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The Perceptions of Social Studies Teachers in Turkey Regarding the Refugee Students' Challenges and Conflicts in the Classroom

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The Perceptions of Social Studies Teachers in Turkey Regarding the Refugee Students' Challenges and Conflicts in the Classroom

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to determine the problems of social studies teachers due to differences in language and culture and inadequate education with refugee students, their methods of solution, the mission of the social studies course and the values that teachers want to teach to refugee students. As a qualitative research method, the case study design was used in the study. The data collection tool chosen in accordance with the method is the interview. The study group consists of 12 social studies teachers teaching refugee students in the state secondary schools of the Ministry of National Education in the Odunpazarı district of Eskişehir in the 2018-2019 academic year. The study has revealed that social studies teachers experience problems with the refugee students due to the policies and curriculum implemented, the difference of language and culture, and students' lack of receive adequate education, and that they react to some behaviors of refugees negatively.

Keywords: refugee, turkey, challenges, conflict resolution, social studies teacher

Introduction

Today, the problem of refugees and asylum seekers is increasingly becoming the most important problem of the world. There is intense migration to different countries, especially due to wars and political problems, natural disasters and economic problems. According to the data of the United Nations, there are more than 70 million refugees in the world today. The world's largest refugee mobility has emerged in Syria, with which Turkey has the longest border. The migration movements, which started in 2011 due to internal turmoil in Syria, continued to increase due to the escalation of the conflicts and their transformation into a full-blown civil war. As a result, in 2018, more than 6 million Syrians had to leave Syria (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2018). Doubtlessly, considering its location, Turkey has been of great significance for Syrians in their migration process. Turkey hosts a significant portion of the Syrians who have been forced to flee their country.

As a result of the "Open Border Policy" applied by Turkey for purely humanitarian reasons, a large majority of the migrants have taken refuge in Turkey. Syrian refugees sustain their lives, not as a refugee or asylum-seeker in Turkey but do so under "temporary protection" status (Kağnıcı, 2017). According to the data released by the Immigration Administration General Directorate of the Interior Ministry, the number of registered Syrians in Turkey reached a total of 3.5 million people as of August 2018 (GIGM, 2018). Of these, 1 million 700 thousand children are between the ages of 0-18. The number of school-age children is over 1 million (UNICEF, 2018). However, besides the Syrian refugees, there are also refugees who immigrated from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan to Turkey for various reasons.

In order that they can establish intercultural communication, adapt to the society they are live in, express themselves, and socialize, education is one of the most basic needs of children who have left their country due to forced migration (Er & Bayındır, 2015). Many international treaties contain many regulations on the right to education, the most fundamental right of refugee children. All States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child agree to respect and guarantee the rights laid down in the Convention for each child in their country. This includes not only children, but also temporary visitors (such as tourist children), refugees, asylum seekers and children living in irregular migrant communities (UNICEF, 2011). Article 22 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child includes comprehensive provisions on the rights of children seeking refugee or status in accordance with the rules and procedures of international law on the protection of children's rights (Yakmaz, 2014). In order for the asylum-seeker children

to enjoy all the rights in the contract, the signatory States of this convention must take the necessary measures.

For children who have left their country as a refugee due to forced migration, receiving education is one of their basic needs to be able to adapt to the host society, to express themselves, to socialize, and to communicate interculturally (Er & Bayındır, 2015).

Migratory students have language barriers, political instability in their countries, human rights violations, oppressive regimes, civil wars, ethnic conflicts, the lack of labor demand and economic problems. The fear of the lack of geographical and life safety results in their absence from school. The fact that some students have never started school and that they have different cultures are causing potential problems in the education process (Benli Özdemir, 2018). With both international and humanitarian approach, Turkey has exerted every effort to take the necessary measures from the very beginning of the crisis to make sure that the refugee children receive the education they need. In the early period, with the assumption that asylum or hospitality status would be short and temporary, these children began to be educated in the Temporary Education Centers in the camps. However, since the number of refugees has increased and their stay has become prolonged, the refugees have been distributed to all the provinces in Turkey.

According to the data by the Directorate of Migration Management (GİGM, 2017) a very small portion (8%) of the refugees in Turkey continue to live in these camps, while a remarkable proportion of them (92%) live in all the cities and towns of Turkey. Hence, the majority of these children continue to receive education in public schools across the country. In addition, to guarantee the educational services provided to the refugee children in Turkey, a circular was issued on 23 September 2014 titled "Education Services for Foreigners," numbered 2014/21.

That the refugee children have been placed in the public schools throughout the country means that students from different cultures, beliefs, ethnicities and social groups receive education in the same classroom. It is inevitable that certain problems will be experienced among students in these classes. These problems primarily relate to the language barrier, cultural difference, and curriculum.

Refugee students' adaptation to their classrooms and overcoming the negative experiences is closely related to their approaches and attitudes, which requires their teachers to perform some crucial duties and to take on responsibilities (Shirberg, 2007, pag. 5-6; Kirk and Winthrop, 2007). Teachers' ability to recognize and understand the basic problems of students from various cultures plays an important role in their learning process (Ereş, 2015). However, the social studies course and the social studies teacher have a key role here.

