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## Education in Emergencies: Case of a Community School for Syrian Refugees

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**Abstract:** With the break of the civil war in Syria, many Syrians have been displaced either internally or as refugees. Turkey, one of the leading host of Syrian refugees, has made changes to the policies to accommodate the needs of Syrians. Education is one of the most prominent needs of displaced refugee children. While 80 percent of refugee children living in camps have access to formal education, only small number of children living outside the camps are attending schools. With the increased number of children, many of the governmental organizations, municipalities, and NGOs have been involved in an effort to establish schools for Syrian refugee children living outside of the camps. This article reports the results of a study conducted at a newly established host community school for Syrian refugee children in the City of Gaziantep during the 2014-2015 school year. The aim of the study was to look at the experiences of administrators, teachers, and a parent who were involved in the establishment of the schools. The study made use of qualitative case study methodology, where interviews, focus group, and field notes were the data sources. The results of the study indicated that there were many systematic challenges involved in the establishment of the school, but nevertheless the teachers, administrators and the parents were happy to have the opportunity to be involved in this effort. The curriculum used in the school provided cultural relevance for the students and made their transition to the context easier. Although the school was established with support from the municipality for that year, there were not solid plans in place to provide sustainability of the school. This study provides a unique insight into the current status of Syrian refugee children living in Turkey and should serve as a bridge to policy makers in designing educational programs for refugees.

**Keywords:** *Refugees, Syrian refugees, refugee education*

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### Introduction

The start of the "Arab Spring" in Tunisia in December of 2010 had given a start for many civil uprisings in the neighboring countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen and Syria. Since the start of the civil unrest in Syria in 2011, many civilians fled to neighboring countries such as Lebanon and Turkey. According to statistics 43 percent of Syrians displaced as refugees live in Turkey (TUSEV, 2015). Turkey does not necessarily have a refugee policy in place and calls them as 'guest', but in legal law there is no such term. Therefore, in order for the Syrians to gain legal status Syrians are protected under the law passed in 2014 that host Syrians under 'temporary protection'. The number of Syrians in Turkey fleeing from the war have gone up to 2.2 million as of December 2015 (UNHCR, 2015). Beginning in April 2014, the General Directorate of Migration Management (GDMM) took over the issues of temporary protected Syrians. They have started to make all the legal coordination of status in Turkey. While some of these refugees live in camps near the border, others have started lives in bordering cities

such as Gaziantep. Gaziantep is estimated to be hosting more than 400,000 refugees.

With the arrival of substantial number of refugees in the city of Gaziantep, there have been problems with security, housing, economic, health but most importantly education. Many children stayed home and could not attend school. The municipality of Gaziantep has worked hard to create solutions to growing number of children and their education. One of the emergency solutions that was created by Gaziantep municipality was establishment of a host community school, where young children would be educated. This article reports the results of a qualitative case study exploring the establishment of the community school in the city of Gaziantep during the 2014-2015 academic year.

### Background

The Syrian civil war has created a large humanitarian crisis. As of September 2015 23 million Syrian has been

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displaced both internally and as refugees (UNHCR, 2015). Syrians have now become the second largest refugee population in the world with nearly four million Syrians displaced compared to five million Palestinian refugees (Nebehay, 2015). The increasing number of refugees in the host countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey created an educational crisis as well. According to the reports by UNHCR fewer than half of the Syrian children are enrolled in formal education. Approximately 1.6 million children school age (5–14 years) are out of school. When adolescents (aged 14–17) are counted in the numbers then the number of children not attending schools increase up to 2.4 million (UNICEF, 2015).

