

SIĞINMACI ÇOCUKLAR İÇİN OYUN İMKANI SAĞLAMAK: YEREL YÖNETİMLERE TAVSİYELER ÜZERİNE BİR TARTIŞMA

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ÖZ

İnsanlar, doğal kaynaklı ya da yapay afetlerden dolayı ilk çağlardan bu yana göç halindedir. Yakın zamanda Suriye'de gelişen krizden dolayı dünya çapındaki göçmen sayılarında büyük bir artış olmuş ve bu göçmen dalgasından en çok etkilenen ülke Türkiye olmuştur. Bu uluslararası düzeyde bir problem olmasına rağmen, Türkiye göç rotasındaki ilk durak olduğu için göçmenlerin yaşadıkları birçok probleme ilk elden çözüm üretmek zorunda kalmıştır. Birleşmiş Milletler İnsan Hakları Konseyi'nin açıklamalarına göre Türkiye'de 2.8 milyon sığınmacı yaşamaktadır, fakat yasal olmayan yollardan ülkeye giren göçmenlerin de olduğu düşünüldüğünde bu sayının çok daha fazla olduğu tahmin edilmektedir. Ayrıca 2016 yılında Türkiye ile Avrupa Birliği arasında imzalanan anlaşma gereği Türkiye, Avrupa ülkeleri tarafından yasal sığınmacı olarak kabul edilene kadar daha fazla sayıda göçmene ev sahipliği yapmak zorunda kalacaktır.

Bu süreç, göçmenlerin yaşamlarını olumsuz olarak etkilemektedir ve bu durumdan en çok etkilenen kitle, göçmen nüfusunun %50'lik kısmını oluşturan çocuklardır. Çocukların rekreasyonel aktivitelere katılma ve oyun oynama hakkı Çocuk Hakları Bildirgesi'nin 31. maddesi ile koruma altına alınmış olsa da, insanların sığınmacı olarak, geçici barınma alanlarında yaşadıkları bir ortamda çocukların oyun oynama haklarına saygı gösterildiğinden ve korunduğundan bahsetmek oldukça zordur. Bu sebeple bu makalede sığınmacı çocukların günlük mekanları ve oyun haklarını ne derece elde edebildikleri sorgulanacaktır. Dahası, bu makalede yerel yönetimlere tavsiyelerde bulunmak amacı ile çocuklara hızlı ve düşük bütçeli oyun sağlama stratejileri üzerine de bir tartışma yürütülecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Sığınmacı çocuklar, oyun imkanları, belediyelerin rolü

CREATING PLAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN: A DISCUSSION ON ADVICE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

ABSTRACT

Human beings have migrated to different places due to natural or human-made disasters since the first ages. In recent years, the number of refugees has increased rapidly due to the crisis in Syria, which has affected Turkey severely through the immigration waves it has generated. According to the United Nations Human Rights Council's statements, Turkey is currently accommodating 2.8 million refugees; however, the actual number might be higher, as illegal immigration is also an issue. Furthermore, Turkey will accommodate even more refugees until they are officially accepted as immigrants by other nations according to the agreement signed with the European Union in 2016. This process negatively affects the lives of immigrants, and the most affected group among them are children, who comprise 50% of the refugees in Turkey. Although article 31st of "Convention on the Rights of the Child" protects children's right of access to play and recreational activities, it is difficult to tell whether children's right to play is protected and respected under these circumstances. Therefore, this paper aims to explore refugee children's daily lives in cities and whether their right to play is achieved under the circumstances of immigration. Furthermore, this paper discusses the possible strategies for fast and low-cost play provision, and how local authorities can be better advised about such resources.

Keywords: Refugee children, play opportunities, role of municipality

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INTRODUCTION

In 2010 young boy immolated himself in front of a crowd, which led millions of people to take action against the regime in Tunisia. This spirit, which was later called “Arab Spring”, spread quickly across other Arab countries and resulted in an uprising against governments in many countries, such as Libya, Egypt, Bahrain, and Algeria. In many of these countries, conflict between regime powers and rebels was unavoidable; however, these conflicts have been settled, resulting in a change of power. The first protest against the government in Syria started in late 2010. None of the actors in this part of the world foresaw that this movement against the government would take the country into civil war and that the conflict would take so long to resolve. Since the regime and its supporters have a strong position in Syria, the conflict between parties has been intensified. The process of a swift change of power that happened in other countries has not happened in Syria, and civil war has been continuous since 2011.

