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Child Poverty Indicators: The Case of Elazig

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Abstract

The risk situations faced by children make them one of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. One of these risk situations is poverty. This research is based on interviews with children and their parents (45 parents, 33 children) in the households living in the city center of Elazig (through SASA) designated as poor. In order to analyze better a special and disadvantageous issue such as child poverty, it is aimed to make an in-depth analysis of this issue. A qualitative research method was preferred for the study because it aimed to conduct interviews with poor individuals. In order to determine the universe and sample of the research, the snowball sampling technique, a sampling method, was used. The data in the study is a case study based on the analysis of the answers obtained from the form of the interview. The data of the study is based on in-depth interviews conducted with school-aged child and their parents. The obtained data were analyzed with quantitative (tables) and qualitative (interview notes) research techniques. Thus, it is tried to determine the socio-economic problems and needs of poor children such as education, health, nutrition and shelter. In addition, it is aimed to make a sociological analysis of these data obtained.

Keywords: Poverty, Child poverty, Indicators, Child poverty indicators, Poverty situations

Introduction

Poverty is one of the most essential phenomena negatively affecting the quality of human life in many respects. Undoubtedly, growing up in a poor and deprived environment means a life containing many problems for children. Experiencing life in poverty means that even though the child becomes an adult, s/he still lives in ongoing poverty. Poverty is inherited from parents to children unless opportunities evolve in a positive way. Growing up in poverty causes the child to be deprived of many rights and opportunities. Education, health, housing, nutrition, etc. It results in a struggle for life in an unequal world in terms of basic human rights. The history of poverty, which is examined by many academic disciplines, is as old as the history of humanity. In this historical process, poverty has faced social changes and transformations and has become a complex issue with many different definitions. In the literature, it is possible to see many definitions of poverty that focus on different points albeit they are close to each other. The factors that make these definitions different are the historical processes, economic

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conjuncture, social habits, socio-cultural changes, and so on. Therefore, a standard definition of the concept of poverty is not possible to be made (Benli&Yenihan, 2018, pp.2-3). G. Marshall, in his *Dictionary of Sociology*, defines poverty as a concept that means social exclusion and isolation beyond being an economic-oriented concept (Marshall, 2005, p.825).

Although poverty differs in terms of the qualities and dimensions in societies with different socio-economic development levels, it is a risky social problem for all societies. It is necessary to consider poverty not only as a form measured by certain criteria, but also as a phenomenon in which many conditions such as education, health, capability, social equality, justice, equality of benefiting from opportunities, and social exclusion, are taken into consideration. For this reason, it is possible to define poverty as a social situation in which individuals not only struggle economically but also try to improve their living standards to make sense of their lives and to see themselves at the point of social acceptance. (Ak, 2016, pp.296-297-298).

The recent poverty debates made in terms of globalization are not only addressed as a problem of economic inadequacy, that is, the inability to meet basic needs but also considering social exclusion and social isolation (Kurnaz, 2007, p.49). In this context, the importance of child poverty increases in the global arena where poverty comes to the fore. In today's world, children are the most negatively affected by poverty. Children experience the effects of poverty in various forms and within a variety of outcomes.

In UNICEF's State of the World's Children 2005 Report, child poverty is defined as the situation in which children are deprived of the material, spiritual, and emotional resources they need to survive on and grow up, and as a result of these negativities, their inability to benefit from their fundamental rights, to actualize their full potential, and to be able to fully and equally participate in the society. (UNICEF, 2004, p.18).

According to UNICEF's The State of the World's Children 2021 report, poverty is a critical social determinant of mental health shaping the lives of many children and their caregivers. Based on 2020 data, 356 million children—globally about 20 percent of children under the age of 5 live in extreme poverty. Poverty is not just about lack of money— it is multidimensional and includes deprivations in education, health, food, water, and sanitation. According to this measure, 644 million children live in multidimensional poverty. Wherever they are, children growing up poor suffer from low standards of living, develop fewer skills for the workforce, and earn lower wages as adults. (2021, p.86). According to the data obtained from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK, 2018) included in UNICEF's Turkey Annual Report (2019), the relative poverty rate in Turkey (the proportion of households with an income below %60 of the equivalent household median income) is %21,2. Relative poverty among children is higher at %32,1 (UNICEF, 2019, p.31).

According to some authors, child poverty is a product of their parents or upbringing. It is not about their being considered poor because of their lack of income. Poor families transfer the state of being poor to their children because they cannot meet the needs that will ensure the mental, physical and emotional development of children. They also cause their children to face or be exposed to undesirable situations such as violence, exploitation, discrimination, and abuse. Therefore, one of the biggest risks for children is poverty (Durgun, 2011, pp.145-146). It is a fact that poverty has negative psychosocial and behavioral effects on children (Kınacı, 2020, p.85).

According to Kahraman and Sallan Gül (2015, p.344), the multidimensional poverty experienced by children did not receive the required significance it should deserve in Turkey, and the child dimension was overshadowed in studies on poverty. However, the subject of child poverty is vital in order to understand and analyze poverty in a more comprehensive way. It is stated that the reasons for child poverty depend on many factors such as "the level of economic development of countries, the inequality of income distribution, the structure of labor markets, socio-cultural approaches to gender roles, family structures, and education levels of parents, especially mothers" (Metin, 2015, p. p.169). In terms of causality, it is possible to say that if necessary precautions are not taken, child poverty will continue in a vicious circle and with intergenerational continuity.

1. The Aim of the Study

This study was carried out not with the aim of attaining a comprehensive and wide sample that can represent poverty, but with the aim of understanding the deprivation and victimization of poor children considering their own speeches about poverty. Rather than obtaining conclusions about the poor by generalizing, this research was carried out with the thought that it would be more meaningful to understand human experiences and poverty situations. The research aims to identify and describe the lifestyle determined by poverty as well as to detect how this situation occurs in children.

