Education for Syrian Refugee in Türkiye, Jordan, and Lebanon[1]

Türkiye, Ürdün ve Lübnan'da Suriyeli Göçmenlerin Eğitimi

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Abstract. The civil war that started in Syria in 2011 caused the migration of more than 6 million Syrians, and this wave of migration affected the region in many ways. In this process, Syrian refugees migrated to many neighboring countries, especially Türkiye, Lebanon and Jordan, and affected the countries they went to politically, socially and economically. War is socially, economically and psychologically devastating for all segments of society. However, it negatively affects the lives of children, one of the most vulnerable groups, in many ways. One of these negative effects is undoubtedly the interruption of their education life, which is effective in shaping their entire lives. In this study, which was conducted using the document scanning method, the reports, official websites and news published by all three countries and international organizations were scanned and the access to education in the countries where Syrian children migrated was discussed in the context of the policies and practices developed. It is observed that hundreds of thousands of children in all three countries are out of school due to curriculum and language differences, lack of classrooms, poverty and the resulting child labor and cultural reasons such as early marriage of girls. Non-formal education activities are very important in ensuring these children have access to education. Education programs to be organized in this context will offer a second chance for children who are lagging behind their peers and have learning losses, as well as children who are out of school age.
Keywords: Immigrant education, Non-formal education, Social integration of immigrants, Syrian children, Out of school children

Öz. 2011 yılında Suriye'de başlayan iç savaş 6 milyonun üzerinde Suriyelinin göç etmesine neden olmuş ve bu göç dalgası bölgeyi pek çok açıdan etkilemiştir. Bu süreçte Suriyeli sığınmacılar başta Türkiye, Lübnan ve Ürdün olmak üzere birçok komşu ülkeye göç etmiş ve gittikleri ülkeleri siyasal, sosyal ve ekonomik anlamda etkilemişlerdir. Savaş, toplumun tüm kesimleri için sosyal, ekonomik ve psikolojik açıdan yıkıcıdır. Ancak en kırılgan gruplardan olan çocukların yaşamlarını pek çok açıdan olumsuz etkilemektedir. Bu olumsuzlardan biri de kuşkusuz bütün yaşamlarına yön vermelerinde etkili olan öğrenim hayatlarının kesintiye uğramasıdır. Doküman tarama yöntemiyle yapılan bu çalışmada, her üç ülke ve uluslararası kuruluşların yayınladığı raporlar, resmi internet siteleri ve haberler taranarak Suriyeli çocukların göç ettiği ülkelerde eğitime erişim durumları geliştirilen politikalar ve uygulamalar bağlamında ele alınmıştır. Her üç ülkede yüzbinlerce çocuğun müfredat ve dil farklılığı, derslik yetersizliği, yoksulluk ve buna bağlı olarak gelişen çocuk işçiliği, kız çocuklarının erken evlendirilmesi gibi kültürel nedenlerle okul dışı kaldığı görülmektedir. Bu çocukların eğitime erişimlerini sağlamada yaygın eğitim çalışmaları oldukça önemlidir. Bu kapsamda düzenlenecek eğitim programları hem akranlarından geri kalan ve öğrenme kayıpları olan hem de okul çağı dışına çıkan çocuklar için ikinci bir şans sunacaktır.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Göçmen eğitimi, Yaygın eğitim, Göçmenlerin sosyal uyumu, Suriyeli çocuklar, Okul dışı kalan çocuklar

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş. 20. yüzyılda, küresel ve bölgesel ölçekli savaşlar, iç karışıklıklar, siyasi istikrarsızlıklar, etnik/dinsel çatışmalar, baskıcı rejimler ve insan hakkı ihlalleri sonucunda göç etmek zorunda kalan mülteci ya da sığınmacı gruplar uluslararası göç olgusunu önemli bir gündem haline getirmiştir (Danış, 2004; Heywood, 2013). Kitlesel göç hareketlerinden biri olan Suriye krizinin başladığı 2011 yılının Mart ayından beri iç savaşın politik, ekonomik ve toplumsal etkileri gerek bölgesel gerek küresel boyutta kendini göstermiştir (Pirinççi, 2018). UNCHR'ın Ocak 2022 verilerine göre ülkesinden göç eden 6.6 milyon Suriyelinin, yaklaşık 5.6 milyonu komşu ülkelere göç etmişlerdir. Suriyeli mülteciler ülkelerinde yaşanan iç karışıklığın uzun sürmesi nedeniyle sığındıkları ülkelerde yaşamlarını sürdürmeye devam etmektedirler. Bu süreçte mülteci popülasyonun önemli bir bölümünü oluşturan çocukların eğitim sorunsalı önemli bir gündem olarak ev sahibi ülkelerin önünde durmaktadır. Suriye iç savaşında gördüğümüz gibi yıllar boyunca süren şiddet ve çatışma ortamı eğitimden mahrum kayıp bir kuşağın oluşmasına neden olmaktadır. Örgün eğitim sistemine erişemeyen, erişse dahi çeşitli nedenlerle uyum sağlayamayan ve okulu terk eden göçmen çocuklar için yaygın eğitim olanakları telafi edici olabilmektedir. Yaygın eğitimin artık örgün eğitime erişimi olmayan gençlerin ve yetişkinlerin öğrenme ihtiyaçlarını karşılamada kritik bir rol oynadığı kabul edilmektedir (Weyer, 2009). Bu araştırmada kitlesel Suriyeli göçünden en fazla etkilenen üç ülke olan Türkiye, Lübnan ve Ürdün'de Suriyeli çocukların eğitimleri geliştirilen politikalar, eğitime erişim olanakları ve engelleri ekseninde değerlendirilmekte, yaygın eğitimin beliren sorumlulukları tartışılmaktadır.