According to the United Nations refugee agency, after 2011 a rapid rise in world-wide mass immigration occurred, and the number of personal immigration applications also increased (UNHCR, 2013). Refugee waves to Turkey started with a group of 252 people entering the country from the Hatay Yayladağ region in April 2011 (Güçer, M., Karaca, S. & Dinçer, B, 2013). Starting in 2011, Turkey has become the country where the highest number of immigration applications have been made, due to the civil war in Syria (UNHCR, 2011). In the first place, passport holding families with higher socioeconomic status moved to south-eastern regions of Turkey, such as Antep, Kilis, Hatay, taking advantage of a visa-free travel agreement between Turkey and Syria. However, in the following months, the number of Syrian refugees increased, and people from different socio-economic levels immigrated to Turkey.

In 2013, just two years after the Syrian crisis started, the number of mass immigration seen in a single year reached the highest level since 1999 (UNHCR, 2013). According to the same report, in the first six months of the year, 1.3 million Syrians had migrated into neighbouring countries. Lebanon and Jordan were severely affected by immigration during this year. Turkey became the country with the third highest number of Syrian refugees and rose to sixth in terms of in the total number of refugees entering countries in a year (UNHCR, 2013).

Before 2012, the Syrian Arab Republic was not even among the top 30 source countries on the refugees list; however, by mid-2014 the number of Syrian refugees had overtaken Afghans, the largest refugee population under UNHCR mandate for a decade (UNHCR, 2015a). This increase in the number of Syrian refugees reflects the continuing conflict between parties and the level of violence in Syria. Mostly, Syria’s neighbouring countries were affected by these refugee waves in 2014. Turkey became the fourth largest country hosting primary refugee and by mid-2014 was hosting 824.400 refugees, 97% of which were from Syria.

In the second half of 2014 and throughout the following year the number of Syrian refugees continued to increase rapidly. Turkey reached 1.8 million registered Syrian refugees, overtaking Lebanon as the country with the largest number (UNHCR, 2015a). By the end of the same year, the number of registered refugees had increased to 2.2 million in Turkey. Turkey had not even been among the top 20 refugee-hosting countries a few years before this; and when this is considered, the scale of the Syrian crisis and its impact on neighbouring countries can be thoroughly understood.

According to the UNHCR (2017), the number of recorded Syrian refugees in Turkey exceeded 2.7 million people as of 2015, and this is the highest number of refugees Turkey has encountered since the establishment of the republic. It is even higher than the total number of refugees Turkey has hosted since 1923 (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, 2015). In addition, if we include illegal and unregistered refugees, the total figure is possibly well over 3 million. In this situation, children and elders are the most affected groups. According to UNICEF 232 thousand children had been

affected by the Syrian crisis in 2012, the numbers increased to 1.2 million in 2013, 1.9 million in 2014 and reached 6 million in 2016 (UNICEF, 2012; UNICEF, 2014). According to the last report, 2.5 million of these children had been forced to migrate out of Syria.

Moreover, at least half of the total number of refugees currently in Turkey (between 3-4 million) are children, which means that the majority of children that faced forced migration from Syria now live in Turkey. Table 1 shows the number of Syrian refugees and Syrian refugee children in Turkey by year. Furthermore, according to Sarıkaya, M. (2016) in Turkish refugee camps alone 125 children are born every day and the actual number of refugee children who have been born in Turkey is not known because almost 90% of the refugee population has spread into different cities. However, the estimate of the total number of children born in Turkey so far is 230 thousand (Erdoğan, 2017). During the immigration process and in the country that they arrived, the majority of these children have had to forfeit their most basic needs and rights, such as food, shelter, and education.