The program of social studies entails education, anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, economics, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology, religion and social sciences. Integrated with humanities and social sciences, social studies is a field of study that aims to help the youth to become effective citizens to fit into a democratic society which has cultural diversity (NCSS, 1994). Social Studies course is whereby the Turkish society's characteristics, customs and traditions, and the Turkish culture and Turkish citizenship requirements are taught to students (Aslan & Gökkaya, 2004, p 227). As a matter of fact, the aim of citizenship education given through social studies is to educate citizens who are responsible, who are loyal to their state and republics, who know how the state mechanisms work, and are aware of their rights and obligations (Sönmez, Meray & Kaymakçı, 2009). Furthermore, the citizenship mission of social studies involves cultural, linguistic and learning diversities based on similarities and differences, which embodies race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation of students (NCSS, 1994). The social studies curriculum also has some achievements and respect for cultural diversity in order to be aware of global problems and to produce solutions to these problems, to be conscious of democracy and to question the stereotypes of various cultures (MoNE, 2018). Explaining the relations between individual, society and state, for the elevation of the Turkish national culture and the continuity of the Turkish state organization, it is important to educate citizens who have adopted the ideals stated in the general aims of the Turkish National Education and described by the general purpose of the Social Studies curriculum. In this respect, Social Studies and Citizenship education has a key role for the measures to be taken and the services to be provided for refugees (Kızıl & Dönmez, 2017). Clearly, the social studies teachers have an important mission in achieving the general aims of the Turkish National Education.

Democratic values can be defined as the values that individuals should have for the functioning of democracy (Uygun & Engin, 2014). Social studies teachers teach democratic values and the rights and responsibilities, in short, teach the knowledge skills, values and coexistence culture of the social life of the citizen to all students, including the refugee students. To create equal educational opportunities, to teach students respect to different races, thoughts and lifestyles and to teach democratic solution methods will ensure the minimization of conflicts. At this point, it is very important to determine the attitudes and behaviors of social studies teachers towards refugee students and raise their awareness about these students' adaptation needs. A review of the related literature reveals that many studies have been conducted on the education of refugees in the literature (Balkar, Şahin & Işıklı Babahan, 2016; Baltacı, 2014; Börü & Boyacı, 2016; Er & Bayındır, 2015; Göktuna Yaylacı, Serpil & Yaylacı, 2017; Kılcan, Çepni & Kılınç, 2017; Özer, Komsuoğlu

& Ateşok, 2016; Mercan Uzun & Bütün, 2016; Nar, 2008; Sakız, 2016; Seydi, 2014; Şeker & Aslan, 2015; Topkaya & Akdağ, 2016; Lergetporer, Piopiunik & Simon, 2018; Mendenhall, Bartlett & Ghaffar-Kucher, 2017; Mendez, 2018; Dryden-Peterson, 2017; Greaves, Nabhani & Bahous, 2019; Sheikh & Anderson, 2018).

However, the research literature on social studies teachers who have to take the most active role in the adaptation process of refugees is much more limited. Aiming to fill this existing gap, the current study aims to find out the social studies teachers' challenges with refugee students and their solution methods, their future situation, the mission of social studies lesson and the values that teachers want to teach to refugee students. In accordance with this aim, the answers of the following questions were sought:

- Are refugee students experiencing any adaptation problems in social studies classes?
- What problems do refugee students face?
- How do you solve the problems faced by refugee students? What are your solutions?
- Which values do you teach refugee students in social studies classes?

Method

In this section of the article, the research design, research participants the data collection tool, and collection the data collection procedure and analysis of the data are presented.

Research Design

The Phenomenology pattern focuses on the phenomena that we are aware but do not have an in-depth and detailed understanding of. Facts can appear in various forms such as events, experiences, perceptions, orientations, concepts and situations in the world we live in (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2013, p. 78). "Phenomenologists explore how individuals construct their meanings of the experience, and how these individual meanings shape group or cultural meanings" (Van der stoep & Johnston 2009, p. 206).

Research Participants

The study group consists of social studies teachers providing education to refugee students in the state secondary schools of the Ministry of National Education in the district of Odunpazarı in the province of Eskişehir in the 2018-2019 academic year. Eskişehir is close to the capital Ankara in the Central Anatolia region. There are nearly 20,000 refugees from different countries in the total population. For this reason, many schools have refugee students. In this study, criterion sampling which is one of the purposive sampling methods is used. The strength of purposeful sample is derived from

its emphasis on deep understanding (Patton, 2014, p. 46). In the criterion sample, the basic approach is to analyze all the situations that meet a pre-determined set of criteria (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 140).

In this study, the criterion in the selection of social studies teachers was determined as “teaching in at least one class with refugee students”. The characteristics of social studies teachers in the study group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 - Personal information about social studies teachers

Personal information		<i>f</i>
Gender	Female	8
	Male	4
Professional Experience	1-5 Years	
	6-10 Years	
	11-15 Years	1
	16-20 Years	4
	21-25 Years	4
	26-30 Years	2
	31-35 Years	
	36-39 Years	1
Status of Receiving Training on Teaching Refugee Students	Yes	5
	Adequate	5
	Inadequate	
	No	7
Total	I needed it	6
	I haven't needed it	1
		12

When Table 1 is examined, it can be seen that eight of the social studies teachers in the study group are female (66.6%) and four (33.4%) are male. One of the social studies teachers has been teaching for 11-15 years, four of them 16-20 years, four of them 21-25 years, two of them 26-30 years and one of them has 36-39 years of teaching experience. Regarding receiving training on teaching refugee students, five teachers have received training and they found it inadequate, and seven teachers have not received any such training.