Amaç. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişimlerini artırmak için yapılan çalışmaları incelemek ve eğitime erişimlerinin önündeki engellerin neler olduğunu belirlemektir. Komşu ülkelere sığınan savaş ve göç mağduru bu çocukların eğitim hakkı bağlamında eğitime erişim engellerinin tespit edilmesi bu engellerin ortadan kaldırılması için önemlidir. Mevcut literatür incelendiğinde bu konuda yapılmış sadece iki araştırma olduğu (Ayık, 2019; Kubilay, 2020) ve alınyazında büyük bir boşluk olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak her üç ülkede örgün eğitim kapsamında Suriyeli çocukların okullaştırılması için geliştirilen politikaları ve uygulamaları ele alan ve okul dışı kalmış çocuklar için alternatif eğitim olanaklarını irdeleyen bir çalışmaya rastlanmamıştır. Suriyeli çocukların eğitiminde benzer zorluklarla mücadele eden bu üç ülkenin eğitim ekosisteminde yaratılan ve yaratılabilecek olanakların bütünsel olarak ele alınması eğitimci, araştırmacı ve politika yapıcılara yol gösterici olma potansiyeli taşımaktadır. Bu bağlamda bu araştırmada aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

1. Türkiye, Ürdün ve Lübnan'da Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişimleri için ne tür çalışmalar yapılmaktadır?
2. Her üç ülkede eğitime erişimin önündeki engeller nelerdir?
3. Okul dışı kalmış çocuklara yönelik ne tür telafi edici eğitim mekanizmaları geliştirilebilir?

Yöntem. Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden durum çalışması kullanılmıştır. Durum çalışması bir veya birkaç sınırlı durumun derinlemesine incelenmesidir (Creswell, 2007). Araştırma verileri döküman tarama yöntemiyle her üç ülke ve uluslararası kuruluşların yayınladığı raporlardan, resmi internet sitelerinden ve haberlerden elde edilmiş ve ilgili araştırmalarla desteklenmiştir. Araştırmada toplanan veriler betimsel analiz tekniğiyle analiz edilmiştir. Betimsel analiz, çeşitli veri toplama teknikleriyle elde

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edilen verilerin belirlenen temalara göre özetlenmesini ve yorumlanmasını içermektedir (Yıldırım ve Şimsek, 2003).

Sonuç, Tartışma ve Öneriler. Başta Türkiye olmak üzere tüm dünyayı etkisi altına alan ve ciddi insan hakları ihlallerine yol açan Suriye iç savaşı nedeniyle milyonlarca insan göç etmek zorunda kalmış, yüz binlerce çocuk okulsuz kalmıştır. Araştırmada savaş ve göç krizi sonrası en ağır bedeli ödeyen kesimlerden olan Suriyeli çocukların önemli bir oranın okul dışında kaldığı görülmektedir. Türkiye, Lübnan ve Ürdün'de Suriyeli çocukların okullaşmasının önündeki engeller müfredat ve dil farklılığı, derslik yetersizliği, çocukları okula gitmek yerine çalışmaya iten ekonomik nedenler, kız çocuklarının erken evlendirilmesi olarak sıralanabilir. Suriyeli göçmen çocukların, en temel insan haklarından olan eğitime erişimlerinin sağlanması konusunda yeterli çaba gösterilmediği takdirde gelecekte eğitimsizlik ve işsizlik sorunları ortaya çıkabilecek, bu da sosyal dışlanma, yoksulluk, suç artışı, ötekileştirilmiş gruplara katılım gibi sorunlara yol açabilecektir. Ayrıca toplum genelinde güvenlik sorunları artması ve sosyal hizmet kaynakları üzerinde baskı oluşması yüksek olasılıklı risklerdendir. Bu potansiyel sorunların önlenmesi için göçmen çocukların eğitimine ve sosyal entegrasyonuna odaklanan etkili politika ve programlar önemlidir.

Suriye iç savaşının başlangıcı dikkate alındığında birçoğu yetişkinliğe geçmekte olan ve okul dışı kalan Suriyeli çocukların, ev sahibi toplumun dilini öğrenme, topluma uyum sağlama ve başta okuma-yazma ve sayısal beceriler gibi temel eğitim ihtiyaçları olmak üzere mesleki beceriler edinme konusunda eğitim desteğine ihtiyaçları vardır. Bu durum örgün eğitimin dışında kalan bu büyük nüfus için yaygın eğitim çalışmalarını önemli kılmaktadır. Okul dışı çocukların eğitim hakkını desteklemek için etkili bir yol olan yaygın eğitim organizasyonu, eğitim yöntemi ve sunduğu çeşitlilikle dünya çapında çocukların, gençlerin ve yetişkinlerin öğrenme ihtiyaçlarını karşılamaktadır (UNESCO, 2014; UNICEF/UIS, 2014). Örgün eğitimin eğitime erişimde zaman, mekân ve yaş sınırlılıklarına yaygın eğitim çözüm getirmesi (Karakuş Yıldız ve Taş, 2023), söz konusu Suriyeli çocukların kayıp kuşak olmasının önüne geçmede etkili bir telafi mekanizması olarak kullanılmasını olanaklı kılmaktadır. Zorunlu göçün mağdur ettiği ve eğitime erişimleri kesintiye uğrayan Suriyeli nüfus için de uluslararası toplumun desteğiyle bölgesel ölçekli yaygın eğitim projelerinin hayata geçirilmesi sağlıklı bireylerin ve toplumların oluşumu için hayati önemdedir.

Introduction

The phenomenon of international migration emerged after nation-states were established with clear borders in the 19th century, and people began to be registered with states as citizens or foreigners (İçduygu, Ender & Gençkaya, 2014). In the 20th century, refugee or asylum seeker groups who had to migrate because of global and regional wars, internal turmoil, political instability, ethnic/religious conflicts, oppressive regimes, and human rights violations converted the phenomenon of international migration into an important policy area (Danış, 2004; Heywood, 2013). Developments during this period such as the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the Afghanistan War, the Arab Spring, and the Syrian Civil War are among the most prominent global and regional developments that have triggered international migration (Deniz, 2014, p.178).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) announced that the number of people fleeing from war, oppression, violence, and violations of rights was declared to be globally 82 million 400 thousand in 2020. According to the report, the number of people who were forced to migrate increased rapidly and doubled compared to the numbers about ten years ago. 9 out of 10 of those who left their country were Syrians, Venezuelans, Afghans, South Sudanese, and Myanmar people. Many refugees migrated to neighboring countries and low- and middle-income countries in these regions. The leading countries that hosted the most refugees were Türkiye (3 million 700 thousand), Colombia (1 million 700 thousand), Pakistan (1 million 400 thousand) and Uganda (1 million 400 thousand). 42 percent of the people who had to migrate were of schooling age under 18 (UNCHR, 2020).

