

UNIVERSITY ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAM:
A CASE STUDY IN TURKEY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

University Alumni Mentoring Program:

A Case Study in Turkey

This qualitative case study explored the university alumni mentoring program implemented by the alumni association of one of the state universities in Turkey. The purpose of the study was to analyze the program descriptively. The following questions guided the study: (1) What are the resources of the university alumni mentoring program? (2) Who participates in the program? (3) What are the activities of the program? (4) What are the outcomes of the program? The study utilized the logic model as a theoretical framework to address research questions. The study sample included one program director, ten student mentees, and ten alumni mentors. Semi-structured interviews and documents were used as data collection methods, and thematic analysis was applied to analyze data. The research findings revealed that mentoring relationships have various positive outcomes on participants' personal and professional lives, such as learning, self-awareness, improved skills, and gaining new perspectives. The study contributed to the literature by providing insights into the university alumni mentoring program development and implementation process. The findings highlight that the university alumni mentoring program has the potential to support lifelong learning experiences for student mentees and alumni mentors and can serve as an adult education tool.

ÖZET

Üniversite Mezun Mentorluk Programı:

Türkiye’de Bir Vaka Çalışması

Bu nitel vaka çalışması, Türkiye’deki devlet üniversitelerinden birinin mezunlar derneği tarafından uygulanan üniversite mezun mentorluk programını araştırmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı programı betimsel olarak incelemektir. Belirtilen araştırma soruları çalışmayı yönlendirmiştir: (1) Üniversite mezun mentorluk programının kaynakları nelerdir? (2) Programa kimler katılıyor? (3) Programın aktiviteleri nelerdir? (4) Programın sonuçları nelerdir? Çalışma, araştırma sorularını ele almak için teorik çerçeve olarak mantık modelini kullanmıştır. Çalışma örneklemini bir program direktörü, on öğrenci menti ve on mezun mentordan oluşmaktadır. Veri toplama yöntemi olarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve dokümanlar kullanılmış, verilerin analizinde tematik analiz uygulanmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, mentorluk ilişkilerinin katılımcıların kişisel ve mesleki yaşamları üzerinde öğrenme, öz farkındalık, gelişmiş beceriler, farklı bakış açıları kazanma gibi çeşitli olumlu sonuçları olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Çalışma, üniversite mezun mentorluk programının geliştirme ve uygulama sürecine ilişkin içgörüler sağlayarak literatüre katkıda bulunmuştur. Bulgular, üniversite mezun mentorluk programının, öğrenci mentilerin ve mezun mentorların yaşam boyu öğrenme deneyimlerini destekleme potansiyeline sahip olduğunu ve yetişkin eğitimi aracı olarak hizmet edebileceğini vurgulamaktadır.

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To my family...

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and key definitions will be presented.

1.1 Background

In the 21st century, there are many uncertainties and ambiguities in various areas of individuals' lives. They bring together concerns about life, career path, and work choices. While facing these concerns, people may need guidance and support from their peers, teachers, academic advisors, or more experienced adults. At that point, the availability of someone to go and talk about those concerns can be crucial for individuals, especially if there is a relationship that promotes assistance and courage. This reciprocal supportive relationship is often referred to as mentoring (Elliott et al., 2011).

Mentoring is defined as a mentee-mentor relationship based on sharing the competencies of a knowledgeable and experienced person with a less experienced person who is open to learning in specific frameworks (Jacobi, 1991). The mentoring relationship can have several benefits; for example, adults in a work setting can develop their professional competency and integrity, making stronger connections with the work environment (Allen et al., 2006). Students in a university setting can establish their identity, increase academic success and develop professional competence (Crisp & Cruz, 2009).

In today's world, mentoring programs are applied widely in different fields such as schools, workplaces, and businesses with various purposes (Givens-Skeaton, Baetz, & D'Abate, 2003). These purposes can change from supporting personal and

social development, increasing the potential of people to supporting career development, and facilitating adoption of the institutional culture. Although the goals are varied depending on the institution and the field in which mentoring programs take place, generally, mentoring programs aim to strengthen the psychosocial and professional competencies of the participating individuals (Schlee, 2000).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Mentoring research conducted in the literature shows the mentoring relationships in different contexts and for various targeted groups such as employers in the workplace settings, educators in educational organizations, disadvantaged groups (women and minorities), underrepresented students in school, and youth in the society (Coles, 2011; Gibson, 2004; Raposa & Hurd, 2021). In the adult education context, mentoring studies focused mainly on mentoring programs designed for new teacher education and retention (Andrea, 2010; Matthews, 2015; Waterman & He, 2011). However, in the higher education context, mentoring first-generation college students, undergraduate university students to faculty, and peer-to-peer are the most studied groups. In contrast, the mentoring programs conducted through alumni associations or career centers in universities are less commonly researched (McAtee, 2012).

McAtee (2012, p. 35) stated that “Less common programs include mentoring programs in partnership with alumni associations... While these programs are less common, they are just as important as the more widely established programs.”

McAtee (2012) argued that although there are few university alumni mentoring programs compared to other mentoring programs, their importance cannot be denied. It is crucial to note that the importance of the mentoring relationship in a university

setting comes from the fact that students face lots of uncertainties, and the mentor can help the mentee overcome difficulties by providing the necessary insights. In other words, the mentors can become a beacon of hope for the mentees at breaking points and crossroads (Cohen & Galbraith, 1995). Besides the importance of the relationship, there is a gap in the literature to explain the mentoring relationship constructed between university students and alumni mentors through mentoring programs. There is a need for the study to understand this relationship and the outcomes of university alumni mentoring programs on mentors and mentees. In this study, the learning experiences of adult mentees and mentors will be investigated through the mentoring concept in the context of higher education.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The aim of this single case study is to provide an analysis of the university alumni mentoring program implemented by the alumni association of one of the state universities in Turkey.

1.4 Research questions

This study will investigate four main research questions to analyze the university alumni mentoring program descriptively:

- i. What are the resources of the university alumni mentoring program?
- ii. Who participates in the program?
- iii. What are the activities of the program?
- iv. What are the outcomes of the program?

1.5 Significance of the study

At most universities, both public and private, mentoring programs exist that involve staff-to-staff mentoring, which includes guidance of more experienced academics to novice educators (Morgan & Smit, 2001); faculty-to-students mentoring, where students take supervision from faculty members to advance their academic progress; and peer-to-peer mentoring, where an older student support a younger student in the transition process to the school (Husband & Jacobs, 2009). Besides the staff-to-staff, faculty-to-student, and peer-to-peer advising, there are also university alumni mentoring programs where university students are paired with alumni of the university with a profession in the relevant area. Kuh et al. (2010) stated that encouraging these mentoring programs is crucial to creating a nurturing and supportive university culture where students can take guidance about the academic courses, career paths to follow, and personal issues.

Although the mentoring programs based on faculty-to-faculty and students-to-faculty were researched most, there is a gap in the literature on university alumni mentoring programs (Ehrich et al., 2004; Lunsford, 2011; Putsche et al., 2008). This study can provide a rigorous understanding of the implementation of the university alumni mentoring program, its effective and challenging aspects, and outcomes for the participant alumni mentors and student mentees. The insights from this study can be helpful for program practitioners in planning, evaluating, and communicating the results of the university alumni mentoring programs. In addition to program practitioners, higher education policymakers can utilize the research findings to build an understanding of the mentoring relationship and the development of mentoring curricula in higher education institutions.

1.6 Definition of key terms

Mentoring: “a developmental, caring, sharing, and helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how and effort in enhancing another person’s growth, knowledge and skills and responds to critical needs in the life of that person in ways that prepare the individual for greater productivity or achievement in the future” (Shea, 1994, p. 13).

E-mentoring: “a mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor and a protégé, which provides new learning as well as career and emotional support, primarily through e-mail and other electronic means (e.g., instant messaging, chat rooms, social networking spaces, etc.)” (Ensher & Murphy, 2007, p. 300).

Mentee: Less experienced or knowledgeable person who needs guidance from a mentor. The mentee can also be referred to as a protégé, apprentice, student, or learner (Davis, 2005).

Mentor: “Individuals with advanced experience, knowledge, wisdom, skills, and influence who provide support to and promote the career development of their protégé through an interactive relationship” (D’Abate & Eddy, 2008, p. 363).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will investigate the literature review in regard to mentoring. The chapter will start with the historical background of mentoring, its definition, and the types of mentoring relationships. Mentoring studies from different disciplines, mentoring in higher and adult education, and the mentoring studies conducted in Turkey will be explored, respectively. Lastly, the theoretical framework of the study will be presented.

2.1 Historical background of mentoring

A mentoring relationship is a supportive relationship between two people, generally the youth and non-parental adults. These two people are named the “mentee” and the “mentor”. The mentee is the less-experienced person who seeks guidance; in contrast, the mentor is a more- experienced and wiser individual who is ready to contribute to the development and growth of the mentee (D’Abate & Eddy, 2008). Although mentoring is trendy nowadays, it is not a new concept. In history, the idea of “Mentoring” dates back to ancient times (Dickey, 1996).

“Mentor” is a French word used in many fields, with the meanings of “advisor, coaching, director,” and its’ origin is based on Greek mythology (Dennis, 1993). According to Homer’s narrative, *Odyssey*, the Ithaca King Odysseus has a trusted friend named Mentor who prepared him for the war; when Odysseus went to the war, he entrusted his son Telemachus to Mentor. Throughout the 20 years until the king’s return to the war, Telemachus was educated and raised by the king's knowledgeable friend Mentor. A special name, “Mentor” has survived from that time

to the present day. This story has been thought of as the starting point of the concept of mentoring (Miller, 2002).

Besides the mythological origin, the usage of the “Mentor” concept is also seen in different stories in history. For example, in “*The Adventures of Telemak*,” which was written by Fenelon in 1699, the term “Mentor” was used as Telemak’s emotional and intellectual role model (Mueller, 2004). Over time, the term “Mentor” has been used to describe a person as a guide with wisdom and expertise (Bierema & Merriam, 2002). History bears witness famous examples of mentoring, such as the extraordinary relationships formed between Socrates and Plato, Aristotle and Alexander Great, and Freud and Jung (Lucas, 2001).

2.2 Definitions of mentoring

When the mentoring literature is reviewed, there is no consistent definition of mentoring, and the definitions vary across different fields (Hurley, 1998). Regarding the various definitions of mentoring, Merriam (1983) stated that:

“The phenomenon of mentoring is not clearly conceptualized, leading to confusion as to just what is being measured or offered as an ingredient in success. Mentoring appears to mean one thing to developmental psychologists, another thing to businesspeople, and a third thing to those in academic settings” (p. 169).

Whereas the definition from the management field emphasized the career development aspect, the psychology field constructs the definition in terms of personal and social development. The education field stressed the learning aspect while defining mentoring relationships (Friday et al., 2004). Although there is no single definition of mentoring, there is a high consistency in the concept of mentoring among most scholars (Haggard et al., 2011; Wanberg et al., 2003). Mentoring should be developmental and interactional, involving mutual learning and

shared experience. Mentors should help mentees develop themselves personally and professionally by providing psychological support and professional guidance (Kram, 1985).

2.3 Types of the mentoring relationship

Mentoring studies have traditionally categorized as naturally occurred or planned mentoring relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). The literature showed that the early mentoring studies primarily focused on the mentoring relationship that occurs naturally between mentee and mentor. If there is no organizational involvement while the connection is formed, this relationship is described as traditional mentoring (Chao et al., 1992). The start of a relationship can be with the initiative of the mentee or mentor, and the maintenance of the relationship involves the personal investment of both parties. With the advancement of this natural relationship, the connection between mentee and mentor can turn into a very personal and intense relationship (Kram, 1985).

The widespread research on naturally occurring mentoring showed that mentoring can result in positive outcomes and has generated more interest in the dynamics of the mentoring relationship. When the organizations recognized the benefits of mentoring relationships for organizations and individuals, they started to run mentoring programs to gain positive outcomes as in the traditional mentoring relationship (Scandura & Viator, 1994). The other reason the organizations decided to conduct mentoring programs is to realize the power of mentoring in the organizational learning process (Tannenbaum, 1997). Although many traditional training programs are conducted in the organization, their effectiveness on organizational learning involves only a small percentage; if training programs

accompany the mentoring, efficacy can be increased (Benabou & Benabou, 1999).

With the planned administration of the mentoring relationship, organizations believed that they could obtain favorable outcomes from mentoring for a greater number of employees (Fogarty & Dirsmith, 2001).

A planned mentoring relationship includes a structure where the organization manages the mentoring process (Ragins et al., 2000). Unlike the naturally developed mentoring relationship, structured mentoring has procedures, rules, and guidelines. Murray (2002) defined structured mentoring programs as planned interventions implemented by an organization that often involves one-to-one relationships. They can differ in their purpose, activities, and duration. In addition to this, how mentors and mentees matched, whether the participants attend the program voluntarily, how often the interaction takes place between mentor and mentee, and whether there is a program evaluation that can change across different mentoring programs (Jacobi, 1991).

Besides the categorization of naturally occurred vs. planned mentoring relationships, mentoring programs can differ based on the physical settings of the relationship. As the technology offers a solution for locational and time constraints, alongside the traditional face-to-face mentoring relationships, distance or e-mentoring has gained the attention of the organizations (Wilbanks, 2014). In this case, contact between mentor and mentee, mentor training, and evaluations are carried through online platforms (Headlam-Wells et al., 2005).

2.4 Mentoring studies from different disciplines

Mentoring studies have started to receive their place in the literature since the mid-1970s in management, psychology, and education (Allen et al., 2006). Although it is

hard to specify the beginning of studies on the mentoring concept, the “*Men and Women of the Corporation*” book published by Kanter (1977) and the “*Much ado about mentors*” article published by Roch (1979) is accepted as the early studies in mentoring studies in the management field. At these times, Levinson et al. (1978) published a book named “*Seasons of a Man’s Life*” which can be considered a pioneer study in the mentoring literature in the psychology field where the mentoring concept and its effect on adults’ psychological state and career development discussed.

In the literature, the “Mentoring” concept started to be seen more in business, management and organization, and human resources in America and Europe in the 1980s (Underhill, 2006). In these studies, a mentor who worked and gained experience in the organization gives guidance to their subordinates. The importance of mentoring relationships in the career development process is explained. Although there were other books and articles in the literature, Kram’s dissertation (1980), where the researcher investigated 18 managers working in the same institution and how mentoring can affect employees’ professional development, is considered pioneer research on mentoring. Her following journal article, “*Phases of a mentor relationship*” (1983), and the book “*Mentoring at Work*” (1985) is also accepted as essential milestones in the mentoring literature. Today, Kram’s studies and her mentoring conceptualization continue to shed light on numerous researchers.

Whereas mentoring literature has long been focused on professional workplace settings, business, and management areas, with the recognition of mentoring as a developmental relationship that individuals can experience in adulthood and the acceptance of mentoring as an example of experiential learning; the popularity of mentoring programs extends beyond the organizations and reaches

the educational setting, resulting in growing literature on mentoring in adult and higher education (e.g., Bova, 1987; Hughes, 1988; Moses, 1989).

Some studies investigate mentoring as an essential source of learning for students and educators in adult and higher education settings such as educational organizations, colleges, and universities (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Harnish & Wild, 1994; Rhodes, 2002; Nettles & Millet, 2006). Johnson (1989) emphasized mentoring as an effective strategy for retention and enrichment and focused on developmental interaction in which the mentor supported the mentee's personal, academic, social, and career development.

2.5 Mentoring in adult and higher education

As the mentoring concept is encountered in different sectors in the literature, an essential role of mentoring has become noticeable in adult and higher education (Allen & Eby, 2007). According to Ragins and Kram (2007), mentoring provides an active learning environment where adult mentees and mentors can engage in lifelong learning practices through reflection and critical thinking.

From an adult education lens, Knowles (1970) considered adult learners as self-directed learners who learn best experientially by bringing their previous experiences and knowledge to the learning environment and associating them with new learnings. Adult learners are intrinsically motivated to solve real-life problems and responsible for their learning processes. According to Chinnasamy (2013), mentoring is an innovative tool suited to adult learning theory. In mentoring, while mentors generally serve as facilitators and provide a suitable environment for learning, adult mentees are ready to learn and actively involved in their learning processes. The life experiences that mentors and mentees bring to the mentoring

relationship enrich the learning environment and promote developmental interactions for both parties (Zachary, 2005)

When the mentoring literature is reviewed, the growing interest in mentoring studies in a higher education context involves mentees and mentors as adult learners. For example, colleges and universities encourage educators to develop mentoring relationships to promote a qualified and diverse learning environment. The early studies (e.g., Astin, 1977; Pascarella, 1980; Wilson et al., 1975) that analyzed the effect of the faculty-student relationship provided a foundation for mentoring studies in higher education. Jacobi's (1991) article named "*Mentoring and Undergraduate academic success: A literature review*" is considered critical in the progress of mentoring literature.

As the mentoring concept takes attention, many mentoring programs started to be actively held in colleges and universities (Rhodes et al., 2002). As evidence, Michigan State University, Curtin University, and the University of Western Sydney can be shown (Curtin University, 2011; Dearlove et al., 2007). Although the purposes and processes of mentoring differ across several mentoring programs, the general mentoring concept in academia involves the dynamic, multidimensional and nurturing relationship between an experienced expert and a less experienced individual (Healy, 1997). Scholars emphasized mentoring as an intervention expected to create a powerful interaction between students, faculty, and colleagues and accepted the mentoring concept universally in higher education (Daloz, 1983; Gershenfeld, 2014).

In higher education, mentoring programs have started to be implemented in university and college settings where academics, counselors, and coaches generally serve as a mentor to the students (Girves et al., 2005). One of the most common

mentoring relationships is the one that occurs between faculty-to-student, where the academics advise students about the research processes. In addition, the mentoring relationship developed through peer-to-peer, where an older student supports a younger student in terms of academic issues and transition to university (McLearn et al., 1998). The least studied mentoring relationship involves student and alumni, where the student and alumni are matched based on shared interests and desired career goals (Nora & Crisp, 2007).

Although there was no sufficient study for mentoring programs in the educational literature, the primary purposes of these programs are enriching students' connection to the university, strengthening students' social and developmental identity, and preparing them for professional careers (Goff, 2011). In the higher education context, university alumni mentoring programs are conducted to support students in choosing their career paths, developing students' work competency, and providing perspective on the business life by connecting them with alumni (Renuga & Ezhilan, 2014). Besides the graduate employability issue, these mentoring programs can also benefit student retention by providing a unique experience for university students (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). In the light of these, it can be said that mentoring programs in university settings are designed for different aims such as career development, increasing graduation rates, and retention and have become a vital component of higher education.

When the examples of university alumni mentoring programs in the literature reviewed, although various programs with different goals and structures exist, the alumni-student specific area of mentoring is not widely examined (Renuga & Ezhilan, 2014). A few studies (Gannon & Maher, 2012; Lopatka et al., 2011;

Skrzypek et al., 2019) focus on university alumni mentoring in a higher education setting.

In one of these mentoring studies, Gannon and Maher (2012) explored a mentoring program implemented by a UK university where university students are matched with alumni. The mixed-method design was used; surveys and interviews were conducted to explore program components and participants' reactions to the program. The study revealed that to design and implement a successful mentoring program, the systematic approach that involves the four key processes – matching of participants, preparation, the interaction between student and alumni, and outcome components are vital. The study also presented the benefits and challenges occurring during the mentoring relationship.

In another study, Lopatka et al. (2011) conducted a pilot project that lasted 8-month at the University of Alberta. The pharmacy undergraduate students were matched with alumni pharmacists to support students' transition to work life. A mixed-method design was applied to evaluate program processes and participants' interests at the end of the program. Results showed that both students and alumni found the program beneficial and considered program processes sufficient. Students stated that the mentoring relationship was very satisfying in finding answers to their career-related questions. The university decided to conduct an extended version of the project in the next academic year with these findings.

In their study, Skrzypek et al. (2019) developed and conducted an alumni student mentoring program where they matched students in a school of social work with alumni of social work. The program's purpose was to address the needs of mentors and mentees by fostering the connection between alumni and students. The

benefits of the mentoring program were explored, and the mentoring model, which explains how to plan, develop and implement a mentoring program, was presented.

2.5.1 Mentoring: motivations & expectations

When the literature reviewed regarding mentoring motivations and expectations, a few research studies (Bernard, 2001; Conner, 2015; Dollinger et al., 2019) have shown that mentees and mentors participate in university alumni mentoring programs with several motivations and expectations.

The study by Bernard (2001) explored the need for a mentoring program and expectations from mentoring through the survey questionnaires conducted with university students and alumni professionals. The analysis of 90 university students' survey responses revealed that students expect networking opportunities, professional growth, skills development, and career and academic guidance. The great majority of alumni professionals indicated that they didn't have a chance to get mentoring during their university years, which negatively affected their career journey. They emphasized the importance of mentoring and reported that they would like to assist students as mentors.

In the case study of Conner (2015), student mentees' expectations of participating in a university alumni mentoring program were explored in one of the private universities in Northern California. The interview findings with seven students showed that university students participated in the university alumni mentoring program with the expectations of finding answers to their career and academic-oriented questions, getting help in the decision-making process, and meeting with someone knowledgeable.

Dollinger et al. (2019) conducted a mixed-method study exploring the motivations of student mentees and alumni mentors through three different programs implemented in a research-intensive university. The findings revealed that while alumni mentors participated in the program to support students' career journeys and give back to the university, student mentees had career-specific expectations.

2.5.2 Mentoring: benefits & challenges

When the literature reviewed in terms of benefits and challenges, research has revealed that establishing mentoring programs between the student and alumni in higher education settings has both benefits and challenges for students, alumni, and institutions.

Mentoring can have two main functions for student mentees: career and psychosocial support (Kram, 1985). Career support involves the development of the mentee's professional goals and identity. The mentor can help the mentee plan a career successfully, set goals, and save time in reaching the right resources and people (Brown, 2007). Thanks to the network and experiences of the mentor, the mentee can develop and establish good relations with other mentors who have developed themselves in professional fields and meet with the key people in the area, which enables the mentee's entry into the profession. In addition to career development, mentoring can also provide psychosocial support; the mentor can share the specific aspects of personal life with the mentee to enable the mentee's progress toward the desired position. The encouragement provided by the mentor can increase the mentee's motivation and self-confidence (Clark et al., 2000). The other potential benefits of mentoring practices can be developing critical thinking and growing

intellectual abilities, and learning specific skills and coping strategies against stress and ambiguities (Dragovich & Margeton, 1995).

The potential benefits of mentoring practices for alumni mentors are increasing spiritual pleasure by helping another person, servicing the community, and gaining different perspectives on events and situations. In addition, they get closer to the sector they are in and increase professional motivation, improve knowledge diversity, have a mentee network, and expand their colleague network (Pfeifer, 2002). While mentoring is vital for mentees, it is essential to emphasize that mentoring can also positively affect mentors. For example, hearing ideas and feedback from mentees can create a potential for career development. Guiding someone can affect the mentor's enthusiasm, resulting in an accomplishment feeling (Ghosh & Reio, 2013).

Implementing the mentoring program can also provide rewards from the institution's perspective. Firstly, mentoring relationship supports the connection of mentors and mentees to the university, which creates a sense of belonging and strengthens ties to the institution. Eventually, the cooperation between alumni, students, and the university can promote productivity and increase commitment. If the mentoring experience of the alumni and students who engaged in the program is positive, they can be the future financial investors of the university (Tyran & Garcia, 2005). In addition to these, mentoring can serve as a retention tool by providing nurturing learning environment and enabling students to develop positive attitudes toward the university (Spivey-Mooring & Apprey, 2014).

Although there are several potential benefits of mentoring, the literature showed that there could be some challenges and strengths in a mentoring relationship (Scandura, 1998). Long (1997) expressed that "under various conditions, the

mentoring relationship can be detrimental to the mentor, mentee or both” (p. 115). Firstly, while mentors try to set goals for students, their background may not be enough to interpret student potential accurately, resulting in setting too high or low goals. Another strength can come from giving career advice that directs students in favor of a mentor’s career path (Sandler, 1995). At this point, listening to students’ interests and being objective about the expertise areas is crucial. It is important to note that mentors cannot be everything for mentees, and not clearly defining the boundaries for mentor relationships can create challenges. Another challenge can arise from a student who demands too much help and time from their mentors; in the reverse situation, where the mentee is disengaged and reluctant to participate in meetings, relationship conflicts can occur (Sandler, 1995). For example, if students do not show up to arranged mentoring sessions, this situation can cause a negative experience for mentors.

From the institution’s perspective, planning, implementing, and assessing the mentoring program can be challenging regarding time, money, and support. It is important to note that developing a mentoring process requires detailed planning and high commitment. Each cycle of the mentoring relationship, selection, matching, training, and guiding process, which require human, financial and organizational resources, should be carefully designed. Finding these resources, such as staff and funding, can be a drawback. If there is insufficient funding or no sponsorship for the program, this situation can cause poor planning and an unsuccessful mentoring process. Another challenge can be promoting, communicating, and increasing program visibility; if there is a lack of support from the leaders of the organization and stakeholders, the program cannot transmit the value to attract and encourage potential participants to give their time and effort to the program (Douglas, 1997).

