

## Views of Teachers and Students on the Problems of Syrian Children in a Refugee School in Turkey

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to shed light on the situations of teachers and students and their perception of the atmosphere in a school where Turkish children were educated in the morning while Syrian refugee students were educated in the afternoon. In this study, the features of the school, and the scope of curriculum applied to Syrian children, and the problems within the education process were examined according to teachers' as well as to students' views. Interviews were conducted with 12 refugee students and 4 Syrian teachers at the school. It was found that teaching had not been the original job of most of the teachers who were teaching due to their economic difficulties. It was also ascertained that teachers had problems, especially with the curriculum as well as with teaching materials; their students had forgotten some part of what they had learned due to several years of gap in their education; and that most of these students carried with them the psychological effects of the war. Based on the results of the study, it is suggested that refugees' education be carried out along with the students of the hosting country, that the curricula be prepared according to their needs, and that teachers working at these schools be equipped with an acceptable level of teaching skills.

**Key words:** Education of Refugee Children, Educational Problems, Globalization, Human Rights and Education

### INTRODUCTION

The effects of immigration are not limited to individuals' geographic movement, but immigration urges individuals to form new social behavioral patterns within the societies where they immigrate. The obligation of people having different cultures and living together, due to immigration, could also result, from time to time, in problems reaching a dimension of nonconformity and conflict in the adaptation process. These problems confront us as obstacles standing in the way of intercultural communication. The adaptation problems rise from cultural differences, communication obstacles, and ways of overcoming these obstacles form societies receiving immigrants today. One of the most important problems in the international immigration phenomenon is the matter of people coming from different cultures living together, attempting to deal with differences and overcoming communication problems (Tunç, 2015). According to United Nations reports, 174.7 million people took part in international immigration movements, worldwide, during 2000, and approximately 15.8 million of these were refugees. Within immigration movements, the centers of the density were in North America and Western Europe. This is remarkable information about the direction, density and flow of immigration. Besides that, in 2002, for a period lasting at least 12 months, 185 million people had to live in a

country other than the one in which they were born (Castles & Miller, 2008). Even if there are differing reasons for immigration, Turkey today is faced with a very dramatic immigration situation due to the war in Syria.

The human tragedy brought out in the civil war in Syria resulted in millions of people's deaths and the need for millions of Syrian people to leave the places they lived. Since 2011, when the internal disorders started in Syria, Turkey has been flooded with many Syrian refugees. This situation brought out the "Syrian refugee issue", making itself felt throughout Turkey's entire social structure, from law to foreign policy, from security to health, from education to employment and from economy to culture. In the process Turkey's immigration policies were altered to become an "open door" and the status of Syrians became that of people under "Temporary Protection". Somewhat over 3 million Syrians suddenly became refugees in Turkey, according to official figures and Turkey has taken much of the responsibility throughout the refugee crisis. Therefore, a need for Syrian refugees to adapt to social life in Turkey was also vital. Two significant points, critical to enable adaptation to social life, were employment and education. Turkey took considerable steps in that they made arrangements to help with both the employment and the education of Syrians (Akgül, Kaptı & Demir, 2015; Coşkun & Emin, 2016). In order to provide quality education for Syrian school-aged refugee

children in Turkey and to increase the schooling rates, The Immigration and Emergency Education Department was founded, as part of the National Ministry of Education. Parallel to this, necessary work was initiated that Syrian refugee children might have healthier education after 2016.