Since the Syrian crisis began in March 2011, the political, economic, and social effects of the civil war have manifested itself both regionally and globally (Pirinçci, 2018). According to UNCHR's January 2022 data, approximately 5.6 million of the 6.6 million Syrians migrated to neighboring countries. As seen in Table 1, the countries hosting the most Syrians are Türkiye, Lebanon, and Jordan (UNCHR, 2022).

Table 1.
Countries to Where Syrians Migrated

Country	Number of Syrian Immigrants
Türkiye	3,629,807
Lebanon	831,053
Jordan	676,606
Iraq	265,384
Egypt	144,768
Other (North Africa)	41,742

Syrian refugees continue to live in the countries they took refuge in due to the prolonged internal turmoil in their native country. In this process, the education problem of children, a significant

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part of the refugee population, remains an important agenda for the host countries. In this research, the education of Syrian children in Türkiye, Lebanon, and Jordan as three countries most affected by the mass Syrian migration is evaluated in terms of the relevant policies, opportunities and limitations. Meeting the learning needs of hundreds of thousands of Syrian children who have never been able to access school and had to drop out of school for various reasons requires introducing various compensation mechanisms in the context of the right to access education and equality. Providing extra learning opportunities for this large group outside of formal education can only be possible through non-formal education activities. In this study, the responsibilities of non-formal education for Syrian children who are out of school are discussed.

Education of immigrant children: obstacles, risks and opportunities

Immigrant children are often at a disadvantage in accessing education. Disruption of immigrant children's education may not only cause them to fail to reach their potential but may also cause economic and social hardship for society. Therefore, the future of these children is related to the social, economic, and political development of societies (İbrahim, Zhou & Li, 2004). Barriers to schooling for immigrant children include poverty, overstretched resources in host countries, policy barriers, lack of documentation, language barriers, discrimination, and lack of physical capacity. These obstacles prevent immigrant children from receiving education on an equal basis with other students. Poverty and limited resources in host countries also contribute to the lack of educational opportunities for refugee and immigrant children (Jacobs & Devlesshouwer; 2022; Van Esveld, 2023; Yihan, 2023). For these reasons, immigrant children face the risks of experiencing cultural, economic, social, and educational deprivation and marginalization (Matsa, 2020).

School is not only a spatial protection area for immigrant children, but also a very important area for them to heal their traumas, build their future, integrate with society, and have a healthy and safe childhood (Duman, 2019; Rousseau & Guzder, 2008). However, as discussed in the following sections, most Syrian immigrant children in the region do not have access to school. It takes time to settle back into a settled life after migration, and this causes disruptions in the educational lives of immigrant children (McBrien, 2005). As seen in the Syrian civil war, the environment of violence and conflict that has lasted for years has led to the formation of a lost generation deprived of education. Non-formal education opportunities can be compensatory for immigrant children who cannot access the formal education system and who, even if they do, cannot adapt for various reasons and drop out of school. Non-formal education is now recognized to play a critical role in meeting the learning needs of youth and adults who do not have access to formal education (Weyer, 2009). The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) defines non-formal education as all educational activities organized alongside or outside formal education (MoNE, 1973). The defining feature of non-formal education is that it provides individuals with the opportunity to guarantee everyone's right to access education as an additional alternative and/or complement to formal education in their lifelong learning process. Non-formal education aims to provide literacy skills to adults and young people, to contribute to the education of children out of school, and to support people's life skills, job skills and social or cultural development (UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2012). The aim of non-formal education to compensate for the deficiencies of young people and adults resulting from not being able to benefit

from formal education (Miser, 2013) shows that it is employed as a compensation mechanism to make access to education possible for everyone.

The aim of this study is to examine the educational problems of Syrian children in the three countries with the highest population and to examine non-formal education opportunities. In the context of the right to education of these children who are victims of war and migration and take refuge in neighboring countries, identifying the obstacles to accessing education is important to eliminate these obstacles. When the existing literature is examined, it is seen that there are only two studies comparatively examining the education systems of countries that receive intense immigration. (Ayık, 2019; Kubilay, 2020) and there is a big gap in the literature. In her research, Ayık (2019) discussed the evaluation of students' academic achievements in terms of equality in Türkiye, Jordan, and Lebanon, and Kubilay (2020) focused on the barriers to access to education in all three countries. However, no study has been found that addresses the policies and practices developed for the schooling of Syrian children within the scope of formal education in all three countries and examines alternative education opportunities for out-of-school children. A holistic consideration of the opportunities created and can be created in the education ecosystem of these three countries, which struggle with similar difficulties in the education of Syrian children, has the potential to guide educators, researchers, and policy makers. In this context, answers to the following questions were sought in this research:

1. What kind of work is being done in Türkiye, Jordan, and Lebanon to ensure Syrian children have access to education?
2. What are the barriers to accessing education in all three countries?
3. What kind of compensatory education mechanisms can be developed for children who are out of school?

Method

In this study, a case study, which is a qualitative research method, is used. Case study is an in-depth examination of one or a few limited situations (Creswell, 2007). Unlike experimental studies, case studies try to explore, not compare (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). In the research, Syrian children's access to education in Türkiye, Lebanon and Jordan is discussed in the context of developed policies and practices. The research data is collected by document scanning method. Google Scholar, Education Source and ERIC databases were used to collect data. Education of Syrian children in Türkiye, education of Syrian children in Lebanon, education of Syrian children in Jordan, Syrian children out of school, Syrian children's access to education were used as keywords. The data is obtained from reports, official websites and news published by all three countries and international organizations and supported by relevant research. The documents accessed and examined within the scope of the research are shown in Table 2.

