

AN ANALYSIS OF BARRIERS TO THE
EDUCATION OF CHILDREN
UNDER TEMPORARY PROTECTION
IN THE DISTRICTS AND RURAL AREAS OF ŞANLIURFA PROVINCE
AKÇAKALE, CEYLANPINAR, HARRAN, SURUÇ

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Foreword

According to the laws that Turkey is a party to, Syrians living in Turkey are under temporary protection status. While this temporary protection status imposes specific responsibilities on asylum seekers, it also provides the right to benefit from education, health, and other public services. According to international laws, Turkey is obliged to provide migrants the same education received by Turkish citizens. Şanlıurfa is a city that has the longest border with Syria. It is also among the provinces with the highest asylum seeker population. This is due to reasons such as the kinship ties between the people of Şanlıurfa and the provinces of Syria on the Turkish border, and the fact that Syrians continue to reside in these provinces after the closure of the shelter centers established in the provinces on the Syrian border during the first arrival of migrants. These reasons, in addition to the low schooling rates in Şanlıurfa pushed us to do this study.

This research was carried out to analyze the barriers to the education of Syrian children under temporary protection status living in the districts of Şanlıurfa. The findings of the study are presented in two parts, one from the perspective of parents and the other from children. The data collected in July and August of 2021 was presented to a selected audience as a research report in February 2022. This study was created by translation of the Turkish text presented as a research report into English.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the authors of this book Hakan Gülerce, Hatice Şahin and my co-editors Ahmet Göçen and Sedat Şen for their hard work, to our final readers Arzu Şahin, Hossein Turner and Mary Ellen Toffle for their feedback at the first draft of the book, and to our students Mehmet Ökten, Mustafa Özmen, Mehmet Şahin, Muti Reşid and Halit Baytok for their hard work at data collection of the research, and to our consultants of the research Gokce Ok and Ekrem Demir from the Presidency of Migration Management. We hope this book contributes to migration studies for future projects.

This study was funded by the European Union Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). I extend my sincere thanks to ECHO for the generous support to make this book published.

Şevket Ökten
Project Coordinator
February 2022, Şanlıurfa

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Executive Summary

With the increase of internal turmoil and violence in Syria since 2011, millions of people have been forcibly displaced. The vast majority of displaced people sought refuge in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and in other countries bordering Syria. Turkey hosts the highest number of displaced people among these countries receiving mass migration. The return of Syrian refugees who were accepted as guests in Turkey after the first waves of mass migration has become increasingly complicated as the years pass and security problems continue in Syria.

Considering the social, economic, and psychological problems brought about by forced migration, various adaptation problems can be experienced between host societies and refugees. The solution for these problems requires a prompt response from public initiatives. One of the most important factors in facilitating social cohesion and social participation is the efficient access of refugee children to education.

Syrian refugees in Turkey are legally bound to abide by the rules mandated within the "temporary protection status" which the Turkish government provides for them in line with the 1951 Geneva Convention.

This temporary protection status does not mean that refugees are excluded from education, health, and other basic services. Like every Turkish citizen, Syrian children have the right to access education. However, when school enrollment rates are examined, the schooling rate of school-aged children for the 2020-2021 academic year is at 64,22% which is at a significantly low level despite the consistent annual increase in the number of enrollees as seen in the previous years. This rate is 48,26% for Şanlıurfa. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the barriers that impede refugee children's access to education, which is their most basic right.

Academic studies and evidence generation are needed to empower all related initiatives in this regard. Thus, decision-makers are able to devise plans towards more efficient and accessible education for refugee children with new policies that would be based on this evidence.

According to the data of the Turkish Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management, the education age population between the ages of 5-17 under temporary protection in the country is increasing every year. Education and training services are planned and carried out in line with these data. According to the data of the Presidency of Migration Management for November 2020, the efforts to enroll the population under temporary protection at the education age (n=1.197.124) to official schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education are being realized in steps. In the e-school system, 757.259 refugee students are enrolled. In Şanlıurfa, out of 124.299 children who are supposed to be in school, just 59.210 (48.26%) refugee children are enrolled in schools. The children who are registered in school are also coping with many economic, social and psychological problems.

The aim of this study is to discuss the obstacles that hinder refugee children's access to education in the rural districts of Şanlıurfa province, which has the longest border with Syria. In this study, sociological analyses were made by using quantitative and qualitative research methods.

After the findings were discussed, various suggestions were made to guide decision-makers. In the first part of the study, in which quantitative research methods were used, a survey was conducted with parents of 520 children who were not in school in Akçakale, Ceylanpınar, Harran and Suruç, the border districts of Şanlıurfa. These respondents are parents of children who were never registered or those who dropped out of schools. Demographic information of these parents was taken in the survey and questions were asked about why their children were not in schools or why they left their education. In the analysis using SPSS program, it has been revealed that the biggest obstacle in children's access to education is economic difficulties as well as other problems brought by the COVID-19 Pandemic. In addition to these, reasons such as child labor due to economic difficulties, language barrier for children whose mother tongue is Arabic or Kurdish, cultural differences, the distance of schools to the refugees' homes, limited physical facilities, and the lack of adequate opportunities for children with special needs are among the barriers to education. Moreover, out-of-school children suffer from loneliness, depressive state, introversion, lack of self-confidence, inclination to violence, etc.

In the second part of the study, in which qualitative research methods were used, a total of 60 children aged between 7 and 17 living in Akçakale (21), Ceylanpınar (15), Harran (8) and Suruç (16) districts were interviewed. Interviews were held using the children's mother tongue and accompanied by a psychologist. In the interviews, it was found that 44 out of 60 children knew the either very limited, moderate, or good level of Turkish. 36 of 44 children, who said they knew Turkish, actually learned Turkish at school. Four children who do not speak Turkish have never been to school. Insufficient knowledge of Turkish, which is the language of education in Turkey, affects the educational success of these children, and the resulting failure may cause children to move away from school. The language barrier is an important factor causing children to drop out of school. In addition to this, economic problems of their families emerge as another factor that consequently leads children to be out of school due to their families' inability to meet education costs. However, economic problems do not only result in children staying out of school. At the same time, children become a means for the family to make a living, and thus the problem of child labor arises. In the study, it was seen that children at very young ages such as those who are 7 and 8 years old also work.

It has been determined that they work in construction, agriculture, and portorage wherein jobs demand heavy labor even for adults. Apart from language and economic barriers, other reasons why immigrant children stay out of school are the difficulties brought by the COVID-19 Pandemic and problems pertaining to peer bullying, exclusion at school, their health, and school transportation.

As a result of the questionnaires provided to parents and the interviews with children, it has been determined that Syrian refugee children living in Akçakale, Ceylanpınar, Harran and Suruç are out of school due to economic, cultural and psycho-social problems which they experienced as a result of migration.

It has also been observed that the problems experienced during the course of COVID-19 Pandemic have more devastating effects on refugees as it has exacerbated existing economic problems and caused serious problems for children, especially in terms of child labor.

It has been observed that families are willing to send their children to school if their economic problems are resolved. However, the insufficient Turkish proficiency of both parents and children is one of the main factors that keep children out of school. To provide a solution to this problem, it is considered essential to implement Turkish language programs for both parents and children. This study concludes that if these problems faced by Syrian refugee families are resolved, the problem of being out of school would be consequently addressed for most of these children.

INTRODUCTION

This study was prepared to analyze the barriers to education faced by Syrian refugee¹ children under temporary protection in the districts and rural areas of the province of Şanlıurfa, located in the Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey. According to the Presidency of Migration Management (2021), as of 21.10.2021, there are 3.723.674 Syrians living under temporary protection in Turkey. With this number, Turkey is hosting the highest number of refugees globally (UNHCR, 2021).

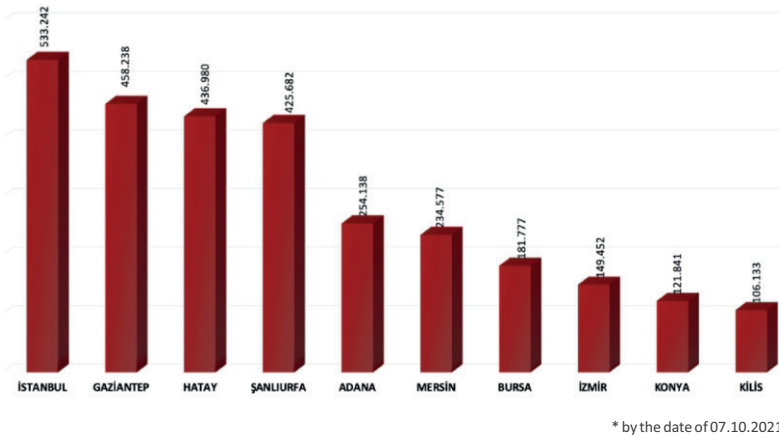


Figure 1: Distribution of Syrians under Temporary Protection in 10 Provinces with the highest refugee population (as of 07.10.2021)

Figure 1 displays the distribution of Syrians under temporary protection in major cities and in some border cities in Turkey. Şanlıurfa Province ranks fourth after İstanbul, Gaziantep and Hatay which are among the provinces with the highest number of refugees. Considering Şanlıurfa's total population, one out of every five people is a refugee in the province.

¹ Syrian children “under temporary protection in Turkey” will be referred to as refugee children in the rest of the text.

School-age children between the ages of 5 and 18 constitute 1.255.619 of the total population of Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey (Presidency of Migration Management, 2021). Children, who are the most vulnerable group affected by forced migration, face difficulties in accessing opportunities in many areas. One of these areas, and perhaps the most important, is education. Many social, economic, and psychological difficulties experienced by families during the migration process cause children not to attend schools at all or to leave their education unfinished.

According to the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, the education age population between the ages of 5-17 under temporary protection in the country is increasing every year. Education and training services are carried out by planning in line with these data (Presidency of Migration Management, 2021).

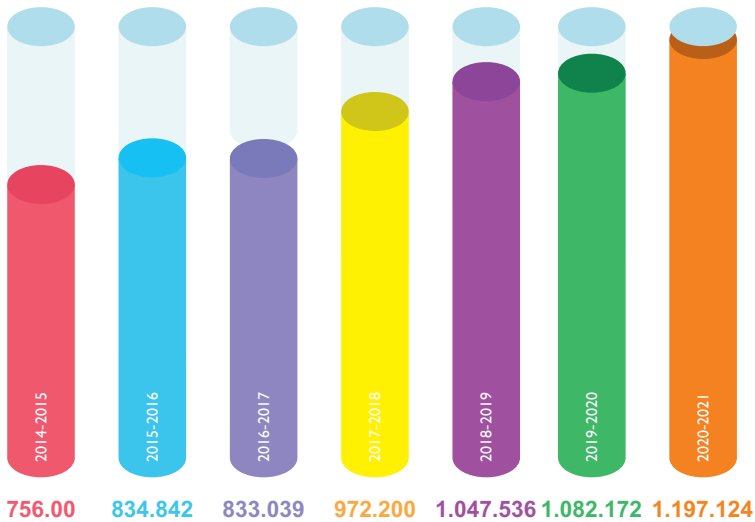


Figure 2: The education age between the ages of 5-17 for refugee children by years

Figure 2 shows the education age between the ages of 5-17. There is a steady annual increase in the number of school-age children. New births in Turkey and newcomers from Syria mainly contribute to this increase.

Education of Children Under Temporary Protection

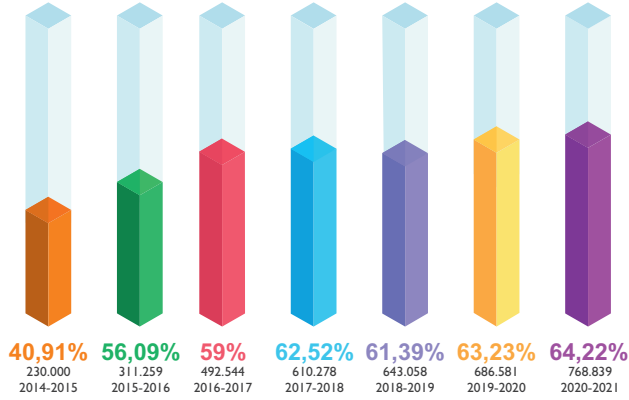


Figure 3: Annual School enrollments between the ages of 5-17 for refugee children from 2014 to 2021

Source: Presidency of Migration Management

Figure 3 shows the yearly school enrollments between the ages of 5 to 17 years for refugee students in the past 7 years. As the number of refugee children increases in Turkey, there are more students from existing families that send their children to the school instead of subjecting them to child labor.