2. Methodology

This research is based on the interviews conducted with children and their parents in poor households (through SASA (Social Assistance and Solidarity Association)) in the city center of Elazig. The study was carried out in Sanayi, Salıbaba, Çatalçeşme, Sarayatik, Rüstempaşa, and Mustafapaşa neighborhoods situated in the city center of Elazig. The reason for choosing these neighborhoods is that the poor are mostly located in those districts. In the research, it is significant to describe the lifestyles, profane, and sacred thoughts of children living in poverty. In order to make these determinations, perspectives on lifestyles, poverty, and other general worldviews were tried to be determined with the help of the form of the interview. Therefore, this study is based on descriptive research aiming to show the relationships between various phenomena.

3. Data Collection Instruments

A qualitative research method was preferred for this study. Qualitative research is defined as a set of processes that try to understand, describe, solve, and interpret the phenomena in their natural environment and interpret what meanings people attribute to these phenomena (Merriam, 2015, p.13). This study aims to examine the lifestyles and conditions of the poor in depth and to describe the conditions in relation to their own expressions and experiences, rather than obtaining macro-scale poverty data. For this reason, rather than a quantitative study, the study aims to be a qualitative study considering its purpose. In order to determine the universe and sample of the research, the snowball sampling technique, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2010).

In this context, the study is a case study based on the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews (semi-structured interview conducted with parents and unstructured interview conducted with children). The case study comprises a detailed description of the individuals, the situations and then, the analysis of themes or problems (Dede, 2016, p.196). The interview, on the other hand, helps us to define and understand the phenomena in terms of phenomenology

(Büyüköztürk et. al., 2018). Additionally, the interviews were conducted by keeping observation notes in accordance with the nature of the qualitative study. To summarize, this study is a qualitative and descriptive case study.

4. Population and Sample of the Research

As a result of the households that were designated to be poor by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation, and the technique followed in the field (snowball sampling technique), 45 households were reached, and one parent and one of the children from these households were interviewed. Since the main axis of the study was to understand and interpret the subject in a phenomenological framework, the study was completed with 45 parents and 33 children, who were regarded to be representative for a qualitative study.

5. Participants

Since the answers and data that were obtained started to be repeated (an issue in the snowball sampling technique), the study was terminated at this point. The study group of the research consists of 33 children between the ages of 7-18, consisting of 19 girls and 14 boys, and 45 parents (3 men, 42 women) whom we interviewed to get information about their children. In-depth interviews were conducted with 33 children who accepted to be interviewed and wanted to answer the questions. The data obtained in the study are based on these in-depth interviews conducted with children. A parent interviewed in the selected poor households (whoever is present in the household, or who holds the position of being the household parent) and a child in the household constitute the participant group of this study.

6. Research Findings

6.1. Demographic Profile

Some demographic data of the individuals interviewed within the scope of the research are detailed in the table below:

Table 1. The profile of the interviewees participating in the research

Interviewee-Parent				
Gender	Number of Interviewees	The Average Age	Marital Status	Education Status
Woman	42	34	31 legally married, 3 common-law marriage, 6 divorced, 1 widow, 1 legally married but live separately	11 illiterates, 6 can only read, 18 primary school graduates, 1 middle school dropout, 1 middle school graduate, 1 high school dropout, 4 high school graduates
Man	3	52	1 Married, 1 Divorced, 1 Widow	1 illiterate, 2 primary school graduates
Interviewee-Child				
			Family togetherness	Education Status

Gender	Number of Interviewees	The Average Age	Together with mother and father	With Only the Mother or the Father	Primary School	Middle School	High School	Non-student
Girl	20	12	14	6	7	10	1	2
Boy	13	9	9	4	6	4	3	-

The information obtained from the households of poverty we tried to analyze got through the parents. Therefore, the interviews were conducted with whichever parent (mother or father) was present in the household when the households were arrived. Accordingly, 42 female and 3 male parents were interviewed. The interviews were conducted with 33 children (between the ages of 7-18), 20 girls (60.6%) and 13 boys (39.4%), who agreed to be interviewed. It has been discovered that almost all of the parents in the interviewed households (excluding the high school graduates-4 people in this context) have low education levels. The interviewed children are mostly studying at primary and secondary school level. In addition, 10 out of 33 children in the sample group live with a single parent. Of the children living with a single parent, 2 of them live with their father and 8 with their mother. During the interviews in the poor households, it was found that the poverty of the children living with a single parent is more.

Table. 2 Profile of the households interviewed

Number of people living in the household	Frequency	Percentage
2-4 People	12	26,7
5-7 People	27	60
8-10 People	6	13,3
Type of the House	Frequency	Percentage
Slum	10	22,2
Basement	2	4,4
House	11	24,5
Flat	22	48,9
Ownership of the house	Frequency	Percentage
Rented	29	64,5
Belongs to father or father-in-law	6	13,3
Charitable	1	2,2
With installment payment (Housing Development Administration of Turkey)	3	6,7
Owner	6	13,3
Availability of a child's room	Frequency	Percentage
available	8	17,8

none-available	37	82,2
Heating type	Frequency	Percentage
Stove (wood-coal)	40	88,9
Natural gas	5	11,1