2.5.3 Mentoring: outcomes

When the literature is reviewed in terms of mentoring outcomes for mentees and mentors, the findings mostly reveal positive outcomes; in contrast, there is comparably little research that reports negative outcomes.

To begin with, mentee outcomes; support and encouragement, improving knowledge and strategies, sharing ideas, and feedback are reported as important outcomes. For example, literature studies (Murphy & Ensher, 2001; Orpen, 1995) investigating graduate employability showed that students who were the mentees in university alumni mentoring programs were more satisfied with their careers than the other students who did not attend the mentoring programs. Participating in the mentoring program also increases student satisfaction and productivity (Tenenbaum, Crosby, & Gliner, 2001). University students perceive the time spent in mentoring as valuable, and they can get a clearer picture of their roadmap after school (Schlee, 2000). In addition, studies (Campbell & Campbell, 1997; Phinney et al., 2011; Thomas, 2000) revealed that mentoring practices help students connect more with school, resulting in better academic performance and retention.

In addition to mentoring outcomes on students, it is also essential to understand what the mentors gain by participating in a mentoring program and the effects of mentoring practice on their personal, social, and professional lives. From the mentor perspective, studies (Hanson, 1996; Murray et al., 1998; Spargo, 1994) showed that networking, a reflection of ideas and values, professional development, and personal satisfaction are the most cited positive outcomes. Dollinger et al. (2019) conducted a study investigating how participating in a university alumni mentoring program affected mentors' connection and feeling toward the university. The

findings revealed that most mentors indicated that they felt like community members and wanted to continue their mentoring practices in the following programs.

Priest and Donley (2014) conducted an exploratory case study where the outcomes of the university alumni mentoring program were assessed. With the participation of three mentors and four student mentees, the evaluative research was implemented through interviews. The study findings showed that the university alumni mentoring program impacts mentors' professional and personal development. Mentors indicated that they had a chance to transfer leadership techniques in professional life to the mentoring relationship. In this way, they improved their mentoring skills in all areas of their life, and they wanted to continue their mentoring practices in the following programs.

On the other hand, few studies (Eby et al., 2000; Eby & Allen, 2002; Scandura, 1998) addressed adverse mentoring outcomes. From the mentee's perspective, mismatched values and personality, lack of career and psychological support, and absenteeism are negative outcomes (Eby & Allen, 2002). Developing a comfortable and effective mentoring relationship becomes impossible when students do not match mentors with similar values, individual characteristics, and communication styles (Turban & Lee, 2007). Another negative outcome is a lack of career support; mentees stated that they could not find the support they were looking for in the mentoring relationship and failed to take guidance. For example, when mentees ask for advice about job opportunities or graduate school, mentors can be reluctant to provide guidance, and they can expect mentees to find their road independently.

Similarly, when the mentor is not approachable and if there is a lack of trust and mutual respect in the relationship, it can cause discouraging mentees who have

no motivation, interest, or appreciation. Absenteeism has also been addressed as a negative outcome. When the mentor is too busy to offer availability, the mentee cannot reach the mentor, and regular mentoring meetings cannot be actualized, resulting in limited contact and communication (Eby et al., 2000).

From the mentor perspective, studies (Bush & Coleman, 1995; Ganser, 1995; Hanson, 1996) reported that shortage of time, dissonance in matching, such as unsuccessful matching of personalities and professional expertise, the additional load of mentoring responsibilities, and the lack of understanding of the mentoring process are the most common negative outcomes.

2.5.4 The need for mentoring programs

Although there are several benefits of mentoring for mentees, mentors, and universities, many university students cannot receive mentoring for different reasons. One reason can be the individuals' busyness, mentoring can require too much time, and some people can be worried about being crushed under the mentoring's demands (Keller et al., 2014). The other reason can be fear; some people can avoid mentoring since they feel incompetent to find a mentor (Pomeroy & Steiker, 2011). Another important reason can be the unawareness of the value of mentoring; people may be reluctant to develop a mentoring relationship because they are not sure about how this relationship will contribute to their life (Simon et al., 2004).

At that point, the availability of a university alumni mentoring program that offers an opportunity for students who cannot connect with alumni is crucial. The mentoring programs can provide a structure that describes the expectations from the mentors and mentees, the roles and responsibilities, the scope and boundaries of the relationship, and the frequency of meetings. With the program structure, people may

feel more comfortable developing mentoring relationships because they can see the expectations and how much time they need to spare to be a part of the mentoring relationship.

Another vital characteristic of the mentoring program is implementing a recruitment and matching process. The students who feel incompetent about finding mentors can be matched with alumni ready to provide support and guidance to mentees; in this way, students can create a valuable relationship (Dow, 2014). Mentoring programs can also provide training on how the mentoring process works and teach students and alumni strategies to develop an effective mentoring relationship.

The other important point regarding a mentoring program is its potential to minimize the negative outcomes of mentoring. As mentioned previously, there is also a dark side to mentoring, and there is a need for careful organization and implementation of mentoring relationships to avoid problematic outcomes. The strategies of providing training, the sensitive recruitment process for participants, the careful matching of mentor and mentee, and ongoing evaluations and assessments are critical to promoting positive outcomes. The detailed administration of mentoring relationships within a program scope can minimize problems and promote the potential benefits.

2.6 Mentoring studies in Turkey

When the literature on mentoring studies conducted in Turkey is examined, there are studies (Akçamete et al., 2010; Gümüş & Gök, 2016; Kılınç & Alparslan, 2014; Sezgin et al., 2014; Tükeltürk and Balcı, 2014) investigating mentoring practices implemented in educational institutions. For example, the mentoring of the school

administrator to promote their training process; mentoring novice teachers to prepare them for the teaching profession; mentoring pre-service teachers, and mentoring research assistants to support their development and adaptation to the academy.

In one of these studies, Kılınç and Alparslan (2014) conducted a focus group study to explore the necessity and effectiveness of mentoring programs in higher education and the expectations of participating mentors and mentees. The study participants involved university students and faculty members, and findings revealed that the mentoring system is necessary for both the student and the university. It has the potential to contribute to each stakeholder's social and professional development.

In another study, Akçamete et al. (2010) examined the mentorship skills of teachers who serve as mentor teachers to novice teachers. The Mentorship Skills Evaluation Tool was applied to 202 teacher candidates to evaluate their mentor teacher in communication, teaching-learning skills, and professional development. The findings revealed that the mentoring skills differ at school levels. In the study of Sezgin et al. (2014), the mentoring roles of school administrators were investigated from the perceptions of school teachers and vice-principals. As research participants, ten school teachers and ten vice-principals were interviewed. The study results showed that both vice-principals and school teachers believed that mentoring is very important in providing career, personal and social development.

On the other hand, Tükeltürk and Balcı (2014) focused on the institutionalization of mentoring practices in a university setting. The study investigated the mentoring expectations of university students for masters and doctorates, and the questionnaire that measures the benefits of mentoring programs and characteristics of mentors was applied to 500 students. The findings revealed that the assistance provided by the academic advisors could support the graduate and

doctoral students in various aspects. In conclusion, the study results supported the idea that the institutionalization of mentoring practices in universities and an efficient implementation process can lead to positive effects. Another study about mentoring in higher education was conducted by Gümüş and Gök (2016) revealed that mentoring has an important place in the careers of research assistants. With the help of experienced faculty members and their transfer of experience and knowledge about the institution and academic profession, new faculty members can adapt quickly to the academic community.

Besides these studies, there are no published mentoring studies about university students who take mentoring from alumni in the higher education field in Turkey.

2.7 Theoretical framework

A logic model (a logical framework or theory of change) is a model used by program managers and evaluators to reveal what the program is trying to accomplish and how (Weiss, 1997). The logic model has been used since the late 1960s. Nowadays, it is more popular since there is a greater emphasis on communicating the program's results with others and measuring its success. Wholey (1987) stated that the basic logic model includes three main components: program inputs, outputs, and outcomes. The logic model provides the road map for the program by declaring the resources, activities, and results of the program and can be used in program design, implementation, and evaluation processes (Taylor-Powell & Henert, 2008).

In the basic logic model, program resources/inputs are what the program invests in, such as organizational, financial, and human resources. The outputs component includes the program activities and participation. The program activities

are explained as what is done with the program inputs, such as conducting training, workshops, and providing services; program participation describes who the program reaches. The last component of the model, outcomes, shows the program's impact, such as knowledge, awareness, and learning gained in the program, behavior, and practice change (McLaughlin & Jordan, 2010). The program impact can be measured as short, medium, and long-term outcomes.

With the logic model, the program can be described as which resources are transformed into certain processes to produce desired outcomes of the program. In this study, the inputs/resources component of the logic model will be investigated as an answer to the first research question: what are the resources of the university alumni mentoring program are. The outputs component will be analyzed with the second and third research questions- who participate in the program and what the activities are; and the last component of the logic model, outcomes, will be outlined with the fourth research question of the study: what the outcomes of the program for participants are. Since the study is conducted right after the university alumni program is completed, only the short-term effects are explored for this research study in the context of the logic model.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology used to provide an analysis of the university alumni mentoring program will be presented. The chapter will start with the nature of the research (3.1), followed by a pilot study (3.2). Research participants (3.3), instruments (3.4), data collection procedures (3.5), data analysis (3.6), ethical considerations (3.7), and researchers' reflexivity (3.8) will be explored, respectively.

3.1 Nature of the research

The qualitative single case study approach was applied to analyze the university alumni mentoring program. When the characteristics of a qualitative study are considered, the focus is on the process, and qualitative research wants to understand how participants make meaning from their experiences (Patton, 2015). The other characteristic of the qualitative design is a human instrument. While trying to understand the phenomena under investigation, the researcher serves as a primary instrument for data collection and analysis processes.

For this study, the focus is on the bounded-system, university alumni mentoring program, and the study investigated the program processes and how participating mentors and mentees interpret the program. According to Yin (2014), "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case ') within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p.16). At this point, using a qualitative case study method that investigates the specific unit of study was meaningful for this study.

This study explores the four main main research questions to analyze the university alumni mentoring program descriptively:

- i. What are the resources of the university alumni mentoring program?
- ii. Who participates in the program?
- iii. What are the activities of the program?
- iv. What are the outcomes of the program?

3.2 Pilot study

The pilot study was conducted with two alumni mentors and two student mentees in September 2021. The pilot study aimed to learn the feasibility of interview questions and if there is a need to improve interview protocol. Each participant asked 11 questions, and the interviews were recorded to review. The interviewing practices showed that the interview took 30-45 minutes to complete. For this reason, the amount of time needed for the interview process was changed from 45-60 minutes to 30- 45 minutes in the interview protocol.

With the results of the pilot study, the researcher realized that some descriptive questions needed to be supported by sub-questions. For example, question six on the mentor and mentee pilot protocols was “What are your evaluations (thoughts, feelings, etc.) for the mentoring program?” This question was supported by two sub-questions, “What were the strengths of this program?” and “What were the areas for open improvement?” to address research questions.

Another modification was revising the wording in question seven on both the mentor and mentee interview protocols. In the pilot study, participants were asked about their experience in the mentoring program. The researcher used two probing questions to deeply investigate their experience: “What were the challenging parts of

your mentoring experience?” and “What were the rewarding parts of your mentoring experience?”. In the second probing question, the rewarding term seemed to focus too much on awards received during the mentoring program, which was not intended to ask. Instead, the term effective was used, and the question was revised to “What were the effective parts of your mentoring experience?”

3.3 Participants

The study involved 21 participants: one program director, ten student mentees and ten alumni mentors. The demographic information of interviewees (students, alumni, and a mentoring program director) is shown in following tables (Table 1 and Table 2). A pseudonym (a number) was used for each research participant to protect their identity.

Participant profiles

According to Table 1, six female and four male students, ranging in age from 21 to 24, participated in the study. Student mentees’ grades changed between 2nd grade to 4th grade, and their departments were various, education, arts and sciences, administrative sciences, engineering, and applied disciplines. Eighty percent of the participants are from the junior and senior years of the university who are preparing to enter business life.

Table 1. Profiles of Interviewed Student Mentees

Pseudonyms	Sex	Age	Grade	Program
1	F	23	3rd	Computer Education and Educational Technology
2	F	24	4th	Mathematics
3	F	21	2nd	Tourism Administration
4	M	24	4th	Tourism Administration
5	M	22	2nd	International Trade
6	F	23	3rd	Sociology
7	F	23	4th	Computer Engineering
8	M	22	3rd	Psychology
9	F	23	4th	Civil Engineering
10	M	22	3rd	Molecular Biology and Genetics

As shown in Table 2, five female, five male alumni mentor and one male program administrator, ranging in age from 28 to 54, participated in the study. In terms of educational background, nine participants completed master's degree whereas two participants completed bachelors degree. The undergraduate program of participants varied with education, engineering, administrative sciences, arts and sciences, and applied disciplines.

Table 2. Profiles of Interviewed Alumni Mentor and Program Director

Pseudonyms	Sex	Age	Years Passed since Graduation	Undergraduate Program	Educational Background
11	M	31	5-10 years	Mathematics and Science Education	Master's Degree
12	M	35	11-15 years	Chemical Engineering	Bachelor's Degree
13	F	53	20+ years	Economics	Master's Degree
14	F	28	5-10 years	Mathematics	Master's Degree
15	M	37	11-15 years	Chemical Engineering	Master's Degree
16	M	50	20+ years	Mechanical Engineering	Master's Degree
17	M	43	20+ years	Management	Master's Degree
18	F	54	20+ years	Management Information System	Bachelor's Degree
19	F	40	16-20 years	Philosophy	Master's Degree
20	F	39	11-15 years	Western Languages and Literatures	Master's Degree
21	M	38	11-15 years	International Trade	Master's Degree

3.4 Instruments

In qualitative studies, data can be collected through different techniques such as observations, documents, and interviews (Wolcott, 2005). According to the problem and purpose of the study, interviews that are semi-structured and documents of the program such as written records and reports used as data collection instruments.

3.4.1 Interview protocol

Interview questions were designed following the research questions of the study for three interview groups: program director, student mentees, and alumni mentors.

While the program director's interview questions were prepared to understand the program's operational aspect, the interview protocols for student mentees and alumni mentors were prepared to understand their experiences in the university alumni mentoring program.

After developing interview protocols, the feedback related to interview questions' relevancy to study research questions, clarity, and answerability were received from the thesis committee. Necessary changes were made, and the interview protocols were put into final form.

The interview protocol for the program director included eight questions; in the first question, participants' demographic information about gender, age, educational background, and highest educational level was collected. The program director asked the following seven questions about mentoring program goals and intended outcomes, program resources and outputs, and programs' challenging and effective parts (see Appendix D).

Interview protocols included eleven questions for student mentees and alumni mentors. The first question directed toward the participants' demographic information such as gender, age, educational background, and the following ten questions investigated the participants' motivations and expectations, their evaluations regarding the mentoring program, and the effect of the mentoring relationship (see Appendix F for student mentees and Appendix H for alumni mentors).

3.4.2 Documents

Along with interviews, the online documents of the program, such as the program web page, presentations, newsletters, and mentoring platform, were used as data collection instruments. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained by the alumni association to access documents. The documents were selected in accordance with the first and third research questions of the study and used to investigate the resources and activities of the university alumni mentoring program.

3.5 Data collection procedures

Whereas the population of the program included 280 mentees and 280 mentors, the sample of this study involved a program director, ten student mentees, and ten alumni mentors who completed the seven-month university alumni mentoring program during the 2020- 2021 calendar years. Purposeful sampling (Chein, 1981) was used while selecting research participants; there were two selection criteria for choosing the study participants: completion of the seven-month mentoring program process and having interaction between mentees and mentors at least six times. The possible variation based on age, gender, and discipline is considered in addition to these two criteria.

An email invitation explained the study and researcher and asked for volunteer participants to attend the interview process sent by the program director to student mentees and alumni mentors. As a result of this process, ten student mentees and ten alumni mentors agreed to participate in the research study.

In-depth interviews were conducted online synchronously (in real-time) through Zoom. Online meetings were scheduled according to the participants' program and implemented between the date from September 2021 to October 2021.

Before the interview process, each participant was provided with an informed consent form (see Appendix B). The meetings lasted approximately 30 minutes to 45 minutes; the audio record was obtained with the consent of the participants. The data collected from the interview groups was enhanced with the review of program documents.

3.6 Data analysis

In the data analysis process, verbatim transcription of interview records was made. Transcripts of 21 interviews were sent to participants for review and correction. After participants' approval, each interview group's answers - program director, student mentees, and alumni mentors- were analyzed.

In the analysis process, the researcher applied thematic analysis where similar statements and concepts were examined, and the emergent themes were identified with phrases and patterns of words (Braun & Clarke, 2012). These phrases are defined as codes, "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 3).

A step-by-step analysis was applied to interpret the data. Firstly, the researcher read the data and then wrote the codes line-by-line. With the review of the coding process, the researcher sorted these codes into meaningful and manageable segments to identify the primary themes and subthemes of the study. Finally, themes and subthemes were used to make sense of the data and answer to research questions of the study.

Documents of the study were analyzed as supporting data sources to interview data. The content analysis method was applied, which was explained as

“an unobtrusive technique that allows researchers to analyze relatively unstructured data in view of the meanings, symbolic qualities, and expressive contents they have, and of the communicative roles they play in the lives of the data’s sources” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 49). The researcher developed a system for coding and categorizing the data and used them to explain the research questions.

While collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the study findings, credibility is the crucial concern of researchers. For quantitative and qualitative studies, ensuring reliability and validity differs in nature. According to Firestone (1987), “the quantitative study must convince the reader that procedures have been followed faithfully because the very little concrete description of what anyone does is provided. The qualitative study provides the reader with a depiction in enough detail to show that the author’s conclusion ‘makes sense’” (p. 19).

In a qualitative study, there are several strategies to promote the study’s credibility, such as triangulation, member checks, researcher reflexivity and sufficient engagement in data collection (Shenton, 2004). This study applied triangulation, member checks, and the researcher’s position strategy. For triangulation, which Denzin (1970) explained as “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon,” (p. 291), documents and interviews were obtained to provide multiple data sources. For member checks, when the transcriptions of interview records were completed, the copy of texts was sent to the participants to check for accuracy (Maxwell, 2013). Lastly, the researcher reflected on her position in the study to explain how her perspective, assumptions, and potential biases can influence the implementation and interpretation of the study (Probst & Berenson, 2014).

3.7 Ethical considerations

In this study, ethical considerations are taken into account. Firstly, the ethical approval was received from the Institutional Review Board to enlighten the research procedures are suitable with ethical issues. (Appendix A). In addition to Ethical Approval, permission was obtained to access information of program participants and documents from the alumni association of the selected university. The names of the university and alumni association were removed from the research for protecting human subjects throughout the study. A pseudonym (a number) was used for each research participant to keep interviewees' identities confidential.

Before data collection, the consent of research participants was obtained with informed consent forms. The purpose of the study and the rights of the participants were explained in detail. All research data obtained during the study was stored on the researcher's personal computer in a password-protected folder and deleted after completing the thesis study.

3.8 Researcher's reflexivity

The researcher's role in this thesis project was shaped by her educational and career experiences. The researcher is a master's student in Educational Sciences Department and worked as a learning specialist in the university alumni mentoring program. With the researcher's background, it is essential to be aware of the issues of insider/outsider and researcher positionality (Probst & Berenson, 2014). The other important point to consider is that the researcher will serve as the main instrument for both data collection and analysis processes. Being an insider status of what is being studied can affect the access to research participants and the flow of the research process; the researcher may influence what participants will share.

When investigating the project, the researcher should be careful about the ethical considerations of the study and be objective regarding the program components and processes. In this study, interviews were used as a data collection instrument; protecting the privacy of participants and analyzing the data without personal bias is the responsibility of the researcher. Qualitative research provides a dialectical process that may affect both researcher and participants (Pillow, 2003); at that point, the researcher must think about how to deal with personal interests and feelings and own the effects of conducting the study ethically.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings from the study will be presented in relation to each research question. This qualitative case study focused on the university alumni mentoring program, implemented by the alumni association of one of the state universities in Turkey. With the analysis of interview questions and program documents, four main themes emerged: (1) program resources; (2) program participants; (3) program activities; and (4) program outcomes.

In the light of the research questions, each subtheme is grouped into themes. The first theme, Program Resources, involves three subthemes: human, financial, and organizational resources. Under the Program Participants theme, two subthemes, selection and matching and participants' motivations and expectations, were investigated. The third theme, Program Activities, described program activities, and participants' thoughts and evaluations regarding program services. The last theme, Program Outcomes, includes the subthemes of the experiences of participants and the mentoring effect. Table 3 describes the themes and subthemes of the study. The narrations of participants in Turkish are presented in Appendix J.

Table 3. The Subthemes Under the Themes

Themes	Subthemes
Program Resources	- Human resources - Financial resources - Organizational resources
Program Participants	- Selection and matching - Motivations and expectations
Program Activities	- Activities - Strengths - Areas open for improvement

4.1 Program resources

The resources of the program were investigated in regard to the first research question of the study: What are the resources of the alumni student mentoring program? The data collected through interview with the program director and documents revealed three subthemes: (1) human resources (2) financial resources and (3) organizational resources.

Human resources

Human resources is at the program's core, and the program team included five people: the general secretary of the association, program director, learning designer, learning specialist, and student affairs professional. While the learning specialist of the program was dedicated to the program full-time, the other four people in the team devoted some of their time. The program director (40) gave information about the program team as follows:

There were five people in the team managing the program, but not everyone was 100% dedicated to it. We had one program manager; this was full-time. The learning designer and I supported it from the outside, and we contributed 20% throughout the program. We had our general secretary, who spent maybe 5% of his time in the program, and then there was student affairs professional. She probably allocated 10-15% of her time during the whole program. In other words, although there are five people in total, we can think that just two people dedicated to the program are working full time. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J,1)

In addition to the program staff, the steering committee that involved six alumni guided the program team with their counselling. Regular committee meetings were implemented during the seven-month program to ensure that the program outputs and outcomes were delivered effectively. The program director (40) explained the steering committee's purpose as follows:

Six of us were on the Steering Committee, but not everyone was very active. The committee's purpose was to position it more like a Board of Directors, gather people who have ideas on this subject, and get support from them; to take guidance on the issues we were not aware of and guide us about whether

we use the right resources in our work. We met every two weeks at the beginning of the program; then, it turned into once a month. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 2)

Another human resource for the program was the mentee committee composed of five volunteer students. This community reflected the ideas, interests, and concerns of the student mentees in the program and worked for the development of the program. The program director (40) explained the mentee community's activities and their support of the program:

A community of mentees was established, which is that students, as mentees, know their own lives, take responsibility, and contribute to the development of this community to make it more sustainable. They noticed the points we missed. The primary purpose of the mentee community is to go through a design as we do. What does the mentee community do? How does it work? What does it focus on? And how does it come up with innovative ideas? They spent about six weeks, then they spent time to realize these, and they came up with a few creative ideas, including the idea of organizing an event at the Clubhouse. They did so on their own initiative. Besides, we invited our high-level graduates to our monthly fireside meetings; they shared their experiences. Mentee community hosted them and provided support. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 3)

Volunteer alumni were another human resource for the program. There were four competency training sessions provided by the alumni who are experts in their field. In addition to trainers, alumni took part in the program as facilitators at different workshops. To sum up, the program's human resources involved the program team, steering committee, volunteer students, and alumni.

Financial resources

The program director (40) explained that the program had very limited financial resources. Still, in terms of resource usage, they didn't need to use that many resources because most of the activities were online:

We had officially only allocated a budget for the learning specialist. Apart from that, we did not need to give a lot of budgets since most of the activities we did were online. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 4)

In terms of financial income, business partnerships and sponsors were the primary financial resources. The program included sponsored events such as Fireside Chats, where experts in businesses come together with students, and interview simulations where companies provide interview practices for students. The program director (40) expressed these incomes as follows:

We had two different incomes regarding financial resources; the first was that we received a fee from a company for the speakers who came to the Fireside Chat. The second was the interview simulations of specific companies, and we earned a small income there. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 5)

In summary, the program's financial resources involved sponsors and partnerships.

Organizational resources

As organizational resources, design workshop results, training materials, certificates, online resources such as mentoring platforms, and ongoing evaluations were examined.

In the design process of the mentoring program, the program team organized design workshops in which students, alumni, mentor-graduates, university professors, and human resources experts participated in separate groups. In these workshops, the expectations of different stakeholders about the ideal mentoring program were inquired. The program director (40) explained these workshops as follows:

If we count information as a resource, we gain the following in the design workshops. At first, we interviewed 16-18 companies; we also interviewed individuals. Here, we gained insights into what is happening in the market, people's expectations, and what Human Resources employees especially feel about students. It was our most significant source of information at the beginning of the program; it guided the program. So, it helped us design a good program. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 6)

In the light of the design workshop results, the program goal is presented as preparing students for the future with the help of mentoring, competence development, and networking. The mentoring program provided training materials in

the following competencies: Resilience, Empathy, Agility, and Critical Thinking. At the end of each training session, online badges were awarded to the participants who completed the training program successfully.