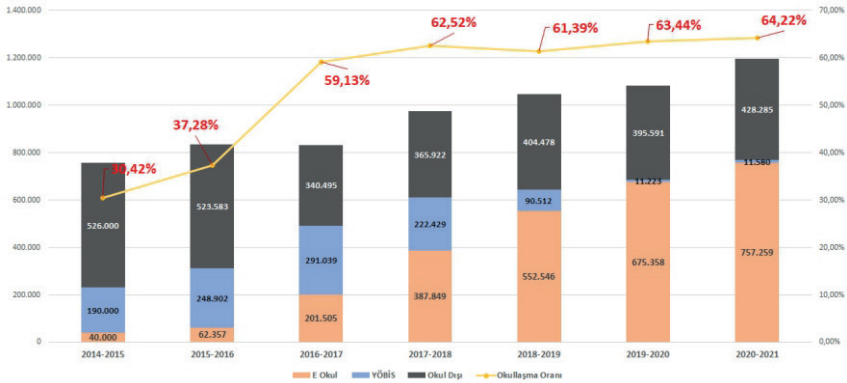


Figure 4: Annual Average percentage of 5 to 17 years old refugee children who have enrolled in schools over those who are out of school from 2014 to 2022.²

Source: Presidency of Migration Management

²**YÖBİS** = refers to "Foreign student information system". This system is not much in use as e-school system will replace it soon.

E-Okul= refers to e-school. This is used for all students in the country. When the first wave of refugees came, the Turkish government used YÖBİS, and then gradually moved the enrolment process to the e-school system.

Okul Dışı= refers to out-of school/not enrolled students.

Okullaşma Oranı= refers to enrollment rate

Figure 4 shows the number of enrolled and not enrolled students by the years. The total number of refugees in education age is 1,197,124 for the 2020-2021 academic year. According to the Presidency of Migration Management (2021), efforts to enroll school-age population under temporary protection to official schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education are being intensified. In the e-school system, there are 757,259 refugee children students enrolled as seen in Figure 4. Another 11,580 children are also registered according to the YÖBİS system.



Figure 5: The ratio of male to female students enrolled in the public schools

When the ratio of girls and boys are compared in terms of enrollment, it is almost equal as seen in Figure 5. There are 392.027 boys and 376.812 girls in the school system.

CITY	e-school	YÖBİS	Grand Total	Population to be Enrolled	Enrollment Rate
GAZİANTEP	87.232	610	87.842	141.904	61,90%
HATAY	64.851	4.757	69.608	115.410	60,31%
KİLİS	19.948	348	20.296	32.201	63,03%
ŞANLIURFA	59.210	772	59.982	124.299	48,26%
TOTAL	231.241	6.487	237.728	413.814	57,45%

Table 1: School enrollment rates of refugee children (2020-2021)

Source: Presidency of Migration Management

Table 1 displays school enrollment rates of refugee children in 2020-2021 academic year for 4 cities in Turkey. The largest refugee student group is in Gaziantep. According to the data from UNICEF (2019), the ratio of the number of refugee students enrolled into Turkish schools was 63,3% nationwide. Therefore, 36,7% of all school-age refugee children are out of school. Most of the non-attending students are of middle and high school age. This implies that the enrollment rate in primary school, which constitutes the basic education level, is higher, while it is lower in the high school level that constitutes the secondary education level. Being deprived of high school education, which has an important role in determining future professions in Turkey, means that refugee children are condemned to work in difficult conditions and more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation (Gül and Türkmen, 2019: 127). Refugee children who are out of school carry great risks in the future both in terms of establishing their own future and in terms of the society they live in.

Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that every person has the right to education, and that at least the first and basic stage of this education is free and compulsory (UN, 1948). The Convention on Children's Rights on 20 November 1989 emphasized that children's right to education and training should be protected and this right should be given free of charge (UNICEF, 1989).

The Article 22 of the 1951 Convention on the Legal Status of Migrants states that the parties would provide migrants with the same treatment given to their citizens in terms of primary education (Odman, 2008: 137).

Therefore, asylum-seeking children should be able to benefit from these rights equally, regardless of religion, race, or origin. Turkey accepted most of the articles above. In the Constitution of the Turkish Republic, article 42 states that "No one shall be deprived of the right of education" and article 10 states that "Everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds" (TBMM, 2021). This equality before the law applies to everyone including refugee children.

Turkey, on the one hand, must fulfill the requirements of these International Conventions to which it is a party, and on the other hand, it must ensure that refugee children benefit from educational institutions on an equal basis with its citizens in order to ensure social integration by bringing refugee children into social life through education. For this reason, it is of great importance to investigate the obstacles to the education of refugee children and to take the necessary precautions. By presenting a sociological analysis and by identifying main obstacles to the education of refugee children, this study aims to be a resource or a policy guideline for the Presidency of Migration Management and the Ministry of National Education of the Turkish Republic in order to increase the schooling rates of refugee children.

The study was conducted in the rural areas of Harran, Akçakale, Ceylanpınar and Suruç in the province of Şanlıurfa. There are several reasons behind the selection of these four districts for the field study. Firstly, these districts in Şanlıurfa are located at the Syrian-Turkish border. This particular area is Turkey's longest border with Syria.

Secondly, the ratio of the Syrian refugee population to the local Turkish population of these districts are the highest in comparison to other regions. Syrian refugee population is 63% in Akçakale, 25% in Ceylanpınar, 28% in Harran and 46% in Suruç. Thirdly, social networks, tribes, language, and cultural similarities of the local population with the refugees make these districts unique. Fourthly, these districts have less educational opportunities than the central districts.

Considering all of these reasons, analyzing the barriers to the education of refugee children will give an opportunity to better understand underlying issues and will aid in developing new policies to ensure efficient access to education.

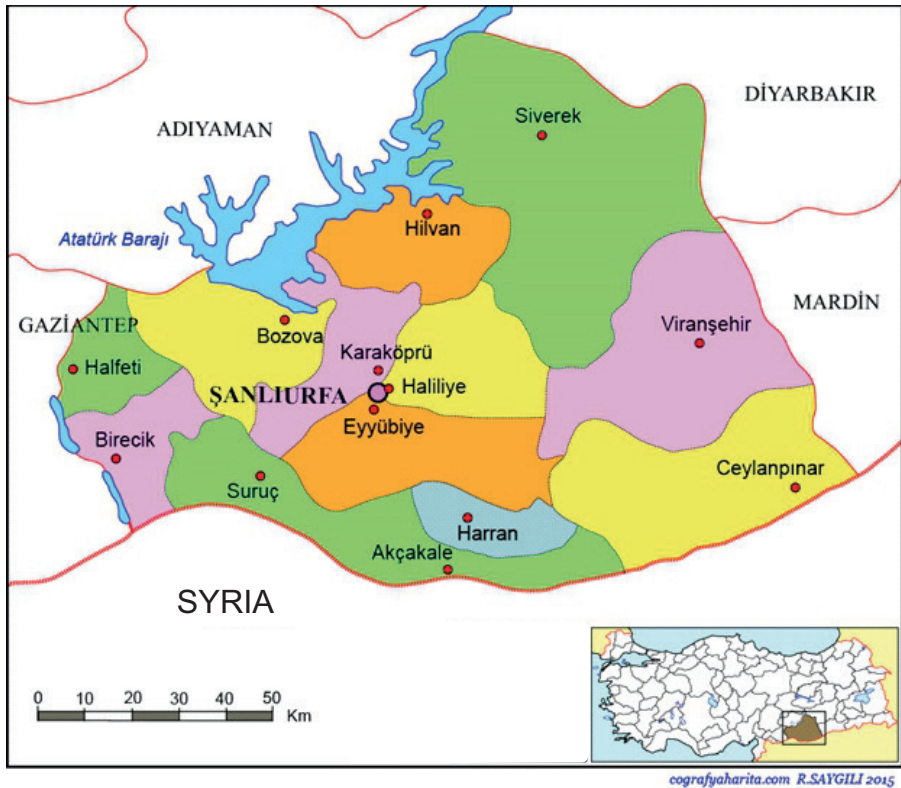


Figure 6: Map Showing Şanlıurfa Province and Its Districts.

Şanlıurfa has 13 districts as shown in Figure 2. Karaköprü, Eyyübiye and Haliliye are the central districts.

DISTRICT	POPULATION OF SYRIAN REFUGEES	TURKISH POPULATION	Ratio of Syrian Refugees to Turkish Population (%)
HALİLİYE	119.059	393.877	30%
EYYÜBİYE	89.210	389.852	20%
AKÇAKALE	60.842	107.265	63%
SURUÇ	49.600	116.615	46%
VİRANŞEHİR	26.787	206.267	13%
HARRAN	20.051	89.798	28%
CEYLANPINAR	20.361	89.762	25%
BİRECİK	14.308	95.128	14%
SİVEREK	9.048	260.570	4%
KARAKÖPRÜ	6.232	219.796	2%
BOZOVA	5.485	55.380	12%
HILVAN	2.337	40.879	6%
HALFETİ	2.362	42.824	7%
TOTAL	425.682	2.108.013	20,1%

Table 2: Population Distribution of Syrian Refugees under Temporary Protection in Şanlıurfa by Districts

Source: Şanlıurfa Provincial Directorate of Migration Management, 2021

As seen in Figure 6, 13 districts have different number of refugees in their regions. Akçakale has the highest ratio of refugees in comparison to the population of the host community. The population of Syrian refugees is 60.842 while the Turkish community is composed of 107.265 citizens. This ratio is followed by Suruç, Harran and Ceylanpınar districts in the rural areas in

METHODOLOGY

This study, which investigates obstacles to the education of refugee children, was carried out in the four districts of Şanlıurfa, adjacent to the Syrian border, where refugee children live in concentrated numbers. The study was conducted with a mixed methodology, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Thus, the study aimed to capture holistic and reliable findings by comparing and combining the data obtained through different methods.

Necessary permissions for the purpose of this study were obtained from the Ethics Committee of Harran University, the Presidency of Migration Management and the Şanlıurfa Directorate of National Education. Data were collected in July and August of 2021, and the questionnaires were administered by four Syrian and two Turkish interviewers who could speak Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish in their mother tongues. They were accompanied by one of the principal researchers of this study. The interviewers are postgraduate students studying at Harran University's Institute of Social Sciences. Before the data collection phase was initiated, interviewers had undergone a special orientation program. The first set of survey respondents were located and interviewed through the assistance of 'mukhtars' who are the official neighborhood leaders in Turkey. The same approach was used in identifying and inviting other participants. Snowball sampling was used to collect data. Efforts to gain participants' trust were made to encourage them to answer the provided questionnaires and other questions raised during the interviews with utmost honesty.

During the pilot study, researchers participated in field studies and observed data collection process. In addition to the interviewers, a psychologist also participated in the interviews with children. Data were collected in Arabic from people who do not speak Turkish. Both printed questionnaires and interview questions were prepared in Arabic, Kurdish and Turkish.

In the quantitative phase of the research, using the questionnaire technique, interviews were conducted with the parents of out-of-school children. In addition to questions about demographics, socio-economic conditions and daily lives of refugees, the questionnaire also has a set of 95 questions designed to understand possible obstacles to their children's access to education.

Each questionnaire was prepared specifically for a child, and parents were asked to fill out a questionnaire for each child. In this context, a survey was conducted with 216 parents of 520 children who did not enroll or those who dropped out of school in the districts of Akçakale (189), Ceylanpınar (58), Harran (63) and Suruç (210) located on the Syrian border of Şanlıurfa province. The number of participants was proportionally determined based on the total number of refugees in each district.

