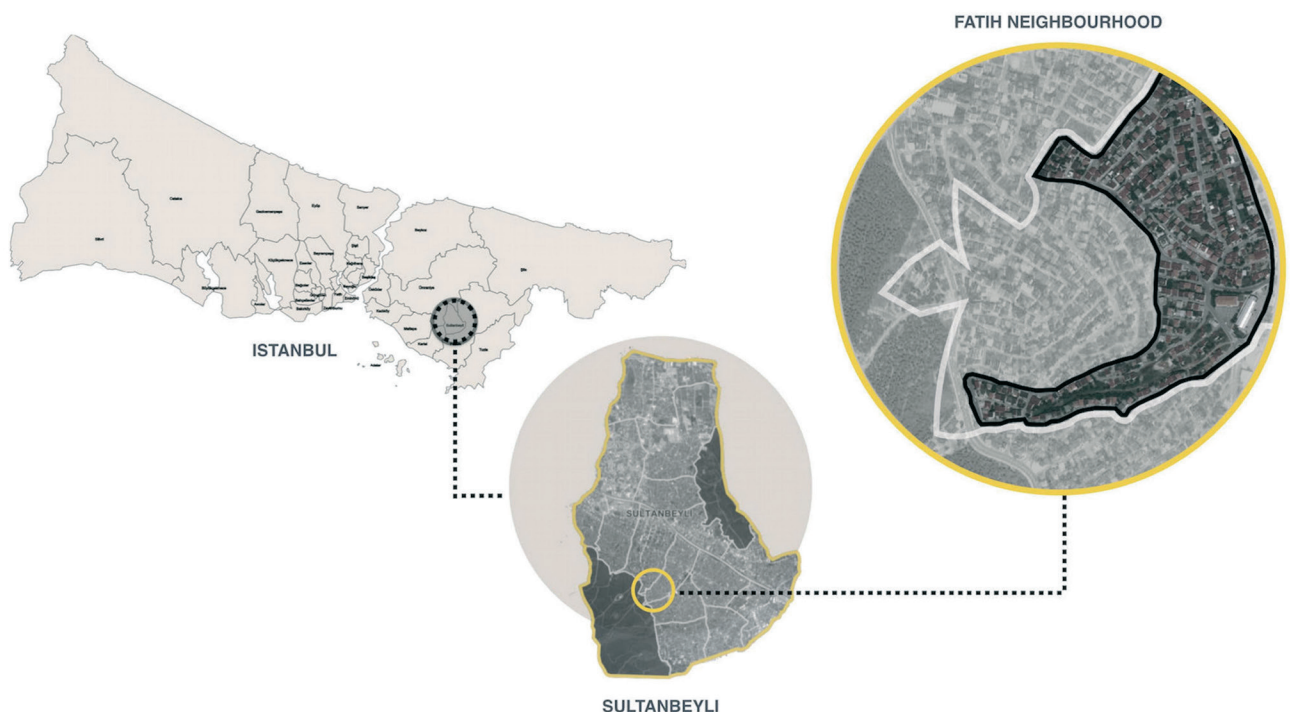
Case Study Setting

In Turkey, Syrians mainly settle in suburban areas of major cities, such as Istanbul (Kılıçaslan, 2016). Compared to other cities, Istanbul has the highest number of registered Syrians—approximately 540,000 (DGMM, 2022)—and the district of Sultanbeyli in the Asian region of Istanbul hosts the largest Syrian population—more than 20,000 (Syrian Coordination Center [SUKOM], 2022). Sultanbeyli was chosen as the case for this study because of the coexistence and cohesion between Syrians and the local inhabitants and the similarities between them in terms of religion, culture, and income. The services of the Sultanbeyli Municipality in terms of shelter, health, education, and employment and the use of the SUKOM database (3) are among other reasons for choosing Sultanbeyli. The field study was limited to the area between Seyhan and Şalgamlı Streets in the Fatih neighborhood (Figure 1). This is where the majority of Syrians settled, according to the 2017 SUKOM database. Sultanbeyli has a built environment consisting mostly of apartment buildings. This is because Syrian families live in apartments; the study was limited to three- to five-story apartment buildings in this neighborhood. The field study was also carried out in two rounds of visits (4): one in January/February 2019 and the other in June/July 2019.

Study Participants

Home is considered a sociocultural unit and is mainly associated with family life (Hayward, 1975). Therefore, the participant group was limited to Syrian low- and middle-income families living in the Fatih neighborhood in Sultanbeyli. The SUKOM database was used to screen the participants. During this process, all 63 Syrian families living in this neighborhood were contacted by a native translator and informed of the purpose of the study. The participant group consisted of 18 volunteer Syrian low- and middle-income families and 45 adults (i.e., two or three members over 18 years old from each family) who could understand and answer the questions.