Table 2.
Documents Reviewed

Document	Reference
Syrian refugees in Jordan: A reality check. The Migration Policy Centre, Policy Briefs	Achilli (2015)

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Integration of Education for Refugees in National Systems. Global Education Monitoring Report 2019: Migration, Education, and Displacement	Dryden-Peterson et al. (2018).
Responding to crisis: Syrian refugee education in Lebanon, Policy Brief	El Ghali et al. (2016)
Double shift educational experience of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon: Case of bater official secondary school	Ghoussaini (2022)
Growing Up Without an Education: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon	Human Right Watch [HRW] (2016a)
We're Afraid for Their Future: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan	HRW (2016b)
Lebanon: Syrian Refugee Children Blocked from School	HRW (2021)
Statistical Bulletin of Scholastic Year 2018–2019	MEHE-CERD (2019)
Suriye'ye komşu ülkelerde Suriyeli mültecilerin durumu: Bulgular, sonuçlar ve öneriler (The situation of Syrian refugees in countries neighboring Syria: Findings, conclusions and recommendations)	ORSAM (2014)
Too young to wed the growing problem of child marriage among Syrian girls in Jordan	Save the Children (2014)
A Study on Early Marriage in Jordan 2014	UNICEF (2014)
Curriculum, accreditation and certification for Syrian children in Syria, Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt	UNICEF (2015)
Syria Regional Response Plan (Second Revision)	United Nations (2012)
Global trends-forced displacement in 2019	UNHCR (2019b)
İzleme ve değerlendirme raporu (Monitoring and evaluation report)	MoNE-GDLL (2022)

The data collected in the research is analyzed with descriptive analysis technique. Descriptive analysis includes summarizing and interpreting the data obtained through various data collection techniques according to the determined themes (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2003). The data collected from the reports were classified under separate headings for each country, based on access opportunities and barriers to education. These findings were then discussed, supported by other research.

Literature Review

Education of immigrants in Türkiye after the first mass migration

Although Türkiye is one of the countries at the center of migration movements due to its location, it has faced mass migration for the first time with the Syrian civil war and undertook a great burden in basic service areas such as education, health, shelter, and security due to the open-door policy followed for Syrian citizens. In the field of education, which is one of the policy areas in question, many studies have been carried out to meet the educational needs of both Syrian adults and children. As of July 2022, 3,650,572 Syrians Under Temporary Protection (SuTP) have been hosted in Türkiye. Approximately 1 million 365 thousand 884 of the SuTP population consist of school-age children. In this respect, the migration process has become an important policy area that needs to be managed well. Within the scope of the policy of integrating Syrians living in Türkiye into the Turkish education system, it is decided to direct Syrian children to official schools as of the 2016-2017 academic year. Among those at school age, 928.485 (67.98%) of the SuTP population are included in education. The schooling rates of Syrian children in educational institutions affiliated with the Ministry are 45.27% in

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pre-school, 78.99% in primary school, 80.25% in secondary school, and 47.43% in high school (MoNE, Directorate General of Life Long Learning [DGLLL], 2022).

MoNE has focused on temporary solutions in the initial years, assuming that the Syrians flocking to Türkiye would return to their country, and supported the training provided by Syrians. Temporary Education Centers (TEC) started to be opened in the camps, providing education to Syrian children in their native language. However, the increasing Syrian population in Türkiye due to continuation of Syrian civil war has necessitated the development of approaches and policies aimed at ensuring social cohesion in the medium and long term. Thereupon, a series of legislative, structural, and academic preparations have been made in the field of education and studies have been initiated to fully include SuTP children in the Turkish education system.

MoNE launched the Accelerated Education Program (AEP) in 2018 to ensure that out-of-school Syrian children acquired the basic learning outcomes of the curriculum in a short time and received education at the same grade level as their peers. Children who successfully completed the program carried out by Public Education Centers were directed to public schools and integrated into education life (MoNE & UNICEF, 2019). In addition, Syrian children also participated in Remedial Education Program in Primary Schools (REPPS) (MoNE, 2020), which was organized by the Ministry of National Education in the 2018-2019 academic year for 3rd grade primary school students who could not achieve sufficient learning outcomes in Turkish language and Mathematics courses throughout the country. Within the scope of non-formal education, Turkish language teaching courses, general courses, vocational courses and Turkish literacy courses are provided to SuTP students, regardless of age limit, in Public Education Centers (MoNE, General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2021).

In order to cope with poverty, which is one of the main obstacles for Syrian children's access to school, the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme, which was launched in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Family and Social Services to increase schooling rates across the country, was launched in 2017 with the inclusion of Syrian and other refugee and asylum seeker families with low socio-economic levels. Within the scope of the facility, cash transfer is provided to Syrian families every month, provided that they send their children to school regularly (MoNE, 2021; MoNE & UNICEF, 2019).

The Project for Supporting the Integration of Syrian Children into the Turkish Education System (PICTES), which was launched in 2016 within the scope of the Facility for Refugees in Türkiye, plays a critical role in the education of SuTP children in Türkiye. The overall goal of the Project, which continues uninterruptedly in three phases as PICTES, PIKTES[2] II and PIKTES+, is "to contribute to the access of SuTP children to education in Türkiye" and its specific goal is to "support the Ministry of National Education in its efforts to integrate SuTP children into the Turkish education system (PICTES, 2018). PICTES operated in 23 provinces, PIKTES II in 26 provinces and PIKTES+ in 29 provinces where Syrian children live intensively. Project studies consist of a very comprehensive chain of activities such as Turkish and Arabic language teaching, preparation of training materials, early childhood education, back-up and catch-up training, transportation service, psychosocial support to students, stationery

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[2] The abbreviation, which was PICTES in the first phase of the project, was changed to PIKTES in the second phase because the word children in its name was replaced with kids.

support, vocational training scholarship, family visits, awareness-raising and information activities, teacher recruitment and training, administrative staff training, educational material and equipment support to schools, employment of cleaning and security personnel and container classroom construction (Tutar, 2024).