Child and youth education were among the main issues affected by the conflicts in Syria. Asylum cases far exceeded the anticipated numbers and length of stay, increasing the importance of the need for education. It was observed that Turkey took on the education needs of Syrian refugees in the camps that were faced with this intense need in addition to their other various needs. However, outside the camps the condition that existed was the near-antithesis. According to data from The Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Presidency, 83% of Syrian children inside camps, but only 14% of the ones outside camps could attend school. Outside the camps, Syrian students, at a very high rate, were being deprived of education. This was in danger of causing serious and unpredictable results for children who had experienced the trauma of undesirable consequences of war and emigration. When Syrian refugees started to immigrate to Turkey in 2011, Turkey developed a policy assuming that immigrants would return within a short time. Yet, with the extension of this immigration period, in addition to this period being more complicated, involving uncertainty; increase in the numbers over and above the numbers which had been declared as “acceptable” by Turkey, more permanent and sustainable solutions were sought and initiated. In this regard, the education process of Syrian students was not planned as one of “diploma” and “graduation”, at the beginning, but, rather, was planned as one in which students might receive a diploma and graduate at a later date. While, initially, there had not been any significant studies regarding Syrians residing outside the camps, it can be observed that activities were initiated and significant decisions were made by the year 2013. Already, in 2012, a temporary solution, creating a special type of student status, valid for one year, enabled university education for Syrians, and an undergraduate, transfer opportunity was also enacted for those students, who could demonstrate they had been studying at university, and the legal step that abolished this one-year restriction was then made in 2013. Moreover, dorm and scholarship facilities were also supplied for Syrian university students (Seydi, 2014).

The most critical matter in the Syrians’ adaptation was clearly education. Syrian children in Turkey were educated in Temporary Education Centers (TEC) and state schools. Nearly half of Syrian youths, aged below 18 were in Turkey. On the other hand, the total number of Syrians at school age (5-18 years) was around 1 million people. At different grade and age levels, the rate of school attendance of Syrian students varies. The most intensive level of schooling was at primary education. The schooling rate was shown to decrease as levels got higher. The highest attendance was in the first grade with the 11th grade having the lowest numbers. There were two distinctive factors affecting school participation being lower at high school level: the first one was that boys needed to take jobs in order to provide economic

support for the family. The second was that, unfortunately, young high school-aged girls, were often pressured to marry. The first available options in Syrians’ education were Temporary Education Centers (TEC) which gave education in Arabic, based on Syrian the curriculum, by Syrian teachers. A total of 425 TECs were opened in Turkey. Since they used a Syrian curriculum and the courses were taught in Arabic, most of the staff teachers in the TECs were Syrian. The second, a more permanent education alternative for Syrians in Turkey, was the option of state schools belonging to Republic of Turkey, where the standard Turkish curriculum was applied and Turkish was the education language used. However, the number of Syrians educated in state schools was very low compared to TECs (Coşkun & Emin, 2016).

The role of the school in refugee children’s settling is critical to the development of their sense of belonging and adapting to the new country (Taylor & Sidhu, 2012). Therefore, analyzing the educational problems in a temporary education center for Syrians in Turkey was accepted as worthy of research. The aim of the study was to analyze the views of teachers and students regarding the problems in a school where Syrian refugee children were educated.

### Research Questions

In line with this aim, answers for the questions below were sought:

1. In what ways did the school use as a Temporary Education Center for Syrian refugees?
2. What are the perspectives of Syrians who are teaching and the students being educated at this school?
3. What are the sources of the problems of Syrian students regarding the schools in which they are educated?

### METHOD

In this qualitative study, the interview method was used. In qualitative studies, personal perceptions and incidents are elicited in a natural setting in a realistic and holistic manner (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Within the study, the perceptions of Syrian refugee teachers and students, regarding education process in a school providing temporary education of Syrians, were explored. Their social, psychological, cultural and individual background was holistically taken into consideration. As a data collection tool, a semi-structured interview form was prepared, parallel to the aims of the research. It included six open-ended questions such as, ‘*What do you think about the temporary education center and what are some problems that you feel in the education center?*’. A voice recorder was used to record the interviews. Each interview lasted from 20 to 40 minutes. After the data in the voice recorder were transcribed, they were described and interpreted qualitatively. Each utterance was analyzed and included into five themes obtained from the participants’ views. Furthermore, with the aim of testing the validity of the data within the study and getting more detailed information, meetings with administrators were set up, with coordinators at five different temporary Syrian refugee education centers.