Figure 1. The field study area within the borders of the Fatih neighborhood in Sultanbeyli on the map of Istanbul



Data Collection Procedures

Before visiting the study area, permissions were acquired from the authorities, including ethical committee approval. The field study was carried out with the participation of a female Syrian translator for easy access to Syrians' residences and to overcome the language barrier with the participants. A clinical psychologist, an adviser on the research team, also contributed to the field study to communicate effectively with the participants. During the site visit, the participants signed a consent form prepared in Arabic and Turkish. The interview questions were asked by the translator via face-to-face communication in Arabic, and the participants' responses were taken in Arabic. The answers were then translated to Turkish by the translator. The photos were filtered, and audio and video recordings were not taken to ensure privacy. Each family was given a code to protect anonymity. After the first meeting and informal conversation to get to know each other, the data collection lasted at least three hours with each family, who were interviewed at their residences. When necessary, this period was extended to obtain sufficient information from the participants.

Materials and Instruments

Multiple methods were used to obtain sufficient data to obtain more objective results. All data were collected sequentially in two phases through visual and ethnographic methods. Sanoff (2016) and Zeisel (2006) referred to visual methods and Creswell (2006) to ethnographic methods. First, visual research methods were used to observe physical traces (Zeisel, 2006) and analyze the visual characteristics of the physical environment through many recording methods (Sanoff, 2016). All data were collected through photographs, schematic drawings and notes to observe and record the Syrians' residential interiors and to reveal their homemaking practices in current residences. Second, the data were collected in two steps through ethnographic methods, which involve direct interviews with people and wide-ranging participant observations (Creswell, 2006). In the first step, with the help of the participant observation technique, Syrians' living rooms were observed by researchers as participant observers to acquire information about their family structure, lifestyle, roles, relationships, activities, and behaviors. All data were collected through photographs, notes, schematic drawings, and mapping techniques. In the second step, the structured and semi-structured interview questions were asked to acquire substantial and holistic information about Syrians and their culture, living habits, and needs for domestic environments in both Syria and Turkey. Besides the structured questions regarding demographic characteristics such as sex, age, marital status, education, profession, and income, nine semi-structured questions were included (**Table 1**).

Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed in two phases. First, the visual data were analyzed to gather information regarding housing plan type, spatial use, activities, and furniture layout and to classify the physical traces as "adaptations for use," "by-products of use," "displays of self," and "public messages" (Zeisel, 2006, 160). With the help of an annotated diagram, all data were recorded on schematic drawings of the floor plan for each house using photographs, symbols, and written information by observing the surfaces (walls, ceilings, and floors) and then analyzed (**Figure 2**). Second, the ethnographic data obtained from the participant observations

| Q number | Questions | Themes |
|----------|--|---|
| Q1 | Why did you prefer to relocate to Sutanbeyli? | Lifestyle Affinity Economy |
| Q2 | What are the reasons for choosing this house? | Lifestyle Affinity Economy |
| Q3 | Do you feel that you belong in your current home? | Culture Lifestyle Appropriation Privacy |
| Q4 | What are your needs for your current residence compared to Syria? | Culture Lifestyle Appropriation Adaptation |
| Q5 | How does your lifestyle affect the indoor use of your current residence? | Culture Lifestyle Privacy Religion |
| Q6 | How did you modify/adapt your residence according to your needs? | Adaptation Appropriation Economy |
| Q7 | What are the mementos and objects that you brought from Syria? Please provide the reason(s). | Appropriation |
| Q8 | If possible, which belongings would you have liked to take during your migration to Turkey? | Appropriation |
| Q9 | How did you get the furniture and other goods in this house? | Economy Appropriation |

Table 1. Semi-structured interview questions

and interviews were analyzed in two steps. The first step was based on an analysis of the observations of participants' living rooms. Again, with the help of an annotated diagram, data were recorded on schematic drawings of the living room for each house using diagrams, symbols, and written information (**Figure 3**). The positions of the family members and the researchers and the activities, behaviors, roles, and relationships were mapped on the annotated diagram and then analyzed. The second step involved analyzing the interviews. The content analysis technique was used for coding the answers according to the appropriate categories for the interview questions. The statistical analysis was used for obtaining the percentage of responses from the demographic characteristics.

RESULTS

The comprehensive data obtained through visual and ethnographic methods support each other and reveal crucial needs for Syrian families' indoor use and important parameters for their transcultural homemaking practices in Sultanbeyli.

Results of Visual Data Analysis

According to the visual data analysis, Syrians usually live on the ground floor of apartment buildings and have a housing plan with a hallway. The houses are approximately 80–110 m², with two or three bedrooms and a living room. Syrians make need-based adaptations to their housing environments (**Figure 4**).