Table 1. Number of refugees and refugee children in Turkey by year

	Total Syrian Refugees	Children Refugees
2012	280.000	N/A
2013	799.668	310.994
2014	1.8 million	841.639
2015	2.2 million	1 million
2016	2.7 million	1.3 million
2017	3.3 million	1.5 million
2018	3.6 million	1.6 million

Data derived from various UNHCR and UNICEF reports.

REFUGEE CHILDREN AND CITIES

It is well-established truth that the majority of refugees in Turkey do not want to live in refugee camps; they would rather move into cities (UNHCR, 2015b). Although there are 27 refugee camps, mainly located on south-eastern Turkey, 91% of the total refugee population live outside of those camps (Johannisson, 2016). A number of issues can be seen to have undermined the camping process. Güçer, et al., (2013) reported that many people living in refugee camps are traumatised or likely to be traumatised due to unemployment and loss of social status. Furthermore, according to the same report. Syrians who have illegally crossed the border are not entitled to live in refugee camps.

Another reason why people wish not to live in refugee camps is that people of a lower economic status or people who could not bring savings with them have to move to bigger cities in order to work. Besides this, refugees with a higher economic status also move into cities hoping to find work, integrate into Turkish social life and feel comfortable in their family lives, as was the case when they were in Syria. In both situations, whether they are willing to work, to live or hoping to integrate, these refugees face a local reaction (Kavlak, 2011; Güçer, et al., 2013).

In both of these situations, children are profoundly affected because they miss out on many opportunities otherwise available. For instance, school-age Syrian children in 2010, either those forced to move into the country or out of it, cannot go to school. If the civil war continues, the majority of these children will grow up without a primary education and may never find educational opportunities in the rest of their life, which is why these children are called the “lost generation”. Especially in Turkey, the majority of children cannot continue their education. According to research by the “No Lost Generation” initiative less than 300 thousand children are

currently continuing their education in Turkey and more than 450 thousand of them have drifted away from education (No Lost Generation, 2016). These numbers are increasing daily. If it is considered that the total number of refugee children in Turkey is well over 1.5 million, the likelihood of a lost generation is not a fantasy.

One of the main reasons that the majority of these children cannot go to school is that they need to work to support their families. When immigrating, people have to leave their real assets, cars and even savings behind. In this situation, if they are not entitled to live in refugee camps or are willing to live in cities, they need to work. However, they do not have permission and are not entitled to work in many sectors. For instance, even if a refugee was a dentist in Syria, they cannot practice in Turkey. Therefore, most people work illegally in severe conditions and earn much lower than the national minimum wage (Kılıç, T. et al., 2015). These families need to maximise their earnings and minimise their spending (Dedeoğlu, 2012). The most critical income maximisation method is to increase the number of people working in the family. In this case, some children need to work for their family. The others who are not working are also affected because they need to spend their time alone at home because both parents need to work long hours for income maximisation (No Lost Generation, 2016). In both of these situations, children have no educational life and often contract trauma and stress disorders as a result (Kılıç, T. et al., 2015).

CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PLAY AND PROVIDING PLAY FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

Play is children's life and style of learning. Children gain much creativity, imagination, fun and physical, cognitive, emotional and dexterity development through imaginary play (NPFA, 2000; Ginsburg, 2007; Kolb & Kolb, 2010). The role of play in development has been explored both in neuro-ethnological and cultural aspects, and it has been suggested that play has a vital role in brain development. Many mammal species share this aspect: play time experiences can even affect brain anatomy (Haight and Black, 2001). Moreover, play provides opportunities for improving problem-solving skills in the young as well as for them to develop social and language skills (Manwaring & Taylor, n.d.).