The main activity of the project is Turkish language education, which aims to overcome the language problem that prevents Syrian students whose native language is Arabic from adapting to school and following the curriculum. Other important activities carried out within the scope of the project stand out as catch-up and back-up training. Catch-up training is provided to children who had to take a break from school so that these children could reach the required academic level to enroll in a class appropriate for their age. Refugee children between the ages of 9 and 18 who are out of school or take a long break from education for various reasons are admitted to catch-up training. The purpose of catch-up training is to ensure that children are included in the Turkish education system by acquiring basic competencies to continue their education. In catch-up training, an intensive special program prepared by PIKTES is applied primarily to increase language skills and provide basic competencies. Supportive training is provided to Syrian students who studied in public schools but were not academically successful or had to repeat a grade, to ensure their continued education and to minimize the risk of school dropout. These trainings, which will enable students to reach average academic standards, are organized in specific courses such as Turkish, Mathematics and Science (X, 2024).

Despite all these efforts in Türkiye, economic, linguistic, cultural, and social problems continue to exist as barrier to Syrian children's schooling and attendance (Topal & Uluçınar Sağır, 2021). Communication problems caused by language differences, structural obstacles, lack of interest in education, negative attitudes of families about the benefits of education, early marriages, negative views on mixed education for female and male students, transportation problems to school, uncertainties about the future, physical inadequacies such as classrooms and laboratories, overcrowding in schools, information shortage, child labor, social acceptance and adaptation problems, socio-economic inadequacies, population mobility, gender roles, etc. (Avcı, 2019; Arabacı, Başar, Akan & Göksoy, 2014; Balkar, Şahin & Babahan, 2016; Block, Gross & Gibbs, 2014; Bulut, Kanat Soysal & Gülçiçek, 2018; Demirbaş & Bekaroğlu, 2013; Er & Bayındır, 2015; Gümüşten, 2017; Kaya & Çolakoğlu, 2020; Özer, Koşuoğlu & Ateşok; 2016; Tanrıkulu, 2017; Taştan & Çelik, 2017; Sarıahmetoğlu & Kamer, 2020; Topal & Uluçınar Sağır; 2021; Keskin & Okçu, 2021; Yurdakul & Tok, 2018) are the main obstacles to schooling and school attendance. Approximately 32% of Syrian children in Türkiye are out of school (MoNE—DGLLL, 2022). When school dropouts are considered, the importance of various measures that need to be taken in the context of non-formal education and adult education to address the educational needs of Syrians becomes apparent.

Syrian children's access to school in Lebanon, a country struggling with multiple crises

Lebanon is the country that hosts such a high number of refugees in the world relative to its population that one in six people is Syrian (UNHCR, 2019b). Lebanon, which currently hosts more than 500 thousand Palestinian refugees and when 1.5 million Syrians are added according to unofficial figures, has become one of the countries most affected by the Syrian crisis (Gökçimen, 2021). Although Lebanon followed an open-door policy for Syrian immigrants at the beginning of the civil war, it started

not accepting refugees as of October 2014. Due to the economic situation, political instability, and the influence of Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian civil war, Beirut did not volunteer to host Syrians, despite having deep historical and political ties with Syria. Therefore, it received financial support from the United Nations (UN) and other non-governmental organizations to meet their basic needs by providing almost exclusively logistical support to Syrian immigrants (Pirinçci, 2018). In Lebanon, where even electricity support is not provided to the settlements, Syrian immigrants experience very unfavorable conditions compared to the countries they took refuge in (Gökçimen, 2021). Syrians, who represent a significant proportion by migrating to Lebanon, where the country's population is 4.5 million, lead to security concerns as well as financial difficulties. The fact that the country consists of many ethnic groups and sects causes Syrian immigrants, who are predominantly Sunni, to make other groups in the country worried about the situation. This situation, which fuels polarization through sects, creates a negative reaction to Syrian immigrants (Orhan, 2015).

While children constitute approximately half of the Syrian population living in tarpaulins well below human living standards in Beirut, Tripoli and Beka Valley, there are no schools in most of these settlements (Gökçimen, 2021). Although the integration of Syrian children into public schools in Lebanon was initiated in 2012-2013, with the UN institutions covering the registration and tuition fees, restrictions were applied as the number of Syrian refugees increased, and the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education switched to a dual-shift system to meet the educational needs of immigrant children (Crul et al., 2019). It is estimated that 987 thousand Syrians migrated to Lebanon as a result of the ongoing conflicts in Syria, and approximately 490 thousand of them are school-age children. Approximately 350 schools provide education to 150 thousand Syrian students with dual-shift education (Ghoussaini, 2022). In the dual-shift system, Lebanese students go to school in the mornings and Syrian students go to school in the afternoon. However, more than half of Syrian children are out of school (Crul et al., 2019; Ghoussaini, 2022; Human Right Watch [HRW], 2021; UNHCR, 2019a).

When the poverty of Syrian families is added to the economic crisis in Lebanon, children work to contribute to the family budget instead of going to school (Ghoussaini, 2022). While the rate of Syrian child labor is 5% as of 2021, the highest concentration is seen in male students between the ages of 15-17. Financial inadequacies, child marriage and child labor are the biggest obstacles to schooling. Most Syrian families are extremely poor and cannot afford school expenses such as tuition, transportation, stationery, and books (VASyR, 2021). Apart from financial obstacles to accessing education, Syrian children in Lebanon suffer from poor language skills, discrimination, and curriculum difficulties at school. The fact that the education system in Lebanon is quite different from Syria in terms of curriculum and language causes great difficulties in the schooling of Syrian children (El Ghali et al., 2016; Ghoussaini, 2022). In addition, the fact that the school-age refugee population is well above the current capacity of public schools in the country is the most critical structure-based obstacle. As a matter of fact, school-age Syrian children far exceed the approximately 250 thousand Lebanese children enrolled in public schools in the 2015-2016 academic year. All these reasons put serious pressure on the Lebanese education system (HRW, 2021b; Ghoussaini, 2022). Although the Lebanese government and non-governmental organizations (NGO) have taken measures against this pressure through policies and practices, the crisis continues (Ghoussaini, 2022).

