



A Phenomenological Model of Child Poverty: A Research on the State-Subsidized Children in Istanbul*

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Abstract

Although the static dimension of child poverty, which corresponds to deprivations experienced in daily life, is a field of interest in both research and policy, study of the dynamic dimension of child poverty, which corresponds to children's reactions, is mostly neglected in Turkey. Based on this deficiency, this study focuses on poor child types in relation to the findings obtained as a consequence of the phenomenological investigation of children's coping strategies with poverty in daily life. The findings rely on field research, which was conducted with children between the ages of 11 and 15 living in the poor regions of Istanbul and state-subsidized ones. The differences among poor children were divided into four different child types: Rescuer child, substituting child, foundation-integrated child, and protectionist child. This typology, which is the outcome of the phenomenological approach, was expressed as the phenomenological model of child poverty. This model has brought both the heterogeneous quality of child poverty and structural and cultural factors neglected in coping strategies into the forefront. Besides, the agency possibilities of poor children in certain contexts are revealed by means of this model.

Keywords

Child poverty, Coping strategies, Poor child types, Phenomenology, State-subsidized children

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Introduction

Child poverty is one of the most significant social problems in Turkey according to the data of the OECD and the statistics of the Turkish Statistical Institute on Income and Living Conditions. According to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute between the years of 2011 and 2016, child poverty rates were around 30%¹. According to the data of the OECD, average child poverty rates, which were around 13%² in OECD countries, were more than 20% in Turkey (Oecd, 2016; 2017). Considering this data, it is seen that child poverty in Turkey should be investigated as one of the problem fields in both sociology and social policy.

Social workers and economists have conducted studies in order to reveal the dimensions and qualities of child poverty and ways of dealing with it with references to statistics in the child poverty literature in Turkey (Dayıoğlu, 2007; Öztürk, 2008; Metin, 2015; Durgun, 2011; 2016; Avşar Kurnaz, 2007; 2009; Aka, 2017). When we look at the literature in the field of sociology, there are studies that focus on child labor, juvenile delinquency, and street children (Işık, 2007; Kılıç, 2009; Bal, 2007; Bilgin, 2009; Kahraman & Özden, 2017; İnal, 2010; Gün, 2017) and reveal how children experience poverty in the context of daily life and how this affects their relationships in daily life (Kahraman, 2015; Gürses, 2014; Doğan, 2011; Akıllı & Dirikoç, 2017). These studies, however, analyzed children's deprivation by focusing on the static side of the phenomenon and, therefore, neglected the dynamic side of it which is about how children cope with poverty in daily life. In poverty studies, coping strategies with poverty are generally understood through the experiences of poor adults in their daily lives (Şentürk, 2008; Yılmaz, 2007; Şahin, 2018; Güneş, 2010; Işık & Göktürk, 2010; Yusufoglu & Kızmaz, 2015). Thus, the need for research in the field of child poverty in Turkey, which would be conducted within the framework of children's coping strategies with poverty, has become more necessary. Based on this, the research question of this study is how children cope with poverty in daily life. The research question has been examined through coping strategies and motives of strategies in an interactive context. Designing such a research question is to raise the question of "what do poor children think, through which motives do they think, and how do they cope with it in the face of deprivations in daily life?". Such a research

1 Poverty rate is based on 60% of the equivalized household median disposable income.

2 Poverty rate is based on 50% of the equivalized household median disposable income.

question has necessitated the investigation of the agency of poor children in a deprived or subordinated status. The approach in the studies of Goffman (1961), De Certau (1984) and Scott (1985), which feature the agency of the ‘ordinary person’ in social theory in the context of the agency of children, has provided a specific perspective for this study. Besides, the literature about the agency of children which consisted of works inspired by Giddens’ (1986; 1979) theory of structuration in the new sociology of childhood has been taken into consideration. Thus, this paper focuses on poor children who, to use the words of Bayat (2006: 35-36), “are active in their own way for survival despite the fact that they are weak”. On the other hand, such a research has necessitated the consideration of factors about age, structure and culture, which are thought to be the missing points in those studies adopting a child-centred approach according to Redmond (2008: 9). The study, therefore, has micro sociological qualifications in terms of its research question and method and involves an analysis of power relations at an interactionist level, and institutional and public resources.