According to the World Health Organization's report, children between the ages of 5 to 17 need 60 minutes of medium or high pace daily physical activity for their healthy growth (WHO, 2015). Play in urban open spaces helps children to fulfil this task and also makes it fun as well as helping children's development, as stated above. Play gives children a chance to escape from the adult world and to find time to relax. Therefore, play is a critical factor for both learning and relaxation for children. United Nation's Commission of Children's Rights recognised the importance of play. The 31st article of the "Convention on the Rights of the Child" states that children's rights involve the freedom, space and resources to enable recreational activities and play (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989). This international act entered into force on 2 September 1990 and was signed by 193 nations, including Turkey. This agreement secures children's social, cultural, and economic rights in any situation through A54 articles (Humanium, 2016). This act primarily guarantees children's accommodation, food and health rights and these three crucial aspects are the foundations of humanitarian aid today. In additions, education is becoming the fourth important aspect of humanitarian aid (Machel, 2001). In many situations, especially in forced immigration, children's right to play is neglected over socio-economic rights; however, playing is as important as the other rights for children's psychological and physical development and preparation for life (Kucukali, 2015). In emergencies circumstances, the responsibility for fulfilling children's right to play and participate in recreational activities is left to signatory countries by the 31st article of the "Convention on the Rights of the Child" agreement. Typically, children's play is organised and regulated by the countries in which they live. However, inconveniences occur in natural or human-made disasters, and the Syrian civil war is a contemporary example of one of this.

As of 2017, almost 6 million children had been affected by the Syrian civil war and children's access to play, or play equipment, is almost non-existent either in Syria or where they have migrated to. Children's right to play is not recognised in Syrian refugees situation, as it is not yet seen as one of the critical aspects of humanitarian aid. UNICEF has done some work about children's access to play and play equipment in refugee camps; however, the vast majority of refugee children live outside of these camps, most of whom are traumatised, unable to continue their education, and isolated from their families, adult members of which need to work long hours to earn sufficient income to support their children. Studies suggest that play helps children to recover from post-traumatic stress disorder more quickly (Wethington et. al., 2008; Flether & Barkley, 2003). Therefore, play and play equipment need to be provided for refugee children living outside of refugee camps because this is their right, as recognised by international agreements. Secondly, play provision is necessary to reduce stress levels and relieve post-traumatic stress disorder. Notably, the latter is essential for building mentally healthy adults in the community. Besides, it is obliged by the "Convention on the Rights of the Child" that in war and refugee situations implementing article 31st is the responsibility of the host country, meaning that, in the situation discussed here, all the weight is upon the Turkish Government's shoulders. The vast majority of refugee children live outside of refugee camps so identifying them and providing play opportunities for them is an arduous task.

Unfortunately, only a limited number of research studies on providing access to play to refugee children in wartime scenarios has been published. However, several successful studies on providing access to play after natural disasters have been written. There is not much difference between these situations. First of all, in both situations, children lose their homes, schools, and environments that they are familiar with. Secondly, they are likely to have lost family members. Thirdly, they are forced to move out of the area they have been living in and to live in temporary accommodation. All of these aspects of both natural and human-made disasters can cause trauma-related stress disorders, and children are likely victims, but the levels of post-traumatic stress disorders are most likely to be higher in the refugee situations, which also highlights the importance of play provision for this group.

When we look to the literature about children's rehabilitation from post-traumatic stress disorder in war and refugee situations, the most significant finding is the need for such children to engage in discovery and have access to adventure playgrounds, which first appeared in Copenhagen after Second World War (figure 1). In such adventure playgrounds, children create an order for themselves, which can counteract the chaos around them (Hurtwood, 1968). At this time, the children tended to play war games in adventure playgrounds, creating a remedy for the war (Lisul, 2004). Playing in adventure playgrounds after the war helped children to recover from post-traumatic stress disorder. However, the importance of adventure playgrounds in relieving post-traumatic stress disorder is still an underestimated subject (Tucker, J., 2014). Adventure playgrounds started to disappear in the Europe after the 1970s. However, adventure playgrounds are one of the most suitable play provision techniques for refugee children because set up and operating costs are minimal. In addition, they can be set up in any suitable open space. In Turkey, it is the district municipality's responsibility to provide adventure playgrounds in areas with numbers of refugee children. It is a fact that district municipalities require an extra budget for play provision. In restricted economies, it is difficult to find such additional funding. However, in a suitable area, free material such as sand, dirt, wooden pieces, rope and other recycled materials is enough for the basic set up of adventure playgrounds. The most important aspect of these amenities is a play supervisor, which is the only operating expense. A play supervisor ensures children play safely in the area, without interrupting their play assemblage. Play supervisors can be both play specialists or child psychologists. In the latter situation, the supervisor can also undertake psychological observations of children playing in the area and direct children that may need psychological treatment to specialists. Arranging voluntary work schedules can solve the expense of play supervision. Besides, undertaking partnership projects

with national or international institutions and non-profit organisations such as UNICEF can also help local authorities to arrange budgets for play supervision.