Since the program was designed as an e-mentoring program, a platform called “Mentorink” was introduced for mentors and mentees to meet online. Apart from the platform, online tools such as Google Suits, Miro, and Zoom were used throughout the program. The program director (40) explained the program’s online tools as follows:

Our most significant resource was Mentorink, they enabled us to use the platform there for free, so we used it. Of course, there were tools such as Miro and Zoom that we also used online. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 7)

Another organizational resource of the program was evaluations. Evaluation questionnaires were sent at the beginning and at the end of the program. Student mentees had a chance to evaluate themselves on the four competencies that the program focused on. The program director (40) emphasized the ongoing evaluations throughout the program:

We constantly made measurements throughout the program about how many participants gave feedback, completed tasks, and how many of them left the program or were not satisfied with their mentor/mentee. We also looked at how many students filled out the evaluation questionnaires we sent at the beginning and at the end of the program, and how things had changed. We have seen it there. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 8)

4.2 Program participants

The program participants were investigated in regard to the second research question of the study: Who participates in the program? The program participants will be presented based on the data collected through interviews with the program director, student mentees, and alumni mentors. The findings will be examined under the two subthemes: (1) Selection and matching; and (2) Motivations and expectations.

4.2.1 Selection and matching

The fourth question of the interview protocol for the program director aimed to understand the program's selection and matching process: "Who participates in the program?" and "How are mentees/mentors selected and matched?"

The mentoring program applications were open to all students at the university and targeted undergraduates, graduates, and newly graduated students. The program announcement was made through e-mail lists and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram of the professional accounts of the alumni association. Student mentees were selected based on the application form and video, where they asked about their special interests and hobbies, internship experiences, and motivations for the program. At the end of the application process, there were 290 application forms, but 280 students were accepted to the program; ten students were not selected since they did not upload the application videos. For alumni mentor selection, the applications were open to alumni with at least five years of work experience. The application forms were requested where mentors asked about their interests, career paths, and motivations. 280 alumni mentors were selected out of 510 applications to match student mentees.

The program team paired mentors and mentees according to their common interests, graduation from similar programs, and alignment between the mentee's desired career path and the mentor's current working field. With the completion of the matching process, student mentees and alumni mentors were e-mailed to visit the mentoring platform to learn their matching. The platform asked to set the date of the first mentoring meeting within one month. Thus, the mentoring relationship started.

4.2.2 Motivations and expectations

To understand the participants in detail, they were asked about their motivations and expectations. The second and third questions of the interview protocol aimed to understand the motivations and expectations of mentees and mentors: “What were your motivations in applying to the mentoring program?” and “What were your expectations from the mentoring program before it started?”

Motivations of mentees

Mentee findings revealed that students’ motivations to apply for the program were mostly career-oriented. Eight out of ten mentees stated that they applied to the mentoring program to get career guidance and advice, set career goals, and share career experience.

One female student mentee (23) stated that her primary motivation was to get guidance regarding her career:

In fact, I wanted to get an opinion while getting guidance with my career, and I wanted this opinion to be more objective, more external, and experienced. Directing my career was my motivation. (Interviewee 6, Appendix J, 9)

One male student mentee (24) expressed that he wanted to clear the questions in his mind:

Since I will be a fresh graduate, I had some questions in my mind, and I thought it would be helpful for me to share this with someone more experienced. As I entered my new business life, I felt that I could meet someone who could be a pioneer and give me some advice. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 10)

Five student mentees stated that their previous mentoring experiences were beneficial for them; for this reason, they wanted to apply to the program again and take mentorship. One male student mentee (22) stated that his previous mentoring experience helped him to discover what he wanted regarding his career:

I had been in the mentoring program before; I benefitted a lot when I joined the program in my first year. Because in the first year, I did not decide what

direction I wanted to go in my future profession. Psychology has different fields, and I had another desire at that time. I was matched with a mentor in this direction, but at the end of our time together, I realized that was not the field I wanted. My mentor had a significant role in this because he introduced me to people from the field and shared his opinions and experiences. I found out what I wanted more and what might suit me better at the end of this mentoring. I wanted to participate in the program again in the 3rd grade because I saw it as very useful. (Interviewee 8, Appendix J, 11)

One female student mentee (24) stated that her previous mentoring relationship had a transformational effect on her life:

I heard about the mentoring program from a friend for the first time in my first year, and then it immediately caught my attention. I have been a regular, active mentee since the 2nd grade. I can say that this mentee-mentor relationship has contributed the most to my life because when I look back, when I was in the 2nd/3rd grade, I was very confused. After all, I am in the Maths Department. I did not make a decision to advance academically. I wanted to do something in the private sector perhaps, but at that time, of course, my thoughts were very scattered because I had little experience. At the very beginning, I put my thoughts in order in these relationships; some points enlightened me during our conversations about what I wanted. Our mentors were also very experienced people, working in very good companies. Their own experiences and the questions they asked brought a lot of clarity for me. It has been very valuable for me to transform into someone who knows oneself more after each year. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 12)

Apart from career guidance and previous mentoring experience, three students stated that they applied to the program with the motivation of meeting with new people.

One female student mentee (23) stated that she learned something from each person she met:

I applied to mentoring programs in the previous three years and met different people. With some, my character was very compatible; with others, I did not fit at all, but I learned something from all of them, so I believe it is a program that has improved me. I applied to meet new people and benefit from their diverse experiences. (Interviewee 7, Appendix J, 13)

One male student mentee (22) expressed that he had difficulty in socializing, especially during the pandemic period, and meeting with new people was his primary motivation:

My motivation was the people I would be within the program. It was important that it was only open to students at our university. I considered not

being able to meet people and spend time in the pandemic period as a significant deficiency. My motivation was that my friends from other departments were in the program and that the graduates would give speeches. (Interviewee 5, Appendix J, 14)

In summary, students' motivations for applying to the program included career guidance, beneficial previous mentoring experiences, and meeting new people.

Expectations of mentees

When students were asked about their expectations from the mentoring program, seven students expressed expectations related to their mentoring relationship, four mentees expressed their expectations related to the program activities. On the other hand, one student said she had no expectations.

In terms of the mentoring relationship, students' expectations heavily concentrated on matching with a mentor in line with their desired career path; and having good connection and communication where they ask the questions in their mind without hesitation.

One male student mentee (24) stated that he expected to have a mentor from the same department:

My mentor had graduated from my department, and I needed such a mentor because I had specific questions for her. My mentor is a sincere person whom I can call whenever I want and ask questions. If I want to talk about something in the future, I can consult her. There was a lot of intimacy and friendship involved after a while. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 15)

One female student mentee (21) said that she expected to have a mentoring relationship where she could trust, get guidance and advice from the mentor:

I was looking for sincerity and finding answers to the questions that came to my mind without hesitation. I think I found both in my mentoring journey. Whatever was on my mind, I was able to ask her. (Interviewee 3, Appendix J, 16)

One male student mentee (22) said that he expected to have a productive mentoring relationship:

I wanted to establish a productive and good relationship with my mentor. Without this, even if he is a very professional person, the relationship cannot progress well, so it was vital for me to have someone with whom I could communicate well. (Interviewee 8, Appendix J, 17)

In summary, all seven students who had expectations related to mentoring relationships stated that their expectations were met in the program.

In addition to the mentoring-specific expectations, four students expressed that they have some expectations related to the program activities. One female student mentee (23) stated that she expected personal growth, and her expectations were met during the program:

The program provided some training and activities; for example, there were chats with people working in different departments. These were good events for me. I aimed to participate in them and improve myself. (Interviewee 1, Appendix J, 18)

Three student mentees expressed their expectations related to the Design Thinking program and stated that their expectations weren't met. One male student mentee (22) expressed his experience as follows:

At the beginning of the program, it was mentioned that there would be case studies, different activities, and even a more advanced program that would include 40 successful people after completing this program. Neither these case studies nor this extra program I mentioned took place. I would like it to happen. At this point, we can say that my expectations were not met. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 19)

There was only one female student mentee (24) who said that although she didn't come with any expectations, she had a good experience:

Mentoring process is based on volunteerism; I can say that I did not even come with an expectation. Knowing even a person at the very beginning excites me very much because I think, for example, where else could I meet such a person, how could I establish such a close relationship? I can call whenever I want, and ask something. I think it's impossible without this program. Since everyone came on this occasion, we had such an opportunity, and it was very nice to experience it. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 20)

Motivations of mentors

Findings revealed that alumni mentors applied to the program with various motivations. These include helping and supporting students by sharing their experiences, giving back to the university, communicating with young people, and keeping up with the new generations.

Six interviewees indicated their motivation for the program was to share their past experiences and support students. Three mentors stated that they had difficulty during their university years and after graduation, and sharing these challenging processes with accuracy can help students. One female alumni mentor (28) expressed her motivation as follows:

When I was a student, I did not know I could be included in such a mentoring program, and I went through a complicated process for five years. Even one year, was not in a very good mood, waiting for only one lesson, without taking any other classes. Besides, we were a good department, but I'm talking about the university's image in my eyes: some things need to be done to survive. While studying, I did not get to ask something knowingly and trustingly. I thought maybe it would be nice for people who do this without affirming things to meet with students. I felt that I was a person who spoke the truth or did not jump from the beginning to the conclusion very quickly. Apart from affirmations such as what I studied, the department was very easy, and I did an excellent job. I could transfer the whole process to a student with accuracy; I applied with this motivation. (Interviewee 14, Appendix J, 21)

One of the female alumni mentors (39) expressed that after graduation, she had experienced hard times, and her motivation to apply to the program was to share these times with students and to help them to realize their potential:

I wanted this to give morale to the students and save them from pessimism. When I went to job interviews after completing my bachelor's degree in Western Languages and Literature, the doors were closed to me; I fell into despair. At that time, the department we were studying was creating a much more significant barrier in front of us; being a graduate of the Department of Language and Literature was a huge problem in 2003. I went through a lot of trouble. Today, this is not a very difficult situation anymore. The competencies, skills, and potentials of people are much more critical. However, I have an observation that when I look at students, students who are still studying in departments such as History, Literature, and Philosophy have

the attitude and belief that their departments will create a barrier for them. They underestimate their potential. I joined this program to tell them about the paths I went through to explain to them that studying in these departments is not a barrier in front of them and that it has excellent advantages. My main motivation is to enable students not to underestimate themselves, realize their potential, and provide hope for them. (Interviewee 20, Appendix J, 22)

One male alumni mentor (43) indicated that he didn't have the opportunity to have a mentor during his university years, and he had difficulty building his career. His primary motivation was to provide this opportunity for current university students:

I was looking for a channel that could provide an opportunity that I did not have when I entered university, at least for the graduates of this term, so I applied for the mentoring program. I was born and raised in a small city, where I had my primary, secondary and high school education. When I went to the big city for university, I saw that most of my classmates were actually from big cities; they were the children of people with certain careers. They received some feedback from their family or the close circle of their family in terms of mentoring and coaching. I did not have such an opportunity. I tried to build my career with a bit of groping. This situation, of course, causes certain costs and errors. As a young person in your early 20s, your knowledge and experience in certain subjects are limited. Therefore, seeing the problems I experienced at that time, I wanted to apply for such a mentoring program so that new generations would not experience this. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 23)

Two mentors emphasized that their motivation was not giving students advice but helping them create their paths. One male alumni mentor (50) expressed his motivation as follows:

The person who wants to receive mentoring expects me to guide based on my own experiences; this is very clear. But I motivated myself not to make the following mistake: I can guide people, but I will not do this by giving advice; I will help them see their path. Sometimes, this road may be covered with vines, branches, or something like a jungle; let him make way for him/herself there and follow that path, create something other than learned methods because people are always taught something. (Interviewee 16, Appendix J, 24)

In addition to supporting and helping students, some mentors applied to the program with the motivations of contributing to university, catching up with the new generation and communicating with young people.

One male alumni mentor (31) stated that mentoring program was a chance for giving back to the university:

I am a person who loves school very much; I continued to love it both when I was a student and after my education was over. You want to give back to the college as a price for that love, and there are specific points where you can do that. First, you can support the university financially. I don't think I can do that right now, as I am not at that level yet. The second one can be moral support from different platforms. On the other hand, I could give back to the university by supporting the students who have not graduated yet. My primary motivation was to give back to school and add something. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 25)

One of the male alumni mentors (37) expressed that the main motivation for mentoring program was to learn about the new generation:

It's been 14 years since I graduated; generations change every ten years, and even this duration is now reduced to five years. My first motivation was to catch up with the new generation and learn their expectations, wishes, and desires. (Interviewee 15, Appendix J, 26)

One female alumni mentor (54) stated that she has been mentoring for many years, and mentoring has become a habit for her:

I have been taking part in the mentoring program since 2012; it has become a habit for me to be with a student every year and spend 7-8 months with them. I have seen that I am competent in mentoring, in terms of communication with students and helping them with some of their problems. It was an important motivation for me. (Interviewee 18, Appendix J, 27)

Expectations of mentors

Interview findings showed that six mentors applied for the mentoring program with different expectations such as mentor-mentor networking, reverse mentoring, and connection with the alumni association, four mentors didn't have specific expectations from the program.

Three mentors stated that they have an expectation of networking between program mentors but their expectations weren't met. One male alumni mentor (43) said that:

I expected more contact with the mentors in the same mentoring program, but we couldn't provide that much. I could only participate in one program. Of course, there may be specific reasons for this. I expected that maybe meetings

could be done once a month by coming together and a networking opportunity with the other mentors in the program would be obtained. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 28)

One female alumni mentor (28) expressed the expectation of a mentor community where mentors provided reverse mentoring to each other:

While working at my previous company, I was in the reverse mentoring program. We were doing reverse mentoring with a person much more experienced than me. I expected the opportunity to meet a mentor group with which I could find these opportunities in the future. (Interviewee 14, Appendix J, 29)

One male alumni mentor (31) stated that he expected to meet with the alumni association and create a feeling of belongingness to the community, but his expectation weren't met:

I thought there might be contact between mentors to a certain extent or an opportunity to meet with the Alumni Association. Even though I attended some events, there were events mostly where I was in the listener mode and with wider participation, so I did not have much connection. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 30)

Two mentors expressed that although they didn't have any specific expectations, they thought that this mentoring could turn into a learning journey. One male alumni mentor (50) expressed his experience as follows:

To be honest, I didn't have any specific expectations, but I felt that my journey with those young people would be very educational for me. So, I thought it was not just to teach the mentee, but maybe it could be a process where I could learn something from him, which excited me. (Interviewee 16, Appendix J, 31)

One female alumni mentor (40) said that although she didn't have specific expectations, the mentoring program exceeded her expectations:

I didn't have any particular expectations from the program. Although I didn't have an expectation, the program itself went beyond any I might have had. The program was well structured. A lot of effort has gone into everything from communication to the design of everything inside, from the tool itself to the videos that come, to the points that can be a guide inside, etc. I liked the program. It went beyond my expectations. I wouldn't expect more, although I didn't have any expectations. (Interviewee 19, Appendix J, 32)

4.3 Program activities

The activities of the program were investigated in regard to the third research question of the study: What are the activities of the program? The program activities will be presented in light of the data collected through program documents and interviews under the two categories: (1) activities for mentees, and (2) activities for mentors.

As a program document, a program kick-off meeting presentation that describes the program goal, timeline, and activities were investigated. In the presentation, the mentoring program goal presented to prepare students for the future with the help of mentoring, competence development, and networking. The seven-month program timeline showed that the program included two main components: working with a mentor and mentee working groups. Apart from two main components, activities such as fireside chats, case study, hackathon, and Design Thinking program were promised.

The program director (40) explained that while the two main activities and fireside chats were implemented successfully during the program, the Design Thinking program couldn't be performed:

Our goal when designing the program was to achieve the best we could, but we do not always achieve these goals. In our initial conversations, we heard from companies that Design Thinking is important, and we thought it would be beneficial to see students participating in such a program. However, since we will also work with partners in the program we created, many companies found the program budget high or did not find the timing correct. Some of them said this program could conflict with their programs because they were making similar ones, so we could not do this. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 33)

4.3.1 Activities for mentees

The fifth question of the interview protocol for mentees and mentors aimed to understand participants' thoughts about the mentoring activities: What do you think about the mentoring program activities?

When the thoughts of student mentees regarding the activities were considered, their answers concentrated on three program activities: Fireside Chats, Mentee Working Groups, and Mentee Community.

Fireside Chats

During the mentoring program, four Fireside Chat activities were held online via Zoom where experts were invited to meet with students to share their failure stories about program competencies. In one-hour meetings, mentees had a chance to listen and ask their questions.

For Fireside Chats, student mentees expressed different thoughts. Five mentees stated that these activities were valuable, whereas one mentee said they were generally pleasant but sometimes not attractive. On the other hand, two out of ten mentees stated that they didn't attend the Fireside Chats because the content of the activities was not appealing.

One female student mentee (23) evaluated the Fireside Chats as successful in terms of content and duration:

I think the events are successful. They can even be increased. I like that people from different departments were invited, and the duration of the event was ideal. I think people would get bored if it were longer. One-hour periods were nice, and we could be actively involved by asking questions.
(Interviewee 1, Appendix J, 34)

Another female student mentee (24) stated that Fireside Chats were valuable because they facilitated the culture of sharing and experience:

Some activities related to our personal development were implemented. For example, during Fireside Chats, a mentor or graduate was invited, and

questions were prepared. There were conversations on various subjects, such as resilience and empathy themes. Those conversations were precious because we could ask questions and get advice without a filter. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 35)

One male student mentee (22) expressed that although he evaluated Fireside Chats as enjoyable in general, he indicated that sometimes the flow of the speech was focused on personal development too much:

Fireside Chats were good events, so it was enjoyable to come and listen to a speaker's experiences. On the other hand, I think the conversations shifted to too much personal development at some points. That's why I have concluded that sometimes there is nothing that interests me in the flow of the subject. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 36)

One male student mentee (24) stated that the Fireside Chat concept didn't attract him:

There were Fireside Chats that I never attended. A person in charge of the area spoke. I didn't participate in it because it didn't interest me. I didn't know what questions to ask, and I couldn't get the concept right in my head. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 37)

Mentee working groups

During the mentoring program, student mentees provided training materials in four competencies: Resilience, Empathy, Agility, and Critical Thinking. Every month, the program team uploaded new training materials to the platform. The training content involved 4-5 short videos, and a total of 25-30 minute long videos were recorded by the trainers.

At the beginning of the program, mentees were divided into groups of three, and worked together throughout the program. After each training material, specific tasks related to the competency of the month were given to student mentees to complete with their working groups.

Regarding training and mentee working groups, while four mentees expressed positive experience, one mentee said that the mentee group lost its effectiveness over

time. On the other hand, two mentees indicated that their mentee working group experience was ineffective from the beginning.

One female student mentee (23) expressed satisfaction with training and mentee working groups:

I was satisfied with the online training of the program and our work in the group, and I just did them literally. I think the group's discussion part was very productive because we don't talk to people much about these topics that we find basic in daily life; it was nice to delve deeper into them from a philosophical point of view. I think it is both relaxing and beneficial for our personal development. (Interviewee 7, Appendix J, 38)

Another male student mentee (22) stated that the mentee working group was beneficial for observing different perspectives:

I think it was very good that the mentoring program was removed from the mentor-mentee relationship and integrated competency training into the program. The content was also good; we watched the videos and discussed these issues as a group with other mentees, and seeing that we all looked at it from different angles was beneficial for me. (Interviewee 8, Appendix J, 39)

One female student mentee (23) indicated that their mentee working group worked effectively at the beginning but then it lost its effectiveness:

It was a good thing that the mentee group was formed. I can say that we were doing more work in the mentee group initially. Our rate of fulfilling tasks decreased a little towards the end; maybe because everyone's final intensity or course intensity increased, I don't know. (Interviewee 6, Appendix J, 40)

One female student mentee (23) expressed that they never met with mentee group members:

We had to meet in groups of three, and we had tasks to complete with them, but in that group of three, we could not coordinate. We had to complete a task, but we could not determine a suitable time, the date passed, and we could not meet. (Interviewee 9, Appendix J, 41)

The program director (40) expressed that the program could not reach the desired completion rate in the working groups:

The working groups were not successful enough; we could not reach the desired number. The number of students that completed the tasks was around 20%. 60 people out of 280 mentees completed all the stages and were entitled

to receive a certificate. This number is below our expectations. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 42)

Mentee community

Along with the program, student mentees formed a mentee community to reflect the student mentees' ideas, interests, and concerns in the program. Three female mentees stated that they took part in the core team of the mentee community, and their experience was valuable. One of them (24) explained her experience as follows:

I took part in the mentee community in the program; after a while, I couldn't continue due to my work life. The special team there was precious and we still keep in touch. Making this communication sustainable is valuable for the program, as we work together with some of my friends here, and our communication continues in different dimensions. That's why I feel it's a great added value. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 43)

4.3.1.1 Strengths & areas open for improvement

The sixth question of the interview protocol for mentees aimed to understand participants' evaluations of the mentoring activities: What are your evaluations (thoughts, feelings, etc.) for the mentoring program? Participants' evaluations were analyzed under two categories, strengths and areas for open improvement.

Strengths

When student mentees were asked about the strengths of the mentoring program, findings revealed that program continuity, program team, communication and follow-up, mentoring platform, and networking opportunity were the strengths. One female student mentee (23) indicated that program maintained the continuity and there was no disconnection:

The strength is the continuity of the program; there was no break in it. After a while, no one left the program. There were trio meeting groups among the mentees; we constantly met at certain times. Program activities were also repeated at certain times, and the program continued until the end. (Interviewee 1, Appendix J, 44)

One male student mentee (24) reported that the program team was accessible throughout the program:

One of its strengths was that the team was always there; I was going in and out of events, some I couldn't attend, but I knew the team was always there. So if I wanted to ask something, I knew there was someone I would get an answer from. The e-mail address shared for communication was also checked frequently. At that point, I had no questions left in the air. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 45)

One female student mentee (23) stated that following the program on the mentoring platform ensured the progress of mentoring meetings:

I had very little contact with my mentors last year. We had met with one of them twice and with the other three times, but we have been in constant contact with my mentor this year. Following the program on the Mentorink platform and having tasks was the strengthened side of the program. (Interviewee 9, Appendix J, 46)

One female student mentee (24) stated that the program provided networking opportunity:

Seven months is a long time; there was much more to be said and done, but theory and practice do not always match one hundred percent in real life. But when I look back, we aimed to share experience and communication, and I think we succeeded. I met many mentees and mentors this term; I know that I can get an answer whenever I ask something. In that sense, I think the program was strong. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 47)

Areas for open improvement

When student mentees were asked about the areas of improvement, findings heavily concentrated on networking with other mentors, promoting of the program, and providing more activities and rematching opportunities.

One male student mentee (22) reported that he wanted to network with other mentors:

It would be nice if we had the chance to meet with other mentors, to meet with a few mentors rather than one mentor, with graduates from other fields. There could be diversity in the selection of mentors. (Interviewee 5, Appendix J, 48)

One female student mentee (21) indicated that the program promotion was missing and could be improved:

The program was not announced to the school much; it could have been announced more widely. For example, people can go to a club event more often through social media. In our program, only posts were made through LinkedIn. Maybe it could be done much more on Instagram because it is a platform that students use more intensely. (Interviewee 3, Appendix J, 49)

One female student mentee (23) reported that providing more activities could strengthen the connection:

I think communication in the program was good in general; there was a very nice welcome event at the beginning. There could be events in the style of warm-ups in between, like asking how we are doing and whether we are satisfied. We could have said, “We’re coming together separately from the mentors,” and we could talk about what we expect and how we are; accordingly, feedback could be given to the mentors. If there were events in which we saw the whole team like at the beginning, we could have connected to the team more. (Interviewee 6, Appendix J, 50)

Another female student mentee (23) in the program reported the lack of harmony in her mentoring relationship and indicated the necessity of a rematching opportunity:

This year, our energies did not quite match with my mentor. In the mentoring program, maybe after the first or second meeting, the mentors and mentees can be asked if they want a match again. (Interviewee 7, Appendix J, 51)

4.3.2 Activities for mentors

When the thoughts of alumni mentors regarding the activities were considered, while four mentors expressed positive reviews, one mentor reported negative experiences regarding the program activity. Three mentors couldn’t share their opinions because they didn’t attend the activities.

During the mentoring program, alumni mentors provided the same training content as student mentees. The program team uploaded competence-specific training videos through the mentoring platform. In addition to that, the question and answer meetings were held between mentors for Empathy and Resilience

competency. In these one-hour online meetings, mentors met with the expert trainer and had a chance to discuss the topics in detail.