Turkey has invested the largest amount of funding to sustain Syrian refugees living in Turkey (UNHCR, 2015a). When compared with the investment made by other neighboring countries Turkey invested more than any other country for Syrian refugees (Jalbout, 2015). As a member to the UN Turkey only grants asylum rights to Europeans (Icduygu, 2014), however with large numbers of Syrian refugees arriving, Turkey adopted a law for Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in 2014. This law allows those who are fleeing conflict to seek refuge in Turkey and free access to health, education and labor market. Under this legislation Turkey is obligated to provide free education for all school-aged children. Since the enactment of this law Turkish government has been working to meet the needs to school-aged Syrian refugees. In addition to making public schools available to Syrian children with government-issued IDs since 2014, Turkey has also started “temporary education centers” that offers the Syrian curriculum available (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Education is a human right, and mostly importantly it “enables access to other rights” (Sinclair, 2007). Even during the times of emergencies, the Convention on the Rights of the Child requires countries to provide free and compulsory education to school age children. Refugees who have been displaced from their countries due to wars value education more than anyone because it can help them to have a “sense of normality” (Sinclair, 2007; p.52). A report by Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Directorate (AFAD) indicates that 80 percent of the school age children who live in camps are attending schools in camps, but only 27 percent of the children living outside of the camps are attending schools. Additionally, 75 percent of the Syrian refugee population is women and children (UNHCR, 2015). Therefore, the low rates of school attendance is concerning. Given the large number of Syrian refugee children who are not attending formal schools and the limited capacity of the country hosting the refugees, the children and adolescents pose a great risk to the future. There needs to be alternatives in place to accommodate the needs of school-aged refugee children living outside of the camps.

The current system of education for refugees vary in Turkey. The children living in camps attend schools operated by the Turkish Ministry of Education and AFAD. The camp schools use the Syrian curriculum and teach in the students’ native language Arabic. The Turkish government however do not accredit these schools. For refugee children living outside of the camps, those with residence permits can enroll in Turkish schools. Those who do not have residence permits are still able to attend schools unregistered as guests but are not able to receive a diploma (Human Rights Watch, 2015). Other than the Turkish government schools many NGOs, municipalities and other community organizations operate schools for Syrians living outside of camps. These schools are often not officially recognized by the Ministry of Education. These schools often follow the Syrian curriculum and children are taught by Syrians. Although some of these schools are funded by the municipality or other authorities, students are not able to receive a completion certificate or a diploma.

Turkish schools are essentially open for enrollment of refugee children with IDs but that creates additional issues for refugee children such as language barriers. Turkish schools have been following “4+4+4” system: 12 years of free compulsory education, comprising 4 years of primary school, 4 years of lower secondary school, and 4 years of upper secondary school. Students may also enroll in vocational training—including religious vocational training—starting from the fifth grade” (Finkel, 2012). The K-12 education system in Turkey is directed by the Ministry of Education through central control mechanisms. All subjects in the curriculum is taught in the Turkish language and English as a foreign language is offered starting in the second grade. Out of the estimated number of two-million Syrian refugee children, only 36,655 of them were enrolled in Turkish public schools in 2014-2015 (Human Rights Watch, 2015). This enrollment number means that many of the Syrian school-aged children are not attending the public schools. Although the government may have made the public schools accessible to Syrian children, the limited resources of schools located in the east and south-east part of Turkey may not have made it possible for the refugee children who are predominantly living in this region to enroll in public schools. There are cited to be various reasons for non-enrollment of Syrian children in schools. The first one seems to be economic hardships. Many young children work as child laborers to provide for their families (Human Rights Watch, 2015). Another reason why Syrian children are not enrolled in the Turkish schools maybe the Turkish curriculum and the fact that is creates a language barrier for children to access the curriculum. There are not any accelerated language literacy programs in the Turkish schools to provide support for the refugee children, therefore it makes it difficult for them to enroll in the school system. Younger children seem to be adapting well in the younger grades, while older children are facing the most difficulty (Ahmadzadeh,

Corabatir, Hashem, Al Hussein and Wahby, 2014). Due to the financial difficulties, structural difficulties and lack of appropriate curriculum in the Turkish public schools many of the Syrian children seem to be not attending school.

Additionally, refugee students are often a victim of violence and trauma as a result of their past experiences (Hos, 2014). Having been displaced from their countries, they need specialized programs that provide them with the necessary psychosocial, academic support. The different programs that are available for Syrian refugees vary in the type of curriculum they follow, the physical conditions, the teaching staff, and other structural areas. For example, while some schools use Arabic as the language of instruction, Turkish is used in other programs. There is no unity in the curriculum followed. There needs to be a “coherent framework and approach for the process of textbook revision and production of the Syrian curriculum should be developed” (UNICEF, 2015). Most of the schools in place for the Syrian refugees continue to adapt and implement the Syrian curriculum in the hopes that it is the most culturally relevant for children. The use of culturally relevant curriculum allows for the smooth transition of refugee children into the new communities. Culturally relevant/responsive curriculum supports students academically, socially, and emotionally (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

While there are many reports on what interventions are in place or need to be in place for the education of children and adolescent refugees in Turkey, the research on how schools operate is very limited. Therefore, the current study provides an understanding of how one community school reached out to the refugee children. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Syrian administrators, teachers and a parent in a newly established community school in Gaziantep. The following research question has been used to gain a deeper understanding of the situation:

- What are the experiences of a parent, teachers, and administrators in a newly established ‘Host Community School’?