## FINDINGS

### Background Information of the Syrian School Students

All of the participants had low socio-economic background. They had limited accessibility to social, educational and economic facilities. Four teachers and 12 students, at the primary level, in a school where refugees were educated, participated in the research. Eight of the interviewed students were girls and four of them were boys. The students ranged between the 3rd and 8th grades. Four of the interviewed teachers were women. While three of the teachers held BA degrees, one of them graduated from the psychological guidance and counseling department, and two of them graduated from the faculty of theology. The temporary education center where Syrian refugee students were educated was in a town with a low socio-economic level, near a large city, in the southern part of Turkey. In the morning Turkish students were educated at the school and in the afternoon Syrian refugee children. While Turkish children coming in the morning were taught according to the curriculum prepared by National Ministry of Education in Turkish, Syrian students coming in the afternoon were educated based on a curriculum in Arabic prepared parallel to a Syrian curriculum. 900 Syrian students were educated at this school. At the school, education was provided at different levels from the 1st grade, in primary school, to the 2nd grade of high school. A weekly course schedule for the school curriculum was presented below in Table 1.

As seen in Table 1, the most frequent weekly course in schedule was Turkish. Arabic, Mathematics, Science and Religion courses were taught much more when compared to the other courses. Religion and Ethics Course started by 4th grade. The course was taught as Life Science until 3th grade. At middle school level, there were 2-3 hours' elective

courses in a week. "Quran" and "Life of Muhammad the Prophet" courses were taught as elective courses. But these courses were done to teach Arabic (C1). The most remarkable detail in weekly schedule was that there was not any Social Sciences course. The school coordinators in the schools with whom interviews were conducted attributed this situation to lack of an appropriate curriculum and course book.

Those Syrian students who were attending their 1st grade went through the curriculum that had been prepared for Turkish students. Hence, the weekly course schedule of 1st grade was discarded from Table 1. In teaching Arabic courses the curricula in Syria were taken as basis. However, there were problems with the content of these books that were scientific, their recency, validity, and inconsistency for students' level in new books for refugee children printed in 2016. On the other hand, in Turkish courses "Turkish Teaching for Foreigners Course Program" prepared by Turkey Directorate General for Lifelong Learning was conducted according to students' age and levels. Turkish teachers were teaching Turkish courses in Temporary Education Centers.

### Perspectives of Syrian Teachers and Students

The data regarding the individual perspectives of 4 teachers and 12 students who participated in the study is shown in Table 2.

While examining the data in Table 2, it was observed that some of the Syrian refugee teachers had entered Turkey with a valid passport but some others as fugitives. The houses of three of the teachers, interviewed had been under bomb attack in Syria. Some of their family members perished. "I lost my mother and father in the war. They bombed. My brother lost his arm," as said the second teacher (T2). Even though, one of the teachers was an experienced educator and had worked

**Table 1.** The weekly course schedule of temporary education center for Syrian refugee children  
course schedules for temporary education centers

Courses	Grades						
	Primary School			Middle School			
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Turkish	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Arabic	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Mathematics	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
Life Science	3	3					
Science			3	2	2	2	2
Religion and Ethics			2	2	2	2	2
Visual Arts	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Music	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Games and Physical Activities	2	2	2				
Physical Education and Sports				2	2	2	2
Traffic Safety			1				
Free Activities	2	2					
Counseling and Career Planning							1
Elective course				3	3	3	2
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