Qualitative research allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' attitudes, experiences, and intentions. Further, qualitative methods reveal wide variety of opinions and views that individuals hold on the subject as well as differences in perspective between groups. Furthermore, for unexplored research areas, qualitative methods attempt to fill gaps that could not be uncovered by survey-based research. While trying to reach generalizations by examining the views of a large group in the quantitative part of the research, the qualitative phase thoroughly considers the ideas and opinions of children and provides in-depth analysis of the research problem.

In the qualitative part of the research, a total of 60 children, one from each family, were interviewed: 21 from Akçakale, 15 from Ceylanpınar, 8 from Harran and 16 from Suruç. Through an interpreter, interviews were conducted in the children's mother tongues. These interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and were subsequently transcribed and analyzed by a single person using the ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis program. Results of this initial analysis were further evaluated by other researchers.

The obtained data were converted into codes, categories and themes. When analyzing the results, the names of the children were excluded. Instead of names, codes were used according to the order of deciphering. For example, the D49 code was given for the child whose interview was deciphered in the 49th row. In the interview transcripts, the code of the child, the district in which he lives, his age and gender (Boy: B, Girl: G) are mentioned in such order. For example, "D16, Akçakale, 11, B". Interviews were conducted with children aged 7 to 11 and 12 to 17 using two separate questionnaires.

Limitations

Children's intense expression of shyness and hesitation have negatively affected their responses to the questions during the interviews. They tended to only answer simple questions. It has been observed that the children who were interviewed have difficulty in answering questions that required them to rely on their ability to imagine or presuppose a particular situation. Especially in interviews with children between the ages of 7 to 11 who exhibited anxiously inhibited demeanor as they responded to researcher, and were unable to provide answers without their parent's presence. In one of the tasks, they were asked to draw a school with a drawing book and coloring pencils given, it was observed that they had difficulties in drawing the required image and some of them drew other unrelated images because they did not know the school well enough. These children, most of them have not been to schools, either had difficulty in answering the questions asked about the school or did not answer them at all since they did not have any information about how schools actually look like.

Children give different clues about their emotions with the pictures they draw (Burkitt, Barrett & Davis, 2005: 72), and in this way, findings about the inner worlds of children are obtained. However, in this study, the main reason why children in the 7-11 age group were given the drawing book and crayons to draw images of school was not to understand the inner world of children. Psychologists state that children are interested in drawing something from the age of one and a half years, and they enjoy the drawing they make (Malchiodi, 1998: 69). In this study, the aim of asking children to draw was to help them relax to create a better atmosphere between them and the researchers. This was intended for the children to trust the researchers so as for them to reflect their real feelings and thoughts. The questions were designed by experts from the fields of sociology, psychology, education and statistics. Survey participants were selected from the families whose one or more children were out of school. The families whose children were regularly going to school were not included in the surveys. We have also used the snowball methodology with a referral system to gain the trust of the participants. Some families could not read and understand the questions. In this case, the enumerators who could speak Arabic (i.e. Syrian enumerators) explained the questions to the participants to make sure that they clearly understood the questions clearly.

FINDINGS

Demographic Structure

Within the scope of the research, a questionnaire with 95 questions was provided to 216 parents who had at least one child who did not attend to any educational institution. 50% of the parents who participated in the survey were females and 50% were males. 95,4% of the participants stated that they were married. 39,8% of the participants stated that their marriage were only officiated by a religious authority. In Turkey, this type of marriage is called 'imam nikahı'. Therefore, it can be said that cultural marriage, that is a marriage ceremony not conducted by duly designated civil state officials, seems to be fairly common among Syrians who are residents of these four districts. It is also noteworthy to mention that most of the respondents were not aware that the legal age of consent for marriage is 18 in accordance to Turkish law.

Childhood Age

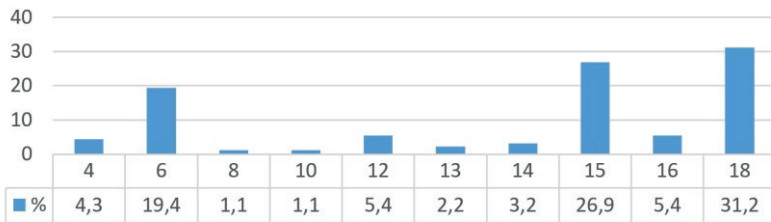


Figure 7: Views of Parents Participating in the Research on Childhood Age.

Figure 7 shows the opinion of the parents participating in the research regarding childhood age.

When the educational status of the participants is examined, 35,6% are illiterate and they did not have any formal education, 20,8% are literate and have not graduated from primary school, 14,4% are primary school graduates, 15,3% are middle school graduates, 8,8% are high school graduates, 1,9% of them are associate degree graduates, and 3,2% of them have bachelor's degree.

As seen in the Table 3 on educational status, Harran has the highest number of illiterate refugee parents and Ceylanpınar has the highest number of university graduate parents.

		Eğitim Statüsü							TOTAL
		Primary School	Bachelor Degree	High School	Literate	Illiterate	Secondary	Associate Degree	
DISTRICTS	Akçakale	9	4	5	33	24	12	3	90
		10.0%	4.4%	5.6%	36.7%	26.7%	13.3%	3.3%	100%
	Ceylanpınar	4	2	6	0	6	5	1	24
		16.7%	8.3%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	20.8%	4.2%	100%
	Harran	0	0	3	7	17	3	0	30
		0.0%	0.0%	10%	23.3%	56.7%	10.0%	0.0%	100%
	Suruç	18	1	5	5	30	13	0	72
		25.0%	1.4%	6.9%	6.9%	41.7%	18.1%	0.0%	100%
TOTAL		31	7	19	45	77	33	4	216
		14.4%	3.2%	8.8%	20.8%	35.6%	15.3%	1.9%	100%

Table 3: Educational Status of Parents per District -Cross tabulation

In the study, it was determined that the education level of most of the parents of children who are out of school is low. Considering the typical relationship between financial stability with educational attainment, unemployment rates and poverty rates are expected to decrease as the educational attainment rises (Çalışkan, 2007: 290). Considering that most of the participants have a low level of education, it is expected that unemployment and poverty rates are high.

Table 4 displays information on monthly income of the household by districts. 94% of the participants stated that their income were not enough to provide for their families. Although most of the participants stated that at least one family member has a job that generates income, 99.1% of them stated that they work informally without legal contracts and thus without proper insurance. When the specifics of their income are examined, 83.2% of the families living in houses with 6 or more people, 52.3% of these families have an income between 0-999 TL, and 42.5% of them have an income between 1000-1999 TL.

		Monthly income of the household.				
		0-9999 TL	1000-9999 TL	2000-2999 TL	3000 TL	TOTAL
DISTRICTS	Akçakale	51 56.7%	30 33.3%	8 8.9%	1 1.1%	90 100%
	Ceylanpınar	10 41.7%	14 58.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	24 100%
	Harran	29 96.7%	1 3.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	30 100%
	Suruç	23 31.9%	46 63.9%	2 2.8%	0 0.0%	72 100%
TOTAL		113 52.3%	91 42.1%	10 4.6%	1 0.5%	216 100%

Table 4: Monthly income of the household in different districts.

94% of the families who cannot earn enough to sustain their cost of living rely Emergency Social Safety Net Programme (ESSN, also known as Red Crescent card). This implies that the interviewed households are in severe poverty. As a result of poverty, 9.7% of families have their children in an income-generating job. Figure 8 displays the income of parents participating in the research.

What is the total monthly income of your household?

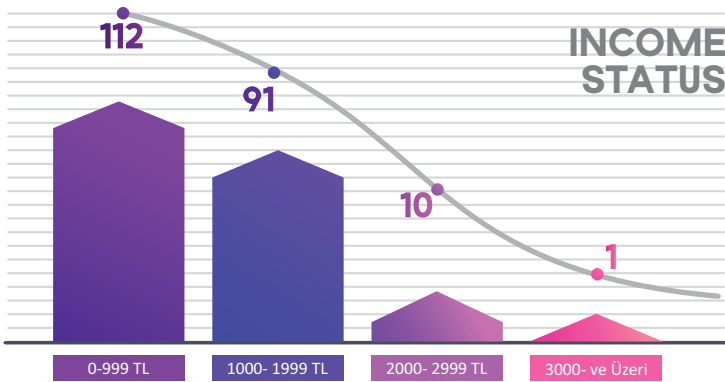


Figure 8: Income status of the parents participating in the research

Figure 9 displays daily language use of parents participating in the research. Deduced from their responses to the questionnaire, 51.4% of the parents did not know Turkish at all, though 94.2% of them stated that they have lived in Turkey for four years or more. The most noFigure causative factor in not being able to learn Turkish in a long period of time is that 98.6% of them use their mother tongue as their preferred daily language of communication. This situation not only makes social cohesion or inclusion with the host Turkish community difficult but also affects their children's education. Especially since parents cannot speak Turkish, they cannot contribute to the language development of their children. This also inhibits parents' ability to communicate with their child's Turkish teachers.

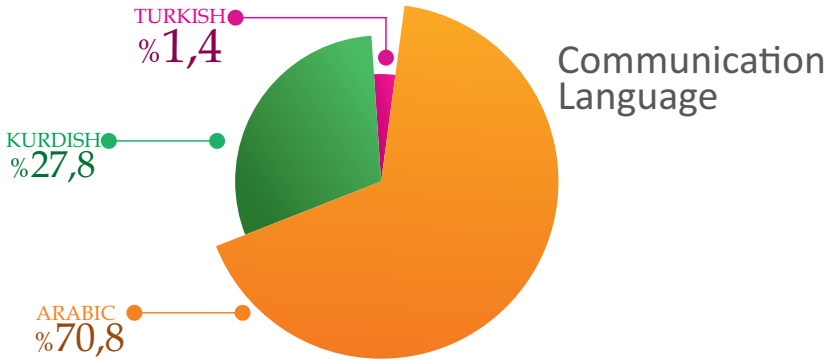


Figure 9: Daily Language Use of Parents Participating in the Research.

The Education of the Children Under Temporary Protection

While the children of some of the parents who participated in the survey (14.8%) never enrolled in school, the children of the majority (85.2%) started school but later left for various reasons. The participants of the survey reported that language problem experienced by children, economic difficulties of the family, exclusion, marginalization, problems during the course of COVID-19 Pandemic and cultural differences are obstacles to children's education. 67.9% of parents are not aware that the minimum compulsory education period in Turkey is 12 years. Figure 10 displays their answers on compulsory education period.

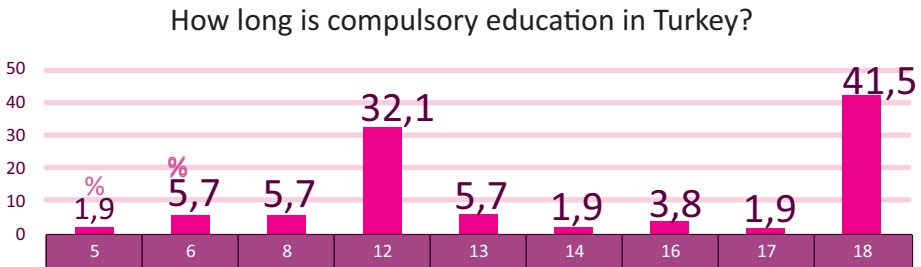


Figure 10: Statements of Parents Participating in the Research about the Compulsory Education Period in Turkey.

According to the data in Figure 10, only 32.1 percent of all participants correctly stated that compulsory education is 12 years. 41.5 percent of them considered compulsory education as 18 years.

While 93.7% of parents whose children do not attend school stated that they would like to send their children to school if the necessary conditions are met, 6.3% of the parents stated that they would not send their children to school under any circumstances. This situation shows that the majority of refugee families are willing to send their children to school. However, the 6.3% should not be underestimated, and the reasons why these families do not want to send their children to school should be revealed through in-depth interviews.