### *Theoretical Framework*

This research is grounded in critical theory. This theory critically examines the ways power plays out in institutional contexts which result in inequalities for certain groups (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1995). According to Apple (1995), schools recreate inequality by purposely excluding certain groups from education or restricting the types of knowledge available to them. Although there are efforts to provide education for the Syrian refugees, the resources are limited and many Syrian children are still out of school. Based on the premise that Syrian refugee children are a

marginalized group, critical theory is useful in examining the issues facing the education of Syrian refugee children from a wider sociological, political stance.

### **Methodology**

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of administrators, teachers, and a Syrian parent at a newly established ‘Host Community School’ in the city of Gaziantep. To achieve this objective, the community school was studied as a case in order to examine their in-depth experiences. A qualitative approach to research was used for this study. Merriam (2002) states that “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed...how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 6). In this study, the researcher looked at the administrators and the teachers’ experiences in the school program. Stake (1994) defines case study as follows: “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p.13).

To further understand the case, individual interviews, focus group interviews, observations, and field notes were used as data sources. Merriam (1998) notes the importance of observation within qualitative research, that it offers “a firsthand account of the situation under study” (p. 111). Through observations the researcher was able to gain an understanding of the experiences of the personnel at the school, the administrators working in a community school. The observations provided a rich description of the participants’ experiences. In addition to the field notes and observations interviews yielded rich insights into the participants’ lives, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes, and feelings (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Due to the limited time the teachers had during their work hours, focus group was a useful tool in gathering information from the teachers.

In this study the case was the experiences of administrators and teachers at a community school established for the refugees. The case study design was the most appropriate as it had many advantages. For instance, it gave the researcher an opportunity to investigate the cases as closely as one can get, and it was tailored to suit the study phenomenon.

### *Ethical Considerations*

In this study, all of the ethical guidelines of the Zirve University Institutional Review Board (IRB) were followed. Critical concerns were considered to ensure protection of the participants. Refugees are considered to be a vulnerable population however, because the study took place within “normal educational practices and settings”, it presented little potential risk to the participants. In order to ensure confidentiality of the

participants they were assigned pseudonyms and all of the data were stored in a password-protected computer. The participants were also made aware that the participation in the study is voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study anytime without any penalty to their jobs.

### Participants

There were ten participants in this study. The ten participants consisted of four teachers, one parent, two Turkish administrators, and three Syrian administrators. The individual interviews were done with the Syrian administrators, the parent, and two Turkish administrators. A focus group was held with four Syrian teachers teaching at the school. A voluntary call to participate in this study was shared with the parents. The information letters were translated into Arabic so that they can easily understand the purpose of the research. Only one parent volunteered to participate in the research, therefore the data from the parent was limited to only one parent. For the purposes of this study, because the refugee students are sensitive and some students did not have legal permit to reside in Turkey, the municipality did not allow the students to be part of the research. Therefore, only administrators and teachers were included in the study. The demographic information of the participants are presented on the table 1 below:

*Table 1. Demographic Information of Participants*

<b>Name(Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Role</b>
Fadel	High School degree	Parent
Rami	Bachelors degree	Teacher
Zainab	Master's degree	Teacher
Aminah	Bachelor's degree	Teacher
Basri	Bachelor's degree	Teacher
Mahmut	Master's degree	Turkish Administrator
Kenan	Master's degree	Turkish Administrator
Iman	Bachelor's degree	Syrian administrator
Mohammed	Bachelor's degree	Syrian administrator
Ali	Bachelor's degree	Syrian administrator

The Syrian teachers, the Syrian administrators and the Turkish administrators worked together to establish this school. The municipality provided the support for the school financially. The interviews and the focus group consisted of semi-structured questions. A Turkish and an Arabic interpreter was used for the interviews and the focus group with the Syrian staff.

The interviews and the focus group were voice recorded.