Data Collection

The data collection tool determined in accordance with the method is the semi-structured interview. The interviews were structured with the inter-

view guide approach. In the interview guideline approach, the points and topics to be covered are predetermined in a framework form, and the researcher determines the order of the questions and the sentence structure during the interview. Regarding the refugee students, teachers were asked questions within these respective themes: a) challenges and conflict types b) solution methods c) the importance of social studies curriculum and d) the child rights. The frame determined increases the coverage of the data and makes the process of collecting data from each participant more systematic (Patton, 2014, p. 349). Interviews were based on this approach, and the questions were asked to social studies teachers who taught refugee students. While preparing the interview questions, the related literature was reviewed, the opinions of the experts in this field were consulted and after the necessary corrections were made, data collection process was launched. In the final version of the interview form, social studies teachers were asked demographic questions about what their gender was, years of professional experience, and whether they were trained to teach refugee students. Secondly, eight questions were asked, which were supported with further probing questions.

Social studies teachers were given information about the purpose of the study and detailed explanations were made about keeping personal information confidential. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder. Verbal permission was obtained from social studies teachers to use the voice recorder. No interviews were made with the teachers who declined to be audio-recorded. The interviews were conducted individually when each social studies teacher was available. The interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

Data Analysis

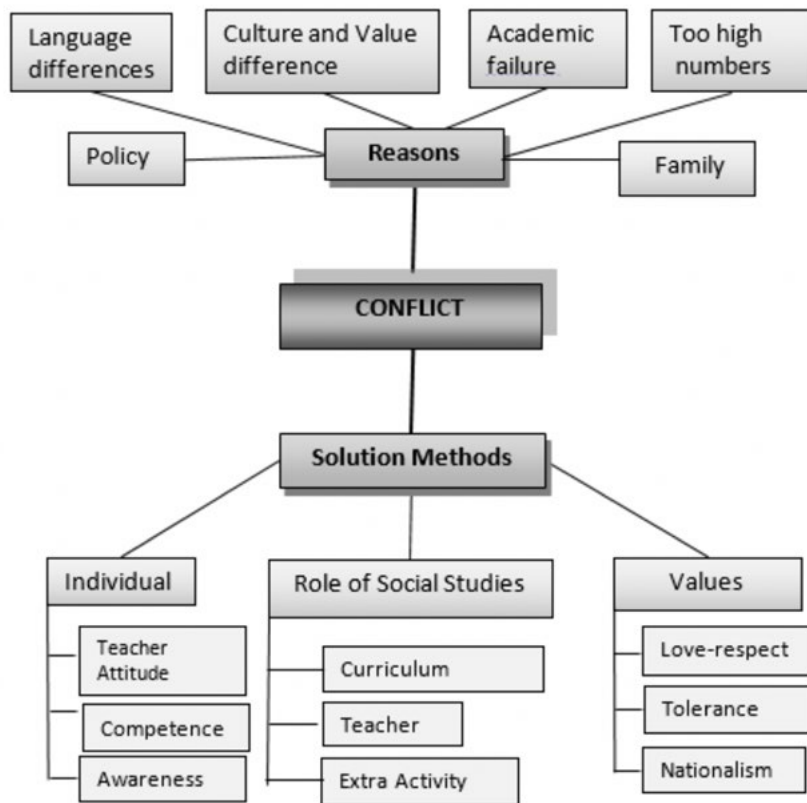
Content analysis was used to analyze the data collected in the study. Before starting the content analysis, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed into a text. The text of the interviews is a total of fifty-nine pages. The transcribed data were analyzed through content analysis. The fundamental process in content analysis is to bring together data similar to each other within the framework of certain concepts and themes and to interpret them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 259). For this purpose, the interview texts were read several times by the researchers and each participant was given an SST (Social Studies Teacher) code to hide participants' true identities. Then, each interview transcript was examined in detail and each line considered important was coded, resulting in many different codes. The codes were read again and some codes were paraphrased. This process was repeated several times. The resulting codes

and similar attributes were put together and collected under the same category. In this coding process, the findings were obtained by performing a completely data-based coding. In order to ensure validity and reliability, the semi-structured interview form was presented to the approval of the expert opinions and direct quotations were included.

Findings

The current study aims to find out the social studies teachers’ problems challenges with refugee students and their solution methods, their future situation, the mission of social studies lesson and the values that teachers want to teach to refugee students. As a result of this study, three main categories were created: “Reasons”, “Conflict “and “Solution Methods”. Findings of these categories are as follows:

Figure 1 - The reasons of conflict and conflict resolution strategies



Reasons

There are some difficulties in providing education services to refugee students, resulting from lack of adequate facilities and proper infrastructure. Some of these problems have been solved in the process and others are still waiting for a solution (Levent & Çayak, 2017). Social studies teachers who participated in the study stated that there were many conflicts in school, classroom and environment due to refugee students. Except for a few teachers, teachers in general stated that there was not much conflict between refugee students, but children of the same nationality formed their own groups in the classroom, and that even when separated in the classroom they tended to stick to their own groups during the breaks. They also said that because the refugee children do not make many friends with Turkish children, they solve their own problems and play together.