Main Barriers to Children's Access to Education

COVID-19 Pandemic

While COVID-19 pandemic caused worldwide economic depression; shrinkage, dismissals and closures were experienced in informal work areas (Yasin, 2020: 432). Considering that 99.1% of the respondents are working informally, it is understood that these groups are most affected by the economic effects of this pandemic. 54% of the parents stated that their children dropped out of school due to problems which they experienced during the pandemic. It has been observed that refugee children are out of school due to being unable to have the necessary electronic devices for the distance learning system implemented by the Ministry of Education in response to the pandemic, not having sufficient internet connection and ignorance about the subject. Figure 11 shows the information on out-of-school children in relation to the pandemic.

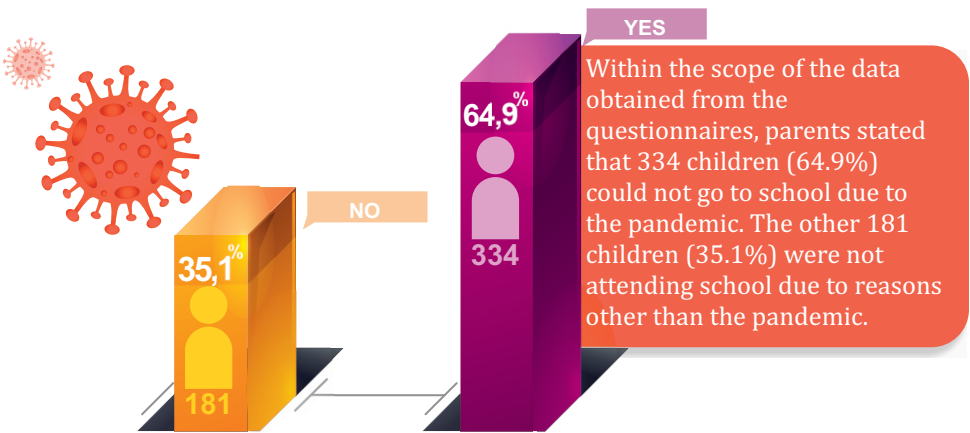


Figure 11: Number of Children who are out of School because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

One of the most significant effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic is that children, who spend all their time at home as a result of the closure of schools, have regressed in their ability to communicate in Turkish language as they speak with their families in their mother tongues either in Arabic or Kurdish at home. Because of this, it can be predicted that refugee children who are out of school during the COVID-19 Pandemic would most likely have serious adaptation problems when they return to school and would likely drop out of school completely.

Economic Difficulties

In a study on the reasons why refugee children are not enrolling in school or leaving school, economic reasons are at the forefront (Emin, 2019). In this study it has been determined that families with limited financial means do not or could not send their children to school, thinking that they should work. This is because families cannot afford the expenses needed to send their children to school such as the amount to purchase stationery, school uniforms, devices, textbooks, etc., and that children are often expected to contribute to household income. Male children are, in particular, in a more disadvantaged position in this context.

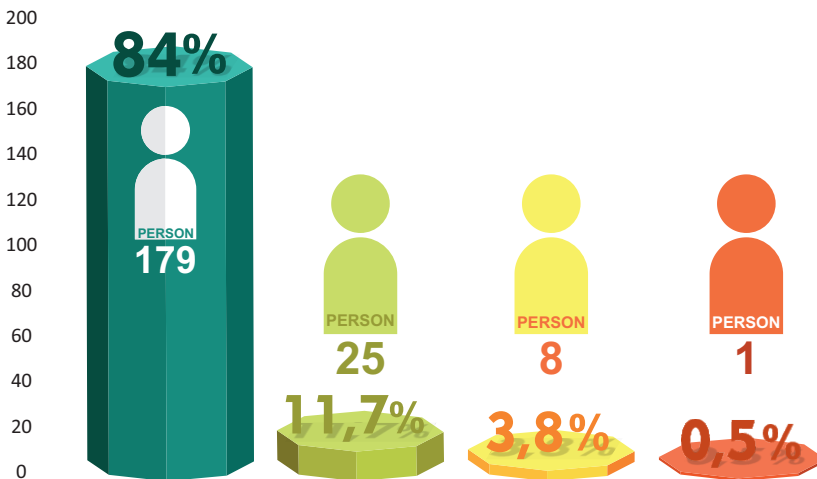


Figure 12: Number of Income Earners in the Households of the Respondents.

The distribution of the answers in response to the question is shown in Figure 12. A majority of the participants (n=179 or 84%) answered that one person brings income in their household, while 25 respondents (11.7%) have two working family members and 8 of the respondent families (3.8%) have three. Only one participant (0.5%) had four people generating income for their household. Table 5 displays information on comparison of the number of income earners and people living in the household.

		How many people are working in an income generating job in your household?					Total	
		0	1	2	3	3		
How many people in total live in the household?	3	N	0	1	0	0	0	1
		%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	4	N	0	11	0	0	0	11
		%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	5	N	1	18	2	2	0	23
		%	4.3%	78.3%	8.7%	8.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	6	N	0	37	2	0	0	39
		%	0.0%	94.9%	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	7	N	0	48	13	2	0	63
		%	0.0%	76.2%	20.6%	3.2%	0.0%	100.0%
8 and more	N	0	63	8	4	1	76	
	%	0.0%	82.9%	10.5%	5.3%	1.3%	100.0%	
Total	N	1	178	25	8	1	213	
	%	0.5%	83.6%	11.7%	3.8%	0.5%	100%	

Table 5: Comparison of the Number of Income Earners Living and People in the Household

In terms of economic barriers to education, the study finds that, on average, 6 to 7 people live in each household, while, in the majority of households, only one person works to provide income for all family members. Almost all these employees work informally and without social security. Considering that half of these individuals have a monthly income of less than 1000 TL (Figure 4), it is clear that they face financial difficulties. It is evident that economic inadequacies are reflected both in many areas of the family's life and in the lives of children.

In order to cover expenses related to basic needs, families do not send their children to school, saving the money they would use for school-related costs. Families also rely on children to work and generate income. Therefore, in order to sustain their daily life and support their families, children work in the same informal and unsecure jobs as their parents, making them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

The distribution of the answers provided by the respondents to the question, “How many uninsured (unregistered) workers are there in your household?” is given in Figure 13.

125 of the participants (59.2%) answered that 1 uninsured person works in the household, 17 respondents (8.1%) answered 2, the number of participants who answered 3 was 7 (3.3%), and the number of participants who answered 4 was 1 (0.5%). The number of participants who answered that there is no one working in the family is 61 (28.9%).

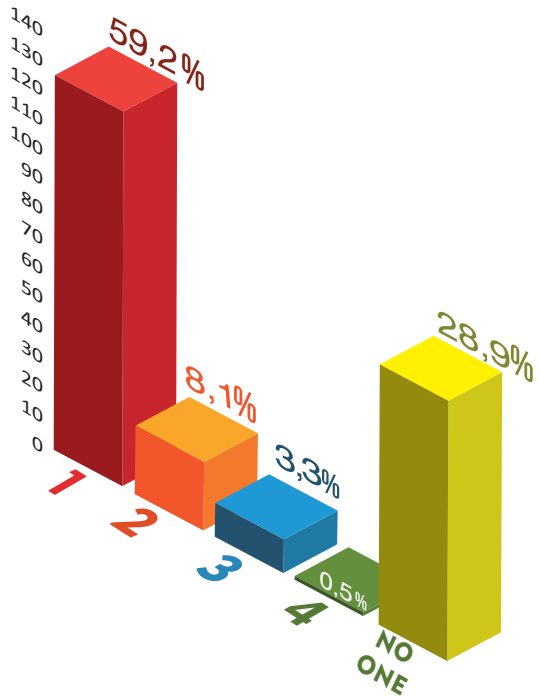


Figure 13: Workers uninsured (unregistered) workers

Refugee families' awareness of the ESSN program has helped alleviate their suffering from economic difficulty. Most of the families stated that they did not receive support from other institutions, associations, organizations, nor from their relatives, and that they have relied upon the benefits they receive from the ESSN program.

Child Labor

The expectation of parents that their children have to contribute to their household income is among the primary factor that leads school-age children to seek jobs. This study has observed that a substantial proportion of children (16.9%) were working. When the school attendance of a working child is jeopardized, his success at school drops significantly (Child Labor and Education Teacher's Handbook, n.d.). Obligating children to work to financially contribute to their family's income is one of the main obstacles to education. Some families stated that their children had to work to cover their school expenses. However, this situation requires children to both work and study at the same time and it does put a lot of pressure on them.

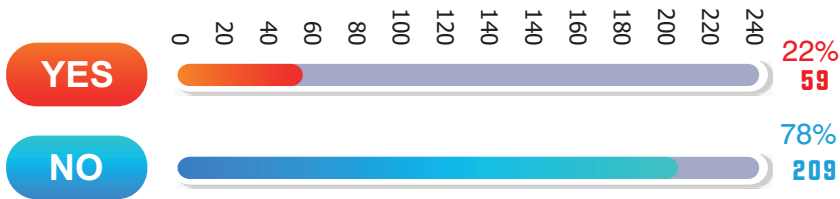


Figure 14: The situation of boys who cannot go to school because they must work.

As seen in Figure 14, 22% of the parents (n=59) stated that their boys could not go to school because they had to work, while 78% (n=209) stated that their boys did not have to work.

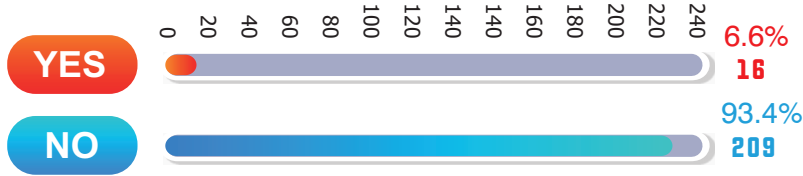


Figure 15: The situation of girls who cannot go to school because they must work.

As seen in Figure 15, considering the data on girls who cannot go to school because they must work, from the responses of their parents, 6.6% of the girls (n=16) could not go to school because they had to work, and 93.4% of them (n=226) did not have to work.

Refugee children, who have to work in order to financially contribute to their families, are also in a decisive position in Turkey's employment market. In particular, a crowded household means that more than one child works. Their age and gender play a decisive role in the kind of work that they would get. Being a male and being an older child imply that one would most likely be obligated to work (Gül, et al., 2019: 936).

The closure of four refugee shelter centers in Şanlıurfa in 2018 led to the relocation of refugees to various provinces. Among them are high school students whose preferences are to work outside the provinces where they have been resettled. For this reason, the number of high school students has also decreased. As of 2021, there are 6,530 registered high school students in Şanlıurfa³. This number is quite low compared to the high school age population. With the sudden increase in university fees for Syrian refugees in 2021, decrease in university enrollments is also expected to be reflected in number of high school level registrations.

³This information was obtained from the presentation made by the representative of Şanlıurfa Directorate of National Education at the Migration Board Meeting held in Şanlıurfa on October 5, 2021.

Future Intentions

All these limited economic opportunities cause refugee families to worry about their future and lead them to reduce their expectations. 74.5% of the participants stated that they were hopeless about the future, while 28.7% thought that they did not have a future. This state of despair turns into a serious obstacle to integration with the local society. Figure 16 and 17 display information on refugees' anxieties and expectations about their future.

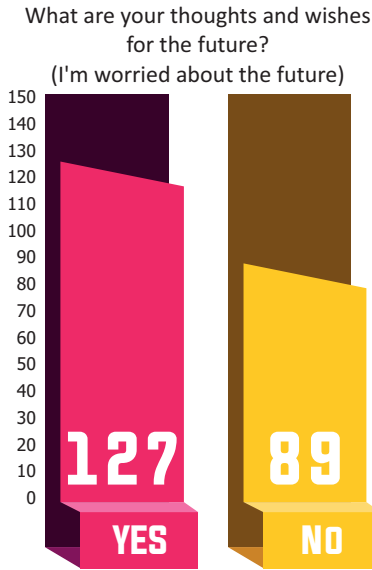


Figure 16: Future Anxiety

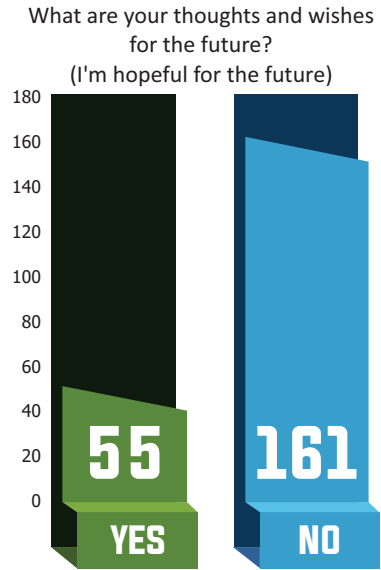


Figure 17: Future Hopefulness

Table 6 and 7 display information on refugee families' degree of anxiety and degree of hopefulness about the future in each district.