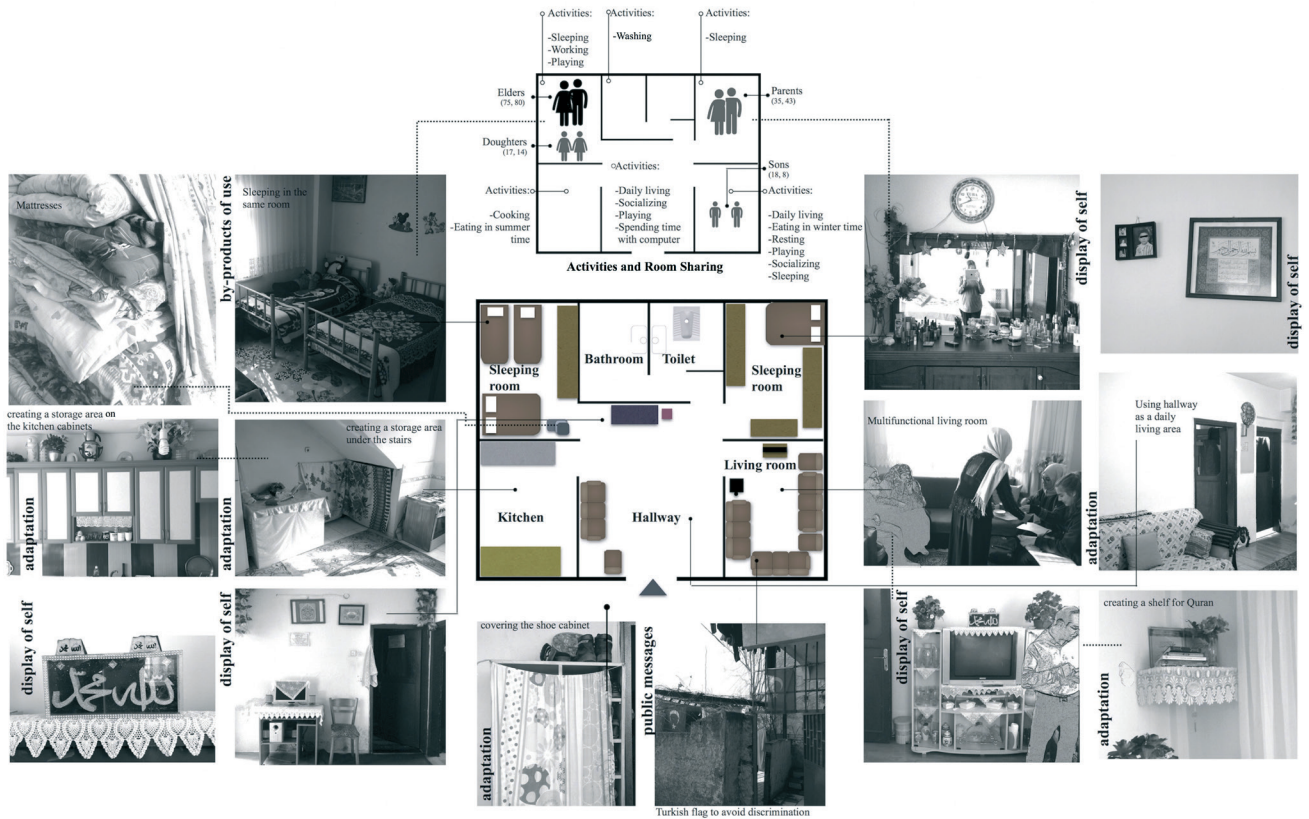


Figure 2. The annotated diagram used for analyzing the visual data

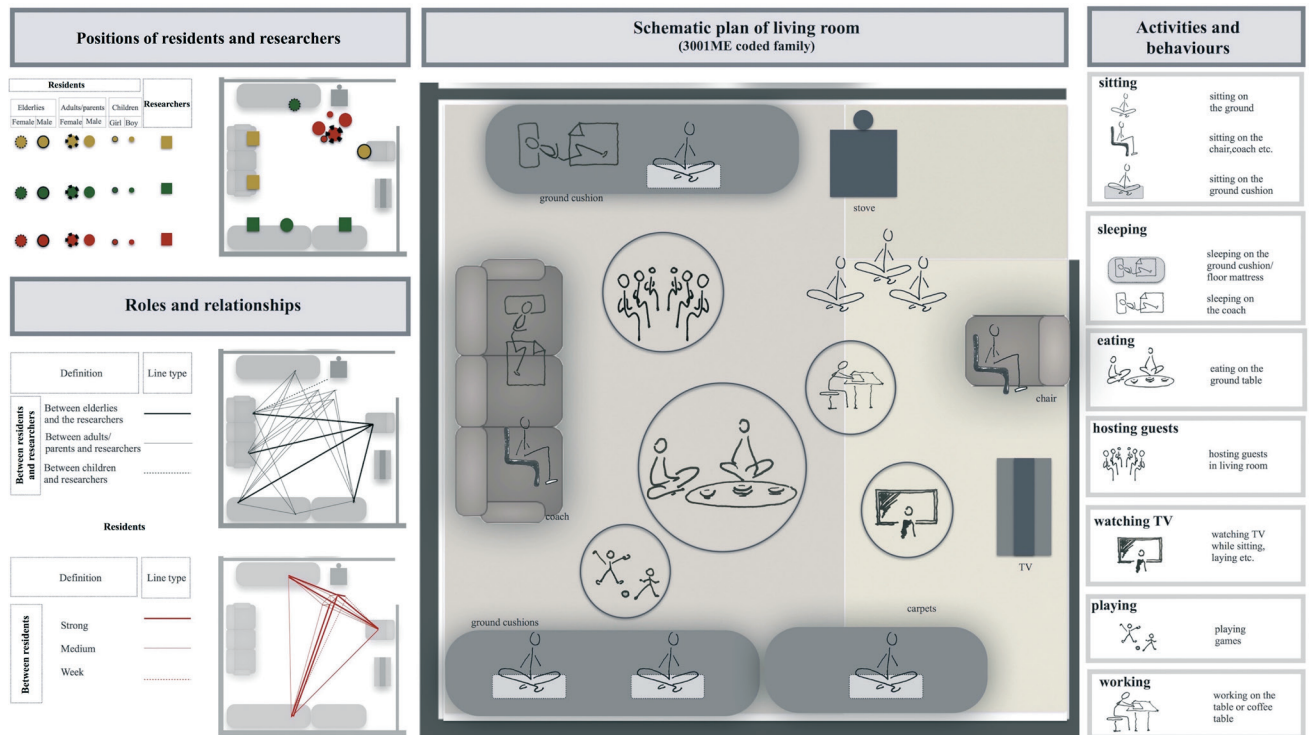


Figure 3. The annotated diagram used for analyzing the observation of living room

5. While homeownership provides real control and ensures people reflect their identities in the way they want, and transform a house into a home (Fox, 2002), being a tenant prevents a feeling of truly having a home and limits the way a rental unit's uses. The tenant, who is not free to shape his/her environment, to some extent, is deprived of the means of personalization to construct his/her identity and make a place his/her own (Stone, 1986).

The adaptations for use are mainly based on their sociocultural, temporal, and spatial needs. For example, if the entrance hall is large enough, the living room is located in the entrance hall, appropriate for Syrians' living habits. The living room is a place where many household activities take place, such as eating, working, resting, playing, socializing, and sleeping. While bedrooms are used for sleeping at night, they are used during the daytime for activities such as studying, playing, and hosting guests. Family members of different ages sleep in the same room according to the sexes and relations between them. If there is not enough room in the house, the elders can share the same bedroom with their grandchildren, and the parents have a bedroom. If a household needs more rooms, the room is divided by curtains, separators, or furniture. If there is no privacy threshold, the bathrooms, toilets, and bedrooms are separated from the public and common zones of the house by curtains. Bathrooms and toilets in the same space are divided by curtains or separators, depending on privacy and religious beliefs as well. In most cases, the kitchen is used for cooking and storing without a dining table, and balconies or terraces are used for storing, seating, etc.

The fact that Syrian families are tenants affects the space organization, which is mostly arranged by furniture. Furniture, such as cradles and showcases, is also used for storage outside of its function. The wall surfaces are also used to maintain extra storage areas. By-products of use can be monitored through material objects, such as furniture and accessories. The use of curtains or separators to provide privacy in appropriate areas, ground cushions and a low table are used in the living room, and stackable floor mattresses are used in bedrooms for sleeping at night to maintain the flexible and multifunctional use of spaces. The tenant status affects Syrian homemaking practices regarding identity construction, personalization, and both physical and psychological aspects (5) as well. According to the visual data results for physical aspects, the wall surfaces of the houses are the main elements that reflect the display of the self through various objects of decoration, mementos, religious objects, and verses from the Quran on the walls. Public messages can be seen through the use of Turkish