Since the social studies teacher comes face to face with the social reality of the society when she enters the classroom, she finds herself as part of the problems that society or the education system cannot resolve regarding multiculturalism. Bilingualism is one of these problems. However, social studies teacher has some important responsibilities in preventing intercultural desensitization, conflict and discrimination by increasing communication and interaction between cultural differences (Yazıcı, 2016, p. 295). The teachers stated that the actual conflicts occurred between refugee students and Turkish students, and sometimes between refugee students and teachers. The teachers further stated that main reasons of these conflicts are the lack of communication due to the language differences, the differences in culture, the lack of interest in the course and academic failure, the indifference of the families toward their children's education, and the wrong policies implemented.

Language Differences

The teachers agree that the main reason for the conflicts is that children do not know each other's languages. They state that children cannot communicate with each other and that even if there is a small problem, this problem cannot be solved and turns into a conflict.

The teachers further assert that the refugee students' not speaking Turkish is the root of all the problems experienced, and they themselves have serious problems in the classroom as well. They also report that they cannot communicate with their refugee students in the classroom, these students cannot read and write, so they do not pay attention to the lesson being taught but are interested in different things, which makes the classroom management quite difficult.

Regarding the communication problem, SST-1 states that:

“They talk among themselves in the classroom, they are not interested in the lesson. I’m warning them but they don’t understand what I’m saying. He tells me something I don’t understand, is he swearing or what? In the meantime there is a confusion in the classroom.”

The teachers also state that they are not able to communicate with parents because of their linguistic difference, and the parents are not involved in the education process, which leads to new problems.

Culture and Value Differences

The teachers stated that there were conflicts arising from the differences in the culture and values of refugee students. It was stated by the teachers that religious and national values are the most important in Turkish culture and these values are sacred. Although many of the refugee students are Muslim, there is not much difference in religious values. The teachers stated that the refugee students did not respect our national values such as Turkish flag and the National Anthem, they tore up the picture of Atatürk and therefore the teachers observed some conflicts with the Turkish students.

The teachers stated that the values of “respect” and “honesty are very important in Turkish culture and that from an early age, children have been informed about these values. Since the refugee students did not acquire these values at home, teachers stated that these values are difficult to teach only in schools. For example, it was stated that refugee students are insensitive to being respectful to adults, nature and living things, and differences. The teachers stated that the refugee students wrote some abusive words and they were not honest about doing homework and this situation caused serious conflicts.

Another reason that teachers stated as the cause of conflicts is the value of “cleanliness”. The teachers stated that the refugee students had some problems since they did not pay attention to the cleanliness both in their clothes and in the classroom and outside the classroom, causing some bad smells.

SST-6 stated that the refugee students could not accept to be here and stated that there was a difference in culture and value between these students and our students. Therefore; conflicts were normal, the refugee students had moral problems and they did not learn the values which their families should give.

The teachers also state that even if the refugee students could speak Turkish, the culture and values of the two countries are different, for example, refugee students do not pay attention to cleanliness, they do not respect Turkish values, for example, they tear up the picture of Atatürk, and they have observed some conflicts with the Turkish students as well. SST-6, who

says that she cannot accept asylum-seekers' being here, there is a cultural difference between Turkish students and these students, so the conflicts are normal, they perceive the conflicts as "normal" and that the refugee students have value problems and they lack the value principles and discipline they should have been instilled by their families.

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Academic failure

Another reason for the conflicts experienced by refugee students with Turkish students and teachers is academic failure. Many teachers report that they have experienced conflicts with both refugee students and parents because refugee students do not participate in or pay attention to the lessons, do not do homework, and cannot do anything in the exams. The teachers also state that refugee students negatively affect Turkish students due to their indifference to the course, and that academic achievement has fallen significantly in the classroom, and therefore they have problems with the Turkish parents as well.

Some social studies teachers emphasize that these children have neither any ideals nor any expectations from the future, and that they expect everything to be spoonfed to them, and therefore they do not study at all.

The SST-12 states that Turkish students resent asylum-seekers who pass courses without ever studying, and that Turkish students are negatively affected by this, which leads to conflicts among the students.

Of the interviewed teachers, only SST-9 reported not having experienced any conflicts with students. SST-9 emphasized that she goes out of her way to educate the refugee children, she does various activities with them, and she does not experience any conflicts because she helps them. However, while she herself does not have any problems, she has also reported that peer-bullying is widespread, the teachers fail to prevent it, but this must be prevented otherwise it will cause more serious problems in the future.

High Number of Refugee Students

Another reason for the conflicts observed by teachers is the high number of refugee students. Teachers stated that the number of refugee students in the classes in the early days was very small and therefore, there were no conflicts and Turkish students even helped them. However, they observed that the number of refugee students has increased over time and that these students banded together and applied violence or peer bullying to other students. Their teachers also reported that the high number of refugee students

has made classroom management very difficult, and these students do not pay attention to the lesson and just talk among themselves during the class.