One male alumni mentor (50) commented on the training content regarding competencies as follows:

There were pieces of training given in the form of very short pills, voiced by the experts on the subject for the mentors. Actually, I don't call them training; let me say better awareness sessions than training; they were very valuable. (Interviewee 16, Appendix J, 52)

Another significant component of the mentoring program was Mentor As a Coach training. In this training, with the guidance of one trainer and four facilitators, mentors discussed the differences and similarities between mentoring and coaching and the approaches to mentoring. This training, which was organized to take two days at the weekend, was repeated twice. Training attendance was not mandatory; as a result of the open call to training, 50 mentors out of 280 participated voluntarily.

Four interviewed alumni mentors indicated that they attended this training and found it helpful. One of the male alumni mentors (43) expressed his pleasure with the coaching training and recommended providing training for every mentor:

There were some pieces of training in the messages received; there were some materials; I had the opportunity to look at them, so I took the time to do it. We worked on coaching on a Saturday-Sunday; it was a very busy program. It had taken half of the two days of the weekend; I was particularly pleased with that event. I think it would be very beneficial to provide a half-day mentoring training to all mentors, as in coaching. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 53)

One female alumni mentor (40) said that she found an opportunity for networking in program activities:

There were some activities for us, for example, there was training on coaching. There were things that primarily trained us about some additional competencies. We developed our mentoring muscle; what is and isn't mentoring? There were a lot of meetings like this; other than that, there were also competency-based meetings. I met very valuable people in general in all of them; I was very pleased. By the way, I didn't have such an expectation, but it was a good networking opportunity. I think it was a good event that

brought together graduates and the program team, in that sense. (Interviewee 19, Appendix J, 54)

On the other hand, one female mentor (53) indicated that she attended one activity but had difficulty there, so she evaluated this online activity as ineffective:

I attended an online event; we did group work together on Zoom. It was difficult being on Zoom, being able to participate in the event. However, it would be different if it was in a social environment, where we share something, but I couldn't feel it in Zoom. There was an artificiality that I felt; it didn't seem very efficient. (Interviewee 13, Appendix J, 55)

Three mentors out of ten expressed that they didn't attend the activities because of personal reasons such as having busy work schedules, being an experienced mentor, and having a profession related to mentoring.

One female alumni mentor (39) expressed that she didn't attend the activities because she would not learn anything new:

I did not attend any of the events this year, but there is a very personal reason why I did not participate. Because of my job, I did not think I would hear any information other than these, as I was constantly listening to and exposed to training such as leadership, coaching, and emotional awareness. If it wasn't my job, I would join. (Interviewee 20, Appendix J, 56)

Another female alumni mentor (54) indicated that her reason for not attending the activities was her extensive mentoring experience; she also expressed that the activities can be helpful for new mentors:

I did not attend training on mentors because I did not feel the need for myself as I have been doing this job for nine years. Of course, the beginner mentors wanted such things very much; I'm sure it was helpful for them. (Interviewee 18, Appendix J, 57)

Two mentors stated that they had a chance to attend some activities. Whereas some activities were evaluated as satisfying and enjoyable, there were also activities whose contents were not attractive. One male mentor (31) indicated his opinion as follows:

I attended the first mentoring meeting, and I encountered a few other events. It was good, but as I said, there was a little time difference, and it was a busy period for me so I couldn't attend all of them. Not all of them appealed to me; maybe it could have been better. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 58)

4.3.2.1 Strengths & areas open for improvement

The sixth question of the interview protocol for mentors aimed to understand participants' evaluations about the mentoring activities: What are your evaluations (thoughts, feelings, etc.) for the mentoring program? Participants' evaluations were analyzed under two categories, strengths and areas for open improvement.

Strengths

When alumni mentors were asked about the strengths of the mentoring program, findings revealed selection and matching, program design and communication strategy, mentoring platform, and providing competency training as program strengths.

One male alumni mentor (43) stated that the program carried out strong selection and matching process:

The strength of the program was correct matchings. I think I could really give the mentorship that my mentee expected, so this was achieved with accurate matchmaking. Someone evaluated the form I filled out; it was not subjected to an automatic process. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 59)

One male alumni mentor (31) evaluated the program design as strength of the program:

The duration of the program, monthly meetings, and a single application were its strengths, in my opinion. If it had been more frequent, it would have been difficult for me to continue. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 60)

One female alumni mentor (53) stated that the program has effective communication strategy:

The program had a very regular and appropriate communication structure; the messages and notifications you received were in a good routine. Some things can sometimes suffocate and sometimes make you forget; the tempo and timing of the program were good, the contents were inclusive, and it made you feel like you were in a group. (Interviewee 13, Appendix J, 61)

One female alumni mentor (40) indicated that the program is integrated with technology:

I found it very successful in terms of technology; it was a program that could be integrated into the present. It was also nice to offer a platform where everything can be done together. The program didn't say go and talk with zoom, or on the phone, or meet face to face we were free on how we wanted to do it. I think it was very valuable that the platform was provided; I still have many notes about my mentee that I can check when I go there. (Interviewee 19, Appendix J, 62)

One male alumni mentor (43) indicated that the competencies were well-chosen:

I think the main competencies in the program were determined quite well, and laying the foundation of the program was one of its strengths. For example, I also benefited from the contents of these meetings in the mentorships I made at the company; there was no foreignness. We are really looking for these competencies in business life, and if these students are preparing for professional and academic life, I think the competencies determined are very accurate. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 63)

Areas open for improvement

When alumni mentors were asked about the areas of improvement, findings revealed that the feedback system, the educational content, the timing, and the certification system are areas open for improvement.

One male alumni mentor (31) stated that the feedback system could be improved:

There was a very simple feedback system on the application, you just rate it, and the other side sees it directly. If I give a low score, the mentee may see this and not come to the following meeting. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 64)

One female alumni mentor (53) indicated that the engagement of students needs to be improved with more attractive content:

I could not scan all of the content, but presenting such competency-based content in writing can be insufficient. I know that especially my mentee did not participate much. Could the contents have been designed better and made a little more attractive? How could participation be encouraged? These are some questions. (Interviewee 13, Appendix J, 65)

One female alumni mentor (54) emphasized the identification of students' training needs:

The four educational contents in the program was good, but these are not the only needs of children. For example, self-confidence is the first problem of mentees, or they need training in time management. The child cannot get up in the morning, and he/she cannot reach here and there. You know, there are

such little things that they need more, of course, those competencies are also important, but there are some problems they experience in their daily lives, the contents maybe a little more directed towards them. (Interviewee 18, Appendix J, 66)

One male alumni mentor (37) reported that they were some delays in the uploading process of training materials:

The content for competencies could have been shared a little earlier; the program could have started in a more prepared fashion. We lagged a little behind; we broke away from the content; we had to do it ourselves. (Interviewee 15, Appendix J, 67)

One female alumni mentor (28) reported that there was nothing to show as proof of program attendance:

There was no certification to indicate that I attended the mentoring program, or if a friend had asked me about the program, I would not have been able to give very clear answers. I had not seen previous mentoring programs either; I saw it by coincidence via e-mail this year. I don't know how I can announce the program, but it is very important for me to share it on LinkedIn because I communicate with many alumni friends there. (Interviewee 14, Appendix J, 68)

4.4 Program outcomes

The program's outcomes were investigated regarding the fourth research question of the study: (4) What are the outcomes of the program? The program outcomes will be presented based on the data collected through interviews with student mentees, alumni mentors, and the program director. The findings will be examined under two categories: (1) the experiences of participants and (2) the effect of mentoring.

4.4.1 The experiences of participants

The seventh question of the interview protocol aimed to understand participants' experiences: "How has your experience in the mentoring program been like?"

Participants' experiences were analyzed under two headings: challenging and effective parts.

Challenging parts for mentees

Three student mentees expressed that they did not experience any challenge during the mentoring process. In contrast, seven student mentees reported various challenges such as coordination of mentee working group meetings, compliance with program activities' schedule, and low participation.

One of the female student mentees (24) stated that although she couldn't participate in all of the activities, she didn't feel bad about this:

Honestly, I didn't have any difficulty. Many events were held in the program, and I could not attend all of them. I wish I could participate, but I couldn't because of life dynamics. In the program, everything was done for us, and we were treated with a lot of compassion, and I didn't feel bad for not being able to attend an event. My feelings about the program are always positive, and I want to participate in this program every year; I have such motivation right now. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 69)

Four out of ten student mentees stated that they had difficulty in mentee working group meetings. One male student mentee (22) expressed that he had some difficulties due to the reluctance of other two friends in his mentee working groups:

It was definitely mentee working groups. One of my friends almost didn't want to participate in the meetings; he said yes when I said let's meet. He came to the sessions without reading the contents; we were rereading them there. The other person was also a very depressed person, so I was the one who determined the energy of the conversations in general. It was challenging for me to set the meeting date, gather that energy, meet on common ground, and keep the group together. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 70)

Another male student mentee (22) expressed his challenge as follows:

It was challenging to arrange the process of getting together with my group mates. We couldn't meet properly; our schedule didn't fit. Then we met, but it was like a conversation; there was no system. (Interviewee 5, Appendix J, 71)

Three student mentees expressed problems related to the timing and attending the activities. One of these mentees (24) described his experience as follows:

There were too many half-hour and one-hour events, and it was not easy to fit them into my schedule. A one-hour event may not take time, but since the time was planned without asking me, I was studying and doing an internship; It was a problem to merge them. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 72)

Another female student mentee (23) said that in addition to complying with program activity schedule, she had a difficulty in the following activities:

I couldn't follow the events. While my schedule conflicted with some of them, there were activities that I couldn't attend because I didn't quite understand what to do. I had a little difficulty in that respect; I couldn't keep up with the schedule, which was a problem. (Interviewee 6, Appendix J, 73)

Two student mentees said that the low participation in program activities demotivated them. One of the female student mentees (21) expressed her challenge as follows:

The low participation in some programs was demotivating for me. The speakers were very valuable people, but the participants turned off their cameras. This person spent time coming here, and the cameras are off; I think it's not nice. I would like to feel the synergy there. (Interviewee 3, Appendix J, 74)

Effective parts for mentees

When student mentees were asked about the effective parts of their mentoring experience, their findings heavily concentrated on matching and mentoring relationships, meeting with new people, and the sense of community. In addition to these, the program's comfortable and warm environment and certification were reported as effective parts.

Eight out of ten mentees expressed that the matching and mentoring relationship was the most effective part of the program. One male student mentee (22) stated that he spent a very productive period with his mentor and developed networking:

The program was very productive for me because my mentor was a person who could answer many of the questions I could ask, that is, a person who

had these experiences before. I am still taking steps for my career and making education plans according to his advice. At the same time, he introduced me to other people he knew from the field, and I had the opportunity to ask them questions. I had both a small-scale network and an answer to my questions, which was very effective. (Interviewee 8, Appendix J, 75)

Another female student mentee (23) evaluated her matching as a great chance:

My mentor was really good. Some of my friends had interned with my mentor before, and she was a person I really wanted to meet. It was an excellent chance for me to be matched with her, and I think our relationship will continue in the future. (Interviewee 9, Appendix J, 76)

Two male student mentees expressed that they felt part of a community. One of them (24) indicated his experience as follows:

The nice thing about the program was that people attended the program. Events ran smoothly; everyone tried to keep up. There were people who felt like me, looking for answers to their questions and using this program to improve themselves. There was a community, and I felt like we were all doing the same thing in that community. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 77)

Two student mentees stated that program activities provided environments for meeting new people. One male student mentee (22) indicated that thanks to the program, he had a chance to socialize even during the pandemic period when it was difficult to meet new people:

It was nice to share things with friends and reason together. Especially in the online period, you cannot meet anyone; there is no interactive environment in the lessons. At Zoom events, we had the opportunity to at least chat by breaking into rooms; I learned something from each person; I think this part was effective. (Interviewee 5, Appendix J, 78)

Two female student mentees expressed that the program provided an intimate and comfortable environment. One of them (23) stated that she felt taken care of by the program:

I generally enjoyed being taken care of by the program. It was a very thoughtful and on track program, open to development. Everyone in the program was very open to feedback; I felt comfortable in the program. (Interviewee 7, Appendix J, 79)

One female student mentee (23) said that the certification was an effective part of her mentoring experience:

After completing each task given to us as a group, a badge was given; I immediately added them all to my LinkedIn profile. At the end of the program, a certificate of successful completion was given; I think these were good things. (Interviewee 1, Appendix J, 80)

Challenging parts for mentors

Whereas three out of ten alumni mentors stated that nothing challenged them during the mentoring process, the rest of the mentors reported challenges such as time allocation, inability to meet face-to-face due to the pandemic and negative memories. In addition to these, communication and observing the generational change were also reported as challenging parts.

Two out of ten alumni mentors expressed difficulty following the program activities because of their busy schedules and the inability to meet face-to-face. One male alumni mentor (35) stated his challenge as follows:

Emails kept coming; I left them unread to read them later and share them with my mentee. Then I couldn't read that email; a week passed; I said I couldn't do this and deleted it from my to-do list. Apart from that, the program did not have any extra difficulties, except that it was during the pandemic period, and we could not meet face to face. (Interviewee 12, Appendix J, 81)

One female alumni mentor (28) expressed that remembering the previous experiences was challenging for her:

While listening to the other person, it was challenging to think about the difficulties I had in the past and still be smiling. There were times when I felt lonely and had a hard time at the beginning of my university life; the program reminded me of these memories. At that point, after closing the meeting, my thoughts were a bit challenging for me. (Interviewee 14, Appendix J, 82)

Three mentors reported communication challenges caused by different reasons, such as generational gap, the mentee characteristics and special situations. One male alumni mentor (37) expressed the effect of generational differences in communication:

I had some difficulties in the first meetings, after all, there is a generation gap, almost 15 years. At first, there were situations where we observed each other, the other party's expectations, what subjects interested him, and whether the advice I would give him would suit him or not. Until we got to know each other, these may not have been perceived by me in some cases or what I said may not have been perceived by him, but later on, as we got to know each other, it got a little better. (Interviewee 15, Appendix J, 83)

Another female alumni mentor (54) said that she had difficulty when her mentee communicated a psychological situation that she could not help with:

A mentee had a special situation; for example, I had difficulty talking about that situation. Of course, there are the mentees that I referred to the Psychological Counseling Center about such things that I could not solve. I told them I couldn't solve their problem; that they had to go there, get some guidance, and decide what to do next. (Interviewee 18, Appendix J, 84)

One male alumni mentor (43) stated that he had a chance to observe how the social structure changed with time, and it was challenging:

Of course, in more than 20 years, a lot has changed in Turkey. Our university is still a place that receives the best students and prepares them for life by providing very high-quality education. Still, unfortunately, Turkey can no longer provide the same opportunities as in our time. In our time, graduating from our university was a much more valuable thing, but not now. The general political conjuncture, the general approach to reading and science caused this situation. I felt that I had some difficulties when I realized it perceptibly. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 85)

Effective parts for mentors

When mentors were asked about the effective parts of their mentoring experience, their findings showed that online mentoring, connectedness, guidance, and matching, structured transfer of experience, and the nourishing environment were the effective parts.

Three out of ten alumni mentors stated that the pandemic period and online program made things easier in terms of time allocation and provided opportunity for the involvement of mentors living abroad. One female alumni mentor (39) indicated that face-to-face meetings create difficulties in terms of time, and this situation has been resolved with the online program:

No part challenged me; it became easier with the pandemic. Even though I left work late, I used to go to a place once or twice a month to meet face to face. We sat with my mentee; we had dinner. I spent time after work fatigued, and that was the biggest challenge, but it was solved. (Interviewee 20, Appendix J, 86)

One of the male alumni mentors (37) said that the pandemic provided more free time to be able to provide mentoring:

I am quite the traveler. One of my motivations for entering the program was that I could spare more time during the pandemic. As far as I know, the Alumni Association had a mentoring program before, but I thought that I couldn't attend because I couldn't spare much time. At first, I had concerns that what we started would be interrupted when the pandemic was over. It was not a problem because we met on weekends when we were always at home due to the pandemic. (Interviewee 15, Appendix J, 87)

One male alumni mentor (31) expressed that he felt connected to the university in his mentoring experience:

The positive experience for me was to have a conversation with someone from the same university, from the same department, from a different generation. I feel like I continue to be in close contact with the university somehow. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 88)

One female alumni mentor (53) stated that her first formal mentoring experience was supported by the program; and program provided a suitable matching:

I did formal mentoring for the first time; there was content on the platform that guided me. I think there was enough support at that point. The program matched me with a mentee from the Economics Department; this made me feel comfortable establishing relationships; it was easier. (Interviewee 13, Appendix J, 89)

One male alumni mentor (43) said that he found a chance to transfer his expertise in a structured way:

I felt a very different relief after each session. It was the first time I'd given my experience to someone in a structured way, fragmented and divided into sessions because my previous mentoring experiences were not structured. Someone comes to you individually, you tell a few things, and I mean, how much you can convey, maybe one-tenth of what you want to share. I think I said all of what I thought a friend of his age could understand, so at least I conveyed all the topics. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 90)

One female alumni mentor (40) stated that the program offered a nourishing and comfortable environment:

I met many sweet people in the program. The people were very constructive, positive, smiling, and the environment was a very nourishing and comfortable environment where you could put yourself out. Therefore, it is necessary to give credit to the trainers and each person in the program; they were also people who opened this field to make people feel comfortable. (Interviewee 19, Appendix J, 91)

Challenging parts for program director

When the program director was asked about the challenging parts of the program, he indicated creating financial resources, establishing methods, and maintaining interaction as challenging parts. The program director (38) stated that the most challenging aspect is financial resources:

The biggest challenge we encountered and tried to solve in the program was creating financial resources for the program. We put much effort into this; being able to create it would have relieved us at many points. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 92)

Apart from creating financial resources, there were other operational challenges:

We did this program for the first time, and there were great uncertainties; we constantly experimented. Each work had different challenges; establishing a method and following upon them, for instance, were challenging. Also, maintaining and increasing interaction were the other challenges we faced. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 93)

Effective parts for program director

When the program director was asked about the effective parts of his program experience, he expressed feeling satisfied, taking positive feedback, impacting students, and creating a network as effective parts.

The program director (38) expressed his satisfaction with the completion of the program and positive feedback from different stakeholders:

The greatest satisfaction for me is to be able to complete something we have planned. I really think that we have created a world-class and an exemplary program. We got a lot of feedback for improvement from mentors and

mentees, but we also got feedback that we created a really good program. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 94)

In addition, observing the effect of the mentoring program on students and creating networks were reported as effective parts:

When I met with the students individually, I realized how the program affected them. They also participated in many activities voluntarily and made us feel that they were valuable. I also created a network because I met many people, and I had the opportunity to introduce myself, contributing to my career. (Interviewee 21, Appendix J, 95)

4.4.2 The effect of mentoring

The eighth question of the interview protocol aimed to understand the effect of mentoring on participants' life: "How has the mentoring relationship affected your life?"

4.4.2.1 The effect of mentoring on mentees

Mentee findings revealed that mentoring relationships have various effects on their lives, such as feeling strong and comfortable, deciding career paths and preparing more effectively, self-awareness, improved resilience skills, knowledge, and perspective.

Feeling strong and comfortable

Six out of ten student mentees stated that having someone to ask questions made them feel strong and comfortable. One female student mentee (23) expressed her feelings as follows:

My mentor knew everyone, had a very good network, and had a good answer to every question I had. That's why this relationship made me feel very strong. (Interviewee 9, Appendix J, 96)

Another male student mentee (22) indicated that he doesn't feel alone when making important decisions:

At least when I want to make an important decision, I don't feel alone in making that decision for a very long time because I know I can consult my mentor whenever I want. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 97)

One female student mentee (23) stated mentoring conversations made her calmer:

I firmly believe that my mentoring relationship has benefited me. I realized that he graduated before me, he had undergone similar processes and experienced similar difficulties. Ah, so the process was like this; there were points where I calmed myself as if it could be so challenging for everyone. My mentor calmed me down by saying, "Okay, you can do it; you are already doing many things." (Interviewee 6, Appendix J, 98)

Deciding on career path

Four mentees stated that mentoring relationships support them in clearing confusion in their minds and setting their career goals. One female student mentee

(24) expressed that mentoring enlightened her career journey:

Especially when I was younger, it enlightened my path a lot. People get very confused; you don't know what to do. Yes, we all have potential, but how do we use it correctly? Where exactly should I start my career journey? What should I do? Those conversations we had gradually accumulated, and made sense. They came together like pieces of a puzzle. (Interviewee 2, Appendix J, 99)

One male student mentee (22) indicated that his mentoring relationship helped him decide his career journey and prepare more effectively:

I participated in this program in the 3rd grade, and before the program, I was very confused. I had a lot of questions in my mind, such as what exactly do I want? Am I suitable for the profession I want? What steps should I take if I am suitable? Who should I communicate with? What should I study? After the mentoring program, it all became very clear; it was very useful for my decision-making process. (Interviewee 8, Appendix J, 100)

Self-awareness

Four mentees expressed that mentoring relationships contributed to their personal growth by helping them to know themselves. One female student mentee

(23) stated that thanks to mentoring, she discovered her strengths and weaknesses:

It helped me a lot to discover my strengths and my weaknesses. It is the same in terms of communication as well as professionally. (Interviewee 7, Appendix J, 101)

Another male student mentee (22) expressed that mentoring conversations provide an opportunity for self-reflection:

By talking with my mentor about the things I have made, I have observed what I have been doing, what I have done this month, what I have done for the future, how important the things I have been doing are, and how much free time I have spent, I had the opportunity to see them all. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 102)

Improved resilience skill

Two student mentees stated that their mentors helped them manage stressful and challenging situations. One female student mentee (21) stated that her mentor was very supportive and helped her to manage stressful processes better:

I applied for an internship at a good company, and the process went badly. In other words, it didn't go like I wanted; my mentor helped me manage the process better, to the point of not treating myself badly, not saying that I'm unsuccessful, I couldn't succeed, and I can't succeed in the future. It was so nice to feel that someone was next to me, behind me. An experienced person, ten years older than you, is entirely focused on you. She says you can do it; I had such an experience too. At that point, I think it was a significant value, very supportive. (Interviewee 3, Appendix J, 103)

Knowledge and perspective

Three student mentees said that their mentors provided them with different perspectives and knowledge. One of these student mentees (24) stated that the mentoring relationship provided him with different perspectives and gained career-related learning:

I can say that it added a different perspective. I was working at a start-up, sharing my experiences with my mentor. She said that maybe it would be better to start in the corporate at first because once you start, you can easily switch to the start-up again. If you spend a lot of time in the start-up, it may be difficult to adapt to the corporate again; you can try the corporate; this was useful for me. (Interviewee 4, Appendix J, 104)

Future mentoring

The ninth and tenth questions of the interview protocol, "Would you like to be a mentor in the future?" and "Would you suggest the mentoring program to

another student?” were asked to understand the student mentee’s opinions about future mentoring. All student mentees interviewed stated that they would like to be a mentor in the future for various reasons such as being beneficial to people and society, being in solidarity with the university, and giving back by transferring the experience and knowledge.

One of these student mentees (22) stated that being a mentor is one of his dreams:

I would love to. It is one of my dreams; I love to talk to people and help them very much. If I come to such a point, I will participate in this program. Because in this process, students can be very confused; they do not know whom to talk to and what to ask. A person who will shed light on that period really feels like medicine, and I would love to be in the same position, to be able to help someone by holding their hand. At the same time, being able to do this within the university is also important for me in terms of maintaining the university’s place in my life, so I want this very much. (Interviewee 8, Appendix J, 105)

One male student mentee (22) stated that being beneficial to others is one of his main motivations:

One of my motivations in my life is to show people the power of belief and effort. To be beneficial to society and people at all times, shed a little light. Life is empty if I am not going to be helpful to anyone. (Interviewee 5, Appendix J, 106)

Another male student mentee (22) said that mentoring belongs to his characteristics:

Of course, I say yes to this question very clearly because it’s something that I thought belonged to my character when I was in high school and maybe even in junior high school. I tend to give back more and more of what I get, so after gaining work experience for a certain time, I don’t want to keep it to myself. I try to convey it to as many people as I can, so I definitely want to be a mentor in later times. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 107)

In addition, when student mentees were asked whether they would recommend the mentoring program to friends, all students stated they had a positive experience in the program. They would recommend the program to other students. One of these student mentees (23) said that she acts like a promoter of the program:

I always suggest it; I seem to be the promoter of this program. I tell all my close friends, and I can’t believe it when I see people who have not heard of

the program. It is a very good program that everyone should participate in; I recommend it to my roommate and all my friends who did not participate. (Interviewee 9, Appendix J, 108)

One female student mentee (21) stated that she recommended mentoring, especially to the disconnected friends during the pandemic:

I have already recommended it to many people. Some people are so disconnected because of the online education period; how can I say it? They got disconnected from school and classes. Sometimes some say, "What am I going to do now? I want to start again." I humbly said I think you should apply for a mentoring program; a mentor is very good, and it feels very good. At least it is not like a trip to an unknown island. There is a certain route; the surroundings are not very foggy, and we are not going towards the unknown. (Interviewee 3, Appendix J, 109)

Another female student mentee (23) indicated that mentoring is a program that everyone should benefit from:

Yes, actually, I am currently recommending it to my friends. There are still those who do not know about the program, and I tell them. It is beneficial in any case; even if the matching is wrong, it is also possible to change it. Apart from this, it is mentoring for volunteer purposes; nobody expects a profit. It provides a nice network; I think it is a program that should definitely be benefited from. (Interviewee 1, Appendix J, 110)

One male student mentee (22) indicated that he would recommend the program to the people who don't know about the program:

Of course, I recommended it to many of my friends when the program first started. Many people around me don't know about the program. I think it's because they don't check school emails. I am a person who checks school emails, and I learned that there is such a program for the first time as a result of the school mail, so I will be recommending it to everyone who is not aware of the program. (Interviewee 10, Appendix J, 111)

4.4.2.2 The effect of mentoring on mentors

Mentors' findings revealed that mentoring relationships have various effects on their lives, such as the feeling of pleasure and satisfaction, catching up with the new generations, improved communication in personal and professional life, the

opportunity for self-discovery and reflection, and transfer of knowledge to the business.

