

# Yasemin Kisbu, PhD

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## Expertise

- Impact evaluation, with a substantive focus on education, health, and child well-being in vulnerable populations (e.g., girls, refugees, LMIC, disabilities)
  - Child indicators and statistics (education, health, developmental, protection, child poverty)
  - Large-scale quantitative survey data analysis to inform policy and interventions (e.g., UNICEF MICS, OECD PISA, WHO HBSC)
  - Survey and mixed methods pre-intervention research
  - Systematic reviews on what works and how
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## Background

- 2013 – 2014 **Post-doc in Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Methods for Impact Evaluation**  
Northwestern University, Institute for Policy Research, USA  
Supervisor: Prof. Thomas D. Cook
- 2009 – 2013 **Ph.D. in Quantitative Methods – with a focus on Evaluation Methods**  
Arizona State University, Department of Psychology, USA
- 2004 – 2006 **M.A. in Developmental Psychology**  
Koç University, Istanbul, Türkiye
- 2001 – 2004 **B.A. in Economics**  
Koç University, Istanbul, Türkiye

## Positions and Affiliations

- 2014 – Present **Koç University, Istanbul Türkiye**  
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology (Dec 2023 – present)  
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology (2014 – 2023)  
Director, [Independent Evaluation Laboratory](#)
- 2022 – 2026 **Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science (AMPPS), APS, Sage.**  
Journal Associate Editor (1 of 4 AEs)
- 01/2023-12/2024 **UNICEF Evaluation Office, Headquarters, New York USA**  
Impact evaluation studies in low- and middle-income countries
- 07/2022-06/2023 **UNICEF Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, Geneva Switzerland**  
Evaluation adviser for impact evaluations of digital interventions
- 2018 Summer **Harvard University, USA**  
Visiting Scholar
- 2009 – 2013 **Research in Prevention Laboratory, Arizona State University**  
Research Associate

## Peer Reviewed Publications

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters:

(\* sign denotes my graduate student)

1. Dost-Gozkan, A. & **Kisbu**, Y. (in press). Time-resourcefulness of children: From time-poverty to time-availability. In E. Delamonica (Ed.), *Handbook Child Poverty and Inequalities*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
2. Turunç G.\* & **Kisbu**, Y. (2023). Emotional, cognitive, and social functioning in children and early adolescents living in post-armed conflict: Testing mediating mechanisms using UNICEF MICS. *International Journal of Psychology*.
3. **Kisbu**, Y. Ozcan, M.S., Kuscul, H., Bozok, M., Kaya, U., Fisek, G. (2023). Fathering Styles in a Traditional Culture and its Association with Marital Relationship: A Latent Profile Analysis with a Nationally Representative Sample. *Family Process*.
4. **Kisbu**, Y., Akcinar, B., Kuscul, H., Bozok, M. Turunc, G., Fisek, G. (2023). Protective and risk factors for involved fathering in a traditional culture. *Family Relations*, 1-31.
5. Turunc, G.\* & **Kisbu**, Y. (2022). Parents' attitudes toward domestic violence as a risk factor for early childhood development: Testing an actor-partner interdependence model using UNICEF MICS. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 1-26.
6. Niehues W.\*, Selcuk B., **Kisbu-Sakarya** Y. (2022). Parental predictors of children's math learning behaviours in different cultures. *Child and Family Studies*.
7. Uslu, D.\*, Marcus, J., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. (2022). Toward optimized effectiveness of workplace training programs: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 21, 49-65.
8. **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. & Doenyas, C. (2021). Can School Teachers' Willingness to Teach ASD-Inclusion Classes Be Increased via Special Education Training? Uncovering Mediating Mechanisms. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 113, 1-9.
9. Ozcan, S.M.\*, Cetinkaya, E., Goksun, T., & **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. (2021). Does learning to code influence cognitive skills of elementary school children? Findings from a randomized experiment. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91, 1434-1455.
10. Çetinkaya, E.\*, Hermann, S., & **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. (2020). Adapting the values affirmation intervention to a multi-stereotype threat framework for female students in STEM. *Social Psychology of Education*, 23, 1587-1607.
11. Balci, F., Baykal, E., Goksun, T., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. Yantac, E. (accepted 2021). Improving creative thinking in elementary school children from disadvantaged families: A randomized trial. *Journal of Creativity Research*.
12. **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., MacKinnon, D. P., Valente, M. J., & Çetinkaya, E. (2020). Causal Mediation Analysis in the Presence of Post-treatment Confounding Variables: A Monte Carlo Simulation Study. *Frontiers in Psychology – Quantitative Psychology and Measurement*, 1-16.