Another space of conflict with refugee students experienced by the teachers is the school playground during the breaks. Teachers reported that refugee students from different classes grouped together during the breaks, acted violently, vandalized the environment, and when they themselves intervened they conflicted with these students. Teachers also stressed that families were involved in the school because of the conflict in school, the families of refugee students came to school, they defended their children and could not communicate, and the school administration did not defend the teachers against families. The teachers stated that they had more conflicts with the 8th grade students. They also stated that the conflicts differed by gender, female students were calmer, but male students were more violent.

What can we do? They keep coming, they keep giving birth, then their problems find us. Why should I share my country's values and resources with them? We did not conquer these lands easily and we paid for it with our blood! But they do not fight in their country and come here, which sounds weird to me (STT-11).

Indifference of families

Another factor that teachers expressed as the source of conflicts is the family. Teachers emphasized that refugee families did not give proper care to their children and did not even teach the most basic values to their children. In addition, some social studies teachers stated that these children were subjected to violence by their families and that they were accustomed to violence so teachers could not control them in school.

Teachers stated that, with no family support, they could not do anything on their own and that the problems were getting bigger, they could not communicate with the families, and this situation caused new conflicts. SST-3 stated the following about "family":

Even refugee students of the same nationality and the same language have problems among themselves. However, they have not received any basic education from their families. So far, they have been trained by beating. Now we are too late to teach them some stuff.

Policy

Some social studies teachers said that Turkey has followed the wrong policy regarding asylum-seekers by distributing them across the country, which has led to serious conflicts. These teachers believe that despite the arrival of asylum seekers in temporary status, they are to become permanent residents in Turkey. As a reason for their permanence, they point out to the facilities and opportunities that asylum seekers have in Turkey. Ex-

cluding SST-9, all of the social studies teachers disapprove of asylum-seeker children and families' becoming permanent in Turkey. Overall, the teachers stress that the refugees do not have any education problems, their children pass classes without studying, they benefit from medicine and health services free of charge, and the state provides all kinds of asylum seekers with unemployment benefits, which they have a hard time accepting.

Another point on which these teachers agree is that the well-educated, well-trained and well-qualified refugee families with better socio-economic status have immigrated to Europe or America, and the unskilled asylum seekers with low socio-economic status have stayed in Turkey. The teachers protest this, asserting that these asylum seekers must go back to their country because they are just a burden for Turkey. They report that the children miss their county and they want to go back, but their families do not want to leave the opportunities in Turkey.

Approaching the matter from a different perspective, SST-11 stated that it is not easy to create a nation because there are some elements that make up the nation, and people need to have the same language, culture, historical ties, and the same values to form the unity of a nation, and that it is not possible to make a nation simply by bringing different peoples together. Therefore, he cannot accept this situation, and the asylum seekers in Turkey must not stay.

Only SST-9 has a democratic citizenship view on asylum seekers' stay. SST-9 stated that the we need to act by expecting that the asylum-seekers will stay here, the language must be taught to integrate these people into the society, they must be given responsibilities, and they must be raised as citizens. SST-9 further emphasized that even though asylum seekers are not granted legal status as Turkish citizens, these people live in the society as individuals, so they should be considered as citizens.

Methods of Resolution

Individual

The teachers participating in the study stated that many decisions about asylum seekers remained on paper but that they had to deal with the problems themselves and that they tried to resolve conflicts on an individual basis.

Social studies teachers stated that they could not provide solutions because they could not communicate with the refugee students. They stated that the same language should be spoken in order to produce a solution; but since this is not possible, they are unable to produce solutions.

SST-7 stated that for the solution of class conflicts, she placed refugee students at the front of the classroom to prevent them from disrupting the class.

Regrading resolutions, SST-4 said that they do charity work and fund-raising for them, and try to help them meet their basic needs in this way.

SST-9 reported that, to produce solutions, first of all she tries to make herself loved by her refugee students, that she tries to learn their language, tries to teach them Turkish, and she tried to learn Kurdish while working in Eastern Anatolia so she has previous experience in doing this.

SST-11 stressed that she is worried for the future and her own children because they are here, that they should go back and fight for their homeland, and therefore, have not tried any extra solutions.

Some social studies teachers reported that for the conflicts that they cannot resolve themselves, they usually send the student to counseling unit or the administration (principal or vice principal), but, they are not of much help either.

Competence

Half of the teachers in this study reported attending a training on teaching asylum-seeker/refugee children, whereas the other half reported not having done so. Those who have received training stressed that the content of the training heavily focused on the description of concepts, and that it was quite inadequate. They stated that the training that was formally described on the official documents and the actual practice did not match, and when they are teaching they face the harsh reality of the school, and they feel incompetent in the face of actual school problems. All of the teachers with such training background agree that language, that is, communication, poses a huge challenge for them. They say that they cannot communicate with these refugee students, and failing to communicate with them, they cannot solve any problems.

The teacher who have not been trained in teaching refugee students state that they do not need such a training because they believe that such a training would be meaningless anyway. Some of them assert that the root problem is lack of communication, and since they fail to establish communication with these students, receiving such a training would not work.