It has been concluded that the households mostly consist of 5-7 (60%) people. It has also been revealed by various studies that poverty increases as the size of the household, which is one of the determining criteria of poverty, increases (Kızılgöl and Demir, 2010, p.23; Evcim, Güneş & Karaalp-Orhan, 2020, p.17; Değirmenci, 2020, p.865). In our study, it has been determined that the majority of households have 5 or more (73.3%) individuals. As the number of individuals in the households with limited financial possibilities increases, the purchasing power decreases, and individuals face the risk of poverty more. 48% of the households live in flats, mostly by paying rent/installments (71.2%). 88.9% of the households try to meet their heating needs by using a stove, and this type of heating cannot ensure a separate room for children (82.2%). It is significant to state that the majority of these households live in the suburbs of the city, especially in the poorer parts of the city. In most of the houses where children live (including those with flats), it is observed they live in poor conditions both in terms of household goods and in terms of the conditions of the houses. It has been determined that only 12 of the 45 households interviewed are livable in terms of cleaning in general, and the cleanliness and use of the goods. Many other remaining households do not provide a livable and clean environment for children. It has been identified that 2 households do not have sofas and beds on which they can sit or lie down. It is obvious that children grow up in a poor environment and culture not only in the houses they live in but also in terms of their environmental location. Poor people gathering in the areas due to low rents lead a life away from a culture that is called city life in this environment. Nested slums and similar settlements present us with intertwined poverty albeit in different ways and different lives. The children who grow up in these residential areas and troubled houses experience an environment closed to many opportunities. The fact that children living in poverty are deprived of many opportunities, not only in terms of money but also in the places where they live, proves that more serious policies should be developed.

6.2. Poverty Situations

Table 3. Poverty situations of the households

Monthly income of the household	Frequency	Percentage
1000TL and less	4	8,9
1000-1500TL	17	37,8
1500-2000TL	14	31,1
2000TL and more	10	22,2
Who works in the household	Frequency	Percentage
Nobody works	14	31,1
One of two parents work	23	51,1
Only the child works	1	2,2

Both parent(s) and the child work	7	15,6
Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	14	31,1
Freelance	23	51,1
Day labor	7	15,6
Trading	1	2,2
Social Security Status	Frequency	Percentage
available	41 (2 SSK, 39 Health Card for the Uninsured)	91,1
none-available	4	8,9
Status of getting aid	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	33 (3 of them get for education and disabled aid, 2 of them get for education and health, 28 of them just for education)	73,3
No	12	26,7

Child poverty is generally defined as the cause of low quality of life (Eryurt and Koç, 2013, p.140). In this context, when we tried to find out the income of the interviewed households, it was observed that they did not have a regular income. The lack of a regular income causes children to grow up in poverty and decreasing living standards which deepen. The income status of the households for average monthly income information is given in the table. This income table shows the average monthly income of the individuals including the sum of their earnings and the cash assistance received. According to this, the monthly income of the households is 37.8% at the most which is between 1000-1500TL. The income of the men who work in jobs earning between 60TL and 130TL per day and the women who clean the stairs earning between 100TL and 300TL per month is not sufficient to provide for the household. Thus, we can say that the children experience the biggest problem since their needs are not met. Children in households that lack the financial means necessary for the minimum standard of living are also deprived of many opportunities.

It is understood that freelance jobs are done mostly in households. These jobs, on the other hand, are mostly done by the father as the head of the household (like porter, construction worker, freelance jobs in the industry, junkyard, fieldwork). In the household with 13 children, it was determined that the father was not working. On the other hand, it has been determined that the father does not work due to some reasons such as death, divorce, illness, inability to find a job, being in prison, and the obligation to take care of the children due to health problems of the mother. It has been understood that the mother works in some households where the father does not work for various reasons. We observe that women generally clean the stairs, and 3 women try to make a living by selling handkerchiefs. Women working in the handkerchief sales business stated that their children also try to earn money by selling handkerchiefs or

begging. In 14 households in which nobody is working and in 8 of the remaining households (17.8%), the children are involved in working life in some way. In these 45 households, a total of 11 children work in various jobs. It has been stated that children work in temporary and daily jobs such as construction, industry, selling handkerchiefs, shoeshine, and porter. The vast majority of children work with the aim of supporting their family. 2 parents stated that it was more reliable for them to go to work with their father because they did not trust people outside. In one household, it was stated that the work of begging, which was adopted as a lifestyle, was carried out by all family members. However, the parents in the household expressed this work not as begging, but as a profession called "asking from houses".

8% of the households do not have social security and 73.3% of them are trying to make a living by getting aid from Social Services and Social Assistance. Some poor households receive aid such as cash aid, education and health service, and food provided by FSSP (Family Social Support Program) and SASA All beneficiaries receive educational aid for their children. The situation of families that are not having social security or are trying to make a living with social assistance through various institutions remains below the minimum standard of living. It is seen that none of the interviewed households can earn the minimum wage even if they work or have a financial income at the level of the minimum wage with the aid they receive. However, working in a regular job, even with minimum wage, can put poor households' livelihoods to a certain standard. Thus, a regular income means regular payments of debts, bills, rent, kitchen expenses, children's needs, and so on, albeit it provides a partial solution. However, a regular income was not encountered in any of the 45 households that were interviewed.

6.3. Child Poverty in Terms of Poverty Indicators

Poverty indicators are categories that enable us to better analyze the poverty of children. Access to health, education opportunities, and literacy have an important place in terms of the basic needs approach related to poverty, and these indicators give an idea about the extent of child poverty (Yaşar, 2016, p.206). In this context, within the scope of the study, it has been tried to determine with various indicators how the children growing up in poverty experience poverty in the most obvious way.

Table 4. Child poverty indicators in terms of nutrition and education

Nutrition		
How many meals are eaten per day	Frequency	%
3 meals	23	51,2
2 meals	19	42,2
1 meal	3	6,6
Consuming Meat Products	Frequency	%
Once per week	15	13,3
Once per month	24	53,4
A few times per year	6	33,3
Consuming Basic Foods such as Dairy Products (Yogurt, Cheese, Eggs)	Frequency	%