13. Sumer, O.\*, **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. Etel, E., Selcuk, B. (2020). Developmental change in early language and cognitive skills of institution-reared children as compared to their parent-reared peers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *121*, 1-9.
14. Niehues W.\*, **Kisbu-Sakarya** Y., & Selcuk B. (2020). Family Cohesion Facilitates Learning-Related Behavior and Math Competency at the Transition to Elementary School. *Early Education and Development*, 1-15.
15. Niehues, W.\*, **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., & Selçuk, B. (2020) Motivation and Math Achievement: Are They Linked with Socio-Economic Status? Evidence form PISA. *Educational Psychology*, 1-22.
16. **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., Cook, T.D., Tang, Y., Clark, T. (2018). Comparative Regression Discontinuity: A Stress Test with Small Samples. *Evaluation Review*, *42*, 111-143.
17. Tang, Y., Cook, T.D., & **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. (2018). Statistical Power for the Comparative Regression Discontinuity Design with a non-Equivalent Comparison Group. *Psychological Methods*, *23*, 150-168.
18. Olivera, M., Rikoon, S., Gonzalez, O., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y. & MacKinnon, D.P. (2018). Bias, type I error rates and statistical power of a latent mediation model in the presence of violations of invariance. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *78*, 460-481.
19. Tang Y., Cook, T.D. & **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., Hock, H., & Chiang, H. (2017). The Comparative Regression Discontinuity (CRD) Design: An overview and demonstration of its performance relative to basic RD and the randomized experiment. In M.D. Cattaneo & J.C. Escanciano (Eds.), *Advances in Econometrics: Regression Discontinuity Designs: Theory and Applications*. Emerald Publishing Limited.
20. Kağıtçıbaşı, C., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., & Aydoğdu, E\*. (2017). Intercultural engagement and relatedness: Examining mediation effects. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *61*, 21-28.
21. **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., MacKinnon, D.P. & O'Rourke, H. (2015). Strategies for drug program evaluation: Statistical models of mediation for drug program evaluation. In L. M. Scheier (Ed.), *Handbook of drug abuse prevention research, intervention strategies, and practice*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
22. Miller, J. D., Maples, J. L., Buffardi, L., Cai, H., Gentile, B., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., Kwan, V.S.Y., LoPilato, A., Pendry, L. F., Sedikides, C., Siedor, L., & Campbell, W. K. (2015). Narcissism and United States' Culture: The view from home and around the world. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *109*, 1068-1089.
23. **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., MacKinnon, D. P., & Miočević, M. (2014). The Distribution of the Product Explains Normal Theory Mediation Confidence Interval Estimation. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, *49*, 261-268.
24. **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., MacKinnon, D.P., & Aiken, L.S. (2013). A Monte Carlo comparison study of the power of the analysis of covariance, simple difference, and residual change scores in testing two-wave data. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *73*, 47-62.
25. Cox, M. G., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., Miočević, M., & MacKinnon, D. P. (2013). Sensitivity Plots for Confounder Bias in the Single Mediator Model. *Evaluation Review*, *37*, 1-27.