Figure 1. The first examples of an adventure playground “Emdrup”, opened by Carl Theodor Sørensen in Denmark (Photograph: SVEN TÜRCK / VISDA)

Another play provision technique that would be suitable for implementation in the refugee crisis is a temporary mobile play van. These vans are widely organised and used by non-profit organisations in different countries (Figure 2). According to the literature, these vans are also generally used in temporary accommodation sites in natural disaster areas, rather than refugee crises; however, this concept could quickly be adopted. The most effective use of these temporary mobile play vans was seen in Japan after the major earthquake and tsunami in 2011 (Figure 3). These vans carry wooden blocks, fabrics, tent equipment in different sizes and shapes that are easily transportable at the back of the van. Unstructured play with this loose material allows children to play together, socialise and learn from each other, improving their creativity (Kinoshita & Woolley, 2015). The most important aspect of these vans is that they provide play in areas that are too small or spatially not suitable for playground design. They can give children play opportunities in just two car parking spaces. Such play can be organised even in the smallest of temporary accommodation sites. This concept can quickly be adapted to refugee children’s play needs. The unstructured play which these vans provide are likely to help children mitigate the stresses their situations create and to overcome their anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. For instance, it was witnessed that children with post-traumatic stress disorder recovered quickly in the areas, where mobile play vans were organised (Kinoshita & Woolley, 2015). Besides, play provision with mobile vans can quickly create a bond between child and play carers, who would most likely be Turkish citizens, in this case, so that refugee children might start to trust native people, supporting their adaptation to their new environment.



Figure 2. Play bus organized by Ipswich Community as non-profit organization, run by volunteer trustees for children under 5 (Source: <http://www.ipswichplaybus.org.uk/>)

Another advantage of mobile play vans is that they are less expensive to create than playgrounds. Therefore, and so do not bring a burden to local authority budgets. They are also adaptable to changing situations. Thus, in the future, they could be directed into the other parts of the country, when the refugee situation in cities changes or other natural disasters strike. They might also be directed to other socio-economically disadvantaged areas of Turkey, where children's access to play is restricted. As can be seen, play vans are a highly versatile tool for providing play and cost considerably less than traditional structured playgrounds. Play provision with play vans has two kinds of fixed expenses. Firstly, fuel costs for travel to the areas where they are needed. Secondly, a childminder pair or team that drives the van t arranges play and look after the children in their care. The former costs can be reduced by creating logistic solutions, such as having a base that is approximately equal distance from different areas where play need to be provided. The latter can be reduced using voluntary services or developing projects with national or international institutions, as was the case in the first method of play provision discussed here. Furthermore, as stated, this model is not as expensive as building a traditional playground, while these types of play spaces offer better opportunities for unstructured play.. Therefore, play vans would be good long term investments that provide better and multiple benefits to children.



Figure 3. Play truck outside temporary residence in Japan (Source: Kinoshita & Woolley, 2015)

The third method district councils should consider for play provision is creating indoor creative play areas. This approach is commonly discussed in the literature on natural disasters. After the 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami disaster, a majority of closed spaces, such as schools and nurseries, had become dysfunctional and the need for new confined play spaces a rose (Woolley & Kinoshita, 2015). Especially in areas close to the Fukushima nuclear power plant, indoor spaces were urgently needed to keep children safe from the effects of radiation. Since in some other parts of the country the weather was cold and rainy, indoor play spaces were needed. The first two types of play provision for the disaster areas would not have been suitable for the situation. However, as discussed above, children need to have daily physical activity, in order to stay mentally and physically healthy as the World Health Organization advises (WHO, 2015).