A Few times per week	3	6,6
Once per week	23	51,2
Once per month	18	40
None	1	2,2
Consuming fresh vegetables per week	Frequency	%
Consuming	40	88,9
Not Consuming	5	11,1
Consuming fresh fruit per week	Frequency	%
Consuming	18	40
Not Consuming	27	60
EDUCATION		
Children in the Household Going to School	Frequency	%
S/he goes	33	73,3
S/he does not go (At least one of them does not go)	12	26,7
Are their Educational Needs Fulfilled?	Frequency	%
Yes	19	42,2
No	26	51,2
Partially	3	6,6
Books Appropriate for Their Level (Excluding School Books)	Frequency	%
Available	18	40
None-available	27	60
Internet connection	Frequency	%
Available	14	31,1
None-available	31	68,9
Appropriate Working Space to do Homework	Frequency	%
Present	16	35,5
Absent	29	64,5
Do parents help doing homework?	Frequency	%
Yes	19	42,2
No	26	57,8
Do the children have sufficient school/stationery supplies?	Frequency	%
Sufficient	11	24,5
Deficient	34	75,5

What is Needed Most in Terms of School Needs (Based on Children's Expressions)	Frequency	%
Notebook, pencil	14	42,4
Shoes, pencil	2	6,1
Supplementary books	1	3,0
Backpacks, pencil	3	9,1
All	8	24,2
No need	5	15,2

While studying child poverty, we basically aimed to find the answer to this question: "How do we know that a child is poor?" The observations made, the households interviewed, and the neighborhoods and streets where the households are located gave us some clues throughout the field. Although we, as researchers, were concerned with the disadvantages of children due to poverty, the most important thing appeared how children were perceiving their situations. During the fieldwork, it was observed that some children were aware of their poor conditions. While answering the questions they were sorry for this situation. It has been concluded that sometimes children do not think that they are poor and that they do not see themselves as such. Because poverty has become a fact of their lifeworld. In some cases, it was observed that they gave different answers to the questions due to suppressed emotions. Despite these different situations, some poverty indicators were tried to be determined within the scope of the study. Thus, it has been tried to determine under what kind of standards and conditions children are living. In this context, information about the nutritional status of children was obtained. It was determined that children ate one meal a day in 3 households, two meals a day in 19 households, and three meals in 23 households. The fact that children can eat 3 meals a day is an important finding. However, when we questioned what children could consume at these meals and the extent of what they ate, it was determined that children could not be fed with healthy and satisfying foods. Unfortunately, even if 3 meals are given, children cannot be fed with enough food in terms of quality. Thus, they are not healthy and adequately fed. Inadequate nutrition of children can cause developmental delay and various health problems (Öztürk, 2009). Parents stated that the children have three meals at home, either a main course or a snack. This situation shows us that children are actually fed with food to spend the day. In addition, it has been revealed that 53.4% of children can consume a meat product (mainly white meat-chicken meat) once a month, 51.2% can consume one or more of the basic foods such as dairy products and eggs once a week, 88.9% of them can consume vegetables weekly and 40% can consume fruit once a week.

Poor families stated that they could consume red meat during the Eid-al-Adha when donations were made and that they could consume vegetables in neighborhood markets. They could buy them mostly in the evening since they were sold at affordable prices because of not being fresh. The majority of those who could consume fruit stated that they go help from relatives/neighbors. In our study, it is possible to say that the biggest obstacle for children to lead a healthy life is their low economic income. Due to their low income, poor families stated that they had difficulty in meeting the basic needs that should be in a food basket. As a result, we can say that children are not fed adequately, healthily, and regularly. As a final word, the

answer given by one of the children to the question "What do you want most?" explains the situation better:

"What I want most is to have a house, clothes, and most of all I would like to have food. Toast, pasta, and soup. I love soup, I would love to have soup." (C.14)

The most striking point in terms of practices and policies that are tried to be developed for fighting and intervention against poverty is the emphasis on education. Education is accepted as one of the most effective ways to prevent poverty and prevent its transmission from one generation to the other. The relationship between poverty and education is a complex and cyclical one. Poverty is related to low education; low education to low pay; and low wages to poor living conditions. This creates a vicious circle from poverty to poverty (Karayılmazlar, 2006, pp.214-215). Lack of education causes unemployment, the problems in the field of employment cause low income, which in turn causes poverty. It is seen that the relationship between poverty and education also works in the opposite direction (Bakırtaş and Kandemir, 2012, p.2). This inverse relationship results in not to benefit from education. In fact, this is a vicious circle as well as a complex one. This cycle encompasses many situations, such as social exclusion, being underclass, not being able to benefit from social and political rights or not being able to use these rights, a decrease in quality of life, and so on. Education is important because it gives the individual both professional skills and socialization. This functionality has an important role to break the vicious circle of poverty (Yaşar, 2016, p.209). For this reason, education is an important tool to prevent children from being condemned to poverty (Kaya, 2011, p.234). In this direction, the children were asked, "Do you like school, why do you think you should study?" Some of the answers received to the question are as follows:

"Yes, I love. I would like to go to school and buy good items for my brothers and my mother." (C.26)

"Yes, I love. But English and math are bad. I do not understand. I do not know why. But I would like to continue school. There is no life without school." (NOTE: Because his brother will start school this year, his mother will not send this child to school due to lack of money. The child is very upset because of this. His mother said that it was very upsetting that he had to leave the school at eight class.) (C.16)

"Yes, I love. If I have a job, I will have money, I will have a better life." (C.13)

"Yes, I love. If I go to school, I will have money. I won't need anyone. I do not have to ask anyone for money." (C.11)

"Yes, I love. In order not to need anyone in the future." (C.10)

"Yes, I love. If I do not do, I cannot help people, it is necessary to help them to get what they want." (C.4)

The common point of these answers is that children are worried about their future and they believe they can change the negative conditions they are in by going to school. One of the most important reasons is that they do not want to be dependent on anyone else and they want to sustain themselves in their own lives. This situation brings to mind that children are uncomfortable with being dependent on others or having expectations from others in their lives. In this direction, when we asked the children "what they want to be in the future", they stated the following answers:

"I would like to be a nurse. I will have money too. So I can help some poor people." (C.5)

"I want to be a judge. I think it is good. I can help my family, I can buy a dishwasher and a freezer." (C.11)

"I want to be a doctor. Because nowadays we need to help people, they need doctors. (He means the epidemic)." (C.12)

"I would like to be a doctor. On order to cure my father's illness. In order to heal people like my father." (C.22)

"I would like to be a doctor. I will have more money, I will be able to buy my own needs. I can easily get what I want." (C.24)

As understood from the answers of the children, they want to have a profession to get financial gain and help people.