Figure 4. Syrian family's entrance hall: This space is mostly used as a living room depending on Syrians' living habits and decorated with small objects for expressing identity, beliefs, and attachment bonds



Figure 5. Living room of a Syrian family: The room has carpets and is furnished with ground cushions to meet cultural needs and secondhand furniture from neighbors or charities

politicians' photographs/posters, graffiti, and writings on the wall surfaces, and the use of Turkish flags on the doors and windows of the houses was also quite common.

Results of Ethnographic Data Analysis

Ethnographic data analysis also presents valuable information for the study. The first step of the ethnographic data results regarding the observations of Syrians' living rooms reveals the sociocultural and sociospatial aspects of homemaking (**Figure 5**). Syrians have an extended or nuclear family structure and a crowded, hierarchical, and introverted lifestyle. They belong to a male-dominated society, and roles and relationships among family members are shaped by this hierarchical structure. While women are responsible for housework, men are responsible for the subsistence of the family. The oldest male member of the household is the head of the family. Additionally, elderly people are the most respected members of the family. The closest and strongest types of relationships are mother-child, husband-wife, elderly-child, and child-child. While there is a close relationship between children, there is distance, depending on their sexes. Because most families have large households (approximately 6–10 people in each family), family members gather and host guests in the living room, covering floor surfaces with carpets to support different activities. This type of use is one of the most important cultural indicators and is especially observed in this room. For example, meals are eaten at a low table. Sitting, resting, or sleeping activities are ensured through ground cushions. In this sense, this multifunctional room is the heart of the home and a public zone where social relationships and many activities take place.

The interview results, which is the second step of the ethnographic data, reveal the demographic characteristics of the participants obtained from the structured interview questions, as seen in **Table 2**. According to the answers, half of the Syrians are over 45, and the rest are between 18 and under 45. The participants, most of them married and from Aleppo, largely belong to the low- and middle-income classes. Women do not have professions, while men work mainly in the textile industry as a worker.