26. Ames, S. L., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., Reynolds, K.D., Boyle, S., Cappelli, C., Cox, M.G., Dust, M., Grenard, J.L., MacKinnon, D.P. & Stacy, A.W. (2014). Inhibitory control effects in adolescent binge eating and consumption of sweetened beverages and snacks. *Appetite*, 81, 180-192.
27. MacKinnon, D.P., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., & Gottschall, A. (2013). Developments in mediation analysis. In T.D. Little (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Quantitative Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
28. Kuehl, K. S., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., Elliot, D. L., Moe, E. L., DeFrancesco, C. A., MacKinnon, D. P., & Kuehl, H. E. (2012). Body Mass Index is a Predictor of Fire Fighter Injury and Worker Compensation Claims. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 54, 579.
29. Pirlott, A. G., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., DeFrancesco, C. A. , Elliot, D. L., & MacKinnon, D.P. (2012). Mechanisms of motivational interviewing in health promotion: A Bayesian mediation analysis. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 9, 1-11.
30. Elliot, D.L., MacKinnon, D.P., Mabry, L., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., DeFrancesco, C.A., Coxe, S.J., Kuehl, K.S., Moe, E.L., Goldberg, L., & Favorite, K.C. (2012). Worksite wellness program implementation: A model of Translational Effectiveness. *Translational Behavioral Medicine*, 1-8.
31. Grenard, J. L., Stacy, A. W., Shiffman, S., Baraldi, A. N., MacKinnon, D. P., Lockhart, G., **Kisbu-Sakarya**, Y., ... & Reynolds, K. D. (2013). Sweetened drink and snacking cues in adolescents. A study using ecological momentary assessment. *Appetite*, 67, 61-73.

Manuscripts under review / final draft:

1. Turunc, G.\* & **Kisbu**, Y. (under review). Mental health and adjustment difficulties as risk factors for parental involvement of Syrian refugee fathers.
2. Oksuz, I\*., Dost, A., & **Kisbu**, Y. (under review). Health risk behaviors of adolescents in Europe: A latent profile analysis of HBSC data from 43 countries.
3. **Kisbu**, Y. & Çetinkaya, E.\* (final draft). Transportability and adaptability of a brief and scalable social belonging intervention to Syrian refugee education context. Evidence from two randomized evaluations.
4. Faraci, C.\* & **Kisbu**, Y. (final draft). Effectiveness of Parent Mediated Autism Interventions: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.
5. Ozcan, S.M.\*, Sabuncuoglu, A., Sezgin, M., & **Kisbu**, Y. (in preparation). A cluster randomized trial on the impact of mobile-app augmented STEM curriculum on children's cognitive outcomes.

## Selected Projects and Grants Details

### UNICEF Evaluation Office, Headquarters, New York USA (01/2023-12/2024)

- Impact evaluations (randomized controlled trials – RCTs) of Child Early and Forced Marriage interventions in West and Central Africa and Eastern Europe and Central Asia Countries.
- Causal impact evaluation feasibility assessments of mental health and psychosocial support interventions supported by UNICEF - global.
- Quasi-experimental evaluation study of the child stunting programme in Mozambique.

### UNICEF Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, Geneva Switzerland (07/2022-06/2023)

- Evaluation adviser for the experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of digital interventions for child well-being, as commissioned by the UNICEF Office of Innovation.
- Preparation of a guidance note on “**Using MICS, MICS Plus, and other Household Survey Data in Impact Evaluations of National/Subnational Programs and Models-to-Scale**” (Sole author).

### UNICEF Türkiye (11/2020-10/2024)

- Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) entitled “Evidence generation, dissemination and M&E capacity building for better monitoring and reporting for the most vulnerable children and adolescents in Türkiye” signed to collaborate on multiple evidence generation activities.

#### Selected Projects:

- **Türkiye Child Profile Survey**, Survey Preparation Team Lead.  
The project aims to produce data on multi-dimensional child well-being indicators in Türkiye (0-17 years old, in the domains of education, health, developmental, protection, child poverty). Responsibilities included the identification of dimensions and indicators of child well-being as investigated in large-scale quantitative studies abroad and in Türkiye (including a review of all EU, World Bank, all UN agencies including WHO, and OECD child indicators and quantitative datasets on child well-being); data mapping and gap analysis for child data in Türkiye (disaggregated by age, sex, disability status, refugee status); preparation of the national quantitative survey to monitor multi-dimensional child well-being in Türkiye (including the UNICEF MICS child functioning module), that is aimed to be implemented by the Turkish Statistical Agency every 4 years to guide the programmatic and policy efforts of the Turkish government and create the first national child data warehouse in the country (with the Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Section and Ministry of Family and Social Services).
- Development of a Measurement Tool for the Measurement of Change in Attitudes and Social Norms for the Elimination of Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEFM) (with the Child Protection Section).
- Behavioral analysis and evidence generation to facilitate transformative change and to increase social norms shift for engagement and participation of adolescent and young people (with the Social Behavioral Change - SBC Section and Ministry of Youth and Sports).