In terms of indicators, the number of households in which there is at least one child who is of school age and does not/cannot go to school is 12 (26.7%). Only 42% of families can meet the educational needs of their children. However, 75% of the children have deficiencies within the scope of school/stationery needs. 60% of children do not have books according to their level of knowledge. Children have deficiencies in at least one of their needs, such as school uniforms, shoes, bags, and stationery. Families have difficulties in meeting these deficiencies. Such situations also affect the success of children, both in terms of their lessons and in terms of embarrassment among their friends. The answers given by the children reveal the situation more clearly:

"I lack many things. My pencils, notebooks, and coloring pencils are always missing. The teacher sometimes asks where it is, I say no. Sometimes the teacher gets angry and asks me to buy. I tell my mom to take it but they can't. I see my friends have it, they have everything perfect. I'm sad because I don't have it." (C.1)

"My shoes and pens are often missing. I usually have shortcomings for school. My teacher is not very angry, but my friends never share their materials. When I don't have it, I don't ask my friends to give it, I'm usually embarrassed. If my parents don't buy it, I'll try to keep it that way. For example, there are those who are worse off. Sometimes others make fun of them. But that's a bad thing." (C.2)

"Notebook, pen, school bag, jersey, and shoes. When I am with friends, I am actually ashamed if I do not have one. The teacher asks where it is, I say I do not have it, but I say it hard. Because some of my friends are laughing at me." (C.8)

Almost all of the children are trying to complete their education with many deficiencies, even in terms of their basic educational needs. It is not about only getting what they want. What parents express is that they can't afford a pen or notebook, so they keep usable materials from the previous year and give them to their children for the next year. Especially today, there are courses, private lessons, additional resources, etc. for children to get an education. It is undoubtedly obvious to see how much support children in poor households actually need to get an education. Therefore, although the children want to study in order not to be dependent on anyone and to have a profession and support their families, it reveals that they bring up the rear in today's conditions. Thus, it is possible to say that they will face poverty while getting an education under much more difficult conditions than their peers, and they will have to fight more than necessary. The lack of their needs sometimes results in being mocked in their environment or sometimes makes them feel sad because of comparisons. We can say that these deficiencies strongly damage children not only physically but also emotionally and psychologically: *"No, my needs are not complete. I need a notebook the most and a school uniform. For example, our teacher does not accept me in the lessons when I lack something. There were times when he kicked me out of class. I feel bad. There are those who laugh at my friends, I get angry, I get angry with the people at home, and I cry out of anger. When I ask my friends, they don't give it to me."* (C.31) One of the saddest situations we encountered during the research was that children, who were excluded because of their poverty, experienced fragility in their will to go to school: *"My siblings who go to school lack many things. There are many shortcomings in terms of both clothes and school supplies. When there is a shortage, the teacher asks for it. My siblings see that their friends have them. When we can't buy the same things, they get*

upset and cry. They don't want to go to school anymore since their friends make fun of them because of their clothes. They are ashamed of being ostracized. There were those who made fun of them calling them "the poor" and "the filthy". They like school but they're pulling away from the school." (C.6). Providing state support better is essential, at least for children to continue their education.

The Internet is considered to be the most functional and actively preferred means of accessing information, especially in the information age. Internet access, which provides access to information in the shortest and fastest way, provides many advantages for people. Internet access, which offers many conveniences in accordance with its use, is, therefore, the most important source of information for those who use it for educational purposes. Internet access, which is one of the increasing needs with the Covid-19 epidemic, is very important for children to continue their education in a healthy way. However, 68.9% of households do not have an internet connection at home. When we asked the children whether it was a problem for them to have the internet or not, it was revealed that this was a problem for the vast majority (91%). Based on the statements of the interviewees, it has been determined that they have problems, especially during the pandemic process, due to lack of access to information such as the inability to follow lessons, prepare homework, access auxiliary resources, etc. The children stating that the absence of the internet access had negative effects on their education processes mentioned as follows:

"We don't have it at home. The teacher assigns homework, but we can't do it. Sometimes we have to go to a shop that is away from the home to get prints. But we need money for that, it makes a problem for us. That's why we cannot take all of the prints." (C.16)

"We don't have it at home. I wish we had. We have difficulty in lessons. For example, for English. If we had it, I could do my homework." (C.5)

"We didn't have the internet at home before. But since we couldn't go to school when Covid-19 broke out, we fell behind in classes because we didn't have internet. That's why, my mom became a partner on the neighbor's internet so that we can do our lessons. If it wasn't possible, I wouldn't be able to do my lessons comfortably." (C.12)

"I do not have it at home. It is a problem. Because sometimes I can't do my homework. Sometimes we connect with my mother's phone. When the internet is cut off, I can't attend the live class. I don't think the internet is the only problem. Connection on the phone is also difficult. That's why we need a tablet." (C.30)

Another factor that affects the education conditions of children is the lack of suitable working places due to the fact that the majority of them live in stove-heated houses. This negatively affects their studying conditions. 64.5% of children do not have a suitable place to study at home. When we ask the children whether they have a comfortable home environment where they can study comfortably, the answers are as follows:

"We don't have a suitable environment to work in. We are 8 people as well. That's why I work mostly during school breaks." (Ç.16) (NOTE: There was not even a proper sofa bed in the house.)