The semi-structured interview questions reveal that Sultanbeyli is a suitable and supportive environment regarding sociocultural, environmental,

| Participants' Characteristics | Group | % |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------|
| Sex | Male | 37.8 |
| | Female | 62.2 |
| Age | 18-24 | 17.8 |
| | 25-34 | 17.8 |
| | 35-44 | 11.1 |
| | 45+ | 53.3 |
| Place of birth | Damascus | 13.3 |
| | Aleppo | 84.4 |
| | Idlib | 2.2 |
| Marital status | Married (monogamy) | 75.6 |
| | Married (polygamy) | 4.4 |
| | Single | 8.9 |
| | Widow | 11.1 |
| Education | Illiterate | 31.1 |
| | Primary school | 26.7 |
| | Secondary school | 31.1 |
| | High school | 6.7 |
| | University | 4.4 |
| Profession (male) | Worker in textile industry | 70.6 |
| | Worker in iron industry | 7.35 |
| | Worker in ceramic industry | 7.35 |
| | Worker in construction | 7.35 |
| | Turner | 7.35 |
| Profession (female) | Housewife | 100 |
| Income | No income | 46.7 |
| | Less than 1000 TL | 6.7 |
| | 1000-1500 TL | 17.8 |
| | 1501-2000 TL | 11.1 |
| | More than 2000 TL | 17.8 |

Table 2. Characteristics of participants

economic, and religious similarities between the locals and Syrians. While most Syrians have good relationships with locals in Sultanbeyli, they do not fully belong in their current residences. A participant explained: "In Syria, everything was ours... Here, we cannot establish a settled life; we constantly change houses, we do not feel we belong here" (Male, 32). Furthermore, they consider their home in Syria as a "real home" and defines their current house as a "shelter". In this sense, property ownership and the sense of belonging associated with social relationships, life habits, and memories are important for them to see a place as their own.

Comparing the current home with the home in Syria reveals the spatial (physical), cultural (privacy, religion, lifestyle), emotional (attachment, belonging, familiarity, identity), territorial (control, protection, security, and safety), material (furniture, goods, decorative items), and temporal (comfort) housing needs of the participants. The responses indicate that family structure, relationships, roles, habits, activities, behaviors, religion, and privacy are also important factors for space use. According to their religious beliefs, Syrians prefer the toilet and bathroom spaces separated, as one of the participants explained: "We perform ablutions many times in a day. Ablution cannot happen next to the toilet. Thank God! The bathroom and toilet are separated in our current house" (Female, 54). The Qibla direction is also important for placing fixtures in wet spaces. Because privacy was vital in space use, the segregation of spaces based on sex and relations was quite common. One of the participants explained the importance of this need: "When our relatives come, we sit in the same

room. But if a guest comes to our home, men and women sit separately... We do the same here..." (Female, 43). Another also explained: "We as parents sleep in a separate room, and the children sleep in another room because they are small children" (Female, 27). Frequent moving depends on high rents; relations with the landlord and neighbors; and the physical condition of living spaces, such as humidity and lack of ventilation, affect residential satisfaction and well-being. The interviews also showed the importance of habits and preferences in space use. One participant explained: "We use the kitchen only for cooking and storage. We do not eat there..." (Female, 38). Another participant shared: "...Our house had an inner courtyard...Daily life was spent in the courtyard in the summer and the rooms in the winter" (Female, 59).

Adaptations to current housing environments reveal that most families made modifications to interior spaces according to their needs, such as separating the bathroom and toilet spaces for religious beliefs and privacy; dividing rooms for privacy and personal space; using rooms multifunctionally (day and night) according to sexes; using suitable areas (niches or voids), surfaces, and some furniture for storage needs; and using open spaces, such as balconies and terraces, for living and storage. In this sense, culture and lifestyle needs stand out among these adaptations and appropriations. A participant mentioned, "We tidy up the rooms every morning and sleep on the floor mattresses at night" (Female, 25). They also modified the window and door surfaces for privacy, as indicated by one participant: "In Syria, there are usually no windows on the doors. We covered the master bedroom's door window with a piece of cloth here" (Female, 25). While the participants could not bring anything but a Qur'an and a few items of clothing and identity documents due to forced migration, they wanted to bring their photographs, personal items, and furniture and appliances during their migration to Turkey. A woman explained: "I wish it was possible to bring all my housing equipment and furniture" (Female, 43), which indicates the need for appropriation (i.e., familiarity, personalization, belonging, identity). Additionally, the answers reveal that they acquired their furniture and other goods secondhand or with help from neighbors, landlords, charities, or institutions without reference to their tastes, preferences, and wants relative to their income status.

DISCUSSION

Home protects people from the outside world and provides them with a familiar place that accommodates their needs. The study results showed that Syrians living in Sultanbeyli adapt their residential interiors through space organization, surface treatment, and furnishing without removing or adding walls or partitions, depending on their tenant and income status. In this sense, space is mostly defined by furnishing. Syrians make spatial- and object-based adaptations depending on their spatial, sociocultural, symbolic, emotional, territorial, and temporal needs and previous and present homemaking experiences, as indicated by many scholars (Bilecen, 2017; Boccagni and Brighenti, 2017; Taylor, 2015; Levin and Fincher, 2010). Adaptation of the domestic environment is also related to Syrians' economic status (Rottmann, 2020) and the physical/spatial conditions of the space (Rapoport, 2005).