I am worried about the future			
DISTRICTS	YES	NO	TOTAL
Akçakale	58 / 64.4%	32 / 35.6%	90 / 100.0%
Ceylanpınar	9 / 37.5%	15 / 62.5%	24 / 100.0%
Harran	23 / 76.7%	7 / 23.3%	30 / 100.0%
Suruç	37 / 51.4%	35 / 48.6%	72 / 100.0%
TOTAL	127 / 58.8%	89 / 41.2%	216 / 100.0%

Table 6: Refugee Families' degree of anxiety about the future in each district

I am hopeful.			
DISTRICTS	YES	NO	TOTAL
Akçakale	20 / 22.2%	70 / 77.8%	90 / 100.0%
Ceylanpınar	8 / 33.3%	16 / 66.7%	24 / 100.0%
Harran	3 / 10.0%	27 / 90.0%	30 / 100.0%
Suruç	26 / 36.1%	46 / 63.9%	72 / 100.0%
TOTAL	57 / 26.4%	159 / 73.6%	216 / 100.0%

Table 7: Refugee Families' Degree of Hopefulness in Each District.

Language Barrier

Children with low level of Turkish language proficiency reported that they did not want to go to school because they failed in their lessons, and this has affected their confidence and motivation. It has been noted that even though children move to the upper classes, they still have learning difficulty in reading and writing in Turkish. Older children in particular feel excluded in the classroom because they fall behind in reading, writing, and speaking, and they often drop out of school because they cannot communicate with their peers and with the staff of the school.

During the interviews, it was observed that most of the children significantly lost the language skills they gained at school as they were confined in their homes during the lockdowns implemented to counter the COVID-19 Pandemic. Interviewers observed that many children, including 5th and 6th-grade students, had difficulty in understanding the questions and in expressing their answers in Turkish during the interviews. Figure 20 shows information on whether students experienced language barrier in accessing education.

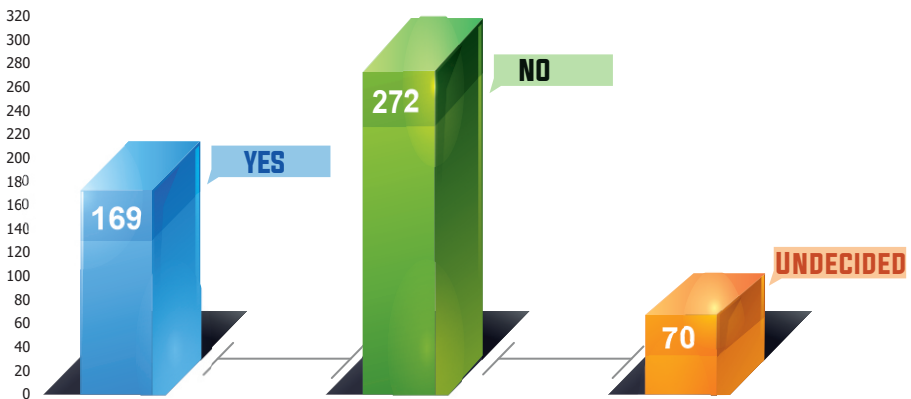


Figure 20: Difficulty in Enrolling Children in School due to Language

Turkish language skills also affect families' ability to successfully register their children in schools, as they must communicate with the school administration and teachers in Turkish. In this context, the parents of 169 children (33.1%) stated that their child had difficulty in enrolling in school due to language barrier, while the parents of 272 children (53.2%) stated that they did not have any difficulties in terms of language. A minority of parents (n=70 or 13.7% of respondents) were uncertain on this issue. In the surveys, it has been observed that some of the parents were not inclined to send their children to school because the language of education is Turkish. This could mean that these parents don't want their children to forget their mother tongue or they think their children would have difficulty understanding their teachers and would not benefit from their lessons.

Cultural Differences

Although Syrians and Turks have many similarities in terms of ethnic identity and culture, they also have some critical cultural differences. Though prevalence of conflicts due to cultural differences is not very high, few instances were reflected in the results of the survey. There were families who stated that their children dropped out of school due to cultural conflicts. Girls are more disadvantaged than boys in terms of cultural differences.

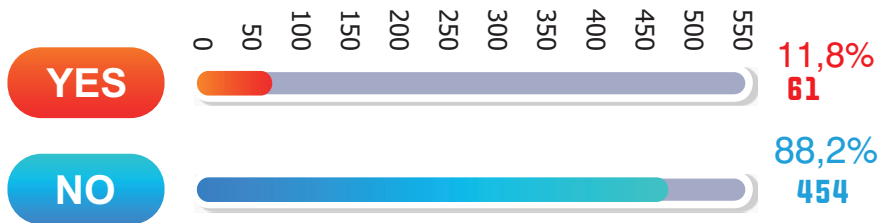


Figure 21: The number of refugee children who left their schools due to having difficulty in getting along with their friends because of cultural differences.

Figure 21 displays information on refugees having difficulty in getting along

It seems that most of the respondents think that there was not much cultural problems in terms of friendship, despite the fact that some were observed to have problems in communicating with their friends. The distribution of children who dropped out of school because of cultural differences and difficulties in getting along with their friends is given in Table 8. While the parents of 61 children (11.8%) stated that their child had difficulties, the parents of 454 children (88.2%) answered that their children did not have any difficulties.

My child had a hard time getting along with friends because of cultural differences.			
GENDER	YES	NO	TOTAL
BOY	29 / 10.8%	240 / 89.2%	269 / 100.0%
GIRL	32 / 13.1%	213 / 86.9%	245 / 100.0%
TOTAL	61 / 11.8%	454 / 87.5%	519 / 100.0%

Table 8: Gender and Cultural Differences

Mixing girls and boys in the same class, language differences and identity problems brought by migration are among the cultural differences which the participants reported. Both groups have mentioned having some problems in getting along with friends because of cultural differences. However, such reported cases were not significantly high. The effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic and economic difficulty may have triggered the actual manifestation of cultural differences. Most of the parents stated that they have not been exposed to exclusion and discrimination by the school management or by their friends.

Physical Disability

Access to educational institutions is more difficult for children who need special education or who have special needs due to their physical disability. In our study, though they are very few in numbers as indicated in Figure 26, it has been observed that disability is an obstacle to the education of children. This is due to the lack of special education centers in the region, and the existing educational institutions are not equipped to meet the needs of students with disabilities. In addition to this, the complexity of some bureaucratic processes and the poor perception of parents about their children's right to education extremely reduce the possibility of providing a better school life for refugee children with disabilities.

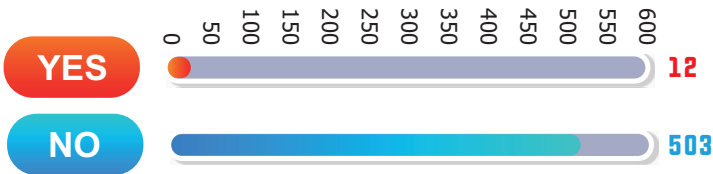


Figure 23: The number of children who cannot go to school because of their

Considering the situation of children who could not go to school due to their disabilities, as seen in Figure 26, parents reported that 12 children (2.3%) could not go to school due to their disabilities. Figure 27 specified how many of these 12 students could have gone to school despite their disabilities.



Figure 24: Children with disabilities who cannot go to school due to the physical conditions of the school.

Nine children (75%) cannot go to school due to unsuitable physical conditions for children with disabilities. The parents of three children (25%) stated that the physical conditions of the school did not prevent them from going to school. The rest of the responses are shown in the Figure 28 below.

Reasons for not enrolling in school (for children with disabilities)	YES	NO
The school administration refuses to enroll children with disabilities	2	10
The physical conditions of the school are not suitable for children with disabilities	3	9
I am not aware of the educational opportunities available to children with disabilities	3	9
I think there are no formal educational opportunities for my child with a disability	3	9
I don't know how to enroll my child who has disability in school	3	9
Schools charge fees for enrollment of children with disabilities	0	12
Because the school administration refused to enroll my child with a disability	1	11
School is not accessible for my child who has physical disability	4	8
School is not useful and sufficient for the education of my child with disability.	3	9
My child with a disability is being bullied at school	2	10
There is no special education center suitable for my child	5	7
Because we could not get a health report for my child with a disability	2	10
Since we could not go to the RAM to have an educational evaluation.	2	10
Child must enroll in rehabilitation center but family cannot afford it	5	7

Table 9: Why don't your children with disabilities go to school?

Table 9 gives an idea about why children with disabilities are away from school.

School Enrollment and Official Procedures

Parents stated that they had various problems during the enrollment process of their children. Language problem, relations with the school administration and the deficiencies in the perception of the right to education are among the most reported issues. In general, the parents stated that they did not have any problems with the school administration and official authorities making things easier, but they had communication problems due to language differences.

This is a problem arising from the lack of interpreters in schools or the inability of refugee family members to learn Turkish. Due to the parents' inability to communicate in Turkish, difficulties in the registration of students as well as in other official procedures after registration, inability to deal with students' lessons, not being able to follow up homework, and other issues may occur. This causes problems on school-family cooperation and stands as a main obstacle to the education of refugee children.

Figure 25 shows the ratio of negative attitudes of school administrators during enrollment of children.

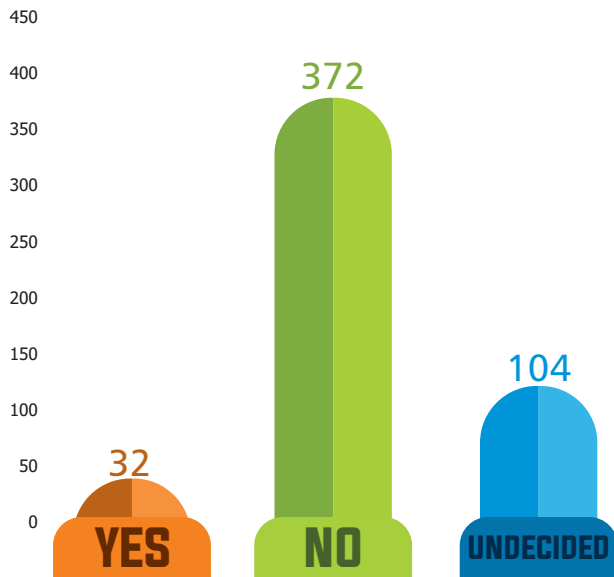


Figure 25: Negative attitudes of school administrators during enrollment of children.

The distribution of responses stating, “During the enrollment process at school, the school administration did not want to enroll my child in that school.” is given in the table above. Accordingly, parents declared that 32 children (6.3%) did not want to be admitted to the school by the school administration. No negative attitude was encountered in the enrollment of 372 children (73.2%). The parents of 104 children (20.5%) could not make a definite assessment regarding the enrollment process.

Gender Factor

While school attendances of girls and boys are almost equal, it has been revealed that this situation is a negative consequence of migration. It was observed that among refugee children, most boys do not go to school.

Due to economic problems, it has been observed that instead of going to school, boys are employed in order to help the family with their livelihood. This is also the case for girls, although the number of girls who work are fewer than number of boys. In particular, adults who lost their jobs during the course of the pandemic were replaced by children who were seen as cheap labor.

Unlike the reason as to why most boys are unable to study, the geographical distance between school and home, and transportation difficulties (3.9%) are reasons to impede girls from being sent to school. This may be because of their families' view that in their culture when girls reach a certain age, they do not want them to travel in far distances alone. This protective inclination of their parents appear as a barrier for girls to access education. Normally, enrollment of students is made at the school that is closest to their residence through the Address Based Registration System.