"Everyone stays in one room, but we study. Only my elder brother had a hard time this year, his lessons were more difficult. He could not study hard because my grandfather was staying in the same room. Even though he was going to leave the school, he continued with the force of my mother. Normally his marks are good, but this year he had problems." (C.27)

"We don't have a separate room at home. To study, my mother puts the stove in the living room so that it can warm the other rooms. If we have exams, she lights the stove so we can study in the other room." (C.18)

"The house we lived in before had a stove, then it was difficult, and it was difficult to work with my brother. This house has natural gas heating system (Housing Development Administration of Turkey). Our rooms are now separate. But my high school is over, now I'm preparing for the university exam. Having a room is an important thing, at least for me." (C.25)

As it can be understood from the answers given, one of the most important factors affecting the educational opportunities of children is whether they are provided with a working environment at home. For example, if we look at the statement of our second interviewee; he said that his brother was about to drop out of school because he did not have a circumstance to study. Therefore, starting from these statements, it is necessary to provide a studying area for children at home so that they fully focus on their studies. In addition, 42% of parents state that they can help children with their homework (especially primary school children stated that their parents helped, while those at secondary and high school level said that their parents could not help them because they could not understand their lessons).

Some indicators have been used to decide how poverty affects children's daily lives. These are receiving pocket money, spending time with friends, owning various tools and equipment, clothes and shoes, and what s/he cannot buy even though s/he wants.

Table 5. Child poverty in terms of daily life indicators

DAILY LIFE		
Regular Allowance Status	Frequency	%
Yes	5	15,2
No	28	84,8
Controversy because s/he couldn't get money / allowance from her/his family	Frequency	%
Quarreled for that	12	36,4
Not quarreled for that	21	63,6
Possibility to Invite Friends to Home	Frequency	%
S/he can invite	9	27,2
S/he cannot invite	19	57,5
S/he sometimes can invite	5	15,1
Outdoor equipment (Bicycle, skate, etc.)	Frequency	%
Yes	6	18,2
No	27	81,8
Electronics/Mobile Devices (Phone, tablet, PC, Mp3 player, etc.)	Frequency	%
Yes	6	18,2
No	27	81,8
Clothing Purchase in the Last Year (Except second hand)	Frequency	%
Bought	24	72,7
Not bought	9	27,2
How Many Pairs of Shoes Does S/he Have?	Frequency	%

1 pair	10	30,3
2 pairs	21	63,6
3 pairs and more	2	6,1
What S/he Wants / Desires but Can't Get	Frequency	%
Tablet, PC	11	33,2
Clothes (clothes, shoes etc.)	10	30,3
School needs	3	9,1
Telephone	2	6,1
Bicycle, skate	2	6,1
Toys	3	9,1
Nothing	2	6,1

Some indicators were used to see how poverty affects children's daily lives. One of them is whether children receive regular pocket money. 84.8% of children do not receive pocket money on a regular basis. In fact, this is an important indicator of how poverty complicates children's living conditions. Especially for children who go to school full-time, this leads us to the hunger dimension of poverty. During the interviews with the children, the children stated that they often come to their house at noon and eat at home, sometimes they take food to school or they can be fed by sharing their friends' food. Some of the children interviewed describe their situation as follows:

"My mother gives 1.5 TL as pocket money, but not always. Sometimes it's not enough, most of the time I'm hungry. I don't always have pocket money, so I bring food from home." (C.2)

"Sometimes I have 2.3 liras and I buy juice or toast. But when it's less, I get a bagel. It is not enough if I buy toast. I take food from home to school. Sometimes my friends share their food with me. So, it goes." (C.3)

"We don't have much money. As we are 4 siblings, pocket money is not regular for all of us. We bring food from home. We are saving money until summer, we will buy a bike." (C.9)

"My father used to give me pocket money when I went to school. Now I don't have a lot of pocket money since there is no school due to Covid-19. When my father has money, he gives 5.10 liras. When I have money, I usually go somewhere with my friends and I spend it there, like an internet cafe. Or we can buy something and eat." (C.23)

"They give pocket money. But everything is expensive at our school, so, it is not enough. I also bring food from home from time to time. I buy bagels at school or toast and that's it. Sometimes we put our money together with friends and buy something." (C.31)

Parents stated they could not give regular pocket money to their children due to financial difficulties. Or it is because they have more than one child going to school.

"We don't get the money properly anyway. When it happens, it goes straight to the debts. If I give 1 lira to each of the children, I need 3-4 liras per day. It's best either I give them their food or they come home and eat, then, go back to school again. He is a child, sometimes he observes his friends. He also wants to buy, so I give him 1-2 liras, but it will not feed him. That's the point, I don't want him to get upset anymore." (P.3)

36.4% of the children who could not receive pocket money from their families stated that they argued/reproached with their families.

"It happens, I had once an argument to buy clothes. But what are we going to do? It still can't be bought." (C.2)

"Sometimes it happens, I get angry. I say it is not enough, why don't you give more? We go to the internet cafe to play games and sometimes it is not enough." (C.3)

"It happens once in a while, I argue, but not much. If they don't have it, how would they give it?" (C.8)

"It happens, I argue, it happens sometimes. But not much, my brother gets very angry. I want to buy a computer. I'm in vocational high school, that's why I am studying in the computer department. I'm sorry, but there's nothing we can do." (C.13)

"Of course, it happens. I need money for school. We want to go somewhere with friends, for example, I cannot go because there is no money." (C.21)

Children have arguments or reproaches since they desire to get what their friends have. Children have a natural feeling of asking for what others have. However, when the financial power of the family does not allow for this, they may show aggressive attitudes and behaviors. Some children, on the other hand, find this situation very natural and state that they act as much as their families can afford. It has been observed that the vast majority of children are aware of their situation of deprivation. In addition, it has been tried to be determined how much they have internalized this situation; whether they have an argument or not. It has been revealed that some children do not accept the situation and they become aggressive, some children normalize it, and some children feel very sad about the situation though they do not reflect it on their family.