The sub-questions in relation to the research question are:

- What are children’s coping strategies with poverty?
- What are the motives of children’s strategies?
- Based on children’s strategies and their meanings, what kind of agency have children shown in coping with poverty?
- What are the demographic, social and political factors determining children’s strategies?

The main purpose of the research is to comprehend how children cope with poverty through strategies and to find out the intentions in the background of strategies. Besides, the other purpose of the study is to comprehend what kind of agency children have shown through demographic, social and political factors determining children’s strategies. This research is important because it helps determine and comprehend structural and cultural resources through children’s coping strategies with poverty. In this respect, a specific perspective and tendency to social policy planning related to poor children will be suggested.

Methodology

This research was conducted in five poor areas of Istanbul. These areas are Sultanbeyli, Sultangazi, Arnavutköy, Esenyurt and Sancaktepe – the districts which have the lowest social status in Istanbul (Şeker, 2017; Erginli, 2018). Besides, based on up to date population data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (2011-2016), it was seen that the child population (under 18) rates were high in these districts. Considering the total population, these districts are found amongst the first 6 districts with the highest child population rates. The study group consisted of children between the ages of 11 and 15 who received state subsidy. Children who were receiving the Social and Economic Support for children and their family, provided by the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services, participated in the research. This was because the children who were receiving the Social and Economic Support were determined to represent the poor more according to the discussions with specialists from the Social Aid and Solidarity Foundation linked to the district governorship. Children between the ages of 11 and 15 were preferred because this range is generally accepted while doing age-based child definitions. This age bracket was also chosen due to the research technique since the possibility to get answers from children was considered as a criterion. This research represents the results of a qualitative research that adopts a phenomenological approach. Sociologists have used phenomenology to understand how the communal world works (Waksler, 2003: 61). The phenomenological study of children is about researching their living world and discovering their interaction styles in daily life (Mandell, 2003: 161). Thus, this paper aims to clarify and interpret the forms of intentionality, which allow children to be part of the world. First of all, the following questions can be asked to make this happen: “What is it like to be a child?” and “What does it mean to live like a child?”. Intentionality makes it possible to research the comprehensions and experiences in the subjects’ living world. The reason to understand the phenomenon while studying children phenomenologically is not to categorize and explain the children’s behaviour but to thematize and configure their meanings by using descriptive methods. This would reveal the meaning of being and living in this world as a child (Danaher & Briod, 2005: 218-219).

The first step of the phenomenological analysis of child poverty requires paying attention to children and seeing their potential as social actors.

Through this perspective, while overcoming the bias, which sees poor children as a silent social group as a result of their poverty and existence as children, children's knowledge and experiences are considered to understand this fact. This way, children's deprivation zone in daily life is portrayed from their own articulation of different situations. Secondly, intersubjectivity has a significance when it comes to finding the meaning that children attribute to their coping strategies with poverty in their daily life. This is related to the fact that children cope with poverty through their own interactions in their social sphere. Third of all, children carry out their coping strategies with poverty with a certain style of intentionality. Thus, both intentionality and intersubjectivity involve important clues on understanding the realities of children.

The phenomenological approach was used as the data-gathering technique for acquiring more detailed information since it focused on the articulation of the lives of individuals. Because open-ended questions, such as why, how, when and where, would provide more detailed answers from children than specific questions (Westcott & Littleton, 2005: 151), a semi-structured interview style was preferred in the research. In-depth interviews were held at the Social Service Center Department linked to the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services in five districts in June - August 2018. Before starting the field study, an in-depth interview form was reviewed by sociologists and psychologists working in the Social Service Center Department. In-depth interviews were held with a total of 48 children including 25 boys and 23 girls with the approval of themselves and their parents (by obtaining an informed consent form). Interviews lasted 45-50 minutes on average. Children's status as a poor child was always taken into consideration. It was particularly indicated to the children that they could end the interview right away if they did not want to continue.

Findings

The phenomenological investigation of children's coping strategies with poverty brought up the suitability and even necessity to develop a typology during the analysis process. The opportunity from the typologies to "objectively explain the subjective aspects of human behaviour" was a determining factor of this assessment. For this reason, the content to be used while developing a typology was focused, and the subjective meaning of the action and result

on the actor was consequently referred to (Schutz, 1970:279). What defines poor children while developing a typology about them are their strategies, motives of their strategies (intentionality), intersubjectivity and the sources. Considering this information, the evaluation led to a classification involving 4 poor children types – the poor child typologies: Rescuer child, substituting child, foundation-integrated child, protectionist child.