**Table 2.** The perspectives of teachers and students

T1	Female, she is psychological counselor. She came from Damascus one and a half years ago. A bomb was exploded in their house in Syria. She came to Turkey one year later. She was married and had 5 children. She worked as psychological counselor for 20 years in Syria. She came from Damascus to Turkey by plane. She had a passport. She paid a rent of 4500 TL annually. Her son was married and she stayed with her other children. Her husband who was an agricultural engineer also worked as a science teacher at the same school.
T2	Female, she is graduate of faculty of theology, she is primary school teacher here. She came from Aleppo. She worked as teacher for 3 months in Syria. Her house was bombed, her parents died then, her brother lost his arm. She has an engineer brother living with them. He washes dishes in a restaurant because he could not find a job.
T3	Female, graduate of faculty of theology, works as primary school teacher. She came from Damascus. She and her husband are of Turkmenian origin; they spoke Turkish in Syria. She worked as volunteer teacher at her house in Syria. Before working at this school she gave Quran and moral courses at a foundation in Turkey. Her husband works as a driver at the foundation she taught. They have twin girls.
T4	Female, she came to Aleppo with her family 3 years ago as a fugitive. She works as vice-principal at school. She was a senior student at Economy department in Syria. She continues her education from second class in Turkey. Single. They made preparations to immigrate in Syria however when their house was suddenly got under bomb attack they could not get their money and other stuff. They could hardly rent a small house with 2 rooms in Turkey. Her father works at dessert shop. There is no one else working in family. They are seven siblings (4 girls, 3 boys). One of her siblings studies agricultural engineering in Maraş. Her 15-year-old brother took shelter in Germany and lived alone in hard conditions there. They also applied to United Nations to bring her brother back, but they did not get any result. She thinks working in a bank after graduated from the university. She thinks that the salaries are very low here. She wants to go to Germany.
S1	Male, he came from Aleppo by bus to Turkey two years ago. He has a passport. He has a family with six members. His father was captured by a group in Syria. They have not got any news since then. His mother doesn't work. His elder brother works with a tailor. He was a second grade student in Syria. This is his second year at school in Turkey. He is now sixth grade. He loves his school in Syria more than the one in here. He likes reading Quran. He doesn't like Math. He likes Turkish and English courses here. He did not know Turkish before, he learned it here. He works one hour a day. He does not watch TV. Their TV is broken. He wants to go back to Syria if the war is ended. He wants to be an engineer.
S2	Male. He came from Aleppo to Turkey a year and a half ago. They had to run away after their house was bombed during the war. His father is a tailor but he is not working now. He loves the school here. He likes English and Turkish courses. He studies 2-3 hours every day. He doesn't like watching TV too much. He likes watching Turkish comedy films.
S3	Male, he is 8 <sup>th</sup> grade student. He loves school. He entered Turkey by a passport with his family 3 years ago. His father is pastry cook. He works in a patisserie here. He is successful at his courses. He likes English and Turkish courser. He wants to go back if war is ended.
S4	Female, 14 years old. She studied in Syria till the 6 <sup>th</sup> grade. She has been in Turkey for 3 years. Having 3 years of break, she started from 9 <sup>th</sup> grade this year. She came from Aleppo. They are a family with 8 members. She does not have mother. Her brothers are working. Her father is engineer but not working. He came from Syria to Turkey by bus as a fugitive. He likes Math at most.
S5	Male, he is 13. He was 4 <sup>th</sup> grade in Syria. Now, she studies at 6 <sup>th</sup> grade. He has been in Turkey for 1.5 years. He was at a different school at his first year. He loves school. He loves Quran course at most. They are five siblings, his father repairs cars. He worked as a dessert cook and at a diner shop. He wants to go back if war is ended. His brother died under bomb attacks during the war in Syria.
S6	She came from Kamışlı and was 13 years ago. She studied 5 years in Syria. She was a 6 <sup>th</sup> grade student here. She could start school 2 year later she came to Turkey. If she had not given any break, she would be 8 <sup>th</sup> grade now. She likes Science course. She wants to be a doctor.
S7	She was 12 years old came from Aleppo. She completed 3 <sup>th</sup> grade there and now she is fourth grader. She could not attend the school for one year. She loves the school here more than in Syria. She loves Turkish course. She has a Turkish friend her neighbors' daughter. She watches Arabic channels. Her father works as blacksmith. They are five siblings.
S8	She was 12 years old, and she studied till the 3 <sup>th</sup> grade in Syria. Now, she is 5 <sup>th</sup> grader. She came from Aleppo to Turkey by bus as a fugitive. She wants to go back if war is ended. They have TV but their fridge is broken. 8 siblings (4 girls, 4 boys)
S9	Female, 12 years old, 5 <sup>th</sup> grader. She attended 3 <sup>th</sup> grade in Syria. She has been in Turkey for 2 years. 8 siblings. Her sister died in war. She likes Math and Turkish courses.
S10	Female, Turkmenian, 13 years old, 7 <sup>th</sup> grader. She completed first 3 grade in Syria, 4 <sup>th</sup> grade in Egypt, 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> grades in Turkey and now 7 <sup>th</sup> grader here. She has been in Turkey for nearly 2.5 years. She has 3 elder brothers, one in Istanbul, one in Egypt and the other in prison in Syria. They went to Egypt at first, her brother was there and stayed there for 7 months. One of her brother was imprisoned by Syrian government. They searched for her father to arrest him as well, so they ran away and went near her brother in Egypt at midnight. But as living there was difficult they could not stay very long. They came near their relatives in Turkey. One of her elder brothers is in Istanbul, married and works as a tailor. He could not find any jobs here. She loves Math and Science courses. She wants to be an optician. She watches Arabic TV channels. She loves Indian movies as they tell about how to fight against difficulties.