- Causal evaluability assessment of the conditional cash transfer for education project with a budget of €34m, to increase school attendance of Syrian refugee children (suggested interrupted time-series design with matched comparison group).
- Back to Learning Study: A mixed method study – survey and FGDs - investigating the barriers and bottlenecks Syrian refugee and Turkish children experience related to their learning, enrolment, and attendance in school.
- Head of the Ethical Review Board services for UNICEF Turkiye (2020-Present)

#### **UNICEF Georgia (09/2023-11/2023)**

- Evaluation of the Leave No Child Out national inclusive education programme, following the OECD DAC criteria and GEROS standards and Contribution Analysis as principal methodology.

#### **Suna Inan Kıraç Foundation, Istanbul Turkiye (07/2022-11/2023)**

- Principal investigator for determining and measuring the child outcome indicators to be monitored for the large-scale systemic complex intervention program in the area of girls' education in Turkiye, its **impact evaluation baseline study**, and the preparation of the program's M&E framework.

#### **Facebook EMEA Headquarters (11/2021-10/2022)**

- Principal evaluator. End-line mixed evaluation of Facebook's digital capacity development project for women CSOs in Turkiye. Tasks included the design of the impact evaluation study and quantitative analysis of intensive social media campaigning data using an interrupted time-series design.

#### **Turkish Natural Catastrophe Insurance Pool (in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency) (2018-2019)**

- Principal evaluator for the cluster-randomized controlled trial of a theory-based elementary school curriculum on disaster preparedness conducted in 26 cities across Turkiye.

#### **NeOAUVRA Virtual Reality based Assessment and Training, New York and Istanbul. (10/2021-10/2022)**

- Evaluation and measurement advisor. The measurement validation and evaluation studies for virtual reality based assessment and training tools.

#### **TOHUM Autism Foundation, Istanbul Turkiye (2017 - 2018) *Funded by Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Social Impact Investment Program financed by EBRD.***

- Principal evaluator for the impact evaluation of Autism Trainings for Inclusive Education Project conducted across 11 cities in Turkiye, using a randomized controlled trial. Determined evaluation design and hypotheses, the targeted outcome indicators, conducted literature review, prepared the questionnaires, supervised the full planning, designing, and implementation of the experimental evaluation, and has written the final report.

#### **Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV), Istanbul Turkiye, (2015-2016) *Funded by Bernard van Leer Foundation.***

- Methodology PI for a comprehensive project on the State of Fatherhood in Turkiye. The project had a mixed design involving qualitative and quantitative methods and gathered disaggregated data from a nationally representative sample of fathers in Turkiye. Provided significant input into the development of a theoretical model identifying risk and protective factors for positive fathering, development of the survey including information about the household and appropriate

parenting scales, sampling strategy, psychometric analysis of scales, data analysis. The project was closely linked to AÇEV's Father Support Program funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

**Education Volunteers Foundation of Turkiye (TEGV), Istanbul Turkiye, (2015-2016)**

- PI for the impact evaluation of TEGV after-school programs given to disadvantaged children in 20 cities across Turkiye. Determined the targeted indicators and supervised the planning, design, and implementation of the quasi-experimental evaluation. Conducted a propensity score matching analysis segregated by gender and has written the final report.

**Jacobs Foundation Marbach Residency Fellowship (August 2015).**

- Project title "Towards optimised reach and effectiveness of parenting interventions to prevent violence against children".

**Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, (2013-2014)**

Post-doc researcher under the supervision of Prof. Thomas D. Cook. *Funded by IES.*

- Conducted research on the development and testing of a new quasi-experimental technique: Comparative Regression Discontinuity Design. Applied the new analysis methods to large-scale national datasets such as the US National Head Start Impact Study promoting child development and US Comprehensive Teacher Induction Study promoting student achievement.