The typology of poor children is an embodiment of the non-standard form of children’s way of experiencing poverty and its heterogeneous characteristic. Poor child typology that emerges by examining children’s coping strategies with the poverty phenomenological approach is expressed as the phenomenological model of child poverty. Meanwhile, since the focus of the research is on coping strategies with poverty, this model states the phenomenological agency of poor children. The approach to regard children as having social agents is based on Giddens (1979; 1986)’s structuration theory (Moran-Ellis, 2013; Stoecklin & Fattore, 2018). The phenomenological agency of poor children is children’s capacity to “do it differently” (Giddens, 1979:56); however, this agency involves intentions, rather than keeping intentions in the background and keeping the power relations forward like Giddens (1986:9), and power relations, rather than neglecting them while bringing intentions forth by using a phenomenological aspect like Schutz (Balçı, 2017:241). This is related to the fact that acting in order to make an intention come true is inevitably contextual and conditional. The field and extent of this agency are determined by the institutive conditions of childhood and intergenerational power relations (Moran-Ellis, 2013: 311). Thus, in the literature of children’s agency (Moran-Ellis, 2013; Kuczynski, 2003; Stoecklin & Fattore, 2018), personal, relational and structural sources that were emphasized as a fact to allow this agency were included in this model. Eventually, this model was the interpretation of children’s coping strategies with poverty in their daily life based on three facts: intentionality, intersubjectivity and resources. The main hypothesis of the phenomenological model of child poverty is: Children tend to reconstruct child poverty in their own experiences by reproducing both poverty and childhood via the strategies they create in their daily lives, which is based on intentionality, intersubjectivity and resources. In a similar way to the appearance of the differences in emphasis instead of the differences in the types (James & James, 2001a:30) of the poor child model developed by

James and et al. (2007), the poor child types in this model mainly consist of the differences in the emphasis of intentionality and agency.

As it is shown in Table 1, in the phenomenological model of child poverty, the four poor child types were placed on two axes, intentionality (oneself/ individuality and significant others/collectivity) and kind of agency (adoption and reproduction).

Table 1
Phenomenological Model of Child Poverty

		Adoption		
Oneself (Individuality)	Foundation-Integrated Child	Protectionist Child		Significant Others (Collectivity)
	Substituting Child	Rescuer Child		
		Reproduction		

The intentionality axis shows the differentiation of motives in children’s strategies. Intersubjectivity as one of the basic components of phenomenology is also operational on this axis. Considering the motives of children’s strategies, it is visible whether they pay attention to themselves or their family or significant others as poor others (Jakoby, 2015: 114) in the performance of the agency. Therefore, individualism is prioritized if oneself is the object of intentionality, and collectivity is prioritized if significant others are the objects of intentionality. The axis of agency types points to the traits of the agency. In the agency types, as an allowing or inhibiting feature of a structure in the matter of social actions, the existing resources are functional because resources and the interactive context is always related to social abilities (Stoecklin & Fattore, 2018:55; Moran-Ellis, 2013:312). According to this, it is understandable whether the developed strategies create the adaptable agency type, which is a coping strategy, by dealing with poverty in daily life or the creative agency type, which is a coping strategy, by reproducing. Hence, in the first example, a passive agency that accepts poverty and is limited by structural and cultural factors, and in the second one, a creative and reproducing agency that uses the resources more effectively to reinterpret poverty can be seen.

The Substituting Child

Substituting is the ability of poor people to transform what they have in their daily life and occurs under the need to create an alternative in case of deprivation. Şentürk (2008:144) mentions that the poor, who are able to substitute any part of their lives because of the imbalance of income and expenses, tend to pass their ability down to their children over time. Focusing on this argument, it is realized that substituting has a significant effect on children's strategies to cope with poverty. They functionally place "substituting" in many different parts of daily life through different strategies.