Adaptations to residential interiors are mainly related to culture—[the] way of life (Oberg, 2006). In this sense, lifestyle, privacy, and appropriation

are distinguishing factors for cultural adaptations. Syrian families, whether extended or nuclear, consist mostly of large households and crowded, introverted living. While customs and rules are important aspects of lifestyle (Rapoport, 2005), the hierarchy of relations and roles between household members (elders, parents, and children) is also important for the homemaking practices of Syrians. Privacy is a crucial factor for maintaining religious, cultural, and personal domestic practices (William et al., 2020) for Syrians as well. It is common to separate and organize space according to religious beliefs, privacy thresholds, sex, and comfort needs. In this sense, privacy is revealed by spatial segregation according to religious beliefs, privacy thresholds, and sexes; spatial orientation according to religion and privacy; and spatial separation or connection for different levels of comfort needs. The use of furniture and accessories (separators, mirrors, etc.) to separate spaces according to the privacy needs of the household is also quite common. Appropriation is also essential for Syrians' homemaking practices according to their culture, lifestyle, education, income, sex, and age through spatial- and object-based adaptations. Appropriation of space is revealed by indoor/outdoor and day/night use for ensuring cultural habits, and multiuse of floor and wall surfaces for privatizing the space are quite common. The use of furniture, accessories, and decorative objects is essential for Syrians expressing preferences and conveying messages for creating a familiar and meaningful environment (Boccagni, 2020; Boccagni and Brighenti, 2017). Transitional decorative objects (Glusac, 2015) and commemorative items also help appropriation for carrying special meaning (Ureta, 2007) and for recalling the previous home and homeland (Brun and Fabos, 2015) in the homemaking practices of Syrians.

Syrians modify their home adjustment capacity of interior spaces depending on their needs. Apart from the size of housing, making alterations to residential interiors is quite critical in considering the culture, lifestyle, and daily life activities of Syrians. Therefore, flexibility, which allows multiple modes of use in the spatial organization (Conran, 2010), meets the Syrians' needs through multifunctional and adaptable use of spaces and effective use of surfaces and storage areas. The furniture and accessories also provide the flexible use of space through multifunctional, modular, adaptable, and lightweight items for Syrians.

Compared to their former economic status in Syria, the majority of Syrians live in more difficult economic conditions in Sultanbeyli and belong to the lower- and middle-income classes (Kavas et al., 2019). Considering the large household and income levels of Syrian families, they need affordable design solutions to meet their needs. Therefore, functional and adaptable use of space and effective use of surfaces are essential. Multifunctional, mass-produced, and affordable furniture and accessories also provide economic solutions for Syrians.

Accordingly, the proposed framework based on determining housing and interior design principles was developed for designers and researchers to adapt existing interior spaces appropriate to the needs of low- and middle-income Syrians living in Sultanbeyli, Turkey. The design principles associated with both the sociocultural and the physical components are explained with space, elements, and objects (**Table 3, 4, Table 5**). Space is defined by organization, elements are defined by surface, and objects are defined by furniture, accessories and decorative items. The design principles and subprinciples were ascertained through the literature review and the study results, while the indicators were revealed through the

| Adaptation to culture Home adapts to residents' culture | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| Indicators | Lifestyle Provide the needs and values of the household | | |
| | Space | Introverted lifestyle Meet the requirements of introverted lifestyle both for household and outsiders | Organization |
| | | Crowded lifestyle Meet needs and comfort conditions for a crowded lifestyle for extended or nuclear family structures | |
| | | Hierarchical relations and roles depending on lifestyle Maintain roles and relationships between individual and family members based on sex and age | |
| | Privacy Ensure spatial and sociocultural needs and allow interaction at different levels for household | | |
| | Space | Spatial segregation Define public and private areas in the use of space, separate toilet and bathroom spaces according to privacy and religious needs, and organize space to ensure the segregation of women's and men's spaces | Organization |
| | | Spatial orientation Organize toilet and bathroom spaces and fixtures based on privacy and religious beliefs | |
| | | Spatial separation or connection Ensure separation or connection of space in terms of household use, needs, and habits at different comfort levels | |
| | Element | Surface use Ensure privacy through the use of surfaces | Surface |
| | Object | Separation or connection Define space through furnishing and provide separation or connection of furniture and accessories for different uses. | Furniture & Accessories |
| | Appropriation Home reflects sociocultural identity and enables familiar interiors for personalization and beautification | | |
| | Space | Indoor and outdoor use Provide indoor and outdoor use for household | Organization |
| | | Day and night use Provide day and night use in space organization | |
| | Element | Multiuse surfaces Use wall surfaces to meet needs, preferences, and tastes of households and support multiuse of floor surface via placement of furniture and accessories | Surface |
| Object | Reflection of preferences Ensure cultural needs and preferences of individuals and households through selection, and/or placement of furniture, accessories, and decorative objects | Furniture , Accessories & Decorative items | |
| | Conveying messages Convey messages to provide identity, belonging, and familiarity needs of individuals and households through selection, and/or placement of furniture, accessories, and decorative objects | | |