(Contd...)

Table 2. Continued

S11	Female, 14 years old. She has been in Turkey for 2 years. She attended 5 <sup>th</sup> grade there. She is 8 <sup>th</sup> grader now. She came from Aleppo by bus. She loves Turkey. Her father works with a tailor. Her mother sews at home. They are 4 siblings. Two of the other siblings are also at this school, 1 <sup>st</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> graders. She is Turkmenian and has relatives here. They have fridge, TV and washing machine at their house. She does not find the school here different than in Syria. She likes Arabic and Math courses. She wants to be a pediatrician.
S12	Female, she came from Kanişli. They came to Turkey near their relatives. She has been in Turkey for 3 years. She was at 8 <sup>th</sup> grade there. She started school after 3 years of break, so she had difficulty in adapting school. She wants to be history teacher. She does not find the school here different than in Syria. She has Turkish friends also her relatives. She studies 2 hours a day. She doesn't like watching TV. She does not want to go back to Syria.

as a psychological counselor for 20 years in Syria, the others had very little or no experience. One teacher, who helped with administrating issues at the school, was university student; the other 2 teachers were university graduates. The teachers didn't have enough for their personal economic needs. Almost all of them had family problems due to immigration:

There are many people coming from Syria who graduated from university with a high level of education; all of them were unemployed or working at unrelated, menial-labor jobs, at a low salary. I have a brother who is an engineer. He washes dishes at a restaurant here. (T2)

Syrian refugees encountered difficulty in teaching. "It was easier to teach in Syria," said the second teacher (T2). Especially, the fact that students of different ages and educational levels were in the same class and the problem of material shortages and lack of resources to be used in the classroom seriously hampers teachers. Because most schools were closed by March 2011, when conflicts started in Syria, there was also a period without any education for Syrian children before coming to Turkey (Seydi, 2014). Teachers state that it is necessary to enhance the communication and empathy between refugees and Turkish national students. They are disturbed about Turkish and Syrian students: though they are educated at different times of day, they frequently fight with each other. These fights adversely affect the education at school, causing some students quit school. It is indicated that war caused Syrian students to be depressed emotionally, and it is also shown that this situation led to students becoming introverted or resulted in aggression among students:

Children are mentally depressed due to the war. Most of them lost at least one of their family members. While some of them become totally introverted, others might behave in a very active and unrestrained way. There are some students who are very ill-tempered. Their future is uncertain, they have very great difficulty. The war destroyed everything. Fights happen, continually, between children at school. Some of the children affected by this do not want to come to school. (T1)

Teachers believe that local Turkish people don't like and resent Syrian refugees. "People believe Syrians somehow have their daily needs met and have enough. On the way home, after school, most of the time I hear from children, they say, "This is the Syrians' street; they will take our street now, then our house and our food, too!" (T3)

One of the most significant problems teachers encounter is accommodations. Teachers have difficulty in finding a house to rent as well as paying the rent:

Rents for houses are very high. Some of the landlords, knowing our situation, increased the rents very much. Houses normally costing 200 TL monthly, are rented to us [Syrian refugees] for 500.- TL ... (T3)

The principal, teacher and kitchen worker/cleaner; while everyone working at the school received 900.- TL salary previously, get 1350 TL now. Male teachers are required to do an additional job such as dessert cook, tailor, driver and machinist, apart from their normal teaching duties. There is not very much interaction between indigenous, Turkish teachers and refugee teachers because local Turkish students are educated in the morning while refugee students attend school in the afternoon:

Turkish teachers do not communicate with us much, but they do not behave badly, either. Only a few of them greet us; they do not seem to care much for us either. (T4)