**Research in Prevention Laboratory, Arizona State University, (2009-2013)**

Graduate research associate for Prof. David P. MacKinnon

- **Habitual and Neurocognitive Processes in Adolescent Obesity Prevention.** *Funded by NIH.* Methodologist and data analyst for a multiple-studies project that included computer intensive real-time mobile-app based assessment methods to develop an evidence-based obesity prevention program. Provided technical input into sampling, indicator and questionnaire development, quantitative data analysis, and report writing. Analysis topics included multilevel power analysis to determine sample size, psychometric analysis of scales, latent profile analysis, and multi-group structural equation modelling.
- **Promoting Healthy Living: Assessing More Effects (PHLAME).** *Funded by NIH.* Methodologist and data analyst for seven-wave longitudinal data on the evaluation of a health promotion program in US. Provided technical input into literature review, theoretical model building, quantitative data analysis, and report writing. Analysis topics include multilevel analysis, missing data analysis with categorical outcomes, Bayesian mediation analysis, and longitudinal models, and quantitative analysis of a data coming from a qualitative sub-study.

**Selected Organized Paper Symposia and Conference Presentations**

Kisbu, Y. (September, 2022). Ethical and practical implications of effectiveness research. **Invited keynote speaker**, European Society for Prevention Research Annual Conference, Estonia.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y.** (June, 2019). Fathering in Different Contexts. **Symposium organized and chaired** for the Annual Meeting of Society for Prevention Research, San Francisco CA.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y.** (June, 2015). Advancing Quasi-Experimental Methods: Comparative Regression Discontinuity Design. **Symposium organized and chaired** for the Annual Meeting of Society for Prevention Research, Washington DC.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y.** (June, 2015). Advances in Mediation Analysis: Improving Causal Interpretation and Accuracy of Estimates. **Symposium organized and chaired** for the Annual Meeting of Society for Prevention Research, Washington DC.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y. & Çetinkaya, E.** (June, 2019). Optimizing the effectiveness of a role model intervention using a factorial experiment with a mediator, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Society of Prevention Research, San Francisco CA.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y. et al.** (June, 2019). Protective and Risk Factors Associated with Involved Fatherhood: Implications for Policy and Practice, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Society of Prevention Research, San Francisco CA.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y.** (2018). Estimating Causal Effects in Testing Causal Mechanisms: Problems and Solutions. Paper presented at European Society for Prevention Research Annual Conference, Portugal

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y. & Çetinkaya, E.** (2018). Social Psychological Strategies to Overcome Gender Stereotype Threat in STEM. International Conference on Gender & Education, Sabanci University, Istanbul.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y. & Cook, T.D.** (June, 2017). Comparative regression discontinuity: Bias, precision, and violation of the parallelity assumption. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Society of Prevention Research, Washington DC.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y., & MacKinnon, D.,** (June, 2015). Causal mediation. Paper presented at VII European Congress of Methodology, Spain.

Olivera-Aguilar, M., **Kisbu-Sakarya, Y., & MacKinnon, D.,** (June, 2015). Violations of invariance in a mediation model: Impact on relative bias, type I error rates, statistical power and coverage. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Society of Prevention Research, Washington DC.

**Kisbu-Sakarya, Y., MacKinnon, D., & Tofighi, D.** (June, 2011). Bayesian mediation analysis for studies with small samples. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of Society of Prevention Research, Denver, Co.

MacKinnon, D.P., Cox, M.G., Miocevic, M., & **Kisbu-Sakarya, Y.** (March, 2012). Methods to assess confounder bias applied to an anabolic steroid prevention program. Paper presented at the Frontiers in the Analysis of Causal Mechanisms Conference, Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences, Cambridge, MA.

### Languages

Turkish (native)

English

French (graduated from a French Middle and High School in Istanbul)

### Personal background information

Year of birth: 1981

Citizenship: Turkish

Marital status: Single

Dependent: Daughter, 10 years old (TR-US dual citizen)