In order to understand how poverty affects children's social relations, they were asked whether they could invite their friends to their homes. In order to socialize, participate in social life, establish and develop social relations, prevent standardized relations, etc., various opportunities and resources are needed. The relationship between poverty and social exclusion is observed in the inability of poor individuals to access these opportunities and resources. For poor children, a proper social environment and social relations are significant factors that can change their conditions. In particular, it is important in the context of social relations that the friendship they establish in the school environment continues outside the school. Thus, children will both strengthen their friendship and find the opportunity to observe different lifestyles in different home environments. However, social relations developed in comparisons may also indirectly affect poverty situations.

When we asked the interviewed children whether they invited their friends to their homes, 27.2% of them stated that they did. The statements of some of the children interviewed are as follows:

"My neighbors or friends come, but those at school do not. I don't invite them. I don't like them very much. I don't like cool people very much. They always say that I own this, my father is like that, my mother is like that. I get angry with them. I have a friend or two, but they cannot come as their home is far away." (C.16)

"No one comes, I don't not go, either. I have a friend, but his house is far away, even if I want to go, I can get lost." (C.14)

"Not so much; sometimes. They are my friends from the neighborhood because their houses are close." (C.1)

"No one comes and goes; my mother doesn't give permission. She doesn't trust the people in the neighborhood here. It's far from my school, so we can't go to each other's home." (C.9)

Most of the children do not get together with their friends at home. The reasons for this are that children spend enough time at school or outside, their families do not allow it, and the homes of their friends at school are far from each other.

The proportion of children who have outdoor equipment such as bicycles and roller skates and those who have electronic devices such as phones, tablets, computers, and mp3s is 18.2%. It has been determined that children do not have many tools and equipment that they can use and develop themselves or have a good time with and also contribute to their development.

"I don't have none. But some of my friends have. But they don't give it to me." (NOTE: His father said sometimes he comes home crying as he asks his friends to borrow them, however, they don't give.) (C.3)

"I had a tablet, but it was broken. I have nothing else." (C.11)

"None. But I wish I had a tablet. I could download the classes. I would research the lessons at school." (C.16)

One of the most necessary items for them in their daily lives is clothing. The fact that they do not have the similar clothes their friends or other children have is another situation that makes these children sensitive. When we asked the children whether they had bought clothes last year (excluding second-hand), 72.7% of them stated that they bought. In this context, when we asked the children how many times they bought clothes and what they bought, 18% of the children said that they bought twice, and the rest said that they could only buy once. The majority of the clothes were bought for the children on holidays. Apart from that, they bought clothes just for school. 63.6% of children have 2 pairs of shoes. These are used for winter and summer only when going to school.

Children stated that they use slippers when they go out (playing games outside of school, going to the market, etc.) and that they only wear the shoes at school so that their shoes do not wear out.

"My mother buys them at a place like a bazaar (a place called Charity bazaar, you can find second-hand). Most of the time, she buys it there. I have two pairs of shoes, for summer and winter, that's all." (C.26)

"We never bought clothes, people give them to us, I wear them. I have 2 pairs of shoes, for summer-winter." (C.14)

"We bought it once, we bought it during the holiday. There is a pair of shoes to wear at school." (C.15)

"We bought it once, from the market during the holiday, but it was bought for my two elder siblings. There are two pairs of shoes for them to wear at school, one for winter and one for summer. I have one too." (C.6)

"They bought it once during the feast. I have 1 pair of shoes for school, the proper one. Someone gave it to me." (C.4)

These situations that children face in daily life activate their wishes and desires like every child. In this direction, when we asked the children what they could not get (what they were upset about because they couldn't get it), the answers we got were as follows: Tablets, computers (33.2%), clothes (clothing, shoes, etc.) (30.3%), school needs (9.1%, toys (9.1%), cellphone (6.1%), bicycles, roller skates (6.1%). 6.1% of the children stated that they did not have anything they wanted to buy.

"A tablet and a skate. I'm sorry I don't have them. I see my friends have it, I don't. They don't give it to me either." (C.1)

"It's the clothes. I'm already upset, so I want to earn money and get what I lacked." (C.8)

"I buy it. My mother works as a cleaner and gives me pocket money. I save money and buy notebooks and pens. I get jealous when I don't get it. I feel like I want to buy but I can't get it, but I definitely wouldn't tell them. It's just slight jealousy that I worry myself about such small material things." (C.16)

"Once I asked for a notebook. Everyone in the class had bought one, but I couldn't buy it, I wanted so much, but I was very sad because I couldn't buy it." (C.17)

"Mostly, the phone. I have an old one. I wish I had a nice new phone, but my father has no money. If there is work to do, he would work, he would work and buy what we want. But there is no job. He was able to find it before, but because of this Covid-19, there is no work to do. That's why I don't upset my father by insisting to buy."(C.23)

"Toy. I'm sad because I don't have it. My friends have a bike, they asked me if I had it, I had said no, I was ashamed to say no. I was sorry. I didn't have then, but now I have it." (C.32)

During the interviews with the children, some questions were also asked to understand their perceptions of the world about their future. "If given an opportunity, what would you want to change about your family or yourself?"³, "What is your biggest dream about your future?", and "Do you have any concerns about the future, and if so what is it?" In this context, it would be more appropriate to include the statements of children in order to understand both the situation they are in and their perceptions of the future. When we first asked children "what they would like to change when given the opportunity", some of the answers we received are as follows:

"I would like to change my life. I wouldn't want to be poor. I would like to have a house, a separate room, and clothes." (C.2)

"I would like to change our house, a bigger one with a pool. I wish everyone had a separate room. I would also like to have many clothes." (C.11)

"I wish we had a house and it was very clean. I wish we had food and clothes. I wish I had many of them." (C.14)

"I would like to go to a bigger house where I would be more comfortable with my family, I would change the house first. I would buy beautiful things, I would lead a comfortable life for my mother." (C.16)

"I would like to be rich, of course, people get sad when they don't have some things." (C.24)