### Setting

The school where this study took place is a community school located in the City of Gaziantep, near the Syrian border. The data were collected during the 2014-2015 school year. There were two buildings for the school. One was a community center building that has been provided by the municipality, the other building consisted of a trailer school that was established on a land owned by the municipality. One of the school buildings was rather limited in the gym space where students would have gym classes, but the new trailer school building had a park, football and basketball fields for the students. There were nine classrooms and twenty teachers at the school. There were about 700 students enrolled in the schools from 1-8<sup>th</sup> grades. The municipality provided transportation, books, uniforms, and all other necessary financial and materials support for the school. The Syrian curriculum was adapted and the teachers teaching were also Syrian. The classrooms were crowded to up to fifty students in each class. The books used were shipped from Syria through the help of the local representatives of the Syrians. Both of the school buildings had classrooms equipped with desks and whiteboards, a teacher's lounge, administrators' offices, and a conference room.

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The purpose of descriptive analysis is to present the data in an organized way (Yildirim & Simsek, 2013). The categories and themes of the data were identified through an open coding process in which the interviews, field notes, and focus group interviews were analyzed through line-by-line coding and analysis. The following section presents the findings that emerged from interviews with the Syrian teachers and administrators and the Turkish administrators.

### Findings and Discussion

The findings are organized into two different categories: 1) the establishment of the school and 2) the experiences in the school.

#### *The Establishment of the School*

The establishment of the school took place in a collaborative effort by the Syrian community and the municipality of Gaziantep. From the discussions with the different stakeholders two themes appeared to be critical in the establishment of the new school. These were the school curriculum and the teacher selection for the school, which are discussed in the following sections.

### The Curriculum

From the interviews and the focus group, it was clear that it took a team effort to establish this community school. First the Syrian officials that represented the education commission decided to get in touch with the municipality. The municipality had already been thinking about the urgent topic of education and what can be done about it. Even though the Syrian officials had reported that “there is a disconnect between the Syrian Education Commission and the Turkish Ministry of Education”, the establishment of the school was completed.

The Syrian curriculum that was followed was a revised curriculum that was revised by the National Education Commission that is formed by the opponents of the Assad Regime. The books were modified to exclude any references to the regime and then reprinted by the Syrian education commission. Based on the discussions observed, the Syrian curriculum was modified mostly in Arabic language, math and science (Field notes and observations). The curriculum included all core subject areas, mathematics, Arabic, National Education System, science, history, foreign languages, and arts. Majority of the revisions were made with the history and the national education books because one of the teachers reported “the students could not be reminded of the Assad regime and what he did to our country” (Interview transcript). While the changing of the curriculum rather seemed to be political and the administrators and the teachers tried to be neutral, there still seemed to be conflicting views that no one wanted to admit in conversations. One of the administrators said “I don’t want to talk about any politics or the regime. We just want to educate our children.” (Interview transcript).

The Turkish administrators described the curriculum as follows:

*“We strictly follow the Syrian curriculum because the children do not speak Turkish. The children also take both English and Turkish language classes in addition. Our hope is that when they go back to their country once the war is over their schooling will not be interrupted and they can continue their education.” (Interview transcript, Kenan).*

Iman (a Syrian administrator) reported their appreciation of the curriculum:

*“Both the parents of the children and we are happy that our children can continue their education with Syrian curriculum. We also like that they can get extra Turkish classes. The school also has Turkish lessons for the parents in the evenings.” (Interview transcript).*

Mohammed (a Syrian administrator) added:

*“We brought the books from Syria and the education commission adapted the curriculum in the books and published the new books in Turkey. Instead of French as a foreign language, we offer Turkish and English. We published about four million copies of the books to be distributed to the different schools around Turkey.” (Interview transcript).*

There seemed to be a lot of collaboration between the teachers and the administrators (observations and field notes). Teachers and administrators worked hard to provide the least disruptive environment for the students. Mohammed (The Syrian administrator) mentioned that:

*“In order to provide a similar educational setting to the Turkish schools we follow the academic calendar of the Turkish schools. In Syria we often have Fridays and Saturdays as the weekend days but here it is a little different. But so far we feel that we are very successful at managing the school here” (Interview transcript).*