Half of the students interviewed entered Turkey with a passport, the other half as fugitives. The courses students liked most were Turkish and English. This could be interpreted as showing that students are interested in learning languages. The ideal occupation students hope to achieve is medicine. Of 12 students interviewed, 11 want to go back to Syria when war ends. Their wish to return to Syria at the war's end could be interpreted in one of two ways. The first of them would be that students were happier there before the war; the second, though, is that the war was instrumental in creating in them considerable fear. Generally, they watch Arabic channels; additionally, they watch Turkish and Indian movies:

I watch Arabic TV channels. As they tell about how to fight against difficulties, I like watching Indian movies very much. (S10)

### Basic Sources of Problems of Syrian Refugee Students

Based on the thematic content analysis, five basic categories were elicited. Thus, the basic sources of problems were listed under 5 basic categories: Curriculum, School, Teacher, Student and Family. These categories were presented in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the teachers of courses are generally related to curriculum, teacher competencies, physical conditions of schools and materials to be used. Curricula at school were prepared in a parallel fashion to curricula in Syria, yet, due to the teachers that did not have enough information about the curriculum, the lack of their pedagogical

**Table 3.** Fundamental sources of problems regarding the schools Syrian students educated

Source of Problem	Problems
Curriculum	There is no standard curriculum, prepared by experts, for refugees, The curriculum is changed too frequently Teachers neither having enough information nor skills about developing curriculum Course books are of low quality Crowded classes
School	Insufficient teaching technologies in the classroom There are not any suitable halls or classrooms and the lack of materials or facilities for physical education, music or art courses Classes with a multi-grade structure (students at different ages and levels are educated in the same classes) Insufficient number of teachers The inefficiency of Turkish education at school Uncertainty regarding the future of Refugee Education Centers
Teacher	Teacher inexperience Teachers lacking pedagogical training Inefficiency in classroom management skills Differing educational philosophies between Turkish and Syrian teachers
Student	Conflicts between Turkish and refugee students (Discrimination) The sometimes seriously adverse psychological effects on students of war Excessive absenteeism Late class time for Syrian students Students' need to work additionally at a job outside of school hours
Family	Lack of budget for education Lack of environment conducive to study at home Families' not being interested enough in education Difficulty in communicating with school administration as well as teachers due to inability in speaking Turkish Over-crowded family residences and atmosphere

cal training and experience. Besides, the curriculum could not be successfully implemented. The curriculum followed here resembles the one in Syria very much though there are differences. For instance, in Syria, there is a religion course in the second grade but here there is not. One of the biggest problems we experienced this year was that of the teachers of Turkish courses not being available. Turkish courses could not be taught yet. Therefore, the Turkish speaking, reading and writing process for Syrian students were delayed. Some students learn to speak on streets but not enough.” (T4) As a result of the research done to analyze the problems Syrian refugee children face in pre-school education institutions by Uzun and Bütün (2016), it was discovered that there were many problems in the education of Syrian refugee children because sufficient, necessary planning could not be made during the process of placing children in schools. These results correspond to findings of our study.

Since there was an insufficient number of a Turkish teacher, Turkish National Ministry of Education employed 5000 contract Turkish teacher countrywide in 2016. Because they were very young and inexperienced, these teachers were given in-service education regarding topics such as “Teaching Turkish to foreigners”, “Immigration and disaster education” in Turkish Education Centers and provincial directorate for national education. “Teachers of Turkish courses ask everything to us administrators, they are afraid of making mistake. This is making classroom management difficult (C2). “One teacher of Turkish course asked me “Is it true to shake hands and greet with students in introducing lesson (C3)”. These

examples put forward teachers' inexperience in a concrete way.

Whether Temporary Education Centers (TEC) will go on or not is uncertain. It is planned that all TECs would be closed until 2019. Through following education year these centers won't take any students to 1th, 2nd, 5th and 9th grades, the students at these grades will continue at state schools of Turkey. This adversely effects development of long-term curricula for TECs. “It is asserted that these schools will be closed next year and Syrian students will be educated with Turkish students (T4)”, “The uncertainty of these schools' future negatively effects Turkish and Syrian teachers. Both teacher groups are afraid of being unemployed when the schools are closed (C1)”. Crowded and multi grade class problem resulted from insufficiency of number of classrooms and teachers is also a finding stressed very much. “There are students at different ages in every classroom. As the readiness of students is different classroom management is getting more difficult. While the older ones learn faster, the smaller ones learn slower. When I progress slowly older students get bored. There are ones that restart school giving long break due to the war. Children forgot their former knowledge, their ages increased. For example, there are now older students at first grade while they should be at higher grades. We do not have enough books. The books we use are also inefficient and outdated in terms of their contents. The classrooms are very crowded. It is very difficult to educate 40 children in a class (T2)”. “UNICEF supports, sends stationery but book number is insufficient. Students are suffered. Our stationery