The feeling of pleasure and satisfaction

The feeling of pleasure and satisfaction was the most expressed effect of the mentoring relationship. Seven out of ten mentors stated that they felt happy and satisfied by touching the life of mentees.

One of the male alumni mentors (31) expressed that the mentoring relationship gave him emotional satisfaction:

I don't know if it directly impacted my own life. I liked the thought of guiding someone, knowing that she could at least handle certain issues more comfortably in certain areas. Touching a person's life gives emotional satisfaction in that sense. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 112)

One female alumni mentor (53) indicated that she felt happy and satisfied in her mentoring journey:

I enjoyed it, and I was happy. I think I will continue my dialogue with my mentee. It was a nice gain; it was fun to be with young people. They give you a reason to be dynamic. It was also delightful to question things together and meet new inquiring minds. There is the beauty of having done something that has been on my mind for a long time; I would like to do it again. (Interviewee 13, Appendix J, 113)

Another female alumni mentor (40) stated the mentoring relationship made her happy:

I feel that I am satisfied; contributing to someone gave me satisfaction, but if I think about who I was and who I turned into, I guess I cannot say anything clearly. Still, I realized that contributing to someone is something that feeds me, grows, and makes me happy. (Interviewee 19, Appendix J, 114)

Catching up with the new generation

Five mentors reported that they had a chance to understand what the new generation was going through and fill the generational gap thanks to the mentoring.

One of the male alumni mentors (50) indicated his experience as follows:

In my working life, I had mostly worked with people of my generation, especially when I came to the management team; there was always a distance, so young people come to the company, but you are not in direct contact with them. You cannot see their expectations, desires, dreams, or lifestyles. It is not possible to have a one-on-one conversation. This mentoring relationship has made me realize how time has changed and where the social structure has evolved. (Interviewee 16, Appendix J, 115)

Another male alumni mentor (43) stated that he gained awareness and filled the generational gap:

I always wanted to give guidance and direction to young friends; I always felt responsible for this. However, as generations come between, your bond starts to break. So you can no longer understand what those new generations are going through and what priorities they have. For example, you can easily give tips to a newly graduated friend who came with a career of 4-5 years in 2005-2006; he is only 4-5 years younger than you. But when there is a difference of 21-22 years, gaps begin to form; it was good for me to fill the gaps. I gained a different awareness. (Interviewee 17, Appendix J, 116)

Improved communication

Five alumni mentors said that the mentoring relationship improved their communication in business and social life. One female alumni mentor (28) expressed that mentoring helped her to ask more quality questions and relieve her tension in business life:

I ask many questions, but it made me think, should I ask every question? Since I work on a project basis and manage a team, I have to motivate and lead the team constantly. Maybe all team leaders are mentors at some point, encouraging them by asking questions. When I started asking questions about the goals and life issues of someone younger than me, I touched on much more niche areas and realized the quality of the questions. At this point, it changed the quality of the questions I would ask in any discussion or in the sense of managing any community. In terms of calmness and stability, I thought I should always have a stable meeting with a positive mood for one hour, no matter what the subject is. And this does not coincide at all with meetings where the tension in business life is very variable and the dynamics are very different; perhaps this may have relieved the stress in my life a little. (Interviewee 14, Appendix J, 117)

One male alumni mentor (37) said that mentoring helped him to develop dialogues more effectively with young generations:

In my business life, we hire new friends, people of the same age as my mentee friend. During the interviews, it had a significant positive effect on making them comfortable and closer and finding the right questions more appropriate. We have our project students in the company, and it has been very useful in the meetings and dialogues with them. Since they are about the same age, it helped me understand what kind of expectations they had.

(Interviewee 15, Appendix J, 118)

Another female alumni mentor (54) stated that mentoring is a part of her personal and professional life and contributes to human relations:

My first mentees are my children; I started with them first. Frankly, I would have a hard time if you told me to stop mentoring, and because I reinforced it with the company, it is both in my job and the training mentoring we do. It certainly contributes to human relations. It significantly helped me direct my children in their career and school choices. (Interviewee 18, Appendix J, 119)

Opportunity for self-discovery and reflection

One male alumni mentor (35) said that the mentoring relationship provided him with an opportunity for self-discovery and reflection:

It is not necessary to be white-collar. It is not required to have a master's degree and become an academician. You can also design t-shirts and travel abroad; talking about these is an opportunity for me to explore and think. What would it be without the mentoring program? A difficult one, most likely not to be answered. (Interviewee 12, Appendix J, 120)

Transfer of knowledge to business

One female alumni mentor (39) stated that her experience in mentoring helps her in business life:

I am very glad that I participated in the program. There is a coincidence or a collective attitude in the business world and companies, mentoring programs started simultaneously, and I receive requests regarding these. When a job request comes, I also benefit from my experience here; it also helps my career. (Interviewee 20, Appendix J, 121)

Future mentoring

All alumni mentors interviewed said that they would like to be mentors in the future program for several reasons, such as contributing to the university and

supporting students, being in solidarity with the university, sharing experiences, and meeting new people.

One of the male alumni mentors (31) indicated that he had a positive mentoring experience this year and wants to contribute to other students too:

The thought of wanting to see the developments I see in my mentee in other mentees can be the reason why I want to continue. If it was a failed experience, I might not want to continue. I might see it as a waste of time because finding time is not always so easy. (Interviewee 11, Appendix J, 122)

One female alumni mentor (40) emphasized that mentoring is valuable for her in different perspectives:

I definitely would. Firstly, It is very pleasant to touch someone's life and leave a mark. Secondly, it is a process that I have learned as well. Thirdly, it is an important thing for me because I feel solidarity with my school; it keeps some values alive for me, so it is valuable in that sense. (Interviewee 19, Appendix J, 123)

Another male alumni mentor (37) indicated that he would like to continue mentoring if he can make a time commitment:

In terms of my job responsibilities, especially if the pandemic disappears, and if I see the opportunity to create time in the following process, I want to continue in the future. (Interviewee 15, Appendix J, 124)

In addition to future mentoring, whereas five alumni mentors stated that they would recommend the program to other alumni, five alumni indicated that they would recommend it to the people who would be a good fit rather than every alumni.

One male alumni mentor (50) said that the people who are ready to listen and understand students should attend the program:

Let me be very clear: people who put themselves and their egos at the center of their lives should not come. Let people come who listen to the other person and are ready to understand their needs. That is why I recommend such graduates to join; they create added value, and others should stay away. (Interviewee 16, Appendix J, 125)

Another female alumni mentor (39) stated that mentoring is not suitable for everyone:

I recommend it, but I do not recommend it to every graduate. If the purpose of coming to the program is to give hope and empowerment to the student, then yes, I recommend it. So far, I have not recommended anyone because I think this is not something that can be done with recommendation and persuasion. I think that those who want to give mentoring and give their heart will volunteer themselves. (Interviewee 20, Appendix J, 126)

One female alumni mentor (54) said that she recommended mentoring to many graduates, but there is a need for training for first-time mentors:

I recommend it to most people, but they have great drawbacks. People do not know what to do because they haven't done it before. Maybe a different training can be given to new ones, something more inclusive, to encourage them on what to do and how to progress. (Interviewee 18, Appendix J, 127)

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the university alumni mentoring program implemented by the alumni association of one of the state universities in Turkey.

Data were collected through a qualitative research approach with program documents and interviews with one program director, ten student mentees, and ten alumni mentors. The logic model guided emergent themes from the data analysis. In this chapter, the study findings will be discussed in relation to the theoretical framework of the study. Implications for the research findings and conclusion will be explored. Limitations and recommendations for further research and practice will be presented.

5.1 Discussion and implications

In this part, the study findings will be discussed under four headings: (1) program resources; (2) program participants; (3) program activities; and (4) program outcomes.

5.1.1 Program Resources

This study utilized a logic model to provide a descriptive analysis of the university alumni mentoring program. Frechtling (2007) explains the input component of the logic model framework as the program's human, financial, and organizational resources. The interview with the program director revealed that the program's human resources are the program team, steering committee, volunteer students, and alumni. While university students and alumni served the program with their knowledge and experience, the program provided a space for volunteering and

development opportunities. Ross-Gordon and Dowling (1995) emphasized the importance of volunteering as a learning source for adult learners. At this point, the mentoring program served as a site for learning opportunities.

According to Cunningham (1993), there is a positive and safe environment at the core of each successful mentoring project. The program participants reported that the program was open to improvement and created spaces where individuals could brainstorm together and be encouraged to share their ideas for the program's progress, resulting in feeling a sense of belongingness to the special community. The program team played a significant role in fostering this environment by providing regular communication and an intimate atmosphere where participants felt comfortable. The findings of this study support the study of Sherman et al. (2000), where qualified program staff is emphasized as a necessity in effective mentoring programs.

Another critical point to consider is financial resources. The program director indicated that the program has limited resources, and the biggest challenge for the team was the management of these resources. These findings are not surprising when the financing trends in higher education in the world and Turkey are considered. According to Kurt and Gümüş (2015), funding issues are among the most critical challenges higher education institutions face. The resources transferred to universities are insufficient to meet the increasing needs for higher education, resulting in concerns about allocating financial resources and sustainable systems (Tremblay et al., 2012). Some planned activities, such as the Design Thinking Program, couldn't be performed due to lack of financial resources, which left some participants disappointed. Similarly, Ensher and Murphy (2005) argued that mentoring programs should analyze and allocate resources carefully to fulfill

program objectives and meet participants' expectations; otherwise, this situation can lead to disappointment and dissatisfaction.

As organizational inputs, the program utilized design workshops, an online mentoring platform, training materials, certificates, and program evaluations.

According to McLaughlin and Jordan (2010), the first step in designing a successful program is research. The knowledge of program expectations and needs can be acquired through interviews with program stakeholders and analysis of relevant documentation. In line with the literature, the program carried out design workshops with different focus groups: students, alumni, mentor-graduates, university professors, and human resources experts during the program's design phase. These focus group workshops played an essential role in setting the program goals and objectives.

In addition to the design workshops, student mentees and alumni mentors expressed positive opinions about the online mentoring platform, program duration, and frequency of meetings. According to Gibb and Tefer (2008), setting a program timeline, providing the media for interaction, and outlining the frequency of mentoring sessions are necessary for a successful mentoring program.

One of the program's strengths was providing an online mentoring tool where participants could connect with video conferencing, reach the training materials and give feedback to each other. Chong et al. (2020) argued that while face-to-face mentoring requires meeting in a scheduled place and time, online mentoring platforms made things easier in terms of saving time and cost. These findings align with literature findings, where Tyran and Garcia (2005) reported that online mentoring makes communication more convenient. In addition, it could be difficult for the program team to follow whether participants carried out meetings regularly

without the online mentoring platform. One implication of this study is that while online mentoring platforms can provide structure for mentees and mentors, they also ease the relationship management process for program practitioners.

One critique of the mentoring platform was related to the simplicity of the feedback system. After each mentor-mentee meeting, the platform automatically asked participants to rate their performance on a 5-star system in terms of communication, harmony, and added value. One implication of this study is that since proper feedback mechanisms are essential for developing an effective mentoring relationship (Davis, 2005), mentoring programs should integrate more diverse and in-depth feedback systems.

With the idea of preparing students for the future with mentoring and competence development, the mentoring program integrated 21st-century soft-skills training (Lee, 2018). The program was grounded on four core competencies: Resilience, Empathy, Agility, and Critical Thinking. Most of the mentors evaluated this idea as innovative and reported that soft skills are well-chosen and essential for preparing students for business life. Similar to findings reported in the literature, Renuga and Ezhilan (2014) argued that mentoring programs should support students' readiness for the industry by focusing on soft-skills development. With the integration of learning models, mentoring relationships can offer learning environments where students and mentors develop themselves personally and professionally.

About program training, one question brought by the mentors was whether the activities achieved desired objectives. Some mentors stated that their mentees neither completed the training nor attended the group works. While the competencies program focused on what was beneficial in business preparation, students may have

higher priority training needs such as time management and self-confidence. One important implication of this study is the importance of identifying and prioritizing students' training needs, which is also in line with the literature (Sherman et al., 2000).

Another critique regarding training was timing. Some mentors stated that the latest training contents were not uploaded to the platform on time, which caused delays in meetings. One way to eliminate this communication breakdown is that the training contents can be uploaded on the platform from the beginning so that the participants can schedule their meetings at their own pace. This finding is in line with the literature where Knowles (1970) argued that adult learners are self-directed, and they should be supported to arrange their own learning pace.

Regarding the program certification, while students who completed the program were awarded a certificate of completion, there was no certification system for participating mentors. Some mentors reported that there is nothing to show as proof of the completion of the program, and they would like to share their mentoring experience on social media platforms such as LinkedIn. This finding is in line with the literature; similarly, Douglas (1997) argued that one of the challenges mentoring programs face is communicating and increasing program visibility. One implication for practice can be providing certification to both mentees and mentors; in this way, potential participants may be more motivated to participate in the program, and the program's presence on social media can be enhanced.

5.1.2 Program Participants

The mentoring program participants were investigated through the output component of the logic model framework that describes the participation element. The mentoring program involved 280 alumni mentors and 280 student mentees.

In the recruitment process, 510 alumni applied to the program, whereas the student number was well below this ratio with 290 applications. The findings of this study are also consistent with the findings of Skrzypek et al. (2019), where more alumni volunteered to participate in the program than students. One interpretation of this situation is whereas university students have several options to commit their time and energy, and the alumni have limited opportunities to connect with their alma mater.

Another reason for low application rates may derive from the recruitment strategy. In the recruitment process, students and alumni were contacted by e-mail. Although the program announcement was also made via social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, it did not reach the desired number of students. According to Putsche et al. (2008), while sending e-mails and sharing program brochures can arouse general interest, communicating the program's expected outcomes with potential participants is the most effective recruitment strategy. One possible way to deal with the recruitment of student mentees would be to share personal stories from program participants on social media channels students frequently use, such as university web pages and school groups on Facebook.

In addition to the recruitment strategy and selection process, Gannon and Maher (2012) discussed matching as one of the most critical processes in building strong mentoring relationships. While applying to the program, participants were asked to upload motivation videos and fill out the application forms to address their

expectations from the mentoring relationship. Most student mentees and alumni mentors were satisfied with their matching and gave positive feedback about the selection process; only one mentee reported a mismatch. One implication of this study is that the program team can create a mentoring pool that involves enthusiastic mentors and mentees with a detailed application process. In the next step, monitoring the mentoring process is necessary for preventing unsatisfied matching. The conclusion of this study is in line with the literature, as Garringer et al. (2015) argued that the program team should check paired mentees and mentors after the first mentoring meeting, ask for their feedback, and make possible changes to overcome mismatches.

When the motivations of alumni and students were taken into consideration, the findings showed that mentees' motivations for applying to the program were primarily focused on getting career guidance, whereas mentors' motivations to apply to the program were helping and supporting students and giving back to the university. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of the study of Dollinger et al. (2019), where student mentees expressed career-oriented motivations while alumni mentors reported help and support motivations. In addition to getting career guidance, meeting with new people was one of the main motivations of student mentees. Similarly, the participants in Conner's (2015) study reported that they participated in the program with the expectation of meeting new people.

The exploration of whether participants' expectations were met can provide essential insights into the program. The strong mentoring relationship and personal development were the most expressed expectations from student mentees, and they reported that the program satisfied their expectations. Similarly, the participants in

Lopatka et al. (2011) study reported that the mentoring program satisfied their career and personal development needs.

On the other hand, there were unmet expectations reported by student mentees and alumni mentors. Whereas student mentees expected more networking opportunities with other mentors, alumni mentors expected networking between program mentors and reverse mentoring opportunities. The expectation of networking opportunity is consistent with the literature studies (Bernard, 2001; Smith-Ruig, 2014), where participants expected engaging events that bring program stakeholders together and create a chance for networking.

While the current program was designed as one-on-one mentoring between alumni and students, the expectations for mentoring with more than one alumni and reverse mentoring opportunities emerged in the findings. For the following programs, these expectations can be considered in the design process. Similarly, the participants in Geesa et al. (2020) study reported the expectations of more connection and informal access opportunities to program mentors.

Another critical expectation was having more connections with the alumni association. Since the program was implemented during the pandemic, it was designed as e-mentoring, and events were held virtually. Some mentors expressed that they would like to attend offline meetings where they physically visit the alumni association and come together with the program team and participants. According to Smith (2015), mentoring programs are essential in terms of providing involvement opportunities for alumni. Holley and Caldwell (2012) suggested that mentoring programs can host interactive activities such as workshops and seminars to strengthen the connection between program participants and the organization. One

implication for future programs can be utilizing a hybrid model for activities where both offline and online events are implemented.

5.1.3 Program Activities

The mentoring program activities are explored through the output component of the logic model framework that describes the activities element. The seven-month university alumni mentoring program involved diverse activities designed for student mentees and alumni mentors.

One of the most discussed activities in the program was mentee working groups. Whereas some students expressed positive opinions, some reported challenges and evaluated group meetings as inefficient. The program director reported that only 60 students out of 280 completed all tasks, and the mentee working groups didn't proceed as effectively as they had planned. From the organization's perspective, maintaining and increasing the interaction was challenging. The study's findings verified the previous results in the literature. The study by Tyrant and Garcia (2005) argued that building a high-quality relationship and maintaining the engagement between participants is the most challenging aspect of the mentoring programs.

Geesa et al. (2020) stated that understanding the interaction among mentees requires careful analysis of participants' reflections. When interview findings are considered, the low engagement rates in mentee working groups can derive from two leading causes. The first reason might be the lack of accountability. Although the program team checked whether groups completed their tasks, there was no negative sanction for the groups that didn't finish their assignments. Secondly, the mentee working groups were created randomly; while some team members were highly

motivated, others were reluctant, resulting in incomplete tasks and disappointments for engaged mentees. One possible way to overcome the problems in mentee working groups would be to provide information on the required time for group meetings and asks students to detail what kind of mentee working group they would like to be involved in through application forms. In this way, student mentees can be grouped according to their availability and expectations.

Another controversial activity of the program was fireside chats. Some students reported that fireside chats provided interesting content where they got insights into valuable guests' failure stories, but the low participation demotivated them. On the contrary, some students reported that the contents of fireside chats were not appealing; hence they didn't attend. In addition, some student mentees reported difficulty fitting the program activities' schedule into their programs. At this point, the low attendance rates may result from the event promotion strategy. According to Trana (2019), scheduling the mentoring program activities according to the availability of participants and promotion is crucial to encourage participation. One implication of these findings can be diversifying event contents and creating promotional strategies in the following programs.

Regarding mentor activities, most of the mentors shared that they had difficulty participating in program activities because of their limited time. This finding is also consistent with the literature. Ehrich et al. (2004) stated that shortage of time is the most common problem mentors face. In addition, one alumni mentor reported the feeling of unnaturalness in online activities because of the lack of face-to-face interaction. Similarly, Mueller (2004) argued that although online mentoring activities provide benefits, the lack of face-to-face communication might cause interpersonal challenges.

Apart from that, the most discussed activity was the mentor training, where the program team provided optional mentor training for those who volunteer to receive training. While some mentors expressed that inclusive mentoring training is needed for all mentors to be in the same line, experienced alumni mentors reported no need for mandatory training because they felt competent in mentoring. Andersen (2020) argued that initial and ongoing mentoring training is required to ensure effective mentoring relationships. At this point, it would be helpful to conduct a continuous assessment of the mentors' training needs and integrate training into the program accordingly.

5.1.4 Program Outcomes

The mentoring program outcomes are investigated through the outcome component of the logic model framework. The interview processes with student mentees and alumni mentors have revealed that the mentoring relationship has various positive outcomes. The conclusions of this study are consistent with the literature studies (e.g., Brown, 2007; Kram, 1985; Lopatka et al., 2011).

From the student mentees' perspective, the positive outcomes involved feeling strong and comfortable, deciding career paths, self-awareness, improved resilience skills, knowledge, and perspective. One of the most expressed outcomes of mentoring on students was feeling comfortable, which is consistent with what has been found in the literature. Similarly, Castellanos et al. (2016) argued that mentors play a crucial role in showing empathy towards students' concerns, and their support makes students feel comfortable. Student mentees also reported that mentoring relationships helped them develop career paths by setting goals and taking steps for

these goals. This finding is also in line with the literature where the participants in Smith-Ruig's (2014) study reported that mentoring enlightened their career journey.

According to Chinnasamy (2013), mentoring programs serve as a tool for adult education where both mentees and mentors engage in the learning process. Aligned with the literature, study findings indicated that mentoring relationships helped students develop resilience skills against ambiguities and supported their learning experience by widening their perspectives and knowledge.

From the alumni mentors' perspective, the main outcomes of mentoring involved feeling pleasure and satisfaction, self-reflection, gaining knowledge about new generations, improved communication skills, and transfer of mentoring knowledge to their careers. One of the most expressed outcomes of mentoring was the feeling of satisfaction and pleasure. Alumni mentors expressed that the mentoring relationship gave them the opportunity to touch someone's life. This conclusion is in line with the study of Allen et al. (2006), where fulfillment and accomplishment are expressed most frequently as the positive outcomes of mentoring.

In addition to feeling satisfaction, mentorship provided a place where alumni mentors discovered themselves through the reflection of ideas and values. Similarly, the participants in Rotstein's (2011) study stated that mentoring relationships engaged them in reflective practice and contributed to their personal growth. Another positive outcome was the transfer of mentoring knowledge to business life. Alumni mentors expressed that their mentoring relationship with the young generation helped them acquire new perspectives and knowledge, resulting in improved communication in personal and professional life. Similarly, the study by Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005) reported that mentoring improved mentors' active listening skills by exchanging ideas and perspectives with mentees.

Whereas positive experiences outweigh the negative experiences, some alumni mentors reported communication challenges caused by generational gaps and mentee characteristics, which is consistent with the literature. The study by Yeager (2000) reported that mentors faced communication challenges that resulted from differences between mentees and mentors, such as age and characteristics. Another challenging aspect of the mentoring relationship was the communication of personal situations. The study's findings showed that sometimes mentees could ask for guidance and assistance in individual problems that mentors could not solve.

According to Healy et al. (2012), mentors should be aware that they cannot find answers to every question students are looking for, but they can help students explore alternative ways to overcome their problems. At this point, clarifying expectations and boundaries are essential for healthy mentoring relationships. In addition, some mentors reported that remembering negative memories and observing the generational change through mentoring sessions were emotionally challenging. Similarly, Sandler (1995) argued that mentoring interactions might be emotionally draining.

5.2 Logic model of the university alumni mentoring program

Based on research findings, the researcher developed a logic model for the university alumni mentoring program and presented it in Figure 1.

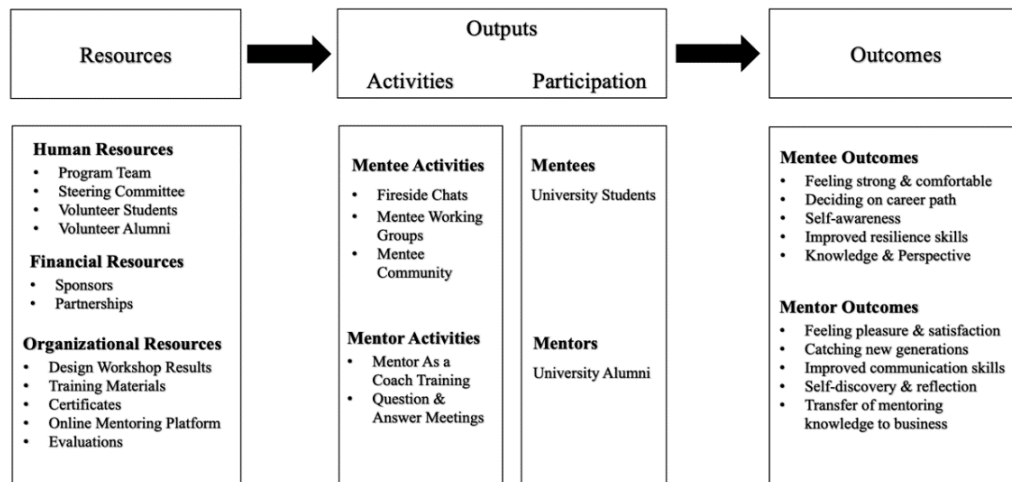


Figure 1. Logic model of the university alumni mentoring program

A logic model demonstrates a holistic illustration with three main elements of the program--resources, outputs, and outcomes--and their connections. Under the resources element, the program had available human resources that involved the program staff, steering committee, volunteer students, and alumni ready to work for creating program activities. Although they were limited, sponsors and partnerships were the primary financial resources to carry out program services. Design workshop results, training materials, certificates, online mentoring platform, and program evaluations were grouped as organizational resources and transformed into program activities such as conducting seminars, training sessions, and workshops. Several positive outcomes occurred with the utilization of program activities and participation of university students and alumni. Under the outcome element, the logic model illustrates the short-term effects of the university alumni mentoring program for participants, including attitudes, awareness, improved skills, knowledge, and perspective.