"I wish I had clothes. I would like to have clothes the most." (C.26)

Considering the wishes of the children, and when considered within today's standards, it is possible to say that their wishes are not extra or exaggerated. On the contrary, these wishes are the most natural rights for a healthy and satisfying life. Namely, a house that is clean and smelling of food in childhood, the excitement of new clothes that are bought with care does not lose its effect in the memories, no matter how old the person is. Being deprived of such a feeling and the fact that this feeling becomes a lifelong longing reveals the strong impact that children have experienced due to poverty. In general, we observe that children want a better life, a better house, and clothes. These answers show what children desire or aspire to. In this respect, some of the answers we received when we asked children "what is your biggest dream" are as follows:

"An orderly life, a nice house, and a room of my own." (C.2)

"I would like to have a tablet and my clothes." (C.4)

"A house which is cleaner and bigger." (C.14)

³ In order to make this question more understandable and to get the relevant answers in a better way, the question "What would you like to change first if you had a magic wand?" was asked right after the related question.

"I would like to go to school. If I do, I will have everything, inshallah." (C.17)

"To be rich. Because if I get rich, everything changes. I can help people." (C.32)

In addition to the question of what their dreams are, the children were asked whether they had any concerns about the future, considering the negative situations, conditions, and poverty they were experiencing. It was also asked if they had any concerns, what they were. In this context, some of the answers obtained from the children are as follows:

"It is not about the future. We always try to spend the day." (C.6)

"I am concerned if I fail the class or if I become poor." (C.11)

"I am concerned about not being able to go to school. If I don't have a salary, this life will continue. If I have a job, I will not be dependent on anyone." (C.16)

"If I can't go to school, I'm afraid that it will get worse in the future if I can't take care of myself." (C.17)

"If I can't go to school, I'll have to work. Business life is tough. Once I worked in a place, it was very difficult. I said I will go to school." (C.21)

The statements we received from some of the children indicate the common concern of all the children interviewed: What if I cannot get an education? It is possible to say that children are aware of the fact that schooling can correct the negative living conditions they are in and save them from this situation.

Additionally, the parents were asked the question of what their children want the most, and they have difficulty responding to this need. With this question, it was aimed to understand the household poverty situation more clearly through children. Trying to meet the needs of households and children together strains the budgets of poor households. In particular, trying to meet the needs of children in terms of education puts more strain on families economically. With this question, it is tried to determine what kind of needs or requests families cannot meet for their children. Accordingly, the things the families have the most difficulty in affording can be classified as follows:

Table 6. The things families have difficulty in affording for their children

The Things the Children Need but the Families Have Difficulty in Affording		The Things the Children Want but the Families Have Difficulty in Affording	
The thing that cannot be bought	Number (Household)	The thing that is wanted	Number (Household)
PC/Tablet/Cellphone	15	PC/Tablet/Cellphone	14
Food	3	Food	2
Clothes	10	Clothes	6
Food and clothes	7	Food and clothes	2
PC and Clothes/Food	5	PC and Clothes/Food	8
Money	1	Money	2
Toys and clothes	1	Toys and clothes	1
Educational needs and clothing	3	Educational needs and clothing	4
		Toys	2
		Food and educational needs	3

		Travel/holiday	1
Total	45	Total	45

Some statements of the interviewees about how parents feel when their children do not get/cannot get what they want, reveal more clearly how difficult poverty is not only for children but especially for parents. The emotional statements of some interviewees are as follows:

"I feel inadequate." (P.2)

"I accept to starve, but let them get what they want." (P.13)

"I am sorry. Doesn't one want his child to have everything? My child wants a bed, I gave him my bed and they sleep on it." (P.18)

"I'm always upset. Sometimes they insist so much that I get angry and beat them. What can I do? I am also fed up with that." (P.26)

"I'm sorry, but there's nothing we can do. Kids are getting used to it now." (P.38)

Although there are not many differences between the things children need and the things they want from their families, all the families have difficulty affording their needs and cannot afford even simple things. Perhaps the most specific need of the children is food (such as chocolate, biscuits, and food that would be bought at school) and families find it difficult to meet it.

Conclusion

Children who grow up in poverty cannot fully enjoy the rights of nutrition, housing conditions, health, education, economics, and so on. This state of poverty and deprivation experienced by the child also carries the risk of causing serious social problems in the future. Looking at the general profile of the poor households, it has been revealed that the majority of them live in crowded households (5+), their place of residence is rented, their education level is low, heating is provided mainly with a stove, and their income is below the minimum wage. Children are deprived of many basic needs, especially education, health, and shelter. Therefore, it causes a decrease in the quality of life. The income of the households is below the minimum wage. This situation results in child labour. Poverty is cited as one of the basic causes of child labour (Şenol and Mazman, 2014, p.255). It makes children taking more responsibilities than they should have taken at a young age and prevents having a childhood as they wish. It also causes them not to allocate the time and intensity they should spend on their education. Again, in terms of daily life indicators, it was concluded that most of the children could not get regular pocket money, and could not have equipment such as bicycles, skates, tablets, and computers. Children growing up in poor households are able to change these living standards and establish a livable life for themselves, by getting a good education and standing on their own feet. The decrease in living standards and the interruption of education opportunities due to financial difficulties make poverty a difficult situation to overcome. This means the transfer of poverty from one generation to the other.

Suggestions

In order to prevent child poverty, "the high benefit of the child" should be considered in the first place. It is possible to express the important suggestions of this study at a few points. Considering that it is very difficult to erase the traces of negative events experienced in

childhood, carrying out studies that will minimize inequality in the environments where children receive their education (libraries, school uniforms, school tools, equipment, etc.) should be considered as an urgent need. It is thought that these studies will provide important benefits to prevent children from discrimination among themselves. Research on child poverty will help to understand the problem and develop solutions for it. It is thought that this study will contribute to the action plans prepared for understanding child poverty in different countries and developing solutions for it.

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