At the beginning of the refugee crisis in 2011-2012, the Lebanese government did not intervene for the education of Syrian children. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has allowed Syrian children to enroll in Lebanese public schools, in line with current policies regarding immigrant children. Enrollment is carried out on the condition that the total number of non-Lebanese students does not exceed 25% of the total enrollment in public schools and there are at least 10 Lebanese students in each class (Kelcey and Chatila, 2020). On the other hand, legal residence documents, registration and book fees are not required so that the enrollment of Syrians in school can be facilitated (El Ghali et al., 2016; HRW, 2016a). However, as mentioned above, when complex bureaucratic procedures are added to access barriers arising from differences in the language of education and poverty, the process turns into an educational crisis (Watkins & Zyck, 2014).

The Government of Lebanon is supported by national and international organizations to manage the refugee education crisis. The government prepared the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan in 2015 and since then has been updating and implementing it every year. Under the plan, each area is managed by a Ministry body and a UN agency. The training area is coordinated by MoEHE & UNICEF. MoEHE, together with international actors, has established the Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) policy, a three-year strategy that has been in effect since 2014 to support and improve the public education system in Lebanon (Elizabeth, Vidur, Dryden -Petersen, 2019; Ghoussaini, 2022). With the five-year (2017-2021) RACE II plan developed subsequently, efforts have continued for the integration of refugee children into formal and non-formal education. RACE I aimed to provide access to education for approximately 200,000 Syrian children by 2016 (United Nations, 2012). In 2016, Lebanon adopted a five-year RACE II plan with the aim of enrolling 440,000 Syrian children in formal education by the 2020-2021 academic year (HRW, 2016a).

Although MoEHE has made progress in increasing the number of children attending public schools and achieving the RACE strategy goals, it has not achieved full success for various reasons, such as insufficient funding, lack of coordination between schools, and limited cooperation with government institutions and non-governmental organizations (El Ghali et al., 2016). Schools in Lebanon face four types of challenges: structural, socio-emotional, cultural, and academic (Mahfouz, 2019). The transition to online learning with the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak and the economic crisis further increased this tension. In this period (2020-2021), the rate of children aged 6-14 years old who were enrolled in school decreased by 14% compared to the previous year, falling to 53%, and Syrian children received little or no distance education (HRW, 2021; VASyR, 2021). During these very difficult times for Lebanon, children's education was seriously affected, and the education system was overstretched (UNCHR, 2021).

The education system in Lebanon differs from that in Syria in terms of the type of institutions and the language of instruction. The language of education at the basic and secondary education levels in Syria is Arabic (El Ghali et al., 2017). Contrary to expectations, the language barrier is the most important learning barrier for Syrian children in Lebanon. Syrian students follow the same educational curriculum as Lebanese children. In Lebanon, teaching mathematics and science, which are core subjects generally starting from the 4th grade, in English or French, creates a significant learning obstacle for Syrian children who only speak Arabic, causing low academic success and high school dropout rates (Crul et al., 2019; Ghoussaini, 2022). The difference in the language of education leaves

families, children and school personnel faced with many difficulties. Language-related barriers affect students' academic success as well as the speed and degree of their social and cultural adaptation with the host community (Ghoussaini, 2022, p. 22).

In Syria, unlike in Lebanon, 97% of schools in basic education are public schools (El Ghali et al., 2017). Education is provided in private and public schools established by foundations affiliated with different sects in Lebanon. Although private school costs are quite high, Lebanese families prefer private schools to ensure that their children receive a more qualified education (Muradoğlu, 2016). Only about 30% of school-age Lebanese children attend public schools, the rest in private or semi-private schools (MEHE-CERD, 2019). Such low enrollment rates in public schools are associated with the low quality of education there (Shuayb et al., 2016). Lack of resources, a very high ratio of students per teacher, and inadequate teacher training and qualifications reduce the quality of education (Ghoussaini, 2022, p. 23).

Educational strategies in three different forms, consisting of complete inclusion where immigrant students do not have access to the national education system, where they follow a national curriculum that is temporarily or spatially separate from the children of the host society, and where they are educated in the same environment as the children of the host society, affect the education quality of immigrant children (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019). The dual-shift education model implemented in Lebanon is questioned, especially in terms of the quality of education for Syrian children (El Ghali et al., 2016). In the research conducted by UNCHR (2019) on the dual-shift education system, it is observed that there are disconnections between the Ministry, which has a very centralized management, and the practices in schools and classrooms. The fact that no official certificate/diploma is issued for the afternoon shift shows that Syrian parents prefer to enroll their children in the morning shift (Shuayb et al., 2016). While access to the first shift provides Syrian students with acceptance and inclusion within Lebanese society, access to the second shift tends to reify the differences and inequalities between these groups (Watkins & Zyck, 2014). In Lebanon, it is observed that most Syrian children study separately from the host community in the afternoon, negatively affecting social cohesion and the quality of education (Crul et al., 2019). Inclusion, which is the education of immigrant children in the same environment as the children of the host society, provides many advantages in terms of the host society's curriculum, diplomas, trained teachers, and existing infrastructure facilities (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2018).

Of the nearly 522 thousand school-age Syrian children and young people between the ages of 3 and 24 registered in Lebanon, 30% of those between the ages of 6 and 17 have never attended school, and only 11% of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 have access to education (UNCHR, 2021). The education process of many Syrian students in Lebanon has been disrupted for at least one or two years, and some of them cannot enroll in school at all due to the war. MoEHE supports children who have lost years and are out of school with the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) and programs such as basic literacy and mathematics, psycho-social activities, community-based education, and early childhood education, which are within the scope of non-formal education (Crul et al., 2019). All these indicators show that Lebanon should urgently focus on non-formal education with the contribution of the international community.