problem is too much. Most of students could not get any books, notebooks, bags. Teachers try to help with photocopy expenses (T4)". It is also emphasized as a significant problem that the readiness level of students at school is different.

Another important problem regarding Syrian students is their having to start school late in Turkey. Very few of Syrian students having connections with Turkey before or relatives here were able to start school right after immigration. Nearly all of the students should have to wait between 1-3 years to attend the school after coming to Turkey. "I studied till 6th grade in Syria, came to Turkey 3 years ago, could attend the school 3 years after coming to Turkey (S4)", "Here I studies at 6th grade, actually I should be 8th grade, but I could not go to school (S6)", "I started school after one year (S7)", "I finished 5th grade in Syria, as I could not go to school in Turkey for 2 years, I studies at 6th grade while I should be 8th grade (S6)", "I was at 8th grade in Syria, after 3 years of break it was difficult to start school in Turkey (S12)".

When the problems at school resulted from student characteristics were analyzed the conflicts between domestic and refugee students, psychological traumas Syrian students had during war, their starting school late and having to work at an extra job out of school time are the most remarkable problems. Syrian and domestic students conflict is indicated as the most stated and primary problem to be solved. "There are always fights among children at school, two weeks ago a student was stabbed at school (T1)", "Children discriminate much more than adults (T3)", "In the morning domestic children are educated while Syrian children in the afternoon at school. At noon a group enters the school while the other goes out. At this time, when they encounter they glower at each other (T4)", "Most of my friends are Syrian, we do not get on well with domestic students, always fight with each other (S1)". One female student disturbed by discriminative behaviors (S10), also reproaching reacted as "They give us nicknames as "suri suri (an abbreviation for Syrian)", mock and humiliate us. In fact, we are all humans". In the study conducted by Coşkun and Emin (2016), problems such as there being language problems in schools Syrian educated, child's not being able to educated with his/her age and level group, children's being excluded by their Turkish peers, lack of communication with teacher and administrators were emphasized. The positive psychosocial adaptation of refugee and asylum children is related with social support services in the settled country, cultural integration, the presence of ethnically and culturally similar peers and sense of belonging to school (Birman, Beehler, Harris, Everson, Batia Liautaud, 2008; Kia-Keating and Ellis, 2007; Kovacev and Shute, 2004). Hence, the precautions regarding Syrian refugee children's integration with Turkey should be urgently taken.

Syrian students came to Turkey with many traumas they lived during the war. "Most of the students are mentally depressed due to war, most of them lost at least one of their family members in the war (T1)", "My sister died in war (S9)", "My elder brother was imprisoned by Eset. Eset would arrest my father too so we ran away near my brother to Egypt. However, as it is difficult to live there we could not stay in that place long. We decided to come to Turkey

(S10)", "My father was lost in Syria, some people we did not know who they were took my father coming to our house, we have not received any news about him since then (S1)".