Table 3. The principle of adaptation to culture

| | | | |
|--|---------|--|-------------------------|
| Flexibility Home adapts to different conditions for meeting the evolving needs of residents | | | |
| Indicators | Space | Multifunctional use Ensure multifunctional use of space appropriate to users' needs | Organization |
| | | Adaptation to use Ensure separation or connection of spaces appropriate to users' needs | |
| | Element | Effective use of surfaces Ensure multiuse of surfaces appropriate to users' needs | Surface |
| | | Increasing storage areas in use Increase storage by using surfaces and suitable areas appropriate to users' needs | |
| | Object | Multifunctional Design multifunctional furniture and accessories for meeting users' needs | Furniture & Accessories |
| | | Modular Design modular furniture and accessories made of compatible elements | |
| | | Adaptable Provide adaptable furniture and accessories through separation or connection | |
| | | Lightweight Produce easily movable furniture and accessories made of light material for different uses | |

Table 4. The principle of flexibility in use

| | | | |
|---|---------|---|-------------------------|
| Economy in design Home adapts to different conditions affordably | | | |
| Indicators | Space | Functional use Adapt space to support affordable, multifunctional use | Organization |
| | | Adaptable use Adapt space appropriately and affordably for users' needs | |
| | | Effective use Ensure affordable and appropriate multi-use surfaces | |
| | Element | Effective use Ensure affordable and appropriate multi-use surfaces | Surface |
| | | Multifunctional Use furniture and accessories that are multifunctional for meeting users' needs affordably | |
| | | Mass-produced Design furniture and accessories made of affordable, repeatable, and easily mass-produced components | |
| | Object | Affordable Use affordable furniture and accessories | Furniture & Accessories |
| | | | |

Table 5. The principle of economy in design

study results alone. Thus, three design principles are determined based on “adaptation to culture,” “flexibility in use,” and “economy in design.” The three sub-principles of “lifestyle,” “privacy,” and “appropriation” are also determined under the principle of adaptation to culture. They are also explained using a set of indicators.

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on finding a micro-scale solution for the housing needs of low- and middle-income Syrians living in Turkey within the existing

built environment from an interior design/architecture viewpoint. A framework has been developed to determine the housing and interior design principles—adaptation to culture, flexibility in use, and economy in design—and the sub-principles—lifestyle, privacy, and appropriation—under the principle of adaptation to culture, with indicators such as spatial segregation, multifunctional use, adaptability in use for designers and researchers for adapting existing residential interiors in compliance with Syrians' needs. Thus, it is aimed at increasing their residential satisfaction and facilitating sociospatial coexistence and cohesion between Syrians and local inhabitants.

The study results reveal that Syrians have modified their current residences to provide a symbolic, emotional, sociocultural, and territorialized place in a physical architectural shell. The spatial (i.e., space organization and surface treatment) and object-based (i.e., furniture, accessories, decorative items) cultural modifications are based on lifestyle (reflecting family structure and social interactions), privacy (allowing interaction and comfort at different levels and ensuring spatial and sociocultural needs), and appropriation (indicating daily routines and identifying personalization needs). In this sense, the study results affirm the literature on the housing and transcultural homemaking practices of refugees or immigrants (Boccagni, 2020; Bilecen, 2017; Boccagni and Brighenti, 2017; Taylor, 2015; Levin and Fincher, 2010; Rapoport, 2005). According to the results, Syrians' housing environments should also provide economical design solutions (Rottman, 2020) and flexible space use for making changes and adaptations appropriate to residents' needs (Dodsworth, 2009). Frequent moving of Syrians and their tenant and income status also reveal the importance of accessories and furniture—which can be affordable, modular, mass-produced, multifunctional, adaptable, lightweight, and commemorative—for designing the space through furnishing (Bilecen, 2017) and for providing a display of self (Zeisel, 2006), a sense of familiarity (Boccagni, 2020), and belonging (Esentepe and Günçe, 2019) to residents.

Thus, the proposed framework provides theoretical and practical contributions to the design field and guides designers (i.e., interior architects/designers, architects, and design students for educational purposes) in adapting existing residential stock—which is needed for social, cultural, physical, political, and economic aspects. The proposed framework can also be used by designers and developers to develop new housing environments for Syrians according to their needs. Besides developing a framework, this study contributes to research in relevant fields such as migration, refugee studies, housing, and homemaking and fills the gap in the literature providing on-site information, observation, and explorations regarding low- and middle-income Syrians' transcultural homemaking practices living in Turkey, and in-depth understanding and further analysis of Syrian's interior space preferences in relocation for researchers and designers. Furthermore, the study provides knowledge for developers and policymakers to develop economically, culturally, socially, and physically supportive housing environments and to lead sustainable policies for sociospatial coexistence and cohesion.