5.3 Conclusion

One of the most crucial conclusions that emerged from this study is that mentoring has provided lifelong learning experiences for the parties engaged in the mentoring relationship. In this respect, university alumni mentoring programs can be evaluated as an adult learning tool where university students and alumni are encouraged to share experiences, think, reflect, and learn from each other. According to Mezirow (2007), self-reflection and critical thinking are effective adult education practices. In mentoring, mentees and mentors have a chance to reflect and engage in discussions where mentees' needs are addressed. With this respect, student mentees and alumni mentors can be evaluated as adult learners who self-directedly attend the mentoring relationship and are actively involved in solving real-life problems, which aligns with Knowles's (1970) assumptions for adult learners. From an adult education point of view, university alumni mentoring programs can serve as learning settings where adult mentees and mentors engage in experiential learning through the developmental mentoring relationship.

5.4 Limitations and recommendations for further research

This qualitative case study explored the university alumni mentoring program implemented at one of the state universities in Turkey; hence it is not representative and generalizable to other university alumni mentoring programs. This study can be replicated across different universities, such as private universities, and a comparison can be made for further research.

Another limitation of this study was the small sample; one program director, ten alumni mentors, and ten student mentees were interviewed to understand the

experiences of university students and alumni. In future research, a mixed-method research design study can be utilized to explore a more extensive study sample.

The university alumni mentoring program was implemented during the pandemic. Since it was impossible to meet face to face, the program activities and one-to-one meetings between mentees and mentors were held online. For further research, the mentoring programs where mentoring sessions and activities are implemented face-to-face can be explored, and comparative studies can be conducted.

5.5 Recommendations for practice

In higher education, existing mentoring research mainly focused on mentoring programs conducted primarily between staff-to-staff, faculty-to-student, and peer-to-peer. This study contributed to the literature by exploring a mentoring program between university alumni and students; and provided information on program resources, activities, and outcomes for participants. The insights from this study can provide helpful information for higher education policymakers, program practitioners, university students and alumni.

University alumni mentoring programs have a significant potential for providing lifelong learning experience opportunities for university students and alumni. At this point, higher education policymakers should take responsibility for raising awareness of university alumni mentoring programs, their visibility, and dissemination. Since the funding is scarce, experts should work on resource transfer to mentoring programs. One recommendation for making mentoring programs more visible and widespread can be the development of mentoring curriculums and the integration of these curriculums into university programs. In addition, in the

collaboration with public education centers, the certificated mentoring programs can be designed and implemented to reach more people.

For program practitioners, it is vital to note that ensuring successful mentoring programs requires a careful design process. To set the goals and objectives of the program, the needs assessment of each program's stakeholders is critical. Using needs assessment tools such as interviews and observations, the program team should identify and prioritize the needs. In the next step, a careful analysis of human, financial, and organizational resources is essential to achieve the program's desired outcomes. Since the financial resources are generally limited, the program should prepare budget plans and be careful in management and allocation.

Mentoring programs need qualified staff who focus on the administration and development of the program processes. Effective recruitment and matching strategies should be applied to strengthen the possibility of a successful mentoring relationship. The program team should provide initial and ongoing training for mentees and mentors tailored to their needs. At this point, a systematic program evaluation is needed to screen the progress of mentoring relationship and determine the parts of the program that need improvement. Whereas designing events that promote networking opportunities between program participants is vital for increasing participant engagement, providing reverse mentoring opportunities can be an innovative approach for future mentoring programs.

For university students and alumni, they should be aware of the fact that they need to take responsibility for their development processes. One of the most important points to having a healthy mentoring relationship is clarifying expectations and setting boundaries at the beginning of the relationship. Mentors and mentees should create mentoring contracts to clarify their responsibilities, roles, and

expectations from the mentoring journey. Receiving and giving feedback effectively is another critical element in constructing a healthy relationship. Students and alumni should be open to different perspectives and perceive feedback as a learning opportunity.

APPENDIX A
ETHICAL APPROVAL

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 17.06.2021-17974

T.C.
BOĞAZIÇI ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER YÜKSEK LİSANS VE DOKTORA TEZLERİ ETİK İNCELEME
KOMİSYONU
TOPLANTI TUTANAĞI

Toplantı Sayısı : 18
Toplantı Tarihi : 17.06.2021
Toplantı Saati : 13:00
Toplantı Yeri : Zoom Sanal Toplantı
Bulunanlar : Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen, Prof. Dr. Ebru Kaya, Prof. Dr. Fatma Nevra Seggie
Bulunmayanlar :

Ayşenur Vatanserver

Eğitim Bilimleri

Sayın Araştırmacı,

"UNIVERSITY ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAM: A CASE STUDY IN TURKEY" başlıklı projeniz ile ilgili olarak yaptığımız SBB-EAK 2021/31 sayılı başvuru komisyonumuz tarafından 17 Haziran 2021 tarihli toplantıda incelenmiş ve uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya çevrimiçi olarak katılımı ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. COVID-19 önlemleri kapsamında kurul üyelerinden ıslak imza alınmadığı için bu onay mektubu üye ve raportör olarak Ebru Kaya tarafından bütün üyeler adına e-imzalanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla, bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Prof. Dr. Ebru KAYA
ÜYE

e-imzalıdır
Prof. Dr.Ebru KAYA
Raportör

SOBETİK 18 17.06.2021

Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5. Maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Supporting Research Institution: Boğaziçi University

Name of the Research: University Alumni Mentoring Program: A Case Study in Turkey

Project Director: Prof. Fatma Nevra SEGGIE

Name of the Researcher: Ayşenur Vatansever

Dear Participant,

Ayşenur Vatansever, a graduate student at Boğaziçi University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Educational Sciences conducting a thesis study under the name of “University Alumni Mentoring Program: A Case Study in Turkey”. The aim of this study is to analyze the mentoring program that is implemented by university alumni association. The approval of study was taken by The Ethics Committee for Master and PhD Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities and the alumni association of the relevant university.

We invite you to participate in this research study. If you agree to participate, semi-structured interviews about your experiences in alumni mentoring program that is expected to last approximately 30-45 minutes will be conducted synchronously through computer-mediated communication tools. Interviews will be audio recorded with your permission. If you do not give the permission for audio recording, the researcher will take interview notes. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You will not be paid or charged any payments. The study is not expected to pose a risk to you, but in case you feel discomfort, you can withdraw at any stage

of the interview process. You may skip any questions during the interview process, and you may withdraw at any stage of the study without giving any reason. In this case, the data we have collected from you will be destroyed.

This research is conducted for a scientific purpose and the confidentiality of participants is essential. The research data will be only used for scientific publications and presentations and the written transcriptions and audio recordings will be destroyed at the end of the study. Your personal information will not be included in the publications and presentations where the research results are shared.

If you would like to receive additional information about the research, you may contact with the project director Prof. Fatma Nevra Seggie and the researcher Ayşenur Vatansever. If you have questions regarding to your rights as a research participant, you may consult with The Ethics Committee for Master and PhD Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities (SOBETİK).

I read the text above and understood the scope and purpose of the study and my responsibilities as a participant. I agree to participate in the study.

I agree that my audio recordings could be taken during the interview process.

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM (TURKISH)

Arařtırmayı destekleyen kurum: Boęaziçi Üniversitesi

Arařtırmanın adı: Üniversite Mezun Mentorluk Programı: Türkiye’de Bir Vaka Çalışması

Proje Yürütücüsü: Prof. Fatma Nevra SEGGIE

Arařtırmacının Adı: Ayşenur Vatansever

Sayın Katılımcı,

Boęaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Eğitim Bilimleri bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencisi Ayşenur Vatansever, yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında “Üniversite Mezun Mentorluk Programı: Türkiye’de Bir Vaka Çalışması” adı altında bilimsel bir araştırma projesi yürütmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı üniversite mezunlar derneęi tarafından uygulanan mentorluk programını analiz etmektir. Arařtırma ile ilgili Boęaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşerî Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu’ndan (SOBETİK) ve ilgili üniversitenin Mezunlar Derneęi’nden onay alınmıştır.

Sizi bilimsel araştırma projemize katılmaya davet ediyoruz. Bu arařtırmaya katılmaya karar verirseniz, sizinle mentorluk programındaki deneyimleriniz ile ilgili yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler video konferans uygulamaları aracılığı ile eşzamanlı olarak gerçekleştirilecektir. Görüşmenin yaklaşık olarak 30 – 45 dakika arasında sürmesi planlanmaktadır. Görüşmede izniniz alınarak ses kaydı alınacaktır, ses kaydınızın alınmasını istemediğiniz durumda arařtırmacı görüşme notları tutacaktır.

Bu arařtırmaya katılım tamamen isteęe baęlıdır. Size herhangi bir ödeme yapılmayacak ve sizden ücret talep edilmeyecektir. alıřmanın sizin için bir risk oluřturması beklenmemektedir ancak görüřme sürecinin herhangi bir ařamasında rahatsızlık hissederseniz alıřmadan ekilebilirsiniz. Görüřme sürecinde herhangi bir soruyu atlayabilir ve alıřmanın herhangi bir ařamasında herhangi bir sebep göstermeksizin arařtırmadan ekilebilirsiniz. Bu durumda sizden almıř olduęumuz veriler imha edilecektir.

Bu arařtırma bilimsel bir amala yapılmaktadır ve katılımcı bilgilerinin gizlilięi esas tutulmaktadır. Arařtırma verileri yalnızca bilimsel amala kullanılacaktır ve arařtırma bittikten sonra imha edilecektir. Arařtırma sonuçlarının paylařıldıęı yayın ve sunumlarda kiřisel bilgileriniz kesinlikle yer almayacaktır.

Eęer alıřma hakkında ek bilgi almak isterseniz, proje yürütücüsü, Boęazii Üniversitesi Eęitim Bilimleri Bölümü öğretim üyesi Prof. Nevra Seggie ve arařtırmacı Ayřenur Vatansever ile iletiřime geebilirsiniz. Arařtırma ile ilgili haklarınız konusunda Boęazii Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beřerî Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu'na (SOBETİK) danıřabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki metni okudum, alıřmanın kapsamını ve amacını, katılımcı olarak üzerime düřen sorumlulukları anladım. Arařtırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Görüřme sürecinde ses kaydımın alınmasını onaylıyorum.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROGRAM DIRECTOR

1. Could you tell me briefly about yourself?

Gender:

Age:

What is your role in the mentoring program?

2. Could you tell me about the mentoring program goal and intended outcomes?

What was the goal of the mentoring program?

What were the intended outcomes of the program before it started?

3. Could you tell me about the resources of mentoring program?

What were the financial, human, and organizational resources of the program?

4. Could you tell me about the program participants?

Who participated to program?

How were mentees/mentors selected?

How were mentees and mentors matched?

5. Could you tell me about the program activities?

What were the activities of the program?

How were mentees/mentors trained?

How were mentees/mentors evaluated?

6. What were the effective parts of the program?

7. What were the challenging parts of the program?

8. Is there any other information you would like to add?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROGRAM DIRECTOR (TURKISH)

1. Bana kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?

Cinsiyetiniz:

Yaşınız:

Mentorluk programındaki rolünüz nedir?

2. Mentorluk programının amacı ve ulaşılmak istenen sonuçlarından bahsedebilir misiniz?

Mentorluk programının amacı nedir?

Programa başlamadan önce ulaşılmak istenen sonuçlar nelerdi?

3. Mentorluk programının kaynaklarından bahsedebilir misiniz?

Programın finansal, insan ve organizasyonel kaynakları neler?

4. Mentorluk programı katılımcılarından bahsedebilir misiniz?

Programa kimler katıldı?

Menteeler/mentorlar nasıl seçildi?

Mentee ve mentor eşleştirmesi nasıl yapıldı?

5. Mentorluk programının aktivitelerinden bahsedebilir misiniz?

Programın aktiviteleri nelerdi?

Menteeler/mentorlar nasıl eğitildi?

Menteeler/mentorlar nasıl değerlendirildi?

6. Sizce programın etkili kısımları nelerdi?

7. Sizce programın zorlu kısımları nelerdi?

8. Eklemek istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTEE

1. Could you tell me briefly about yourself?

Gender:

Age:

What undergraduate program are you currently enrolled in?

What is your class year?

2. What were your motivations to apply the mentoring program?

3. What were your expectations from the mentoring program before it started?

Which one of those expectations were met?

4. How much time did you spent with your mentor throughout the mentoring program?

5. What do you think about the mentoring program activities?

6. What are your evaluations (thoughts, feelings, etc.) for the mentoring program?

What were the strengths of this program?

What were the areas for open improvement?

7. How has your experience at mentoring program been like?

What were the challenging parts of your mentoring experience?

What were the effective parts of your mentoring experience?

8. How the mentoring relationship affected your life?

9. Would you like to be a mentor in the future? Why?

10. Would you suggest the mentoring program to another student? Why?

11. Is there any other information you would like to add?

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTEE (TURKISH)

1. Bana kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?

Cinsiyetiniz:

Yaşınız:

Hangi bölümde okuyorsunuz?

Kaçıncı sınıftasınız?

2. Mentorluk programına başvururken motivasyonlarınız nelerdi?

3. Mentorluk programından beklentileriniz nelerdi?

Bu beklentilerden hangisi / hangileri karşılandı?

4. Mentorluk programı boyunca mentorunuzla ne kadar zaman geçirdiniz?

5. Mentorluk programı etkinlikleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

6. Mentorluk programına ilişkin değerlendirmeleriniz (düşünce, duygu vb.) nelerdir?

Mentorluk programın güçlü yönleri nelerdi?

Mentorluk programının geliştirilmeye açık alanları nelerdi?

7. Mentorluk programındaki deneyiminiz nasıldı?

Mentorluk deneyiminizin zorlu kısımları nelerdi?

Mentorluk deneyiminizin etkili kısımları nelerdi?

8. Mentorluk ilişkisi hayatınızı nasıl etkiledi?

9. Gelecekte mentorluk yapmak ister misiniz? Neden?

10. Mentorluk programını başka bir öğrenciye önerir misiniz? Neden?

11. Eklemek istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTOR

1. Could you tell me briefly about yourself?

Gender:

Age:

What area/program did you receive your degree from university?

How many years have passed since graduating from undergraduate program?

- 5-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 20 + years

What is your highest level of education achieved?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Ph.D

2. What were your motivations to be a mentor in the mentoring program?

3. What were your expectations from the mentoring program before it started?

Which one of those expectations were met?

4. How much time did you spent with your mentee throughout the mentoring program?

5. What do you think about program activities?

6. What are your evaluations (thoughts, feelings, etc.) for the mentoring program?

What were the strengths of this program?

What were the areas for open improvement?

7. How has your experience at mentoring program been like?

What were the challenging parts of your mentoring experience?

What were the effective parts of your mentoring experience?

8. How has the mentoring relationship affected your life?
9. Would you like to continue to be a mentor in the future program? Why?
10. Would you suggest the mentoring program to other alumni? Why?
11. Is there any other information you would like to add?

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTOR (TURKISH)

1. Bana kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?

Cinsiyetiniz:

Yaşınız:

Üniversitesi diplomanızı hangi bölümden / programdan aldınız?

Lisans mezuniyetinizin üzerinden kaç yıl geçti?

- 5-10 yıl
- 11-15 yıl
- 16-20 yıl
- 20 + yıl

Ulaştığınız en yüksek eğitim seviyesi nedir?

- Lisans
- Yüksek Lisans
- Doktora

2. Mentorluk programına başvururken motivasyonlarınız nelerdi?

3. Mentorluk programından beklentileriniz nelerdi?

Bu beklentilerden hangisi / hangileri karşılandı?

4. Mentorluk programı boyunca mentee'nizle ne kadar zaman geçirdiniz?

5. Mentorluk programı etkinlikleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

6. Mentorluk programına ilişkin değerlendirmeleriniz (düşünce, duygu vb.) nelerdir?

Mentorluk programın güçlü yönleri nelerdi?

Mentorluk programının geliştirilmeye açık alanları nelerdi?

7. Mentorluk programındaki deneyiminiz nasıldı?

Mentorluk deneyiminizin zorlu kısımları nelerdi?

Mentorluk deneyiminizin etkili kısımları nelerdi?

8. Mentorluk ilişkisi hayatınızı nasıl etkiledi?
9. Gelecek programda mentor olmak ister misiniz? Neden?
10. Mentorluk programını başka bir mezuna önerir misiniz? Neden?
11. Eklemek istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?

APPENDIX J

NARRATIVES IN TURKISH

1. Programı yöneten ekipte beş kişi vardı, ama herkes %100 buna adanmış değildi. Bir tane öğrenme uzmanımız vardı, bu full time çalışıyordu. Dışarıdan öğrenme tasarımcımız ve ben destek veriyorduk, program boyunca %20 katkı sağladık. Genel sekreterimiz vardı, o belki de % 5 program içerisinde zaman ayırırdı, bir de öğrenci işlerinden sorumlu bir arkadaşımız vardı, o da herhalde tüm program boyunca zamanının %10-15'ini ayırmış olabilir. Yani, toplamında beş kişi olmasına rağmen programa adanmış neredeyse iki kişi full time çalışıyormuş gibi düşünebiliriz.
2. Steering Committee'de altı kişiydik, ama herkes çok aktif değildi. Komitenin amacı biraz daha Yönetim Kurulu gibi konumlandırmak, bu konuda fikir sahibi insanları bir araya getirip onlardan destek almak. Bizim fark etmediğimiz konularda bizi yönlendirmelerini sağlamak ve yaptığımız işlerde doğru kaynakları mı kullanıyoruz bunlar konusunda bizi yönlendirmeleriydi. Program başında iki haftada bir buluşuyorduk; sonra ayda bire dönuştü.
3. Bir mentee komünitesi kuruldu, amacı menteeeler olarak öğrenciler kendi yaşamlarını biliyorlar, sorumluluk edinmeleri ve bu komünitenin gelişimine katkıda bulunmaları. Daha sürdürülebilir bir hale getirmek. Bizim gözümüzden kaçan noktaları fark etmeleri. Mentee komünitesinin en baştaki amacı bizim yaptığımız gibi bir tasarımdan geçmek, mentee komünitesi ne yapar, nasıl işler, neler üzerine yoğunlaşır, nasıl inovatif fikirler çıkarır. Altı hafta kadar böyle bir süreden geçirdiler, daha sonra bunları gerçekleştirmek için de zaman ayırdılar birkaç tane inovatif fikirle geldiler, Clubhouse'da event yapma fikri. Kendi inisiyatifleriyle bunları da gerçekleştirdiler. Bir taraftan da bizim her ay olan ateş başı görüşmelerimiz var, yüksek seviyedeki mezunlarımızı çağırıyoruz; deneyimlerini paylaşıyorlar. Bu etkinliklerin ev sahipliğini yaptılar öyle bir destekleri oldu.
4. Çok limitli bir kaynağımız vardı, resmi olarak sadece öğrenme uzmanı için bir bütçe ayırmıştık. Bunun dışında yaptığımız etkinliklerin birçoğu online olduğu için çok fazla bütçe ayırmamıza gerek kalmadı.
5. Finansal kaynak noktasında iki farklı gelirimiz oldu; birincisi Fireside Chat'e gelen konuşmacılardan bir şirketten ücret aldık. İkincisi de belli başlı şirketlerin mülakat simülasyonu yapması oldu, orada da cüzi bir gelir edindik.
6. Bilgiyi de bir kaynak olarak sayacak olursak yaptığımız tasarım workshoplarında biz şu bilgileri edindik. İlk başta 16-18 şirketle görüştük, bireylerle de görüştük. Burada pazarda neler oluyor, insanların beklentileri neler, özellikle İnsan Kaynakların'da çalışanlar öğrencilerde neleri eksik hissediyorlar, bunlarla ilgili içgörüler elde ettik. Bence programın başlangıcındaki en büyük bilgi kaynağımız bu oldu, programa yön verdi. Dolayısıyla iyi bir program tasarlamamıza yardımcı oldu.

7. En büyük kaynağımız Mentorinkti; orada platformu kullanmayı bize ücretsiz olarak temin ettiler, onu kullandık. Tabii online da da kullandığımız Miro, Zoom gibi araçları vardı.

8. Program süresince devamlı bir ölçümleme yapıyorduk, katılımcıların ne kadarı geribildirimde bulunuyor, ne kadarı görevleri tamamlıyor, ne kadarı programdan ayrıldı ya da ne kadarı mentorundan / menteesinden memnun değildi. Ne kadarı program başında ve sonunda göndermiş olduğumuz anketi doldurdu ve nasıl bir değişim oldu bunları orada görmüş olduk.

9. Aslında kariyerimi yönlendirirken bir görüş almak istedim ve bu görüş de daha objektif, daha dışarıdan ve tecrübeli bir görüş olsun istedim. Kariyerimi yönlendirmek motivasyonumdu.

10. Yeni mezun olacağım için kafamda bazı soru işaretleri vardı ve bunu daha deneyimli biriyle paylaşmanın benim için faydalı olacağını düşündüm. Yeni iş hayatına girerken bana bir öncü olabilecek, bana bir akıl verecek bir insanla görüşebileceğimi düşündüm.

11. Mentorluk programında daha önce de bulunmuştum, 1.sınıfta programa katıldığımda çok faydasını gördüm. Çünkü 1.sınıfta henüz mesleğim adına gelecekte ne yönde ilerlemek istediğim noktasında kesin bir kararım yoktu, farklı alanları var Psikoloji'nin ve o dönem farklı bir isteğim vardı. Bu doğrultuda bir mentorla eşleşmişim ama onunla geçirdiğim sürecin sonunda aslında istediğim alanın o olmadığını fark ettim. Bunda mentorumun çok büyük bir payı oldu, çünkü beni alandan kişilerle tanıştırdı, kendi yorumlarını, deneyimlerini paylaştı. Ben bunun sonunda aslında daha çok ne istediğimi bana neyin daha çok uygun olabileceğini buldum. O dönemde çok faydasını gördüğüm için 3.sınıftayken de tekrar katılmak istedim programa.

12. Ben üniversite 1.sınıfta ilk defa bir arkadaşımın mentorluk programını duymuştum ve sonra hemen ilgimi çekti. 2.sınıftan itibaren düzenli, aktif bir menteeyim. Bu mentee- mentor ilişkisinin hayatımda bana en çok katkı sağlayan şey olduğunu söyleyebilirim. Çünkü aslında eskiye baktığımda 2./3.sınıftayken düşüncelerim çok karışık. Sonuçta Matematik bölümündeyim, akademik olarak ilerlemek gibi bir kararım da yoktu belki özel sektörde bir şeyler yapmak istiyordum ama o zamanlar tabii tecrübem de daha az olduğu için düşüncelerim çok dağınıktı. En başında bir kere bu ilişkilerde düşüncelerimi daha düzene sokmam, gerçekten ne istediğim konusunda sohbetlerimiz sırasında bana ışık tutan noktalar oldu ki hani zaten mentorlarımız da çok deneyimli kişilerdi, çok iyi yerlerde çalışan. Onların kendi deneyimleri, sordukları sorular bana çok ışık yaktı. Her yıldan sonra kendimi daha çok bilen birine doğru dönüşüyor olmam benim için çok çok değerli oldu.

13. Önceki üç yılda mentorluk programlarına başvurmuştum ve farklı insanlarla tanışmışım. Bazılarıyla karakterim çok uydu, bazılarıyla hiç uymadı ama her birinden öğrendiğim şeyler oldu farklı anlamda, o yüzden beni geliştirdiğine inandığım bir program. Yeni insanlarla tanışmak ve deneyimlerden faydalanmak için başvururdum.

14. Motivasyonum beraber olacağım insanlardı. Sadece bizim üniversitedeki öğrencilere açık olması önemliydi. Pandemi dönemde insanlarla tanışamamayı, zaman geçirememeyi büyük bir eksik olarak görüyordum. Başka bölümlerden arkadaşlarımla programda olması, mezunların konuşmalar yapacak olması motivasyonumdu.