Education in Jordan, the concentration camp of the Middle East

Jordan is one of the countries that has been subjected to intense immigration for many years because of the wars in the Middle East. After the Arab Israeli Wars, approximately 3 million Palestinians and after the Iraqi occupation, more than 200 thousand Iraqis immigrated to Jordan. Before the start of the Syrian civil war, Jordan, where more than 3 million of its population of approximately 7 million were refugees, turned into a concentration camp with the Syrian migration (Kenar & Abdullahoğlu, 2021; Middle East Strategic Research Center [ORSAM], 2014). Although approximately half of Jordan's population are Palestinian refugees, only 634,182 of them are officially registered as refugees (Lischer, 2008). Similarly, while Jordan hosts approximately 671 thousand registered Syrian refugees, the real population is estimated to be approximately 1.3 million when unregistered people are considered. Approximately 90% of Syrian refugees live outside the camps in Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa, and approximately 130 thousand of them live in the camps (Acaps, 2022; UNICEF; 2022). Hundreds of thousands of Syrians who fled to Jordan from the Syrian civil war created serious population pressure in Jordan, multiplying the country's economic crisis and unemployment problem, and negatively affected both Syrian refugees and Jordanians (Achilli, 2015).

The Jordanian Ministry of Education has carried out many studies to meet the educational needs of Syrian children who migrated to their country after the Syrian crisis in 2011. The most prominent of these efforts can be listed as the hiring of new teachers, allowing Syrian children to enroll in public schools free of charge, and starting dual-shift education in approximately 100 primary schools to create a more educational environment (Human Watch Right, 2016b). The Jordanian Ministry of Education has opened fully accredited schools for Syrian children in refugee camps. Syrian students studying in these schools have received official certificates at the end of the year (UNICEF, 2015). There have been approximately 257 thousand school-age refugee children in Jordan, and approximately 145 thousand of these children have been schooled (UNCHR, 2022). Syrian children have been taught the Jordanian curriculum in public schools. Syrian children have adapted to the Jordanian curriculum more easily than other countries because the language of education is Arabic (UNICEF, 2015).

In Jordan, the government and various NGOs are working together to ensure that Syrian children at the primary school level receive an education. However, this support is not continued for older children. As a matter of fact, the enrollment rate for Syrian students drops from 90% in primary schools to below 30% in secondary schools (Lenahan, 2020).

Administrative restrictions such as the inability to provide the documents required for registration and the "three-year rule" that does not allow children who have been out of school for three years or more to continue formal education are the biggest obstacles to Syrian children's access to school in Lebanon. Similarly, the fact that Syrian refugees are not given legal work permits and that they work unregistered and for low wages requires children to join the workforce to increase household income. Poverty is one of the main obstacles to schooling for Syrians in Jordan. Accordingly, the inability of households that are far from the school to afford the transportation fee causes a barrier in accessing the school. On the other hand, being exposed to bullying, humiliation, physical abuse, psychological distress and discrimination causes Syrian refugee children enrolled in school to drop out

of school. Lack of psychological support for Syrian children who suffered from trauma in schools is also seen as an obstacle to access to school (HRW, 2016b; Younes & Morrice, 2019). Early marriage of female students is one of the main obstacles to schooling. According to Save the Children's (2014) report, the marriage rates of girls under the age of 18 increased so significantly after the war that while the rate of Syrian child brides in Jordan was 12% in 2011, this rate reached 18% in 2012 and 25% in 2013. Poverty, protecting girls from sexual violence (Save the Children, 2014; Selby, 2018) and cultural reasons (UNICEF, 2014) lie behind the early marriage of girls. This rate increased to 36% in 2014, a fourfold increase compared to the pre-war period (Selby, 2018). Jordan does not offer many options for accessing education other than formal education, the priority of being a spouse and getting pregnant pushes children in this group out of school life altogether (UNICEF, 2014).

In addition to the obstacles in accessing education for Syrian children, Jordan's structural and qualitative deficiencies in the field of education also hinder schooling. One of the main education problems in Jordan is that the schools attended by Syrian children are generally overcrowded. In regions where Syrian refugees are concentrated, public schools have exceeded their capacity (UNICEF, 2015). Although Lebanese families have started to enroll their children in private schools due to the decreasing quality of education in public schools, the inability to afford private school fees due to economic reasons has led to a negative tendency towards public schools again (Human Watch Right, 2016). The transfer of Jordanian children, as well as Syrian children, from private schools to public schools due to the economic crisis in the country has further increased this congestion (UNICEF, 2015).

With the admission of Syrian children to public schools, the currently limited classroom environment has become even more limited. Even before the Syrian crisis, many schools in Jordan had introduced morning and afternoon shifts to increase classroom space (Human Watch Right, 2016). Jordanian and Syrian students in schools that operate in two shifts, and students in refugee camp schools receive fewer hours of education than children attending schools that operate at regular hours. Moreover, there are deficiencies regarding the learning environment and quality in dual-shift education schools. Some of these include closing school facilities such as libraries during the afternoon shift, reducing class hours, and the fact that some teachers have not received any teaching training (HRW, 2016b). On the other hand, very few Syrian children in Jordan have access to vocational education, which is of strategic importance in the fight against child labor. The biggest factors in this are the inability to pay the fees for vocational training colleges and not having the necessary documents for registration, and the fact that the Jordanian authorities do not approve vocational training projects due to the concern that Syrians will compete with Jordanians for jobs, according to the statement of NGOs (HRW, 2016b).

In order to get Syrian refugee children into school, works are carried out such as UNICEF's providing cash support to households with three school-age children, at least one of whom is at risk of dropping out of school, providing school meals through a nationwide nutrition program carried out in cooperation with UNICEF, UNHCR and the International Labor Organization, and the provision of free textbooks and the project to combat child labor. Transportation service is provided for children living in residential areas far from the school. In 2016, the "Learning for All" campaign was launched nationwide for parents of children who were out of school and at risk of dropping out. UNICEF sent messages to families and formed a helpline to inform them about the possibilities and opportunities

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regarding schooling. The Jordanian Ministry of Education has launched the Anti-Bullying program. UN organizations have been working to improve the school environment; UNICEF, in collaboration with many government organizations, has implemented the "Multi-Sectoral Strategy of Changing Norms and Behavior to End Violence Against Children". The ministry has also launched the Nashatati (my activities) program, which aims to develop life skills and citizenship, strengthen social cohesion, and improve children's psychosocial well-being through after-school activities (Younes & Morrice, 2019).