The decision to allow students to enroll in schools far from their home addresses can be considered as an indication that there is not enough schools in the region where they live. Another reason for not sending girls to school is the negative attitudes of families towards their education solely because of their gender. 7.9% of the participants expressed their point of view by answering a question with "girls do not need to study (school)".

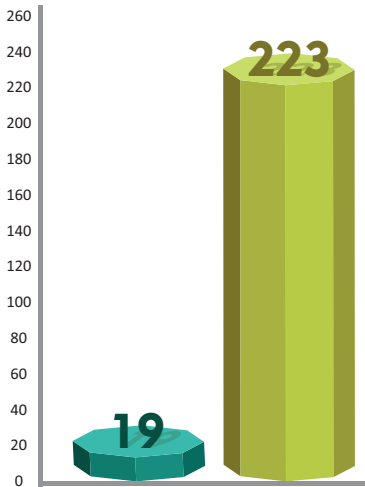


Figure 26 displays the information on girls who are not sent to school because of their parents' opinion that "Girls do not need to study".

It is seen that there is a gender-based segregation in terms of problems in accessing educational institutions. The number of male pupils are fewer than the number of female pupils. While the main reason for boys not attending school is economic factor, it is economic and cultural factors that hinder girls from being enrolled.

Figure 26: Girls who are not sent to school because "Girls do not need to study".

Trauma and other MHPSS Barriers

A significant number of children, who cannot attend school, experience psychosocial distress. This is mostly due to post-war trauma. One of the obstacles standing in the way of education is that Syrian children and their families exhibit behaviors as a result of their exposures to violent environment. In the survey, 19% of children (n=98) experienced psychosocial distress as seen in Figure 27.

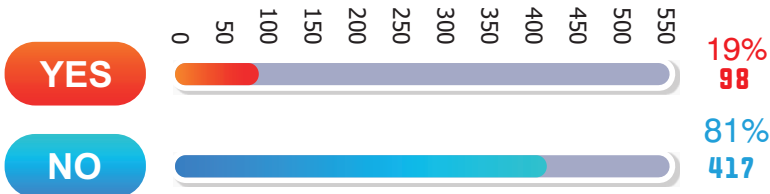


Figure 27: Do you observe any symptoms of psychosocial distress in your school-age, out-of-school child?

Parents state that they observe symptoms of psychosocial distress mostly exhibited by their children who do not continue their education. In this sense, the opinions of the parents are very important as they reflect the real situation. These symptoms appear as loneliness, inability to make friends, lack of confidence, and distraction. In addition to these, it is possible to observe other symptoms. Table 10 gives the list of reported psychosocial distress symptoms.

Symptom	Number of Children
Loneliness	80
Depressive	46
Introversion	37
Aggression	41
Low self esteem	29
Fighting regularly	41
Lying	43
Distracted and overactive child	21
Leaving the things or activities they started without finishing	19
Lack of trust	28
Not being able to share nor support others	30
Could not make friends	27
anxiety about the future or anticipatory anxiety	56

Table 10: Psychosocial Distress Symptoms

Table 10 shows a number of symptoms from loneliness to anxiety about the future. These have negative impacts on students' life. The manifestation of these symptoms can be overcome if refugee children are enrolled as full-time students in schools with inclusive education and responsible teachers.

BARRIERS TO EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CHILDREN UNDER TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Within the scope of this study, interviews were also conducted with children using qualitative research methods. Through this approach, data obtained from the survey with the parents and the data obtained from the interview with the children were compared.

a) Socio-Demographical Characteristics

The ages of the children participating in the study ranged from 7 to 17. One of the primary school-aged children said that he did not know his age. Thirty-nine of the children included in the study were boys and 21 were girls. Table 11 displays age and gender distribution.

AGE	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Unknown	TOTAL
BOY	8	0	0	6	5	8	4	2	1	2	2	1	39
GIRL	1	4	2	4	4	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	21
TOTAL	9	4	2	10	9	11	4	3	1	3	3	1	60

Table 11: Age and Gender Distribution

The interviewed children generally belong to families with many children. Only one of the children has no siblings, four have one sibling, and seven have two siblings. Forty-seven of the children stated that they have 4 to 12 siblings. Half of the families (31) have five or six children. One child stated that he does not know how many siblings he has. Table 12 shows the number of siblings

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	12	Unknown	TOTAL
f	1	4	7	6	20	11	4	2	2	1	1	1	60

Table 12: Number of Siblings

Length of Stay or Duration of Residency in Şanlıurfa	f
1	1
2	4
3	4
4	2
5	2
6	7
7	16
8	10
9	5
10	4
Does Not Know	1
Born here	1
Unanswered	3
TOTAL	60

Table 13 below gives information on the duration of residency in Şanlıurfa. Three children did not answer the question about how long they have been living in the district where they reside. One child stated that he did not know at all. Another 7-year-old child stated that he was born in the area where his family lives. 13 children stated that it was between 1 and 5 years. 42 of them stated that it was between 6 and 10 years.

Friend Preferences	f
Syrian	10
Turkish	4
from both Communities	34
Unanswered	12
TOTAL	60

Table 13: Length of Residency in Şanlıurfa

Table 14: Friendship preferences

Table 14 shows the friendship preferences of refugee children. When asked about the ethnic identity of their friends, 12 of the children did not answer, 4 of them stated that they only made friends with those from Turkey, and 10 of them stated that they only made friends with those who were Syrians. 34 of the children stated that they had friends from both communities, the majority of them explained this relationship is made through "good agreement" and "loving each other". Considering their friendship preferences, it is thought that a sense of closeness and social cohesion began to occur among children from these two communities.

Knowledge of Turkish	f
Little	20
Midlevel	2
I know	25
I do not know	13
TOTAL	60

Table 15 shows information on the refugee children's level of Turkish proficiency. When asked whether they knew Turkish, the children provided varied responses as “little”, “midlevel”, “I know” or “I do not know”. 22 out of 60 children described the level of knowing Turkish as low or midlevel. 25 children gave the answer I know. 13 children stated that they did not know any Turkish.

Table 15: Knowledge of Turkish

When those children who reported knowing some levels of Turkish were asked how they learned the language, Table 16 enumerates their different responses. The majority (36) said they learned in school. Three children reported learning from their workplace, neighbors, or from watching television shows. Six children learned Turkish at the shelter centers for refugees.

Means of learning Turkish	f
from my mother	1
from my friends	1
from work and school	1
from shelter center	6
from neighbors and school	1
from school	33
from TV and school	1
TOTAL	44

Table 16: How Refugee Children learnt Turkish

Table 17 shows School Attendance Status. Of the 14 children who were interviewed, 7 boys and 7 girls. They stated that they were enrolled in schools. While 5 children, 3 boys and 2 girls, stated that they had never been to school before.

32 children, 21 boys and 11 girls, stated that they had gone to school before, but not at the moment. 8 boys and 1 girl preferred not to answer the question asked on whether they went to school. However, 12 of these 14 children could not follow their lessons because they did not have educational materials to follow distance education during the course of the pandemic. The other 2 children attending school also stated that they could not follow their lessons regularly during the pandemic. In a research conducted by the Turkish Red Crescent Community Center (2021: 4) with the participation of 385 refugee children, it was determined that 69% of these children who could not attend school in 2020 because of the lack of educational materials such as internet and technological devices. The high number of school-age children in families without the necessary technological devices nor internet access is another factor that causes disruption in education. “We have only one phone, but we are 5 siblings. If I enter, they cannot enter, if they enter, I cannot enter” (D55, Suruç, 13, B). D55 implied that he could not continue his education regularly during the pandemic. The high number of children in families and the lack of educational materials hindered the education of children who continued their education during the course of the pandemic, and this would increase the possibility that they may leave school after the pandemic.

School Attendance Status	GENDER		TOTAL
	BOY	GIRL	
Enrolled in school	7	7	14
Have gone to school before	21	11	32
Have never gone to school	3	2	5
Unanswered	8	1	9
TOTAL	39	21	60

Table 17: School Attendance Status

When they were asked whether they have school-age siblings or relatives who go to school, 18 children who were not currently attending school stated that at least 1 of their siblings had gone to school. 2 children who said that they never went to school also mentioned that at least 1 of their siblings attended school. In this case, at least one child attends school in the majority of the families interviewed. This situation gives a clue that families are not reluctant to send their children to school.

Table 18 shows the relationship between language proficiency and school attendance.

School Attendance Status	Little	Midlevel	Knows	Does not know	Total
Enrolled in school	3	2	8	1	14
Have gone to school before	13	0	15	4	32
Have never gone to school	1	0	0	4	5
TOTAL	17	2	23	9	51

Table 18: The relationship between language proficiency and school attendance

When the relationship between language proficiency and school attendance is analyzed, it is seen that those who went to school before or those who are still attending school know little, medium or good level of Turkish. Only 1 of the children (D16, Akçakale, 11, B) who went to school said that he did not know Turkish. 1 child, who said that he knew Turkish very little, and 4 children, who said that they did not know at all, did not go to school.

Table 19 gives information on language spoken at home.

When asked in which language the children prefer to communicate with their families at home, 41 children stated that they only spoke Arabic at home, 12 children only spoke Kurdish, and 7 children said that they speak Turkish as well as Arabic at home. Three children, who stated that they spoke both Arabic and Turkish at home,

Table 19: Language spoken at home

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME	f
ARABIC	41
ARABIC AND TURKISH	7
KURDISH	12
TOTAL	60

added that they spoke Arabic with their parents and Turkish with their siblings, since their parents did not speak Turkish. Learning the language of the society they live in usually takes place in schools in migrant communities (de Cillia, 2008: 3). Considering that Turkish is also the language of socialization in Turkey, there is a danger that interrupted education will harm the language development of children, causing them not to learn both their mother tongue and Turkish fully, and leaving them out of both societies.

Table 20 presents data on neighborhood friends who go to school.

Table 20: Neighborhood friends who go to school

Neighborhood friends who go to school	f
YES	34
NO	26
TOTAL	60

On the questions asked which were aimed to assess the situation of the other children in the neighborhood where the refugee children live, 34 of them stated that their friends in the neighborhood attend school, while 26 of them stated that their friends do not attend school. From these responses, it could be inferred that a significant number of children in their neighborhoods do not attend school. This could probably imply that there is a high number of out-of-school children in the target areas of this study. If dropping out of schools have become rampant and perceived as normal in these neighborhoods, it could discourage children who were interviewed in this research from returning to schools.

Table 21 gives information on working status according to age and gender of the sample population.

AGE	Gender	Currently Working	Used to Work	TOTAL
7	Boy	1	0	1
	Girl	0	0	0
8	Boy	0	0	0
	Girl	1	0	1
9	Boy	0	0	0
	Girl	0	1	1
11	Boy	2	1	3
	Girl	1	0	1
12	Boy	3	0	3
	Girl	2	0	2
13	Boy	1	0	1
	Girl	0	0	0
16	Boy	1	1	2
	Girl	0	0	0
17	Boy	0	2	2
	Girl	1	0	1
TOTAL		13	5	18

Table 21: Working status according to age and gender

Deduced from the interviews, 13 children, 8 boys and 5 girls, work in an income-generating job for various reasons. Two children aged 7 and 8, who were too young to work, say that they work. The age of the other children who stated that they were working ranged from 11 to 17. There are 5 children, 4 boys and 1 girl, used to work and are not currently working. Two boys, who stated that they had worked before, defined themselves as unemployed and stated that they were looking for a job. 42 children stated that they do not work in any income generating job.



Table 22 gives information on doing housework in the sample.

AGE	WORKING STATUS			
	Currently Working	Used to Work	Used to Work	TOTAL
7	1	0	8	9
8	0	0	3	3
9	0	1	0	1
10	0	0	6	6
11	3	1	5	9
12	5	0	4	9
13	1	0	2	3
14	0	0	2	2
15	0	0	1	1
16	1	0	1	2
17	1	2	0	3
Unknown	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	12	4	33	49

Table 22: The children doing housework

49 children stated that they helped their families with housework. 12 of the 13 children who stated that they are currently working also said that they helped their families with housework. 4 out of 5 children who stated that they had worked before also help their families with housework. 33 children who say they do housework do not work in any income generating job or have not worked in any jobs before. Children's participation in housework is often regarded as a positive situation for children's personal development (Child Labor A textbook for University Students, 2004: 16). However, considering the age of these children and the fact that they work in jobs that generate income for their families, it could be said that these children are being exposed to violence by their own parents, albeit unknowingly.