15. Benim mentorum benim bölümümden mezun olmuştu, benim de böyle bir mentora ihtiyacım vardı çünkü ona özel sorularım vardı. Şu an mentorum istediğim zaman arayıp soru sorabileceğim samimiyette bir insan ileride de bir şey konuşmak istersem danışabilirim. Baya bir samimiyet de oluştu aslında, arkadaşlık da işin içine girmişti bir zaman sonra.

16. Benim aradığım şey hem samimiyet hem de böyle çekinmeden aklıma gelen sorulara cevap bulabilmektir. Her ikisini de kendi mentorluk yolculuğumda bulduğumu düşünüyorum. Aklıma ne takıldıysa, sorabildim.

17. Mentorumla verimli ve iyi bir ilişki kurmak istiyordum çünkü o olmadan karşınızdaki çok profesyonel biri de olsa iyi ilerleyemeyebiliyor yani iyi iletişim kurabileceğin birinin olması benim için de önemliydi.

18. Programın sağladığı bazı eğitimler ve etkinlikler vardı; örneğin, farklı dallarda çalışan insanların konuşmaları olmuştu. Bunlar benim için güzel etkinliklerdi, amacım bunlara katılıp kendimi biraz daha geliştirmektir.

19. Programın başında, programın işleyişinden bahsedilirken vaka çalışmaları olacağı, daha farklı etkinlikler olacağı hatta bu programı tamandıktan sonra başarı göstermiş 40 kişinin dahil edileceği daha ileri seviye bir program olacağından bahsedilmişti. Ne bu vaka çalışmaları ne de bu bahsettiğim ekstra program gerçekleşmedi; sadece bunların devam ediyor olmasını istedim, bu noktada beklentilerim karşılanmadı diyebiliriz.

20. Bu süreç gönüllülüğü dayalı bir süreç, nasıl desem bir beklentiyle bile gelmedim diyebilirim. En başında bir insan bile tanışmış olmak beni çok heyecandırıyor çünkü düşünüyorum mesela böyle bir insanla nerede tanışabilirdim, nasıl böyle yakın bir ilişki kurabilirdim. İstediğim zaman arayabileceğim, bir şey sorabileceğim; bu program olmasa gerçekten imkânsız bence. Herkes bu vesileyle geldiği için böyle bir olanağımız oldu ve bunu deneyimlemek de çok güzel oldu.

21. Aslında öğrenci olduğum zamanlarda böyle bir mentorluk programına dahil olabileceğimi bilmiyordum ve zor bir süreç yaşadım 5 sene boyunca. Hatta 1 sene böyle hiçbir dersi almadan sadece bir dersi bekleyerek, çok psikolojisi iyi olmayan karışık bir sene geçirdim. Bunun yanında, bölüm olarak güzeldik ama üniversitenin benim gözümde olan imajını söylüyorum: hayatta kalmak için bazı şeyler yapmak gerekiyor. Bilerek, güvenerek bir şey sormak kavramını ben tatmadım okurken. Belki bunu bir şeyleri olumsuzlamadan yapan insanların öğrencilerle buluşması güzel olur diye düşündüm. Hani ben okudum, bölüm de çok kolaydı, çok iyi işler yaptım gibi olumsuzlamaların haricinde, gerçekleri söyleyen ya da çok hızlı başlangıçtan sonuca atlamayan bir insan olduğumu düşünerek aradaki o bütün süreci de doğruluğuyla bir öğrenciye aktarabileceğimi düşündüğüm için bu motivasyonla başvurduğum.

22. Öğrencilere moral vermek ve onları karamsarlıktan kurtarmak istemek, bunu çok istedim. Ben Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatı lisansını tamamladıktan sonra iş görüşmelerine gittiğimde kapılar yüzüme çok kapandı, çok umutsuzluğa kapıldım. O zamanlar okuduğumuz bölüm önümüzde çok daha büyük bir bariyer oluşturuyordu; Dil ve Edebiyat bölümü mezunu olmak 2003 senesinde gerçekten çok büyük bir sorundu. Ben bunun çok sıkıntısını yaşadım. Günümüzde bu çok sıkıntılı bir durum değil artık yetkinlikler, beceriler, kişilerin potansiyelleri çok daha önemli ancak şöyle bir gözlemim oluyor, öğrencilere baktığımda hala Tarih, Edebiyat, Felsefe gibi bölümlerde okuyan öğrenciler, bölümlerinin kendilerine bir bariyer oluşturacağına dair tutum ve inanç içindeler, kendi potansiyellerini çok azımsıyorlar. Ben de aslında bu bölümlerde okumanın önlerinde bir bariyer olmadığını çok büyük avantajlar barındırdığını onlara anlatabilmek için geçtiğim yolları anlatmak üzere bu programa katıldım. Temel motivasyonum öğrencilerin kendilerini azımsamamalarını, onların potansiyellerini fark etmelerini sağlamak ve onlara umut olmak.

23. Ben üniversiteyi kazandığım zaman sahip olmadığım bir imkânı en azından bu dönemki mezunlara sağlayabilecek bir mecra arıyordum, bu sebeple mentorluk programına başvurduğum. Ben küçük bir şehirde doğup büyüdüm, ilk, orta ve lise eğitimimi orada gördüm. Üniversite için büyük şehire gittiğim zaman sınıf arkadaşlarımla büyük bir çoğunluğunun aslında büyük şehirlerden olduğunu, genelde belirli bir kariyer sahibi insanların çocukları olduklarını ve dolayısıyla da mentorluk ve koçluk gibi kavramlarda öncelikle aileden daha sonra da ailenin yakın çevresinden bazı geribildirimler aldıklarını gördüm. Benim böyle bir imkanım yoktu; kendi kariyerimi birazcık el yordamıyla oluşturmaya gayret ettim. Bu da tabii ki belirli maliyetlere ve yanılmalara sebep oluyor. 20'li yaşların başındaki bir genç olarak belirli konularda bilgi ve tecrübenin çok sınırlı oluyor. Dolayısıyla o dönemde kendi yaşadığım sorunları görerek bunu yeni nesiller yaşamasın diye böyle bir mentorluk programına başvurmak istedim.

24. Mentorluk hizmeti almak isteyen kişi aslında benden kendi deneyimlerimden yola çıkarak yol göstermemi bekliyor, bu çok açık. Fakat ben şu hataya düşmemek yönünde kendimi motive etmişim: insanlara yol gösterebilirim ama bunu akıl vererek yapmayacağım, kendi yolunu görmesine yardımcı olacağım; bu yol bazen balta girmemiş orman gibi sarmaşıklarla, dallarla falan örtülü olabilir, orada kendine bir yol açsın ve o yolda ilerlesin, öğrenilmiş metotların haricinde bir şeyler yaratsın kendine çünkü insanlara hep bir şeyler öğretiliyor.

25. Okulu çok seven birisiyim, hem öğrenciyken hem de öğrenciliğim bittikten sonra sevmeye devam ettim. Bu sevmenin bir bedeli olarak üniversiteye geri vermek istiyorsunuz ve bunu yapabileceğiniz belirli noktalar var. Birincisi, maddi olarak destek verebilirsiniz, şu an bunu yapabileceğimi düşünmüyorum henüz o seviyede değilim. İkincisi de manevi olarak, farklı platformlardan desteklemek olabilir. Diğer taraftan da hali hazırda mezun olmamış öğrencilere destek olarak, bir şekilde geri verebilirsiniz üniversiteye diye düşünmüştüm. En temel motivasyonum okula geri vermek ve bir şeyler katmaktı.

26. Mezun olalı 14 yıl oldu, 10 yılda bir nesiller değişir hatta bu 5 yıla indi, ilk motivasyonum biraz jenerasyonu da yakalama, onların beklentileri, istekleri, arzuları nedir bunu öğrenmekti.

27. 2012 senesinden beri mentorluk programında yer aldığım için açıkçası her sene bir talebe almak ve onunla 7-8 ayı birlikte geçirmek bende alışkanlık yarattı. Bu konuda biraz yetkin olduğumu gördüm, öğrencilerle kurduğum iletişim açısından, onların birtakım sorunlarına yardımcı olmak açısından. Bu önemli bir motivasyondur.

28. Aynı mentorluk programında olanlarla daha fazla temas beklentim vardı, ama onu çok fazla sağlayamadık; ben sadece bir programa katılabildim. Bunun tabii belirli sebepleri olabilir; benim beklentim belki ayda bir falan bir araya gelerek yapılabilecek çalışmalar ve benimle birlikte mentorluk yapanlarla bir networking imkanydı.

29. Eski şirketimde çalışırken reverse mentoring programındaydım. Benden çok daha deneyimli bir kişiyle reverse mentoring yapıyorduk; bu imkanları ilerisi için bulabileceğim bir grupla tanışma imkanını aslında beklemiştim. Bu noktada beklentim karşılanmadı.

30. Mentorlar arasında belirli bir oranda irtibat veyahut da Mezunlar Derneği ile tanışmak için de bir fırsat olarak düşünmüştüm. Bazı etkinliklere katıldım ama daha çok geniş katımlı ve dinleyici modunda olduğum etkinliklerdi; böyle bir bağlantı çok olmadı.

31. Dürüst olayım, somut bir beklentim yoktu, ama o genç insanlarla çıkacağım yolculuğun benim için de çok öğretici olacağını hissediyordum. Yani bunun menteeye bir şeyler öğretmek için değil ama belki benim ondan bir şeyler öğrenebileceğim bir süreç olabileceğini düşündüm, bu bana heyecan verdi.

32. Benim programdan özel bir beklentim yoktu. Benim bir beklentim olmamasına rağmen programın kendisi benim bir beklentim olsaydı da bunun ötesine geçti. Program gerçekten çok güzel yapılandırılmış, emek harcanmış, hem iletişiminden içerideki her şeyin tasarlanmasına, kullanılan toolun kendisinden içerideki rehber olabilecek noktalara, gelen videolara vs. programı çok beğendim. O anlamda beklentilerimin ötesine geçti aslında bir beklentim olmamasına rağmen ama daha ötesini de beklemezdim.

33. Programı tasarlarken amacımız olabileceğinin en iyisine ulaşmaktı, ama bu hedefleri her zaman gerçekleştiriyoruz. Yaptığımız ilk görüşmelerde, şirketlerden Tasarım Odaklı Düşünmenin önemli olduğunu duyduk ve böyle bir programa öğrencilerin katıldığını görmek faydalı olur diye düşünüyorduk. Yalnız, oluşturduğumuz programda partnerlerle de çalışacağımız için birçok şirket programın bütçesini yüksek buldu ya da zamanlamasını doğru bulmadı. Bazı şirketlerde buna benzer programları yaptıkları için onlarla çakışabileceğini söylediler, dolayısıyla bunu gerçekleştiremedik.

34. Etkinliklerin başarılı olduğunu düşünüyorum; hatta sıklaştırılabilir. Farklı departmanlardan insanların çağrılması benim hoşuma gidiyor, etkinlik süreleri de idealdi; daha uzun süreli olsaydı insanlar sıkılırdı diye düşünüyorum. Bir saatlik süreler güzel oldu, biz de soru sorarak aktif bir şekilde dahil olabiliyorduk.

35. Kişisel gelişimimize dair bazı etkinlikler yapıldı. Örnek veriyorum, Fireside Chatlerde bir mentor ya da mezun davet edildi, sorular hazırlandı. Farklı konularda, dayanıklılık, empati temaları gibi, sohbetler olmuştu. O sohbetler çok değerliydi, filtresiz bir şekilde sorular sorabildik, tavsiyeler alabildik.

36. Fireside Chat etkinlikleri güzel etkinliklerdi, yani bir konuşmacının gelip tecrübelerini dinlememiz keyifliydi. Bunun yanında, bazen bazı noktalarda konuşmaların çok fazla kişisel gelişim alanına kaydığını düşünüyorum. O yüzden bazen konu akışında çok da ilgimi çeken bir şey olmadığı kanısına vardım.

37. Benim hiç katılmadığım Fireside Chat etkinlikleri olmuştu; alanın yetkilisi bir insan konuşma yapıyordu. Buna hiç katılmadım çünkü ilgimi çekmedi, hangi soruları soracağımı da bilmiyordum o konsepti kafamda pek oturtamadım.

38. Programın online eğitimleri ve bizim grup içindeki çalışmalarımızdan memnundum ve sadece onları tam anlamıyla yaptım. Özellikle grup içerisinde tartışma kısmı çok verimliydi bence çünkü insanlarla günlük hayatta basic bulduğumuz bu konular üzerine çok fazla konuşmuyoruz; bunlara derinlemesine inebilmek biraz da felsefi açıdan güzel olabiliyor. Hem rahatlatıcı hem de kişisel gelişimimiz adına faydalı bence.

39. Mentorluk programının sadece mentor-mentee ilişkisinden çıkarılıp yetkinlik eğitimlerinin de programa entegre edilmesi bence gayet güzel olmuştu. İçerikler de güzeldi; izlenen videolar, daha sonrasında diğer menteeleerle grup halinde bu konuları tartışmamız, hepimizin farklı açılardan baktığını görmek benim için faydalı oldu.

40. Mentee grubunun oluşması güzel bir şeydi, mentee grubunda aslında en başta daha çok iş yapıyorduk diyebilirim. Sonlara doğru iş yapma oranımız biraz azaldı, belki herkesin final yoğunluğu ya da ders yoğunluğu arttığı için olabilir bilmiyorum.

41. Üçlü çalışma gruplarıyla görüşmemiz gerekiyordu ve onlarla görevlerimiz oluyordu, ama o üçlü grupta biz bir türlü koordine olamadık. Bir görevi tamamlamamız gerekiyor ama bir türlü ortak zaman belirleyemiyoruz, tarih geçiyor, buluşamıyoruz.

42. Çalışma grupları yeterince başarılı olmadı, istediğimiz rakama ulaşamadık. Görevleri tamamlayan kitle %20 gibi bir rakamdı. 280 mentee içerisinde 60 kişi tüm aşamaları tamamladı ve sertifika almaya hak kazandı. Bu beklentimizin altında bir rakam.

43. Programdaki mentee komünitesinde yer almıştım; bir süre sonrasında çalışma hayatımdan dolayı çok devam ettiremedim. Oradaki özel ekip çok değerliydi çünkü biz hala iletişimini sürdürüyoruz. Bu iletişimi sürdürülebilir kılmak, program açısından çok değerli ki buradaki arkadaşlarımla bir kısmıyla şimdi beraber çalışıyoruz. İletişimimiz farklı boyutlarda da devam ediyor. O yüzden bunun çok katma değerli olduğunu hissediyorum.

44. Güçlü yanı programın devamlılığı olması, bir kopma söz konusu olmadı. Bir süreden sonra kimse programı bırakmadı. Menteeleer arasında üçlü görüşme grupları

vardı, belirli sürelerde sürekli toplanıyorduk. Program etkinlikleri de belirli zamanlarda tekrarlanıyordu ve program sonuna kadar devam etti.

45. Güçlü yönlerinden bir tanesi ekip hep oradaydı; ben etkinliklere girip çıkıyordum, bazılarına katılamıyordum ama ekibin her zaman orada olduğunu biliyordum. Yani bir şey sormak istesem, cevap alacağım biri olduğunu biliyordum. İletişim için paylaşılan mail adresi de sık sık kontrol ediliyordu o noktada hiçbir sorum havada kalmadı o bence güçlü bir yanıydı.

46. Ben geçen seneki mentorlarımla çok az görüşmüştüm. Birisiyle 2 kez diğeriyle 3 kez görüşmüştük, ama bu seneki mentorumla sürekli görüştük. Programın Mentorink platformu üzerinden takip edilmesi ve görevlerimizin olması programın güçlendirilmiş tarafıydı.

47. Yedi ay uzun bir zaman, konuşulan ve yapılmak istenen belki çok daha fazla şey vardı ama gerçek hayatta teori ve pratik her zaman yüzde yüz eşleşmiyor. Ama ben şöyle bir dönüp baktığımda, amacımız deneyim ve iletişim paylaşımını sağlamaktı ve bunu başardığımızı düşünüyorum. Bu dönem birçok mentee ve mentorla tanıştım, istediğim zaman bir şey sorduğumda bir cevap alabileceğimi biliyorum. Bu anlamda programın güçlü olduğunu düşünüyorum.

48. Diğer mentorlarla da görüşebilme şansı, bir mentor değil de birkaç mentorla, başka alanlardan mezunlarla görüşebilme şanslarımız artsa güzel olurdu. Mentor seçimlerinde çeşitlilik olabilirdi.

49. Program okula çok duyurulmadı, daha çok duyurulabilirdi. Mesela bir kulüp etkinliğine bile insanlar daha çok gidebiliyorlar sosyal medya aracılığıyla. Bizim programda sadece LinkedIn aracılığıyla paylaşımlar yapıyordu. Belki Instagram'dan çok daha fazla yapılabilirdi, öğrencilerin daha yoğun kullandığı bir platform olduğu için.

50. Programdaki iletişim genel olarak iyiydi bence, girişte çok güzel bir hoş geldin etkinliği vardı aralarda da yine warm-up tarzında etkinlikler olabilirdi, ne durumdayız memnun muyuz gibi. Mentorlardan ayrı olarak bir araya geliyoruz diyip arada bir konuşulabilirdi ne bekliyoruz, nasılız; buna göre mentorlara feedback verilebilirdi. Aralarda da yine en başta gördüğümüz ekibin tamamını gördüğümüz etkinlikler olsaydı, ekibe de daha çok bağlanabilirdik.

51. Bu sene mentorumla enerjilerimiz pek uyuşmadı, mentorluk programında belki ilk ya da ikinci görüşmeden sonra mentorlara menteelere tekrar bir eşleşme isityorlar mı diye sorabilirler.

52. Mentorlar için konunun uzmanlarının dile getirdiği, çok kısa hap şeklinde verilen eğitimler vardı. Aslında ben onlara eğitim demiyorum, eğitimden daha güzel farkındalık seansları diyeyim; onlar çok kıymetliydi.

53. Gelen mesajlardaki bazı eğitimler vardı, bazı materyaller vardı; onlara göz atma imkânım oldu, yani zaman ayırıp yapmaya çalıştım. Bir de bir Cumartesi- Pazar koçluk üzerine bir grup çalışması şeklinde bir araya geldik; o da baya yoğun bir programdı. Yani hafta sonu iki günün de yarımşar gününü almıştı; ben o etkinlikten

özellikle memnun kaldım. Tüm mentorlara yarım günlük koçlukta gibi bir mentorluk eğitimi verilmesinin çok faydalı olacağını düşünüyorum.

54. Bize yönelik bazı etkinlikler vardı, koçluk konusunda mesela bir eğitim oldu. Ekstra bazı yetkinlikler ile ilgili öncelikle bizleri eğiten şeyler oldu. Mentorluk kasımızı geliştiren; mentorluk nedir ne değildir? gibi bir sürü buluşmalar oldu. Onun dışında yetkinlik bazlı görüşmeler de oldu; ben hepsinde genel olarak çok kıymetli insanlarla tanışmış oldum, çok memnun oldum. Bu arada böyle bir beklentim yoktu ama güzel bir network fırsatı da oldu. Mezunlarla ve bu işi yapan kişilerle, o anlamda da buluşturan güzel bir etkinlikti bence.

55. Ben bir tane online etkinliğe katıldım, birlikte Zoom'da bir grup çalışması yapmıştık. Zoom olmasının getirdiği bir zorluk vardı, etkinliğin içine girebilmek, halbuki sosyal ortamda olsa daha farklı olur birlikte bir şey paylaşıyoruz ama Zoom'da onu hissedemedim. Benim hissettiğim bir yapaylık vardı, çok verimli gelmedi.

56. Bu seneki etkinliklerin hiçbirisine katılmadım, ama benim katılmayışımın çok bireysel bir nedeni var. Ben yaptığım iş nedeniyle liderlik, koçluk, duygusal farkındalık gibi eğitimleri sürekli dinlediğim ve buna maruz kaldığım için bunların dışında bir bilgi duyacağımı düşünmedim. Eğer bu işi yapmıyor olsaydım katılırdım.

57. Ben mentorlarla ilgili eğitimlere girmedim, çünkü ben 9 senedir bu işi yaptığım için bir ihtiyaç hissetmedim kendi adıma. Tabi, yeni başlayanlar böyle şeyleri çok istiyorlardı; onlar için eminim yararlı olmuştur.

58. İlk baştaki mentorluk toplantısına katılmıştım, onun dışında birkaç tane etkinliğine denk gelmiştim. İyiydi, ama dediğim gibi biraz saat farkının olması, biraz da benim yoğun bir dönemime denk gelmesinden dolayı hepsine katılamadım. Hepsi de bana hitap etmiyordu; daha iyi olabilirdi belki.

59. Programın güçlü yönü doğru eşleştirmelerdi. Mentee gerçekten de beklediği mentorluğu verebildiğimi düşünüyorum, dolayısıyla bu nasıl sağlandı doğru bir match making ile. Yani benim doldurduğum form birileri tarafından değerlendirilmiş, otomatik bir sürece tabii tutulmamış.

60. Program süresi, ayda bir görüşmelerin olması, tek bir uygulama üzerinden takip edilmesi bence güçlü yönleriydi. Daha sık olsaydı devam etmem zor olabilirdi.

61. Programın çok düzenli ve yerinde bir iletişim yapısı vardı; size gelen mesajlar, bilgilendirmeler güzel bir rutindeydi. Bazı şeyler bazen boğabilir bazen de size unutturabilir, programdaki tempo ve zamanlama güzeldi, içerikler kapsayıcıydı, sizin bir grup olduğunuzu hissettiriyordu.

62. Teknolojik anlamda çok başarılı buldum; günümüze entegre olabilmiş bir programdı. Her şeyin bir arada yapılabildiği bir platform sunulması da güzeldi. Program gidin zoom ile ya da telefonda konuşun ya da yüz yüze görüşün, nasıl yaparsanız demedi. O platformun sağlanmış olması bence çok kıymetliydi; hala ben girdiğimde bir sürü orada notlarım var mentee ile ilgili onlara bakabiliyorum.

63. Programdaki ana yetkinlikler bence oldukça doğru belirlenmişti, programın temelini oraya oturtmak da güçlü yönlerindendi. Ben mesela bu görüşmelerdeki içeriklerinden şirkette yaptığım mentorluklarda da faydalandım; bir yabancılık olmadı. İş hayatında gerçekten temelde bizim aradığımız yetkinlikler, bu arkadaşlarımız da profesyonel hayata hazırlanıyorsa, akademik hayata hazırlanıyorsa, belirlenen yetkinlikler bence çok doğru belirlenmiş.

64. Uygulama üzerinde çok basit bir feedback sistemi vardı, sadece oranlıyorsunuz ve karşı tarafta direkt görüyor. Ben düşük puan versem, mentee bunu görüp çok rahat bir şekilde diğer görüşmeye gelmeyebilir.

65. İçeriklerin hepsini tarayamadım ama bu tür özellikle beceri içeren içerikleri yazılı sunmak çok yetersiz kalabiliyor. Özellikle menteemin de çok katılmadığını biliyorum. İçerikler daha iyi kurgulanıp biraz daha cazip hale getirilebilir miydi? Katılım nasıl teşvik edilebilirdi; bunlar soru işareti.

66. Programdaki dört eğitim içeriği güzeldi, ama çocukların tek ihtiyaçları bunlar değil. Mesela özgüven menteelerin ilk problemi aslında, ya da zaman yönetimi ile ilgili eğitimlere ihtiyaçları var. Sabah kalkamıyor çocuk, yetişemiyor oraya buraya. Hani böyle ufak şeyler var daha çok ihtiyaç duydukları, tabi ki o yetkinlikler de önemli ama günlük yaşantılarında yaşadıkları birtakım sorunlar var, içerikler biraz daha bunlara yönelebilir.

67. Yetkinliklere yönelik içerikler biraz daha önden paylaşılabilirdi, program daha hazırlıklı başlayabilirdi. Biraz geriden takip ettik; biz içeriklerden koştuk, kendimiz yapmak zorunda kaldık.

68. Mentorluk programına katıldığımı gösterebilecek bir sertifika yoktu, ya da bir arkadaşım bana program ile ilgili bir şey sorsaydı eğer çok net cevaplar veremezdim. Ben de daha önceki mentorluk programlarını görmemiştim, bu yıl mail üzerinden tesadüf eseri gördüm. Programı ben nasıl duyurabilirim, bilmiyorum ama LinkedIn üzerinden paylaşmak benim için çok önemli çünkü birçok mezun arkadaşımın oradan da iletişim kuruyorum.

69. Açıkçası hiç zorlanmadım. Hatta birçok etkinlik yapıldı, hepsine katılamadım. Keşke katılabilseydim, ama o hayat dinamiklerinden dolayı katılamadım. Programda her şey bizim için yapılıyordu ve çok da şefkatle yaklaşıyordu, bir etkinliğe katılmadığım için kendimi kötü de hissetmedim. Programın bende kalan hissiyatları hep olumlu ve pozitif duygular, bu programa her yıl katılmak istiyorum; şu an öyle bir motivasyonum var.