In Jordan, there are non-formal education programs aiming at reintegrating children into formal education who have been out of school for more than three years and are deemed unsuitable for direct access to formal education (UNICEF, 2015). The Jordanian government implements two major non-formal education programs, the catch-up program, and the drop-out program, for Syrian children who are out of school. The catch-up training program is designed to provide an accelerated learning curriculum to reintegrate 9- to 12-year-old children who have been out of school for three years or more into the school system. The school leaving program is organized to provide an intensive education curriculum in an accelerated format for male students aged 13-18 and female students aged 13-20 who are refugees or Jordanians and are in environments where schooling is difficult to reach (Younes and Morrice, 2019). The school leaving program is given by teachers accredited by the Ministry of Education and hired by the Ministry. Teachers who will take these courses are given training by NGOs on how to implement the condensed and accelerated curriculum. Apart from these, there are various non-formal education programs that Syrian refugees can access, such as home education, evening and summer study programs, adult education, and literacy (UNICEF, 2015). Jordan is making maximum efforts to bring Syrian children to school despite all economic, social, and infrastructural difficulties. However, despite all these efforts, the educational needs of approximately 112 thousand Syrian children who are out of school continue. Some of these questions include the impact of transnational migration on adult education, the difficulties, and opportunities in accessing education, the role of immigrants in their adaptation to a new society, how states and communities can work together to develop policies and practices regarding adult education, and the relationship between migration, identity, and lifelong learning.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Most of the refugees who had to migrate after the civil unrest that started in Syria in 2011 migrated to neighboring countries, especially Türkiye, Lebanon, and Jordan. A significant proportion of Syrian children, who are among those who paid the heaviest price after the war and migration crisis, seems to be out of school.

It is seen that there are various efforts in every country towards the first question of the research "What kind of work is being done in Türkiye, Jordan, and Lebanon to ensure Syrian children have access to education". Since 2016, immigrant children have been studying in public schools in Türkiye. The Ministry provides accelerated education program and Turkish language education support for Syrian children to access school. In addition, efforts to school Syrian children continue with PIKTES, which includes a series of activities directly for immigrant children and disadvantaged Turkish children (TUTAR, 2024). Lebanon has adopted a dual-shift system to school Syrian children, which is quite high

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compared to the number of school-age children in the country. In addition, MoEHE & UNICEF and other international actors have established the Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) policy and strategies have been developed for Syrian children to access school. The Jordanian Ministry of Education has carried out many studies to meet the educational needs of Syrian children as hiring of new teachers, allowing Syrian children to enroll in public schools free of charge, and starting dual-shift education (Human Watch Right, 2016b).

The second question "What are the barriers to accessing education in all three countries?" reveals many similar obstacles for the three countries. The main obstacles to Syrian children's schooling in all three countries can be listed as curriculum and language differences, insufficient classrooms, early marriages, child labor, school adaptation problems and poverty. Economic inadequacies and resulting child labor are the biggest obstacles to schooling (Avcı, 2019; Bilecik, 2019; Gümüşten, 2017; HRW, 2016a; Hodes, 2000; Kaya & Çolakoğlu, 2020; Nar, 2008; Tanrıkulu, 2017; VASyR, 2021; Younes & Morrice, 2019; Watkins & Zyck, 2014). On the other hand, in Türkiye (Altıntaş & Şekli, 2015; Saklan, 2018; Topal & Sağır; 2021) in Lebanon (Ghoussaini, 2022, p. 24) and in Jordan (HRW, 2016a; Younes & Morrice, 2019) Syrian children are exposed to bullying, humiliation, physical abuse, psychological distress and discrimination due to differences in culture, ethnicity and even social class. Not providing adequate psychological support to combat these social and psychological obstacles also causes an obstacle to accessing school. If sufficient efforts are not made to ensure that Syrian immigrant children have access to education, which is a fundamental human right, problems of lack of education and unemployment may arise in the future, which may lead to problems such as social exclusion, poverty, increase in crime, participation in marginalized groups. In addition, security problems may increase throughout society and a burden may arise on social service resources. To prevent these potential problems, effective policies and programs focusing on the education and social integration of immigrant children are important.

The last question of this study is "What kind of compensatory education mechanisms can be developed for children who are out of school?" points to other opportunities besides formal education. When we look at the regional scale, because of the Syrian civil war, which affected the whole world, especially Türkiye, and caused serious human rights violations, millions of people were forced to migrate and hundreds of thousands of children were left out of school. Considering the beginning of the war, these children need educational support in learning the language of the host society, adapting to society, especially their basic educational needs such as literacy and numerical skills. This situation makes non-formal education studies important for this large population who are excluded from formal education.

Non-formal education provides a solution to the time, space, and age limitations of formal education in accessing education (Karakuş Yıldız and Taş, 2023). Various forms of service through different learning pathways are required to support out-of-school children's right to education. Non-formal education, which is such a path, meets the learning needs of children, young people and adults worldwide with its organizational structure, educational method and diversity it offers. Non-formal education, which is open to flexibility, change and innovation, covers a wide range of stakeholders, including public institutions, private sector, and civil society (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2014; UNICEF & UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2014). Non-formal education has an important role in eliminating

the learning losses of Syrian children who migrate to other countries and are out of school. The catch-up education program, which is carried out in all three countries to reintegrate children who were out of school, should be expanded to include children who are still out of school. These accelerated trainings within the scope of non-formal education are very important as they enable students to quickly compensate for their learning losses and return to school. Support mechanisms should be developed regarding the obligation to learn the language of the host society, which is the most fundamental barrier to academic success during schooling and attendance. With language training courses for both children and adults, the biggest barrier to adaptation to the host society will be removed. All of these require non-formal education efforts that include an institutional and systematic effort. On the other hand, considering the barriers to school access mentioned above, integrating these educational activities into distance education will facilitate participation. Although non-formal education has been overshadowed by formal education for many years (Karakuş Yıldız and Taş, 2023), it plays a very important role as a second chance for disadvantaged groups with various obstacles in accessing education. It is vital for the formation of healthy individuals and societies to implement regional-scale non-formal education projects with the support of the international community for the Syrian population, which has been victimized by forced migration and whose access to education has been interrupted.

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