Apart from this, when we look at the work that children do at home, it is understood that they do small tasks, such as helping their parents and siblings, which will have a positive effect on their development. However, some children assume responsibilities of adults at home. "I do the housework, I cook, I clean the house." (D29, Harran, 12, B), it is understood that they are responsible for the house, especially children whose mothers are sick, regardless of their age, and that they are faced with major responsibilities to maintain their homes and to take care of their younger siblings. D53 (Suruç, 7, B), who said "My mother slept here, she told me to cook meat and eggs for my siblings, so I did it." D53 assumed responsibility for his siblings when he was just 7 years old. The 13-year-old D55 has taken on household responsibilities in addition to patient care. "My mother is sick, I cook for her, I do the cleaning." (D55, Suruç, 13, B).

Table 23 compares school attendance with working status.

School Attendance Status	Currently Working	Used to Work	Does not work	TOTAL
Enrolled in school	4	2	8	14
Went to school before	8	2	22	32
Never gone	1	0	4	5
TOTAL	13	4	34	51

Table 23: Comparison of school attendance and working status

4 of the 13 working children are enrolled in school, and 8 have gone to school however they are not currently enrolled in school, and 1 has never been to school. When questioned what kind of jobs the working children had, it was determined that 3 children worked as construction workers, 2 as agricultural workers and 1 as a porter. These tasks, which are heavy even for most adults, are performed by young children. Working as an agricultural worker, D2 (Akçakale, 12, G) states that she goes to work at 4:00 in the morning and returns at 18:00 and her job is very difficult.

One of the other children who stated that they were working was a translator, 2 of them was working in their family's shop, and the other working children stated that they worked as a courier, tailor and cleaner in shops. When asked about the wages that children receive for their work, it has been assessed that they work for very low wages such as 600 TL per month (D3, Akçakale, 16, B), 10 TL per week (D14, Akçakale, 12, B), 5 TL per day (D51, Suruç, 11, B). Children working in construction earn more money than the other children. But even in this case, they earn less than a construction worker. D1 (Akçakale, 13, B) working in construction earns 20 TL per day, D49 (Suruç, 9, B) earns 100 TL per week, and D13 (Akçakale, 17, B) earns 35 TL per week. As the age of children working in construction increases, their wages also increase. However, none of them get the same amount which adult workers usually receive.

Table 24 gives information on working status of neighborhood friends

Working status of neighborhood friends	f
Currently Working	21
Does not Work	39
TOTAL	60

Table 24: Working status of neighborhood friends



When looking at the working status of their friends living in the same neighborhood, 21 of the interviewed children said that their friends are working. 39 children stated that their neighborhood friends do not work. With the expression of D1 (Akçakale, 13, B) "They go to school and then they go to work." He says that children in their neighborhood both study and work.

Daily Activities of Children Under Temporary Protection

While working children spend most of their daily lives at work (12-14 hours), all other children, who either go to school or not, spend their time at home during the pandemic. Children who help their families while they are at home play games with their friends in the neighborhood during the day. They stated that they played online games with their friends as well as physical games such as jumping rope, playing ball, and riding a bicycle. It has been observed that the online war game called "PUBG" is widely played among children. Considering their age, they prefer a game that may negatively affect their development. In the remaining free time, they state that they either watch TV or play games on their cellphones at home. 5 of these children attend the Qur'an Course. One of them who stated that he went to a Qur'an Course said that he was enrolled in school. The other child said that he had never gone to school. Two children said that they went to school before but did not go to school at that moment, and one child did not say whether he went to school or not.



School Attendance Status

School, which is defined by children as the place where they go to "learn to read and write", "learn", "learn Turkish", "play", "have a job", "feel good", "be happy and safe", appears to be an inaccessible place for a significant number of children. When children were asked to describe their dream school, most children described simple school buildings. When D30 (Ceylanpınar, 11, G) is asked to describe her dream school, she answered "just a normal school is

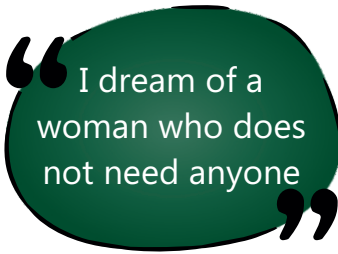


enough." On the other hand, a child who lacks educational materials described her dream school as "a place where books and notebooks are complete and lessons are good" (D27, Harran, 9, G). D22 (Harran, 7, B), who has never been to school before, answered "I don't go, so I don't know".

Picture 1:
A picture of the dream
school of a 10-year-old girl,
living in Akçakale.



Out-of-school children expressed during the interviews that if they went to school, their life would change positively, everything would be better, they would have a job, they would be able buy anything they wanted. These represent their understanding of the benefits that would gain through having a good education. When asked about their dreams, children who wanted to become doctors, engineers, teachers, policemen, and firefighter, are aware that they can achieve becoming one through education. "If I could go to school now, I could easily have a job in the future. I could have been a teacher" (D49, Suruç, 9, G).



I dream of a woman who does not need anyone

"I dream of a woman who does not need anyone" (D56, Suruç, 16,G). Considering these expressions, they understood that they can change their lives through their schools by having the opportunity learn within a conducive environment. D59 (Suruç, 12, B), who did not say whether he went to school and who does not speak Turkish, stated that he had no dreams and expected nothing. Some of these out-of-school children have expressed serious hopelessness. These children often used expressions such as "I don't want" and "I don't expect anything." As a result of the aimlessness caused by not going to school or not being able to go to school, hopelessness prevails in their expectations and dreams for the future. Expressions such as "I'm sorry," "I feel bad," and "I'm bored" are often repeated. Most of the children who do not go to school describe their situations as being in a state of deficiency and unhappiness.

The Reasons for not Going to School

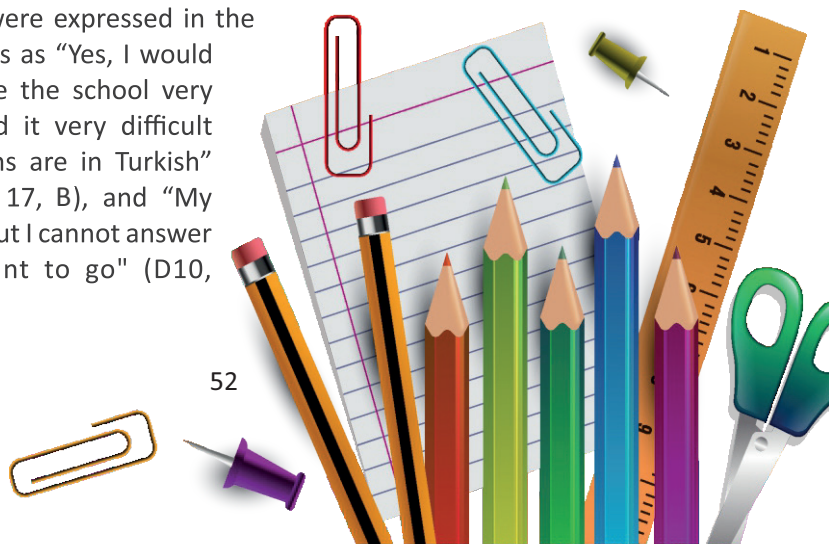
Being a term that originated from Western languages, 'school' means leisure and entertainment in Greek (Giddens, 2012: 427). School appeals to people who have time to go to school. Children of families with lower socio-economic status sometimes have to work to support their families instead of going to school. D48 (Suruç, 12,G) stated that "It will be better if I go to school. But now I am working." For her, earning a livelihood comes first before going to school.

Economic factor pertinent to financial needs of their families is the primary reason as to why these children are unable to go to school. In particular, the lack of educational materials constitutes a major obstacle to access education.



They had to leave school because they could not meet their material needs such as pencils and notebooks which are necessary for education at the simplest level. Statements such as “I need glue and scissors. There are books, I just want notebooks” (D20, Akçakale, 11, G) are frequently repeated by these children. 7-year-old D53 (Suruç, B) expresses that “I would go to school if there were a notebook and a pen”. However, he later complains that “everything was needed, paint, pencil, book”. And 8-year-old D6 (Akçakale, Unknown, G) said that “I just need a pencil, eraser, pencil sharpener and notebook to go to school.” For many children, they thought that when these needs are met, their being out of school would be resolved. The need for technological tools and internet access, especially during the pandemic period, has exacerbated the problem on the lack of basic educational materials. 12 out of 14 children enrolled in school have never participated in distance learning. Only 2 of them were able to participate in an irregular manner. This seems to be an issue that will probably cause children who currently in schools to dropout after the pandemic period. 11-year-old D16 (Akçakale, B) draws attention to a different dimension of the previously mentioned economic factors by stating that he does not want to go to school because he cannot afford to eat at school.

The second most important reason for not going to school is the language barrier. Children say that they cannot understand their teachers because they do not know Turkish, so they do not want to go to school. These language-related problems were expressed in the children's responses as “Yes, I would like to go. We love the school very much, but we find it very difficult because the lessons are in Turkish” (D42, Ceylanpınar, 17, B), and “My teacher is talking, but I cannot answer him. I do not want to go” (D10, Akçakale, 7, B).



These are statements which can be used as proof that refugee children do have difficulties in understanding their lessons.

The inability to have the command of the language causes children to have difficulties in their lessons and this leads them to drop out of school. D18 (Akçakale, 11, B) says that he does not want to go to school because the lessons are in Turkish, but he wants to go to school if the lessons are in Arabic. They do not want to go to school because their lack of knowledge of Turkish causes them to not understand what is being taught at school. One of the things that needs to be done to address the issue on school dropout is to solve the language problem of children as soon as possible.

Three of the participating children experienced various health problems. Because of their health problems and as a result of having inadequate assistive equipment for children with disabilities in school buildings, they cannot attend school. D60 (Suruç, 10, B), who had walking difficulty, went to school for 3 months before and then had to leave school because of health problems. According to his father, the child who was taken to a hospital in Adana and the doctors said that they could only operate on him when he reaches the age of 18. Considering that the schooling age of the child would have passed by the time a solution to his health problem is found, the adult life of a child who cannot read, nor speak Turkish will also be quite difficult. In addition to the impact of migration and having disability, lack of education will also put refugee children in a more disadvantageous position.

Cases of non-enrollment in schools due to school administrations' refusal to admit Syrian students in some instances have also been identified in our research. Three of the participating children stated that they could not go to school because school officials did not accept them. When asked why the school administration did not allow them to enroll, 2 of them said that they did not know, while 8-year-old D26 (Harran, G) gave the answer that she was too young to go to school. Students are enrolled and designated in particular schools based on the proximity of these schools to their home addresses via Turkey's Address Based Registration System.

In this process, so long as families provide the necessary documents required by the school, the enrollment process can be completed easily (Address Registration System Regulation, 2006).

It would appear that in those reported cases wherein Syrian children were not allowed to register, teachers and administrators may not have done their best effort to assist and properly meet the needs of those parents who wanted to enroll their children. They may have thought that the administrators did not want to register them because they could not properly communicate with them due to the insufficient Turkish language skills of their parents.

As identified in this research, there are also other incidences that have caused some children to drop out of school. Three of the children said that they did not want to go to school because they were exposed to racism. One expressed a sense of being stigmatized, saying “Because the teacher gets angry with me, he calls me Syrian, and whatever happens, he blames me immediately” (D55, Suruç, 13, B). This is a very problematic situation that causes the child to stay away from school.

Another reason why children do not want to go to school seems to be due to the authoritarian attitudes they are exposed to at school. This includes peer bullying and the harsh attitude perpetrated by the teachers of some of these children. D20 (Akçakale, 11,G), recounting the peer bullying she experienced, said “During our break time, my friends play in the shade, but they don't let me in the shade, I always stay in the sun.” She dropped out of school and does not want return.