In Japan, indoor play areas were created to provide children with play opportunities and keep them physically active (Woolley & Kinoshita, 2015). Although the type of disaster is different in Turkey, this approach should also be adopted because in Turkey, for at least three months of the year, the weather is not suitable for outdoor play. Winter is much longer in the South-East region of Turkey. Therefore, the first two types of play provision that we have discussed earlier, would not meet refugee children's needs. First of all, Syrian refugee children have grown up in different climatic conditions, and their physical activity levels are likely to decrease in the winter months in a colder climate. Secondly, and most importantly, when children have to stay alone while their parents are at work for long hours, this is likely not to involve much physical activity in these months, putting further stress on traumatised children. Indoor creative play areas are a potential solution to this problem.



Figure 4. Imagination playgrounds that can be placed indoors or in containers (Photograph: David Knopf / Richmond News)

This type of play provision can be arranged in the areas where refugee children populations are concentrated. It can be provided in two different ways depending, on circumstances. In the first case, large containers can be placed in open spaces and converted to indoor creative play areas (figure 4). These containers can be removed when the weather improves and open spaces can be arranged as outdoor play spaces. Besides, these container playgrounds are almost as versatile as play vans. They can be transported to another part of the district, city or even country, depending on changing situations and where they are needed. These containers can be arranged as donations, or collaboration with institutional organisations. They do not cost much, and sometimes it can be recycled after previous use. This first type of indoor play provision again is not very expensive for the local authorities. In the second case, where open spaces are limited, indoor play areas can be organised in empty shopping spaces, offices or warehouses (figure 5). This type of provision is slightly more expensive compared to the first case scenario, but money can be obtained from monthly charitable donations and linking projects to legal institutions. In the worst-case scenario, local authorities could rent an indoor space, as this would still cost as less than building one new structured playground.



Figure 5. Indoors sand play space in Japan after Tsunami disaster (Source: Kinoshita & Woolley, 2015)

CONCLUSIONS

The civil war in Syria has affected millions of children' lives and changed them forever. Massive numbers of children have been forced to move to countries they have never seen before. From this perspective, a majority of refugees that have migrated to Turkey have done so in the hope of finding a home without too much cultural difference to their own, to find work, to seek asylum and sometimes to illegally travel to European countries with a view to settling there. We have witnessed the worst of those situations in recent years. It is a very well-known fact that more than half of the refugees that have moved to Turkey are children. Play is an important aspect of childhood and helps children to improve their cognitive, social, emotional, fine and gross motor skills. Also, play is a good tool for helping children to recover from many mental illnesses such as post-traumatic disorder, which is common in refugee people. Furthermore, children have the right to play, as given to them by the United Nations and agreed by 193 countries worldwide.

In this paper, we have discussed how play can be provided to refugee children in Turkey at a modest cost to local and district authorities. The discussion involved analysing three different methods of play provision that had been previously undertaken in natural and human-made disaster cases. The common ground for all those strategies has been the need to provide rapid solutions to a key element in major crises, namely the need to provide children with active play opportunities that are not too costly and have been tested in previous disaster situations. The provision of traditional parks and playgrounds is both expensive and takes time to build. In urgent, crisis situations response times have to be quicker. All three types of strategies discussed here can be realised and made available in a short period and cost considerably less compared to the traditional alternative.

Needless to say, none of these methods has been tried and used on target populations in Turkey previously, so the implementation stage is likely to bring many challenges. In this article, some of those challenges have been identified, and possible solutions to these issues have been discussed. However, empirical research on this subject is needed in order to obtain a full and detailed understanding of these challenges. Therefore, there is scope for future research on the possibility of bringing funding bodies and local authorities together to adopt these strategies and research whether these theoretically sound strategies work on implementation. Certainly, henceforth we might have the knowledge to create better solutions for children's right to play in refugee situations, provide better play opportunities for them, and thus reduce the psychological burden these children are very likely to have suffered, which may well also lead to financial savings for authorities in the future. Studies have shown that one of the long-term benefits of bringing children up in a way which nurtures their developmental process effectively is that a range of costs related to illness, worklessness, crime, etc. that result from crises in childhood are likely to be significantly lower in the future, if good quality support is given in the immediate aftermath of such situations.