This study has limitations regarding the reservations of Syrian families to participate in the research and the language barrier between them and the researchers. The proposed framework can be revised according to the changing needs of Syrians and can be used to develop a framework for further studies. Additionally, the study will draw attention to the housing

needs of Syrians, both academically and in general, and will promote future research related to micro- and macro-scale housing studies and designs for refugees, immigrants, or low-income populations living in Turkey and abroad.

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Anahtar Sözcükler: Adaptasyon; tasarım prensipleri; evin yeniden inşası; konut iç mekanları; Suriyeliler

SULTANBEYLİ'DE YAŞAYAN ALT VE ORTA GELİR GRUBUNDAKİ SURİYELİLER İÇİN KONUT İÇ MEKANLARININ ADAPTASYONU

Mart 2011'den bu yana milyonlarca Suriyeli, Suriye'deki iç savaş sebebiyle Türkiye'ye sığınmıştır. Bu çalışma, mevcut yapısal çevre içinde, Türkiye'de yaşayan Suriyeliler ile yerel sakinler arasında bir arada yaşamayı ve uyumu kolaylaştırmak için iç mimarlık disiplininin bakış açısı ile Suriyelilerin barınma ihtiyacına mikro ölçekte odaklanmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, mevcut konut iç mekanlarının Türkiye'de yaşayan alt ve orta gelir grubuna mensup Suriyelilerin ihtiyaçlarına uygun olarak adapte edilmesi için tasarımcılar ve araştırmacılar için bir çerçeve geliştirmektir. Bu çalışma, ekonomik, kültürel, sosyal ve fiziksel olarak destekleyici yaşam alanlarının sağlanması için politika yapıcılara ve proje geliştiricilerine de bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu çerçeve, konut iç mekanına yönelik

tasarım ilke ve alt ilkelerinin belirlenmesine ve bunların bir dizi gösterge kullanılarak açıklanmasına dayanmaktadır. Bir vaka çalışması olan bu çalışmanın saha çalışması, İstanbul'un Sultanbeyli ilçesine bağlı Fatih Mahallesi'ndeki konutlarda yaşayan Suriyeli ailelerin gönüllü katılımı ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmada, literatür taramasının yanı sıra, görsel ve etnografik yöntemler ile veri toplanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler, görsel ve gözlem tabanlı veriler için açıklamalı diyagramlar ve görüşmeler için içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir. Böylece, Suriyelilerin kültürleri, yeniden ev kurma süreçleri ve konut ve kullanıma yönelik ihtiyaçları hakkında bütünsel bilgi elde edilmiştir. Çalışma sonuçlarına göre Suriyeliler, konut iç mekanlarında, yaşam tarzı, mahremiyet ve kendileme ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için kültürlerine uygun, esnek ve ekonomik, mekansal ve nesne tabanlı uyarlamalara ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Çalışma, literatüre Türkiye'den bir örnek sunarak hem teorik hem de uygulamaya dönük bilgi/katkı sağlayacak ve gelecekteki araştırmalara ışık tutacaktır.

ADAPTATION OF RESIDENTIAL INTERIORS FOR LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME SYRIANS LIVING IN SULTANBEYLİ, TURKEY

Millions of Syrians have fled to Turkey since March 2011 due to the civil war in Syria. To facilitate coexistence and cohesion between Syrians living in Turkey and local inhabitants, this study focuses on Syrians' housing needs on a micro-scale from the viewpoint of interior design/architecture. The purpose of this study is to develop a framework for designers and researchers to adapt existing residential interiors appropriate to low- and middle-income Syrians' needs. This study also provides a framework for developers and policymakers to achieve economically, culturally, socially, and physically supportive housing environments for Syrians. The proposed framework is based on determining housing and interior design principles and sub-principles and explaining them using a set of indicators. The field study of the case study was conducted with the voluntary participation of Syrian families in their residences in the Fatih neighborhood in Sultanbeyli, Istanbul. The data were obtained through visual and ethnographic methods in addition to the literature review. The data were then analyzed using annotated diagrams for visual and observation-based data and content analysis for interview questions. Thus, holistic information on Syrians' culture, housing needs, and homemaking practices was acquired. According to the study results, Syrians need flexible and economic spatial- and object-based adaptations in their residential interiors appropriate to their culture to meet their lifestyle, privacy, and appropriation needs. The study will provide theoretical and practical contributions to the literature by presenting an example from Turkey and promoting future research studies.

ÖZGE CORDAN; B.Arch, M.Sc., Ph.D.

Received her B. Arch, M. Arch and Ph.D. in Architecture from Black Sea Technical University (1992-2002). Major research interests include interior architecture/design and education, urban interiors, adaptive reuse, and housing and migration. cordan@itu.edu.tr; cordanozge@gmail.com

TALİA ÖZCAN AKTAN; B.Int.Arch, M.Art.

Received her bachelor's degree in interior architecture and environmental design from Ihsan Dogramacı Bilkent University (2014) and master's degree in interior architectural design in Istanbul Technical University (2019). She continues her Ph.D. in Landscape Architecture Doctorate Program in Institute of Science and Technology in Namik Kemal University. ozcanta15@gmail.com