The use of the Syrian curriculum provided the refugee children with culturally responsive instruction and helped them transition into the new community without too much interruption. In this case of the “Host Community School”, the administrators and the teachers were able to identify the specialized needs of the refugee children and adapted culturally responsive curriculum (Olsen, 2006). Ladson-Billings (1994) refers to this as “empowering students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically” (p.18). The Syrian curriculum of education utilized at this community school benefitted the Syrian refugee students by providing them with basic competencies which would enable them to pursue further learning. The curriculum provided academic knowledge. However, this curriculum did not have any additional support systems in place to provide socio-emotional or practical support for the students. The curriculum also did not integrate any practical skills critical for the survival of refugee children. The utilization of the theoretical and academic curriculum assumed that all students will continue within the academic line and continue on to higher learning or schooling. However, with the financial concerns of many Syrian families, it is a given that some of the students may not be able to pursue high school or further education. Without a curriculum that integrates some survival skills and vocational training, some of the students completing their schooling at this temporary school may be at risk for succeeding in life.

The schooling system and the curriculum in Turkey and Syria seems to be similar in many aspects. The obligatory schooling in Turkish schools are until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and it is similar in Syrian schools. The Syrian curriculum is strictly homogeneous and controlled by the government, therefore there is a lot of reliance on the textbooks by the teachers. The situation is not different in the Turkish schools. The Turkish public schools often follow the curriculum set out by the

government. Teachers seem to be complying the curriculum set out by the Ministry of Education (Can, 2009). Similarly, even though the teachers at this community school said that the students needed more than what the books offered, they followed the books provided for them. With limited resources the teachers tried their best to meet the needs of the students.

#### *Selection of the Teaching Staff*

The Syrian teaching and the administrator staff was selected after a careful review of their qualifications. Kenan (a Turkish administrator) reported that,

*“Syrians established an educational commission to recruit individuals who were teachers or academics in Syria and collected their CVs. After a careful review of the qualifications through a point system, teachers and administrators were hired to work in the school.”* (Interview transcript).

Mohammed (a Syrian administrator) added:

*“First we established a commission that is composed of six teachers and academics. Then this commission reviewed the qualifications and experiences of the teacher applicants to the school. We tried to select the best teachers out of a pool of applicants.”* (Interview transcript).

The interviews and observations indicated that the teaching staff at the school was carefully selected in order to provide the best education possible for the refugee children. The establishment of the Syrian education commission is a sign that Syrians are putting forth the effort to shape the future of their children and the country. Although there was a lot of demand for the employment of Syrian citizens in school, the priority for the teacher selection was qualifications of the staff.

#### *The Experiences at the School*

The teachers, administrators and the parent in the study emphasized the importance of continued education for children in the state of emergencies. Mohammed, one of the administrators reported that “there are ninety schools similar to this one around Turkey.” One of the common concerns from everyone was the “acceptability of the school” by formal authorities. Because the school was not accredited through the Ministry of Education, both the parent, teachers, and administrators were concerned about the future. But they also rationalized it by saying “It is not possible for the education of this many people to be not accepted. We hope that the certificates from this school will be valid in the future.” (Iman, interview transcript).

When asked of their experiences of working in this type of a school, teachers spoke of the infrastructural difficulties in the school.

Aminah stated:

*“I feel like I am working in a real school but the school is very small and the students cannot move freely. The teacher’s lounge is also used as a computer class and this creates a problem of space. I do not think that the documents kept are sustainable enough for the future of the school.”*

Basri added:

*“The school is good but because it is all day long, we get very tired. In Syria the schools are not two shifts but one shift.”*

Zainab mentioned:

*“I used to teach at the university when I was in Syria, so teaching little children is difficult for me. But I try my best to work well with the rest of the teachers.”*

In addition to working in a new environment, some of the teachers had also left behind many loved ones in Syria. One teacher mentioned that she was struggling financially to make the ends meet because her husband died in the war and she had to care for her family. This prompted the fact that the school did not have any services for social-emotional support for the teachers or the students. For example Rami mentioned that “some students are struggling psychologically” and it is difficult to do any academics with these types of students. From the observations done, there was not any psychological support at the school. Despite challenges, the teachers were still pleased to be teaching at the school. Rami stated:

*“This school is like the private schools in Syria. Transportation, uniform, notebooks and books are free. The educational support is actually more than Syrian schools.”*

In addition to the teachers’ appreciation of the opportunities at the school, the parents were also happy to be able to send their children to school. Fadel stated:

*“I am very glad to be sending my child to this school. I know that many families do not have their children in school and are waiting to find an opportunity. I thank the Gaziantep municipality for their help in building this school.”*

In addition to the first hand experiences of teachers and administrators at the school, there seemed to be challenges with the instruction in the classrooms. From the observations it was apparent that the curriculum that was implemented only provided students with basic competencies in core academic areas. The curriculum did not include any social or psychological support for the refugee children. The teachers also used a traditional teaching style that was based on

banking model of education (Freire, 1996), where the students were seen as passive recipients of knowledge. The use of teacher-centered pedagogy prevents students' active participation in the classroom and does not allow for the improvement of critical thinking skills, which would be essential for refugee children to develop for their future lives (Field notes and observations).

On top of the challenges within the school, the temporariness of the community center made some of the administrators and the teachers uncomfortable. Zainab mentioned:

*"This school is said to be continuing until the end of June this year and after that we don't know if the municipality will continue to fund the school. We are not sure what will happen to us after that" (Focus group transcript).*

Kenan (a Turkish administrator) also reiterated:

*"The municipality only funded this school until the end of June and we are not sure what will happen after that. There are elections coming up, the mayor will change, so things can change quickly and there may not be any school after June" (Interview transcript).*

The sense of temporariness seemed to be bothering the administrators and the teachers and made them feel like they were on pins and needles. This may have affected their motivation in school but both the administrators and the teachers emphasized in conversations that they did not want to think about this and only wanted to concentrate on the school.

The teachers and the parents overall reported their appreciation of the support from the Turkish people and the government in general but there were still many challenges, such as lack of infrastructure to educate the remaining Syrian children who cannot attend schools, the limited amount of pay for the teachers, and the sustainability of the school itself. Although the school seemed to be equipped with all the necessary tools, there were still a lot to be done to meet the needs of the students and other involved stakeholders. Although the established community school was supported by the local government (municipality) there was no centralized effort to accommodate the children who were not attending school. One school certainly was not sufficient in providing education for refugee children outside of the camps.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

Syrian refugee children who are living outside of the camps are a vulnerable population as there are many barriers to their enrollment in schools. The limited number of schools available for the Syrian refugees living outside of camps are scarce, therefore many children continue to have interruptions in their

schooling. The current study reported in this article was a case of a community based host school established for the Syrian refugees by a local municipality near the Syrian border. Although there were many challenges associated with the school, the teachers and administrators put forth a lot of effort to educate children without an interruption. The use of the Syrian curriculum with adaptations helped refugees transition into their new context. However, the pedagogical application of the curriculum was rather traditional teacher-centered, therefore was not supportive of students' various learning styles and psycho-social development. As demonstrated in this study, the Syrian refugee children are receiving basic education under difficult conditions. The classrooms were overcrowded, there was limited number of resources and staff. The host country seems to be offering extensive support to make education available for the refugee children, which is a powerful message to the rest of the host communities about the importance of refugee children's education.

The temporary community center and other solutions that have provided alternative to public schools have been helpful in allowing the children the least interruptive education. These temporary programs provide a safe haven for children, yet the Syrian conflict is entering into its sixth year, so the presence of temporary educational programs may be a reflection of the inability to handle the education crisis and develop a long-term, sustainable educational solution for the Syrian refugees in Turkey. There are challenges with the accreditation, quality and standardization of the educational programs. Turkey has provided access to public school system for the Syrian children with IDs, however the lack of language literacy programs make it unattractive for Syrian parents to send their children to Turkish schools. Additionally, the unavailability of ample school spaces in the east and southeast part of Turkey, where Syrians predominantly settled in, make it difficult to meet the educational needs of children. Improving programs for Syrian refugee children in Turkey and providing a sustainable solution that enhance the integration of the refugee children rather than temporary solutions may be an answer. Strengthening coordination between various organizations in an effort to provide the best education solutions possible is vital to ensuring quality education for the Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Although the refugee children are receiving basic premise of education at the host school there are still a lot of issues that need to be resolved. The accreditation of the schools that are established by local authorities or NGOs need to be prioritized so that all parties involved including teachers and parents can set future goals. Community host schools like the one in this study need to be expanded to accommodate the large number of refugee children who are not attending any type of schooling. More studies should be done specifically looking at the children's experiences in the schools.

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