All of the social studies teachers believe that they are not competent enough in terms of conflict resolution skills. They stated that they taught subjects such as democracy and human rights, but that this was not enough to resolve conflicts or to facilitate the integration of these refugee children. They believe that these children lack many qualities that are normally de-

veloped through various types of education such as family education, values education, moral education, and environmental support.

SST-2 It is not a very important factor to sufficiently know and speak about democracy. Today, some things must be provided by the family. We teach the children in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades how to be a good citizen and what democracy and humans rights are, but the family is the main determinant here, without a firm family background, these children are doomed to fail.

SST-10 pointed out that there are some serious problems related to democratic education and democracy perception, and in general, teachers's awareness about this issue should be raised.

Teacher Attitude

Except for a few social studies teachers, all teachers stated that they did not discriminate between refugee children and Turkish children, and tried to support refugee students in a material and spiritual sense. However, they also stated that they felt much challenged at doing this.

SST-9 Never, I do not discriminate, I am against violence, (if there is violence), then we are not human. These are just children, discrimination is out of question. We need to reach out to them.

Some teachers stated that they had to discriminate. Teachers said that, as they are unable to communicate with the refugee students, they are more interested in teaching the Turkish children, and secondly in teaching the successful refugee students, and if they are to be assisted, they first help Turkish students who are the citizens of Turkey and then help the successful refugee students as their secondary priority.

SST-11 If there was help to be given, I chose (gave priority to) my Turkish students first. Why? That's because Turkish children are my fellow citizens, they are poor just as the foreigners are. I also thought that they are temporary guests here anyway, so I helped my own students. I would do the same now, I would help my fellow citizens over them again.

Awareness

Social studies teachers emphasized that refugee students are aware of their right to education, health, nutrition, shelter, and life, and that they are easily benefiting from these rights. Some teachers added that these children have the right to play, right to physical integrity, and equality, and are protected against child labor, torture, and abuse of all kinds. Teachers also stated that these rights apply not only to refugee students but also to Turkish children and to all children, and that there is no discrimination among children.

Role of Social Studies

Teacher

Only a few teachers who participated in the study stated that social studies teachers have a special mission by getting involved in the adaptation and conflict prevention of refugee students. All other teachers stated that all the school subjects are important, but Turkish is the most important course because the person who will teach them language is the Turkish teacher.

SST-11 Social Studies course is important but the Turkish lessons and teachers have a more important mission than us. The Turkish teacher teaches 5 hours a week. We cannot do anything without solving the language problem because these children cannot read, write or understand anything.

In addition to underscoring the key role of the Turkish teacher, the participants stated that counseling services are crucial and school counselors have important duties. Some social studies teachers also argued that refugee students must be grouped in the same classroom without placing them in different classrooms, and must be taught the Turkish language while being coached by the school counselors.

Some social studies teachers drew attention the importance of math, painting and music teachers as well.

Only a few social studies teachers mentioned the importance of social studies. These teachers stated that the social studies course has a critical mission because it prepared students for life, taught their basic rights and duties, and taught the relationships in the society. Some teachers have further emphasized that the social studies course has a special importance because of its history and geography content.

SST-6 We teach the information about daily life, if the student encounters a problem, or if treated unfairly, we teach how to solve it, we teach consumer rights, so we have a special mission.

Curriculum

All of the social studies teachers participating in the research stated that there is nothing in the social studies curriculum aimed at solving the conflicts with refugee students.

Teachers stated that the social studies curriculum covers topics about human rights, values teaching, world citizenship, and themes related to the teaching of Atatürk's principles, but no units are directly related to refugees or their adaptation process. However, some teachers stated that even if such topics on refugees were covered by the curriculum it would not make any difference, because they could not teach them due to students' inability to speak Turkish.

SST-1 The curriculum has been completely revised now, and we have examined the new curriculum. For example, (now) they need to know about Atatürkism, the curriculum has values education (tolerance, empathy, etc.). But children need to speak Turkish, I tell (him/her) about tolerance but (s/he) doesn't understand our language.

Extra activity

All social studies teachers participating in the research reported not doing any extra activities for the adaptation of refugee students or for conflict-prevention. As a reason for this, the teachers generally argued that, the time allocated for the social studies course is insufficient, the time given to cover the syllabus content is not enough, other parents (Turkish parents) may react negatively to doing such extra activities, students do not speak Turkish, and the problem should be solved more systematically.

Some social studies teachers stated that they collected money at the school for refugee students, tried to meet their basic needs, talked with parents and did group work in the classroom.

SST-6 emphasized that they elected a class president, elected a school representative, and had propaganda work with the students in order to equip them with democratic skills.

SST-9 stated that these children need psychological support and can get help from the guidance and counseling service.

Values

In resolving conflicts, social studies teachers stressed that, the refugee students should be taught many values, however, in particular, the value of respect and tolerance must be taught when solving conflicts.

The teachers stated that there are people from different cultures at the school, differences occur and therefore they try to teach both refugee students and Turkish students the value of respect and tolerance in the first place. It is necessary to teach tolerance for all differences, and respect not only for their peers, but also for their parents, elders, environment, and teachers.

Other values that teachers try to teach refugee students while solving conflicts are the values of love, justice, charity, responsibility, good morals, goodness, cooperation, and mercy.