70. Grup görüşmeleriydi kesinlikle. Arkadaşımdan bir tanesi neredeyse görüşmelere hiç katılmama niyetindeydi; görüşelim dedikçe evet olur diyordu. Görüşmelere içerikleri okumadan geliyordu; orada baştan okuyorduk. Diğer kişi de çok depresif bir insandı, o yüzden genel olarak konuşmaların enerjisini belirleyen kişi bendim. Görüşme tarihini ayarlamak, gerçekten o enerji toplayıp ortak bir paydada buluşmak, grubu bir arada tutmaya çalışmak beni zorluyordu.

71. Grup arkadaşlarımla bir araya gelme süreçlerini ayarlamak zordu. Doğru düzgün buluşamadık; saatlerimiz uymadı. Sonra görüştük, ama sohbet gibiydi; bir sistem yoktu.

72. Çok fazla yarım saat, bir saatlik etkinlikler oluyordu ve onları programıma oturtmak kolay olmuyordu. Bir saatlik bir etkinlik belki vakit almıyor, ama saati bana sorulmadan planlandığı için hem okuyordum hem staj yapıyordum; bir yerde onları bir araya getirmek sorun oldu.

73. Etkinlikleri takip edemedim. Bazılarıyla programım çakıştı, bazılarında nasıl bir şey yapacağımızı pek anlayamadığım için katılamadım. O tarafta biraz zorlandım; program saatlerine uyamadım, bir sıkıntı oldu.

74. Bazı programlarda az katılım olması beni demotive ediyordu. Yani gelen isimler çok kıymetliydi ama nasıl desem insanların kamerası kapalı. Bu insan vakit ayırıp gelmiş buraya, ve kameralar kapalı hani hoş değil bence. Orada sinerjiyi hissetmek isterdim sanırım.

75. Benim için program çok verimli geçti çünkü mentorum benim sormam gereken birçok soruya cevap olabilecek bir kişiydi, yani bu deneyimleri daha önce yaşamış bir insandı. Hala onun verdiği tavsiyeler doğrultusunda kendi kariyer ya da eğitim planlarım için adım atıyorum. Aynı zamanda, beni sahadan tanıdığı başka insanlarla tanıştırdı, onlara da sorular sorabilme imkanım oldu. Hem ufak çaplı bir çevre edinmiş oldum hem de sorularıma cevap bulmuş oldum, bu açıdan çok etkiliydi benim için.

76. Benim mentorum gerçekten çok iyiydi. Daha önce bazı arkadaşlarım benim mentorumla staj yapmıştı ve benim gerçekten tanışmak istediğim bir insandı. Onunla eşleşmem çok büyük bir şans oldu, ileride de ilişkimizin devam edeceğini düşünüyorum.

77. Programın güzel yanı programa katılan insanlardı. Etkinlikler düzgün ilerleyebiliyordu; herkes ayak uydurmaya çalışıyordu. Benim gibi hisseden, sorularına cevap arayan, bu programı kendini geliştirmek için kullanan insanlar vardı. Bir topluluk vardı ve bu topluluk içinde hep birlikte aynı şeyi yapıyormuşuz gibi hissediyordum.

78. Arkadaşlarla bir şeyler paylaşmak ve birlikte akıl yürütmek güzeldi. Hele ki online dönemde, kimseyle tanışamıyorsun; derslerde interaktif bir ortam yok. Zoom etkinliklerinde, odalara bölünerek en azından sohbet etme fırsatı bulmuştuk; her insandan bir şeyler öğrendim, bu kısmı etkileydi bence.

79. Genel olarak bizimle ilgilenilmesinden hoşlandım. Çok düşünülmüş ve takip edilen, gelişime açık bir programdı. Programdaki herkes geribildirime çok açıktı; rahat hissettim programda.

80. Bize grup olarak verilen her bir görevi tamamladıktan sonra bir rozet verildi; hemen hepsini LinkedIn profilime ekledim. Programın sonunda başarıyla tamamlama sertifikası verildi; bunlar güzel şeylerdi bence.

81. Mailler geliyordu; okunmadı da bırakıyordum bunu sonrasında okuyayım, menteem ile paylaşayım diye. Sonra o maili okuyamıyordum; bir hafta geçiyordu, ben bunu yapamayacağım diyip to-do-listimden siliyordum. Bunun dışında programın ekstra bir zorluğu yoktu, pandemi dönemi olması ve yüzyüze görüşmemiz dışında.

82. Karşımdakimi dinlerken, geçmişte yaşadığım zorlukları düşünmek ve hala güler yüzlü takılmak zordu. Hani gerçekten benim de üniversite hayatımın ilk başlarında yalnız hissettiğim, çok zorlandığım dönemler olmuştu; program bana bunları hatırlattı. O noktada, görüşmeyi kapattıktan sonra düşündüklerim beni biraz zorluyordu.

83. İlk görüşmelerde biraz zorlandım, sonuçta bir nesil farkı var, 15 yıla yakın nerdeyse. İlk başta birbirimizi gözlemlediğimiz durumlar oldu, karşı tarafın beklentileri, hangi konular ilgisini çeker, benim ona vereceğim tavsiyeler acaba ona uyar mı uymaz mı. Bunlar birbirimizi tanıyana kadar, bazı durumlarda benim tarafımdan çok algılanmamış ya da benim söylediklerim onun tarafından algılanmamış olabilir, ama daha sonra birbirimizi tanıdıkça biraz daha rayını oturdu.

84. Bir menteenin özel bir durumu vardı; mesela o durum ile ilgili konuşurken zorlanıyordum. Tabi şu var, bu tür benim çözemeyeceğim şeyleri Psikolojik Danışma Merkezi'ne yönlendirdiğim menteeler oldu. Senin bu sorununu ben çözemem; oraya gidip bir rehberlik almalısın, bundan sonra ne yapacağına karar vermelisin şeklinde.

85. Aradan geçen 20 yılı aşan süre tabi ki Türkiye'de çok şeyleri değiştirdi. Üniversite hala en iyi öğrencileri alan ve gerçekten de çok kaliteli bir eğitim vererek onları hayata hazırlayan bir yer. Ama, ne yazık ki, bizim zamanlarımızdaki imkanları Türkiye çok fazla sağlayamıyor artık. Bizim zamanımızda, üniversiteden mezun olmak çok daha kıymetli bir şeydi, şu an da değil. Bu da siyasi genel konjonktür, okumaya, ilime ve bilime olan genel yaklaşımın neden olduğu bir durum. Onu çok somut olarak hissettiğim anlarda biraz zorlandığımı hissettim.

86. Beni zorlayan hiçbir kısım olmadı; pandemi ile birlikte daha da kolay oldu. Önceden işten geç çıkmama rağmen, ayda bir veya iki kere yüz yüze görüşmek için bir yere gidiyordum. Menteemle oturuyorduk; yemek yiyorduk. Hakikaten iş yorgunluğu üzerine vakit ayırıyordum, en büyük zorluk oydu, o da çözüldü.

87. Ben oldukça seyahat eden biriyim. Aslında programa girme motivasyonlarımdan biri de pandemi döneminde daha fazla vakit ayırabilecek olmamdı. Bildiğim kadarıyla, önceden de Mezunlar Derneği'nin Mentorluk Programı vardı, katılmama nedenim çok zaman ayıramam diye düşünüyordum. İlk başta pandemi biterse acaba o başladığımız şey yarıda kesilir mi çekincesi vardı. Hafta sonları o dönem hep evlerde olunca bir problem olmadı.

88. Benim için pozitif deneyimi, üniversiteden, aynı bölümden, farklı bir jenerasyondan birisiyle sohbet etmektir. Üniversiteyle bir şekilde yakından iletişim kurmaya devam etmiş gibi hissediyordum.

89. Ben ilk defa formal bir mentorluk yapıyorum; platformda benim gibi ilk defa mentorluk yapanlar için yol yordam gösteren içerikler vardı. O noktada yeterli bir

destek vardı diye düşünüyorum. Program ekonomi bölümünden bir eşleştirme yaptı; bu beni ilişki kurmakta rahatlattı, daha kolay oldu.

90. Ben her seans sonrasında çok farklı bir rahatlama hissediyordum. İlk kez yapılandırılmış bir şekilde tecrübemi birine aktardığımı düşünüyorum, parçalanmış, seanslara bölünmüş şekilde, çünkü daha öncesindeki mentorluk tecrübelerim yapılandırılmış değildi. İşte münferit olarak geliyor, birkaç şey anlatıyorsun ve yani ne kadarını aktarabilirsin belki aktarmak istediğinin onda birini aktarıyorsun. Ama şimdi öyle olmadı, ben o yaştaki bir arkadaşımızın anlayabileceğini düşündüğüm kadarının hepsini aktardığımı düşünüyorum, yani en azından tüm konu başlıklarını aktardım.

91. Programda bir sürü tatlı insanla tanıştım. İnsanlar zaten çok yapıcı, pozitif, güler yüzlü, ortam da çok besleyici ve rahat bir şekilde kendini ortaya koyabildiğin bir ortamdı. Dolayısıyla, eğitmenlerin ve programdaki her bir kişinin hakkını teslim etmek lazım; onlar da insana bu alanı açan, insanı rahat hissettiren kişilerdi.

92. Bizim programda en fazla karşılaştığımız ve çözmeye çalıştığımız zorluk, programa mali kaynak oluşturabilmektir. Bunun için çok çaba sarfettik; onu oluşturabilmek birçok noktada bizi rahatlatacaktı.

93. Bu programı ilk defa yaptık ve çok büyük belirsizlikler vardı; devamlı bir deneme yapıyorduk. Herbir çalışmanın farklı zorlukları vardı; bir yöntem oluşturmak ve onların takibi, ikincisi de etkileşimi korumak ve arttırmak, yaşadığımız zorluklardı.

94. Benim için en büyük tatmin noktası planladığımız bir şeyi tamamına erdirebilmek. Ben gerçekten dünya standartlarında ve örnek bir program bir program oluşturduğumuzu düşünüyorum. Mentorlardan ve menteelerden gelişim için çok fazla geribildirim aldık, ama hepsinden gerçekten iyi bir program yarattığımızın geribildirimini de aldık.

95. Bireysel olarak da öğrencilerle görüştüğüm zaman, programın onlarda nasıl bir etki yarattığını fark ettim. Gönüllü olarak birçok çalışmaya da katıldılar ve değerli olduğunu bize hissettirdiler. Hem network de oluşturduğum çünkü birçok insanla tanıştım, kendimi tanıtmaya fırsatı da buldum, bu da benim işim için bir katkı oldu.

96. Mentorum herkesi tanıyordu, çok iyi bir networku vardı ve her soruma iyi bir cevabı vardı. O yüzden bu ilişki beni çok güçlü hissettirdi açıkçası.

97. En azından önemli bir karar vermek istediğim zaman, o kararı verirken tek başıma hissetmiyorum çok uzun bir süredir çünkü istediğim zaman mentoruma danışabileceğimi biliyordum.

98. Mentorumla kurduğum ilişkinin bana fayda sağladığına kesinlikle inanıyorum. Bir kere şunu fark ettim, benden daha önce mezun olmuş bir insan ama benzer süreçlerden geçmiş ve benzer zorlukları yaşamış. Aa demek ki süreç böyleymiş; herkes için böyle zorlayıcı olabiliyormuş gibi kendimi sakinleştirdiğim noktalar oldu. Mentorum, "Tamam yapabilirsin, zaten birçok şeyi yapıyorsun." diyerek bana sakinlik kazandırdı.

99. Özellikle daha küçük yaşlarımda, yolumu çok aydınlattı. İnsanın kafası çok karışık oluyor; ne yapacağını bilemiyorsun. Evet hepimizin bir potansiyeli var, ama onu nasıl doğru kullanırız? Kariyer yolculuğuma tam olarak nerede başlamalıyım? Ne yapmalıyım? Yaptığımız sohbetler adım adım birikti, anlamlandı ve bir yapbozun parçaları gibi birleşti.

100. Ben bu programa 3.sınıfta katıldım ve programa katılmadan önce kafam çok karışık. Ben tam olarak ne istiyorum, istediğim mesleğe uygun muyum, uygunsam nasıl adımlar atmam lazım, kimlerle iletişim kurmam lazım, nelere çalışmam lazım gibi bir sürü soru vardı aklımda. Mentorluk programı sonrasında çok netleştim, karar vermem açısından çok faydalı oldu.

101. Güçlü yönlerimi ve eksik olduğum yönlerimi keşfetmeme baya yardımcı oldu. İletişim konusunda da öyle mesleki anlamında da öyle.

102. Benim hayatıma katkısı, yaptığım şeyleri mentoruma anlatarak aslında neler yaptığımı kendim gözlemlemiş oldum, bu ay neler yaptım, ilerisi için neler yaptım, yaptığım şeyler benim için ne kadar önemli ya da ne kadar boş vakit geçirdim, bunları görme fırsatım oldu.

103. Benim iyi bir şirkete bir staj başvurum olmuştu ve süreç kötü geçti. Yani istediğim gibi geçmedi; o noktada kendime kötü davranmamam, ben başarısızım şu an başaramadım, gelecekte başaramayacağım dememem noktasında süreci daha iyi yönetmemi sağladı mentorum. Yanımda, arkamda birisinin olduğunu hissetmek çok güzeldi. Senden 10 yaş büyük, deneyimli tecrübeli bir isim, tamamen sana odaklanmış durumda. Yapabilirsin bunu, benim de böyle bir tecrübem olmuştu diyor. O noktada bence çok önemli bir değer, çok destekleyiciydi.

104. Bir kere farklı bir perspektif kattı diyebilirim. Ben vaktinde bir girişimde çalışıyordum, orada yaşadıklarımı da mentorumla paylaşıyordum. O da belki ilk başta kurumsalda başlamak daha iyi olabilir, çünkü kurumsalda başlayınca girişime tekrar kolayca geçebilirsin. Ama girişimde çok vakit harcarsan, kurumsala tekrar uyum sağlamak zor olabilir, kurumsal deneyebilirsin demişti; bu benim için bir öğretiydi.

105. Çok isterdim. Ben insanlarla konuşmayı, yardımcı olmayı çok sevdiğim için hayallerimden biri. Böyle bir noktaya geleyim, ben de bu programa katılayım. Çünkü bu süreçte öğrencilerin çok kafa karışıklığı olabiliyor; kimlerle konuşması gerektiği, neyi sorması gerektiğini bilmeyebiliyorlar. O dönemde ışık tutacak bir insan gerçekten ilaç gibi geliyor ve aynı konumda olabilmeyi, birinin elinden tutup yardımcı olabilmeyi çok isterim. Aynı zamanda üniversite bünyesinde bunu yapabiliyor olmak, üniversitenin hayatındaki yerimi korumak açısından önemli benim için, o yüzden bunu çok istiyorum.

106. Hayatımdaki motivasyonlarımdan biri de insanlara inancın ve çabanın gücünü gösterebilmek. Topluma ve insanlara her daim faydalı olabilmek, bir küçük ışık yakabilmek. Hayat birilerine faydası olmayacaksam boş.

107. Tabi ki, bu soruya çok net bir şekilde evet diyorum çünkü lisedeyken de hatta belki ortaokuldayken de kendi karakterime ait olduğunu düşündüğüm bir şey. Ne

alırsam onun kat ve kat fazlasını geri vermeye yönelik bir insanım, o yüzden mentorumdan aldığım şeyleri, belirli bir zaman iş tecrübesi edindikten sonra, kendime saklamayı hiç sevmem; aktarabildiğim kadar çok insana aktarmaya çalışırım, o yüzden kesinlikle mentor olmak isterim ilerleyen zamanlarda.

108. Ben sürekli öneriyorum; zaten bu programın promoterlığını yapıyor gibiyim. Bütün yakın çevremdeki arkadaşlarıma söylüyorum ve programı duymamış insanları gördükçe inanmıyorum. Herkesin katılmak isteyeceği, çok iyi bir program; ev arkadaşlarıma, çevremdeki bütün katılmayan arkadaşlarıma öneriyorum.

109. Çoktan tavsiye ettim hatta o kadar çok kişiye ettim ki. Bazı insanlar online eğitim döneminden dolayı çok koptular, nasıl desem okuldan, derslerden koptular. Bazen “Ben şu an ne yapacağım? Yeniden başlamak istiyorum.” diyenler de oluyor. Ben de naçizane şunu söyledim, bence mentorluk programına başvurun; bir mentor çok iyi oluyor, çok iyi hissettiriyor. En azından bilinmeyen adaya yolculuk gibi olmuyor. Belirli bir rota oluyor, etraf çok sisli değil, hani bilinmeze doğru gitmiyoruz.

110. Evet, aslında ben şu anda da tavsiye ediyorum arkadaşlarıma. Programı hala bilmeyenler var ve onlara da söylüyorum. Her türlü faydalı bir program; eşleştirme yanlış olsa bile değiştirme imkânı da var. Bunun dışında gönüllülük amaçlı yapılan bir mentorluk; kimsenin bir kar beklentisi yok. Güzel bir network sağlıyor, kesinlikle faydalanılması gereken bir program diye düşünüyorum.

111. Tabi ki, ben program ilk başladığı zaman da çok fazla arkadaşlarıma tavsiye etmiştim. Benim etrafımdaki insanların birçoğu programı bilmiyor, bunun sebebinin okul maillerini kontrol etmemek olduğunu düşünüyorum. Ben okul maillerimi kontrol eden bir insanım ve böyle bir programın olduğunu ilk defa okul maili sonucunda öğrenmiştim, o yüzden programdan haberdar olmayan herkese tavsiye ediyor olacağım.

112. Kendi hayatıma direkt olarak bir etki oluşturdu mu bilmiyorum. Birisine yol göstermiş olma düşüncesi, en azından belirli konularda belirli meseleleri daha rahat halledebileceğini bilmek benim çok hoşuma gitmişti. Bir kişinin hayatına dokunmuş olmak o anlamda duygusal bir tatmin veriyor.

113. Keyif aldım ve mutlu oldum; menteem ile diyalogumu devam ettiririm diye düşünüyorum. Güzel bir kazanç, gençlerle olmak keyifli bir şey, size dinamik olmanız için bir neden sunuyorlar. Bir de birlikte sorgulamak, sorgulayan yeni beyinlerle karşılaşmak çok keyifli. Uzun zamandır kafamda olan bir şeyi bir kere yapmış olmanın güzelliği var; yine yapmak isterim.

114. Doyum aldığımı hissediyorum; birisine katkı sağlayabilmek bana da doyum sağladı, ama ben kimdim kime dönüştüm diye düşünürsem net olarak söyleyebileceğim bir şey yok galiba. Ama şunu fark ettim ki birilerine katkı sağlamak beni çok besleyen, büyüten ve mutlu eden bir şey.

115. Ben çalışma hayatımda çoğunlukla kendi jenerasyonumda insanlarla çalıştım, özellikle de yönetim kadrosuna çıktığımda, arada hep bir mesafe oluyordu; yani şirkete genç insanlar geliyor ama sen onlarla direkt temasta değilsin. Onların

beklentilerini, arzularını, hayallerini, yaşam tarzlarını göremiyorsun. Bire bir konuşma imkanı olmuyor. Bu mentorluk ilişkisi bana zamanın nasıl değişmiş olduğunu, toplumsal yapının nereye evirildiğini fark ettirdi.

116. Genç arkadaşlar her zaman bir rehberlik verme ve yön gösterme isteğim olmuştu; kendimi hep bu konuda sorumlu hissetmişim. Ancak, araya nesiller girdikçe bağın kopmaya başlıyor. Yani o yeni nesillerin neler çektiğini, neler yaşadığını ve ne gibi önceliklerinin olduğu artık anlayamayabiliyorsun. Mesela 2005-2006 yılında 4-5 senelik bir kariyerle gelmiş, yeni mezun bir arkadaşına çok rahat tüyolar verebiliyorsun; o senden sadece 4-5 yaş küçük birisi. Ama 21- 22 yaşlık bir fark geldiği zaman artık gapler oluşmaya başlıyor, o gapleri doldurma anlamında iyi oldu benim için. Daha farklı bir farkındalık kazandım.

117. Ben çok soru sorarım, ama her soruyu gerçekten sormalı mıyım'ı düşündürdü. Proje bazlı çalıştığım ve takım yönettiğim için takımı sürekli motive etmek ve lead etmek zorundayım. Belki bütün takım liderleri bir yerde mentor oluyor, sorular sorarak motive ediyor. Benden daha küçük yaşta birinin hedefleri ve hayatında olan konularla ilgili sorular sormaya başlayınca, çok daha niş alanlara değinip soruların kalitesini fark ettim. Bu noktada, herhangi bir tartışma anında ya da herhangi bir topluluğu yönetme anlamında soracağım soruların kalitesinde değişiklik yarattı. Sakinlik ve stabile anlamında, 1 saat boyunca nasıl bir konu olursa olsun her zaman pozitif ruh hali ile stabil giden bir görüşme yapmam gerektiğini düşünüyorum. Bu da iş hayatındaki tansiyonun çok değişken olduğu, dinamiklerin çok farklı olduğu toplantılarla hiç örtüşmüyor; belki de bu benim hayatımdaki tansiyonu biraz dindirmiş olabilir.

118. İş hayatımda yeni aldığımız arkadaşlar oluyor, mentee arkadaşımınla aynı yaşta kişiler. Mülakatlar sırasında onları rahatlatma, yakınlaşma ve doğru soruları daha uygun bulmak adına ciddi anlamda pozitif bir etkisi oldu. Şirkette bizim proje öğrencilerimiz oluyor, onlarla olan görüşmeler ve diyaloglarda oldukça faydalı oldu. Aşağı yukarı aynı yaşta oldukları için onların da nasıl bir beklenti içerisinde olduklarını anlamam yönünden katkısı oldu.

119. Benim ilk menteelerim çocuklarım, ilk onlarla başladım. Bana mentorluğu bırak deseniz zorlanırım açıkçası, bir de şirketle pekiştirdiğim için hem işimde hem bu yaptığımız eğitim mentorluğunda. İnsan ilişkileri açısından tabii ki katkısı oluyor. Özellikle kendi çocuklarımla kariyer seçimlerinde, okul seçimlerinde yardımcı oldu.

120. Beyaz yaka olmak şart değil, master yapıp akademisyen olmak şart değil. Sen tshirt de tasarlayabilirsin, yurtdışında da gezdebilirsin; bunları konuşmak kendim için de keşfetmek ve düşünmek için fırsat oluyor. Mentorluk programı olmasaydı olmaz mıydı? Zor bir cevap, büyük ihtimalle olmazdı.

121. Programa katıldığım için çok iyi ki katılmışım diyorum. Tesadüf eseri ya da kolektif bir tutum var iş dünyasında, şirketlerde de mentorluk programları eş zamanlı olarak başladı ve bana bunlarla ilgili talepler de geliyor. Bir iş talebi geldiğinde buradaki deneyimlerimden de istifade ediyorum, kendi kariyerime de bir faydası var.

122. Kendi menteemde gördüğüm gelişmeleri başkalarında da görmek isteme düşüncesi devam etmek isteme nedenim olabilir. Eğer ki başarısız bir tecrübe

olsaydı, devam etmek istemeyebilirdim; vakit kaybı olarak görebilirdim çünkü zaman bulmak her zaman o kadar kolay olmuyor.

123. Kesinlikle isterim. Birincisi, birisinin hayatına dokunmak ve bir iz bırakmak çok keyifli bir şey. İkincisi, benim de öğrendiğim bir süreç; üçüncüsü benim için önemli bir şey çünkü okulumla dayanışma halinde hissediyorum, benim için bazı değerleri yaşıyor dolayısıyla o anlamda da kıymetli.

124. Benim iş sorumluluklarım itibariyle, özellikle pandemi ortadan kalkarsa ve bundan sonraki süreçte de zaman yaratma fırsatını göreceğim olursam, önümüzdeki dönemde devam etmek istiyorum.

125. Çok açık konuşayım: kendilerini ve kendi egolarını hayatının merkezine koymuş insanlar gelmesin. Karşısındakini dinleyen, onun ihtiyaçlarını anlamaya hazır insanlar gelsin. O yüzden böyle mezunlara tavsiye ederim; katılınsınlar katma değer yaratırlar, diğerleri uzak dursun.

126. Öneririm ama her mezuna önermem. Programa geliş amacı öğrenciye umut vermek, güçlendirmekse, o zaman evet, öneririm. Şu ana kadar kimseye önerdiğim olmadı çünkü bu öneriyle, ikna ile olacak bir şey değil. Mentorluğu zaten isteyen, gönül veren kendisi gönüllü olur diye düşünüyorum.

127. Çoğu insana öneriyorum, ama çok büyük çekinceleri var insanların. Daha önce yapmadıkları için ne yapacaklarını bilmiyorlar. Belki yenilere farklı bir eğitim verilebilir, cesaretlendirmek adına işte ne yapması gerekiyor, nasıl ilerlenmeli diye daha kapsayıcı bir şey.

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