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Uzun Öz

İnsanlar doğal kaynaklı ya da yapay afetlerden dolayı ilk çağlardan bu yana göç halindedir. Fakat son altı yılda "Arap Baharı" ile başlayan karışıklık ve güvensiz ortam farklı ülkelerden birçok göç dalgası yaratmıştır. Yakın zamanda Suriye'de gelişen krizden dolayı da dünya çapındaki göçmen sayılarında büyük bir artış olmuş ve bu göçmen dalgasından en çok etkilenen ülke Türkiye olmuştur. Suriye'deki savaşın başladığı ilk yıllardan beri Türkiye sığınmacıları kabul etmiş olsa da Türkiye'ye gelen sığınmacı nüfusundaki ivme 2012 yılından sonra giderek artmıştır. Bu, uluslararası düzeyde bir problem olmasına rağmen, Türkiye göç rotasındaki ilk durak olduğu için göçmenlerin yaşadıkları birçok probleme ilk elden çözüm üretmek zorunda kalmıştır. Birleşmiş Milletler İnsan Hakları Konseyi'nin açıklamalarına göre Türkiye'de 2,8 milyon sığınmacı yaşamaktadır, fakat yasal olmayan yollardan ülkeye giren göçmenlerin de olduğu düşünüldüğünde bu sayının 4 milyon civarında olduğu tahmin edilmektedir. Ayrıca 2016 yılında Türkiye ile Avrupa Birliği arasında imzalanan anlaşma gereği, Türkiye Avrupa ülkeleri tarafından yasal sığınmacı olarak kabul edilene kadar daha fazla sayıda göçmene ev sahipliği yapmak zorunda kalacaktır. Ayrıca bu anlaşmanın şartlarının Avrupa Birliği tarafından yerine getirilmediği 2017 yılı içerisinde görülmüş ve bu süre zarfında Türkiye'deki sığınmacı sayısı giderek artmıştır. Böyle durumlarda insanların hayatları sonsuza kadar değişir ve bu durumdan en çok etkilenen kitle göç etmiş nüfusun %50'lik kısmını oluşturan çocuklardır. Türkiye'deki kamplarda ve şehirlerde yaşayan Suriyeli çocuk sayısında da artış olduğu bilinmektedir. Türkiye'de tahminlere göre günde ortalama 125 Suriyeli çocuğun doğduğu düşünülmekte fakat bütün coğrafyaya yayılmış bir sığınmacı toplamı olduğu düşünüldüğünde kesin sayı bilinmemektedir. Fakat kesin olarak bilinen şudur ki Türkiye'deki Suriyeli çocuk sayısı ve toplam Suriyeli sığınmacılar içindeki çocuk yüzdesi günden güne artmaktadır. Çocukların rekreasyonel aktivitelere katılma ve oyun oynama hakkı Çocuk Hakları Bildirgesi'nin 31. maddesi ile koruma altına alınmış olsa da insanların sığınmacı olarak geçici barınma alanlarında yaşadıkları bir ortamda çocukların oyun oynama hakkına saygı gösterildiğinden ve korunduğundan bahsetmek oldukça zordur. Bu sebeple bu makalede sığınmacı çocukların günlük mekanları ve oyun hakkının ne derece sağlanabildiği sorgulanmaktadır. Dahası, bu makalede yerel yönetimlere tavsiyelerde bulunmak amacı ile çocuklara hızlı ve düşük bütçeli oyun sağlama