Some social studies teachers who talk about these values stated that all students should be taught these values without discrimination between children.

SST-10 stated that these children were subjected to violence by their families, including the educated families, therefore they needed love, they should first be loved and then other values should be taught.

In conflict resolution, besides the given values, the value stressed the strongest by all the social studies teachers is the value of patriotism. All of the social studies teachers stated that all students should be taught the value of patriotism. They pointed that refugee students coming to Turkey do not know the importance of national unity and solidarity since they fled their country, and they failed to develop values such as the love for the homeland, love for the flag, and love for the nation, and therefore, they do not feel respect for our national values (The Turkish national anthem, Atatürk, flag, etc.), resulting in conflicts.

The teachers also reported teaching the importance of national unity and solidarity by giving examples from the Turkish War of Independence, and Atatürk's principles and revolutions.

SST-2 stated the following about patriotism value:

We must first instill them the love for the homeland. Because children are small and flee their country, they do not have the concept of homeland or nation. We have our values, but because they don't know them, they conflict with ours; we are filed in the same line during the Independence March, we celebrate the Republic Day, we celebrate the 23rd of April, we commemorate the death anniversary of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and if we instill these in the children, they will understand us.

Another value that the teachers emphasize is the value of diligence. The social studies teachers stated that, except for a few students, refugee students do not have the value diligence, and that refugee students are lazy, they expect to be spoonfed everything and they try to get everything without studying.

Several social studies teachers said that refugee students are not particularly sensitive to the environment because they constantly vandalized the nature and the objects around them, which lead to conflicts among them. Therefore, they pointed out to the need for teaching them to respect their environment.

SST-3 asserted that these children have not been taught any values by their families, and therefore, they should be taught all the values.

Discussion

In this study, which aims to determine social studies teachers' conflicts with refugee students and their resolution methods, the following results have been obtained:

There are many refugee student-related conflicts among students at schools. According to the social studies teachers, the main reason for these problems and conflicts is the linguistic and cultural difference. Teachers are unable to find effective solutions to the conflicts because they believe they

cannot communicate with the refugee students. Many studies in Turkey indicate that the primary problem underlying all other problems experienced with the refugee students is the lack of foreign language (Turkish and Arabic) skills (Akalin, 2016; Apak, 2014; Buz, 2008; Gözübüyük Tamer, 2017; Deniz, Hülür & Ekinci, 2016; Göktuna Yaylacı, Serpil & Yaylacı, 2017; Güneş, 2012; Güngör, 2015; Kahya Nizam & Sallan Gül, 2013; Karasu, 2016; Kultaş, 2017; Sağlam & Kanbur, 2017; Sarıtaş, Şahin & Çatalbaş, 2016; Yılmaz, 2015).

While language does not constitute a barrier for Syrians who take refuge in Arabic-speaking countries (Lebanon, Jordan), for those who have migrated to Turkey, Turkish constitutes a serious obstacle in adapting to daily life, education, the business environment and to other spheres of life. Moreover, the alphabet that refugee students know (Arabic alphabet) and the alphabet they learn in Turkey are completely different from each other, which poses an enormous challenge for these children. According to the teachers, these disadvantages related to the low language proficiency of refugee students lead to many problems such as academic failure, turning into crime, non-socialization, feeling of exclusion, and withdrawal from school. For instance, in his study on Syrian refugees in schools in Van, Kultaş (2017) found that Syrian students experienced problems such as alienation, loneliness, exclusion and failure.

The refugee children in Turkey are mainstreamed directly into the regular classrooms, without prior preparation and without solving the language problem. In the process, some schools conducted orientations for these students and tried to solve these problems by opening a literacy or language course. However, according to the data obtained, such orientation work was not carried out in all schools. While some students try to continue their education by partially overcoming their language and adaptation problems, some of them could not benefit from the educational activities because they could not overcome the language and adaptation problem (Kultaş, 2017). Research on refugee children shows that there is a direct link between alienation and the inability to master the language of the host society. Language education is one of the most important topics for children in terms of both success in education and self-confidence and social harmony (Candappa & Egharevba, 2000; Stanley, 2001). Not detected by teachers, but identified by the experts on refugees and immigrants, another language problem is the difficulty experienced by children in reading and writing and especially in understanding the academic language, while speaking may not pose much of a challenge for them (Allen, 2002).

Another result obtained by the current study relates to the refugee policy followed by Turkey. The teachers think that Turkey has been following the wrong policy regarding refugees because dispersing refugees across the country has led to some serious conflicts. All the teachers in the study be-

lieve that they are not adequate or efficacious in terms of conflict resolution skills. They criticize the policies implemented in this regard and think that it is strategically wrong to have been forced to teach these refugee students without any prior experience or training. The teacher need to receive professional training to address such students' needs. Öztürk (2018) concluded that social studies teachers need training on teaching refugees.

Social studies teachers think that all refugee students should be gathered in one classroom without being placed in different classes and that they should be guided by teaching the Turkish language. In the first years of migration, the Turkish government did not develop any educational policy for refugees, assuming that the refugees will return to their countries. Some temporary solutions have been attempted with the policies developed later on. However, although Turkey has been trying hard to manage this intensive migration effectively, according to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (2015), Turkey ranks last among the 38 countries in terms of the integration policies classified under eight headings as political cohesion, work cohesion, family unity, health, education, permanent home, citizenship rights and discrimination. These results support the views of the teachers in this study.