Children who reported that they fought with Turkish children, on the grounds that they are Syrians, felt that school is not a safe place for them. “We don't go out during break time, when they come in, we go out. I complain to the teacher because they fight with us” (D58, Suruç, 10,G). She expressed the hardship she experienced at school. Although these are not rampantly reported and could be isolated cases, it undermines the reliability of school and causes children to alienate themselves from school. This is one of the issues that needs to be addressed.

The second case of problem at school is that which is perpetuated by teachers. Strictness by teachers in some schools have caused children to feel embarrassed and hopeless. Claiming that she was subjected to authoritarian attitude by her teacher, D46 (Suruç, 10,G) said that “When the teachers asked us something, they got angry if we didn't know. I wouldn't say anything and I wouldn't want anything.” That means she has withdrawn herself at school because of the attitude she has suffered from her teachers. D23 (Harran, 7, B), who had been subjected to strict attitude by his teachers and other students at school, did not include portrayals of teachers and other students in his drawings, rather he only drew a school building. When asked why there was no one in the school, he said that he did not draw anyone because his teachers were sometimes angry with him. Some of the children who experienced authoritarian attitude stated that their school was not a welcoming place, so they did not want to go to school.

Picture 2:

A picture of a 7-year-old boy's dream school, living in



Reasons such as the distance between the school and the place where they live, and the limited means of transportation are also among the obstacles that impede refugee children from regularly attending their lessons. Children in this situation had to drop out of school. D24 (Harran, 10, B) stated that because his family had to constantly move from one house to another in Şanlıurfa, he could not go to school. One of the statements made in the interviews was “Many people studied here, but it did not work, so it is not very important for me whether to go to school or not. But if I had the opportunity, I would go” (D8, Akçakale, 16, B). Statements like this represent the degree by which education is valued by the community where these children belong, and if a majority of the members of their community devalues education, it would mostly likely have negative impact on children’s attitude towards their education.

Expectations from School and Teachers

When asked about the expectations of children from school and teachers, some students said that they liked their teachers, they did everything they could, and they did not have any expectations. Some students listed their material or nonmaterial expectations.

Children with economic problems demanded educational materials such as notebooks and pens, while children with language problems stated that they wanted their teachers to speak more slowly, listen to them, value their ideas, and ask them if they understood the lesson. According to the study carried out by Unal et al. (2018: 142), Syrian refugees have difficulties in learning Turkish due to ineffective and inappropriate approach in teaching the language as such that often Turkish teachers would explain the subject too quickly and would not even correct the mistakes made by their students.

Children experienced learning difficulties as they could not understand their teachers and thus they could provide answers to their questions. In order to solve these, teachers should conduct lessons in a way that students can clearly understand and should take into account their learning styles and the pacing of how they deliver their lectures. Otherwise, children are alienated from school, and these children living in families that are already suffering from economic difficulties are forced to become child workers.

The fact that 6 of the 60 children interviewed said that they were subjected to an authoritarian attitude or harsh words by their teachers indicates that this is an issue that needs to be seriously addressed. Children who are exposed to authoritarian attitude from their teachers at school should be empowered by informing them of their rights and by providing them the means to complaint and report.

Effects of the Pandemic

Although COVID-19 Pandemic has affected everyone, it has more negative impact among disadvantaged groups. With the implementation of curfews and closures of businesses, the problem of unemployment among refugee families, most of whom work informally, has been further worsened. Some children stated that their families were unemployed during the pandemic, and therefore they experienced economic difficulties. 14 children enrolled in schools stated that they could not follow their lessons because they did not have the necessary technological equipment nor internet connection. D58 (Suruç, 10, G) describes the impact of the pandemic on her by saying “previously my lessons were good, now they are bad”. Studies (Çelik and Şahin, 2020: 596; Nerse, 2020: 11) show that the ability of parents and children to use technological tools is also effective in accessing education. It is obvious that parents, most of whom do not speak Turkish, cannot support their children's education during the pandemic. In addition to the mandatory online lessons that require internet connection during the closure of schools, the Ministry of National Education offered lessons over EBA (www.eba.gov.tr), an online education platform. However, many parents and their children could not follow the lessons because they did not have the necessary information. In research conducted by the Turkish Red Crescent Community Center (2021: 4) in 2020, it was reported that 46% of 385 refugee children interviewed could not access distance education because they were not aware or did not have sufficient information on how to access distance education.

Evaluation of Interview Findings

Interviews were conducted with 60 school-age children whose ages ranges from 7 to 17 years old in the 4 districts of Şanlıurfa; Akçakale, Ceylanpınar, Harran and Suruç. It was determined that 47 of the interviewed children lived in these districts for a period of 4 to 10 years. Although almost all of them spend most of their lives in Turkey, 13 of these children do not speak Turkish at all. Out of 47 children who stated that they knew Turkish at a low, midlevel, or good level, 36 of them said that they learned Turkish at school, and 6 said that they learned it in the shelter center for the refugees.



This signifies the fact that educational institutions have a significant contribution to language learning. Being away from school would not only undermine the nature of the work they will do in their future lives, but would also deter the quality of socialization that they will have because they do not know the language of the society in which they live. These children, who are educated through the Turkish National Education curriculum and are taught to read and write only in Turkish, are deemed to be actually illiterate in their own mother tongues even though they can speak their native languages. A deficiency arises when children who do not receive formal education in their mother tongues and cannot develop themselves in a second language need to work with abstract concepts (de Cillia, 2008: 4).

Refugee families are mostly at the bottom of the society in economic and social terms. This is because they are newcomers who would have to start from scratch in rebuilding their lives in a foreign land wherein they are financially strapped and have tendencies and perceptions of being socio-culturally alienated. Being in this situation forces some parents to encourage or to directly oblige their underage children to take inappropriate difficult jobs in order to provide additional income to their household, as in most of poor families (Avşar Kurnaz, 2007: 53). In the interviews, 13 children were working at very low wages as construction workers, agricultural workers, and porters, which are often heavy even for adults. While 5 children stated that they had worked before and are not working now, 2 of these children said that they had to look for a job instead of going to school. In some cases, children must drop out of school because they work. In some cases, even if they attend school, they cannot sufficiently benefit from their education (Child Labor and Education Teacher's Handbook, n.d.: 67).

By conducting thorough interviews with refugee children, this research has identified six main issues that have caused them to drop out of school.

➤ First among these is the economic factor. In Turkey, not providing the necessary materials at school, apart from the free textbooks, causes children to stay away from educational institutions. Especially during the pandemic, the fact that they did not have the necessary technological tools and internet connection to access and regularly follow distance education courses caused them to stay away from school.

➤ The language barrier also contributes to drop out rates, as these children do not have sufficient command of the Turkish language. All of them communicate with their families in their mother tongues at home. Seven of them use both Turkish and Arabic languages. This situation causes children to have problems in learning Turkish because their parents and other members of their families are unable to support them in understanding the lessons from their schools. Not knowing Turkish causes communication problems with their teachers. As they do not understand the lectures delivered in Turkish, they feel being or are actually alienated when they are in their classrooms. Another factor that contributes to this problem is that these districts are adjacent to the Syrian border, and people in these areas tend to have similar accents of Arabic, though there are great differences as well. So, they think they do not need to learn Turkish and the local Arabic accent is enough for them in daily transactions.

➤ Difficulties related to the pandemic also trigger children to drop out of school. Challenges like not having the educational materials to follow distance education or not having enough information about their lessons caused children to stay away from school.



➤ Children experience peer bullying from their fellow students, as well as verbally and emotionally authoritarian attitude by their teachers. Children dropped out of school on the grounds that they were discriminated, excluded, stigmatized and exposed to racism both by teachers and other Turkish students.

➤ Some children cannot go to school because school buildings do not have suitable facilities to cater for their needs related to disability and other health issues.








➤ Children also do not go to school because of challenges related to their transportation to their schools and their return to their homes. The lack of school buses, the cost of public transportation, and the unwillingness of parents to send their children to schools that are far away from their residences cause children to drop out of school.


RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS


As a result of both the survey conducted with the parents and the interviews with the children living in Şanlıurfa, it was revealed that there are significant barriers to the access of refugee children to education. These are economic, geographical, cultural, and psycho-social obstacles. All these reasons are closely related to each other. For example, the school absenteeism of refugee children is high because they have to spend their time working in informal jobs without social security and they need to do so in order to financially contribute their families, Their parents do not have sufficient income to meet the basic material needs for their education. Taking into account all these obstacles, children are forced to stay away from schools. Further, the COVID-19 Pandemic has seriously disrupted the education of refugee children. Though the inclination of children and parents towards education is high, but there are critical barriers that obstruct these children from having efficient access to education. In this context;


-  1 Refugee families should be strengthened economically in order to minimize the social and psychological effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
-  2 It has been revealed that especially high school students work in various jobs in order to contribute to the income of their family. In order to minimize this situation, employment studies should be carried out to support the economy of rural areas where parents can work with proper social security.




-  **3** The employment of refugee parents needs to be strengthened. This would help in improving social cohesion, and this would also remedy the financial constraints that refugee families have. As a consequence of assisting parents to find decent jobs, they would be more capable of sending their children to school. Thus, an increase in school enrollments.
-  **4** To resolve the issue on language barrier, Turkish language courses for adults and children should be carried out in cooperation with various public institutions.
-  **5** An inclusive education model should be implemented. This refers to a model in which refugee students spend the majority of their time alongside the local students. It is also necessary to ensure the inclusiveness of the education curriculum considering the situation of refugee students.
-  **6** In schools, there is a communication problem among refugee students and their parents with teachers and administrators. Interpreter support should be provided to schools in order to minimize the difficulties experienced in communication.
-  **7** For ensuring school attendance, regular monitoring of registered students can be done via the Ministry of Education's e-school (e-okul) system. Students who do not attend classes should be contacted and their reasons should be investigated. Through this approach, the issue on low school attendance can be resolved.
-  **8** New schools should be built in order to reduce the number of students in existing schools and to reduce the distance that refugee children need to travel from their homes to their schools.
-  **9** Volunteer educators should be supported to encourage children to go to school and to ensure proper adaptation after they start school. Volunteer educators can be defined as facilitators, such as Syrian teachers, who can help strengthen communication between students, teachers and parents, and ensure the school adaptation of children.

 10 It is necessary to carry out activities wherein Syrian and Turkish parents, teachers and school administrators can come together to socialize, to talk about issues pertinent to their children's education and to work together develop solutions. Communication gap among them should be minimized.

 11 The Turkish Government must implement necessary measures prevent child labor. Penalties can be imposed against companies who employ children. Providing financial support for children and tracking their school attendance should also be considered.

 12 Teachers should improve their teaching method in consideration of the actual needs of their students. There is a need to for teachers to develop alternative, innovative teaching approaches to further motivate their students to learn. Teachers also need to be informed and supported on what they can do to provide an inclusive education for refugee children.

 13 School buildings should be restructured in order to enable students with special needs to receive education.

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With the increase of internal turmoil and violence in Syria since 2011, millions of people have been forcibly displaced. The vast majority of displaced people sought refuge in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and in other countries bordering Syria. Turkey hosts the highest number of displaced people among these countries receiving mass migration. According to the laws that Turkey is a party to, Syrians living in Turkey are under temporary protection status. While this temporary protection status imposes specific responsibilities on asylum seekers, it also provides the right to benefit from education, health, and other public services. According to international laws, Turkey is obliged to provide migrants the same education received by Turkish citizens.

Şanlıurfa is a city that has the longest border with Syria. It is also among the provinces with the highest asylum seeker population. This is due to reasons such as the kinship ties between the people of Şanlıurfa and the provinces of Syria on the Turkish border, and the fact that Syrians continue to reside in these provinces after the closure of the shelter centers established in the provinces on the Syrian border during the first arrival of migrants. This research was carried out to analyze the barriers to the education of Syrian children under temporary protection status living in the districts and rural areas of Şanlıurfa province; Akçakale, Ceylanpınar, Harran and Suruç. The findings of the study are presented in two parts, one from the perspective of parents and the other from children.

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