stratejileri üzerine bir tartışma yürütülmektedir. Oyun çocukların yaşam biçimidir. Çocuklar oyun yolu ile yaratıcılık, sosyal etkileşim, motor becerilerde gelişim gibi birçok konuda gelişim sağlarlar. Yapılan sosyal ve nörolojik araştırmalar da çocukların beyin gelişiminde oyunun önemini vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca Dünya Sağlık Örgütü'nün raporlarına göre çocuklar günde en az 60 dakika hızlı aktivitelere katılarak sağlıklı gelişebilirler ve bunu yapmanın en kolay yolu çocukların oyun oynamalarıdır. Fakat Suriyeli sığınmacı çocuklar düşünüldüğünde onların oyun oynama imkanından bahsetmek mümkün olmayabilmektedir. Özellikle göç, okuldan ayrılma, maddi gelirden yoksunluk gibi durumlar çocukların hayatında büyük değişiklikler yaratmakta ve bu çocukların birçoğunu çalışmaya mahkûm etmektedir. Okula gidememenin ve çalışmak zorunda olmanın çocukların üzerinde yaratacağı travmaların zaten göçün halihazırda yaratmış olduğu travmaya eklendiği düşünüldüğünde çocukların travma sonrası stres bozukluğu rahatsızlığına yakalanmaları yüksek ihtimaldir. Travma sonrası stres bozukluğunun da giderilmesinde oyun oynamanın büyük bir rolü olduğu kanıtlanmıştır. Yapılan araştırmalar doğrultusunda oyunun göçmen çocukların hayatlarını tekrar düzene sokacak ve travma sonrası stres bozukluklarını giderebilecek bir araç olarak kullanılabileceği görülmektedir. Çocuğa verilmiş bir hak olan oyunun çocuklara ulaştırılmasında ve bunun düzenlenmesinde yetki yerel yönetimlere bırakılmış durumdadır fakat yerel yönetimlerin yetkilerini tam olarak kullanamadıkları ve oyun imkanını sağlamak için bazı stratejilere ihtiyaçları olduğu görülmektedir. Literatürde yapılan araştırmalar sonucunda farklı afet durumlarında kullanılmış üç farklı oyun sağlama stratejisinin Türkiye'deki sığınmacı çocuklar için uygun olacağı düşünülmüş ve bu makalede üç strateji üzerine tartışmalar yürütülmüştür. Bu yöntemler; Macera oyun alanları, oyun pick-up / kamyonetleri ve kapalı oyun alanlarının sağlanması olarak sıralanabilir. Bu oyun sağlama stratejilerinin tamamının ortak yönü çok düşük bütçeli stratejiler olmaları ve yerel yönetimlere ekstra bir yük getirmeyecek şekilde organize edilebilmeleridir. Örneğin macera oyun alanları Suriyeli mültecilerin yoğun olarak yaşadıkları bölgelerdeki herhangi bir arsa üzerine geri dönüştürülmüş malzemeler kullanılarak kolayca oluşturulabilecek alanlardır. Bunların yapımında ve yönetiminde de sivil toplum kuruluşları ve gönüllülerden yardım alınabilir. Öte yandan oyun kamyonetleri biraz daha maliyetli bir oyun sağlama aracı olmakla birlikte, mobil olması ve farklı bölgelere oyunu götürebilmesi avantajları düşünüldüğünde bu maliyetlere değecek bir oyun sağlama şekli olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Ayrıca oluşturulacak oyun kamyonetleri diğer çeşitli oyun imkanlarının kurgulanamadığı dar ve sıkışık alanlara oyun imkanını götürebilmek için de oldukça kullanışlı bir oyun sağlama metodudur. Buna ek olarak istihdam edildikleri bölgede işleri bittiği takdirde farklı bölgelere yönlendirilme veya ileride farklı illerde gerçekleştirilecek doğal kaynaklı afet ve krizler sonrasında da kullanılabilecek bir araç olması dolayısı ile önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bunların dışında kurgulanabilecek kapalı oyun alanları da özellikle kış aylarında ya da hava şartlarının yıl boyu daha sert seyrettiği bölgelerde düşünülmesi gereken bir oyun sağlama metodu olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Yerel yönetimlere ait kapalı mekanlarda yapılabileceği gibi, özel kişilere ait mekanların kiralanması ya da bağış yolu ile birkaç aylığına elde edilmesi şeklinde de organize edilebilmektedirler. Özellikle bağış yolu ile elde edilen mekanlarda kurulacak olan oyun alanları yerel yönetimlere ek yük getirmeyecek ve bu alanlara konulan oyun ekipmanları bu alanlar işlevini tamamladıklarında açık havada çocuk oyun alanlarına nakledilebileceklerdir.