The teachers believe that, although arriving in Turkey in a temporary status, the refugees will become permanent residents in Turkey, because they will be unwilling to leave the opportunities they have in Turkey. Various studies in Turkey support this belief of the teachers. Many studies indicate that the refugees are generally pleased to be in Turkey (Apak, 2014, 2015; Erdogan, 2015; Karasu, 2016; Kumar, 2015), and if offered, many of the refugees report that they want to become citizens of the Republic of Turkey (Apak, 2014; Erdogan, 2015). However, all of the social studies teachers in the present study show a negative reaction to refugee children and their families' having many opportunities, to their easy access to many things without working for them, and to their becoming permanent in Turkey. Another reason why teachers react negatively is that refugees have fled their country. According to social studies teachers, values of nationalism and patriotism are very important for the Turkish people. The Turkish people have never left their homeland, whatever the circumstances. Therefore, they cannot accept this betrayal of the refugees towards their homeland. Teachers stated that refugee students should be taught the value of patriotism. They think that the refugee students who have come to Turkey are not aware of the importance of national unity and solidarity because they fled their own country, that they have not developed the love of country, love of flag, and love of nation, and therefore, they do not respect our national values (Turkish Independence Anthem, Atatürk, Turkish flag, etc.), which leads to conflicts.

Various studies conducted in Turkey show that school administrators and teachers display negative attitudes towards the education of refugee

children in public schools (Emin, 2016; Sakız, 2016). The research by Sakız (2016) revealed that school principals are of the opinion that the demographic shift caused by the immigration wave in recent years has disrupted the regular procedures of teaching in their schools and disrupted the normal school routines of the mainstream students. Therefore, these principals do not support the education of refugee children in their schools and generally advocate maintaining the homogeneous student structure in their schools. It is quite worrying that teachers, especially social studies teachers, have think in this negative way because by their missions, social studies teachers play a key role in teaching democratic citizenship, values and attitudes. If teachers themselves have a negative attitude towards refugees, they will not be able to teach the values they do not believe, which will create many problems.

Further, some teachers who participated in this research stated that they are forced to discriminate in some respects. Discrimination is opposite to inclusive education. UNESCO defines inclusive education as follows: the process by which students' different needs are addressed by increasing their participation in education, culture and society, and reducing discrimination in the education system (UNESCO, 2005). Recognizing the discrimination that may arise in education and taking measures to prevent discrimination should be among the priorities of all teachers, especially teachers with refugees in their class (Aktekin, 2017). While teachers' practices that reinforce discrimination and prejudices can be devastating, on the contrary, receiving the necessary training on multiculturalism and being careful against discrimination can have very positive effects on the education of these children. As such, In order for teachers to work with refugee children, supporting them with professional development and specialization training is very important for the quality of education (Dreyden-Peterson, 2011, p. 54-57). Furthermore, in accordance with the international Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have rights regardless of "language, religion, class differences, ethnic or religious origin." Articles 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 of the Convention refer to children's right to education. These articles assign education a responsibility that needs to be fulfilled, regardless of the differences in children's religion, language, and ethnicity, and physical or mental disability.

In order for refugee students to adapt to the society, to understand the Turkish culture and social structure, to love the country they live in, and to learn the basic information needed for a citizen, social studies teachers have a very important mission. However, the results show that teachers do not think that social studies teachers have a special mission in the adaptation of and conflict prevention for refugee students. They think that all the courses are equally important, but the Turkish language course is the most important of all. The teachers think that there is nothing in the curriculum of social

studies aimed at solving conflicts with refugee students. These teachers do not engage in any extra activities to prevent refugee students from being involved in conflict. Öztürk (2018) concluded that social studies teachers think that the social studies curriculum is inadequate to ensure that the refugees are adapted to Turkey, and that the Turkish students are inadequate in accepting refugee students.

When solving conflicts, teachers emphasize that many values should be given to refugee students, but first and foremost, they should be taught the value of respect and tolerance in solving conflicts. Other values that teachers try to instill in refugee students while solving conflicts are the values of love, justice, benevolence, responsibility, good morality, kindness, cooperation, and compassion. Individuals with conflict-solving skills gain values such as tolerance, respect for differences, and peace. The acquisition of these values and skills is an important objective in social studies courses (Gürdoğan, Bayır & Gültekin, 2016).

To sum up, due to the policies implemented, the curriculum, linguistic and cultural differences, and the lack of adequate training, social studies teachers have problems with refugee students and demonstrate negative reactions to refugees by citing some of their unacceptable behaviors. Furthermore, due to their concern about meeting deadlines in covering the syllabus, being concerned about Turkish parents' reactions, and arguing that it is not covered in the official curriculum; teachers do not include extra activities to facilitate refugee students' adaptation. However, despite all these difficulties, by the mission of social studies teachers, they need to take more effective responsibility and role in the process of refugee students' adaptation. To take this active role, teachers should be provided the specific training that they need to be able to facilitate their refugee students' adaptation to the new culture.

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