The problems regarding the school could be associated with Syrian students' parents are problems arisen from parents' not being interested enough in their children's education, they're not having budget for education and being a big family. There are also problems of parents about adaptation to Turkey. Besides, it could be asserted that they are face to face with economic and sociological problems and they give priority to solve these. Language barrier in state schools Syrian children educated is a very big problem. Parents avoid communicating with those concerned with school issues as they do not know Turkish. This weakens the parents' support for education. Most of the problems refugees experience are related with economy. Neo-liberal economy policies applied during last 30 years' period when liberal economy has entered in a restructuring process forcing people to immigrate to reach better living conditions; political, ecological, demographic problems compel many people to be refugees out of their own country; ethnic and political conflicts increasing in different regions bringing mass escapes with it and creating new trade regions causes movements of labor (Güllüpinar, 2012). The findings show Syrian refugees also experienced economic problems. Naturally this situation adversely affected the education of Syrian children. "House rents are very high (T1)", "The salary we get is not sufficient, most students do not have even a bag (T4)", "We have a TV but broken (T1)", "Our TV is working but our fridge is broken (S8)". The families coming from Syria are generally crowded in addition to numbers of children ranging between 4 and 8 family elders such as grandmother and grandfather live with the family. "We are 4 siblings (S10 and S11)", "I have five children (T1)", "We are seven siblings (T4)", "We are eight siblings (S9)", "We as 9 people try to fit into a small house with two rooms" (S10). These findings apparently show that Syrian families are quite crowded.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Immigrants could have difficulty in learning a different language, adapting to a foreign culture and changing their existing habits. Therefore, immigration leaves deep traces in society's consciousness, it shapes people's physical environment, material life circumstances and their state of mind (Gün & Bayraktar, 2008). As a result of this study which is conducted to analyze the problems in a school where Syrian refugee students continue their education temporarily, it is seen that there was not a frame curriculum for Syrian students. This effects curriculum negatively as a whole. The planning, application and evaluation of curriculum will be applied at schools where the education totally left to substitute teachers who are not have much teaching experience and training about curriculum development. They only centrally prepared the weekly course schedules. There are made very frequent changes in terms of schedules of weekly courses. In the study conducted by Seydi (2014), it is found out that there occurred significant change in terms of Turkey's approach and policies for Syrian refugees. Although

the changes in approach and policies are seen positive in terms of curriculum development, it still creates problems about teachers and students' adapting to education system. It could be said that there is a need for developing standard frame curricula prepared by experts for pre-school, primary, middle and high school levels.

The number of refugees in Turkey has reached over 3.2 million, making Turkey a hosting country with the largest refugee population in the world. About 90 % of Syrian refugees in Turkey stay outside of camp settings with limited access to basic services (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2017). The economic status of Syrian refugees forms the fundamental source of educational problems. The number of Syrian refugees at school age with high numbers in Turkey is getting increased with new births every year. This situation adversely effects the quality of education and requires continuously increasing the budget for education. It is necessary international institutions such as European Commission and UNICEF to increase their support for refugee education. Increasing the number of Turkish teachers working at temporary education centers and the lesson hours of Turkish course in schedule positively affected refugees' Turkish learning. There were problems resulted from inexperienced teachers. It can be thought that getting support from experienced teachers could be models in addition to in-service educations conducted. Experienced teachers could give lessons by coming to school on specific days, they could guide young teachers.

Those refugee students who are in the same class are at different ages and readiness level. This affects the education negatively in temporary education centers for Syrians. Special courses which are apart from regular courses could also contribute to the solution of this problem. Beside these courses, materials for mult-grade classes and programmed instruction also could be benefited from. Most of Syrian students have psychological traumas resulted from the war. This situation makes students more reactive and aggressive. "Even the games Syrian children play includes violence (C3)". With respect to this psychological, support for students should be increased. Students' absence from the school is also accepted as a vital problem regarding the sustainability and effectiveness of the education. Absence from school increases, especially at higher grades. For instance, in Syrian case in Turkey, males are more disadvantaged group in terms of having to participate to labor market, but females also have risk of early marriage. Both are the obstacles prevent attending school regularly. Local authorities should make provisions for refugee education against the social problems of child labor and child brides (Bircan & Sunata, 2015). However, it could be stated that there is a need for parent education as well. Educational needs are not limited within the refugee camps. Although current school circumstances in camp settings enable a general projection, there are different educational approaches for the camp schools and for urban refugee education. For instance; the home-school liaison is critically important for urban refugee education (Dryden-Peterson, 2011).

The education problem of Syrians cannot be taught independent of economic, political and sociological problems.

Hence, multidimensional solutions should be produced to deal with education problems in its all scientific aspects. The main sources of these problems should be clearly determined through the cooperation with scientific and expert authorities with participation of all actors who play a role through this process and every sociological, political and economic perspectives should be evaluated, solutions should be actualized being produced (Akgül et al., 2015). This perspective is very important in terms of refugees' being integrated into the society which they immigrated.

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