In order to cope with poverty, a substituting child tends to develop alternative strategies such as saving their pocket money; sharing and borrowing strategies except for money and the ability of recycling-fixing; developing hobbies; bringing lunch from home; walking instead of taking the bus; using second-hand items; reading; writing; going to parks; using their backpack instead of a pencil case; and using television, phone, library or internet cafes instead of computers. Saving their pocket money is seen to be a generalized pattern in children's daily lives. Children usually save their pocket money, which becomes more functional in their daily lives in order to meet their needs and wishes, joining social and cultural activities and many more. Nearly half of the children save their pocket money periodically and in a goal-driven way. Children who save their money when they would like to join a trip, to see a film or to meet one of their needs are seen to be rather rational and organized, which shows an awareness in their strategies. Regarding how these children acquired their pocket money, a variety of resources can determine children's strategies to save their money. These resources can be divided into two categories as inner resources, such as themselves and their families, and outer resources, such as relatives, neighbours, visitors, pocket money from their teachers and their savings from religious festivals. What allows children to save their pocket money is their inner resources, although outer resources can also vary on children's experiences.

Strategies of sharing and borrowing except money were experienced by more than half of the children. Since they are deprived of owning toys like bicycles, roller skates and dolls or using technologies like a phone, children mostly develop strategies to share and rarely to borrow. Children's behaviour of sharing with their peers is two-sided when it comes to their school needs,

while it is mostly one-sided when it comes to toys like bicycles, roller skates and dolls. This difference is thought to be related to the financial value of the item: While school needs are cheaper, toys are more expensive. Most of the children's experiences did not turn out to become a routine: More than half of them mentioned that they shared things with their peers from time to time. Functionalism was not observed during most of the children's experiences: One in four children expressed that they were sharing for various reasons.

The reasons for alternative strategies were mostly to meet their essential needs, although sometimes it could be the lack of internet, technological devices and toys, and not being able to have whatever they wanted. In alternative strategies except for recycling; age, gender, family structure, district, cultural and structural factors were not determining. While none of the boys were recycling, 4 out of 5 girls who were recycling were aged between 11 and 12. Besides, alternative strategies -except for recycling- were not developed by a group of children but one by one. Since these alternative strategies were experienced by 1/3 of the children, even though there is no generalized pattern in their daily lives it is still relatively more possible to perform. What makes performing more possible is being less dependent on financial and social resources, which is about transforming their belongings in daily life with creativity.

The Foundation-Integrated Child

Foundation-Integrated children utilize the services provided by governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the municipality, district governorship, neighbourhood unit and school. Nearly 2/3 of the children interacted with governmental and non-governmental organizations for joining free courses, using libraries and computers, doing their homework, attending social and cultural activities and to get clothing, food and financial supports from them. Both in terms of bringing these services to the children – the quality of the resources – and the quality of the services, some differences were observed. Because of this, the quality of the structural resources and the quality of the services were seen to be the two significant elements of this type. The quality of the resources can be divided into two - governmental and non-governmental organizations. The quality of the services is the field where children get these services from. The quality of the services can be

divided into two - direct and indirect services. The former are services related to education or social and cultural activities; and the latter are services such as clothing, food and financial support.

The quality of these types of services and direct services are relatively more important because they reach children without any mediators and support their education. These services mainly consist of joining free courses, attending social and cultural activities, doing homework, using libraries and computers with the help of various governmental and non-governmental organizations such as municipality, district governorship, neighbourhood unit and school. Of the children involved in this study, 9 children were getting aid from local governments, 16 from schools and 4 children from non-governmental organizations. Additionally, 2 girls were getting a public boarding school scholarship. Regarding the efforts of local governments, the constitution of The Knowledge Houses came to the forefront. Four of 8 children who attended the interviews from Sancaktepe were attending the Knowledge Houses. It was noticed that the services given to children by schools tend to reach the children more: 1/3 of children from the workgroup benefited from free courses and social and cultural activities provided by schools. The children indicated that sometimes their teachers covered their trip fees or that they arranged trips free of charge. It was observed that schools had an important role in terms of supporting children's educational life with free courses and giving them chances to attend social and cultural activities; however, non-governmental organizations remained in the background when it came to direct services.

The Rescuer Child

Rescuer children are the ones who save their pocket money, work and plan their future as a strategy to cope with poverty. The goal of their strategy is to cover their house expenses and improve the living conditions of themselves, their families and other poor people. These strategies were experienced by 1/3 of the children. The "we-relationship" in the context of intentionality and intersubjectivity stood out as a collective form of existence based on solidarity and sympathy. Children who witness the hardship of covering house expenses usually share their saved-up pocket money or their wages to voluntarily support their families financially. Parents rarely include their children's wages

or pocket money for house expenses by using parent's authority. Likewise, in the studies of Gürses (2014) and van der Hoek (2005: 34), it was observed that children shared pocket money or earnings with their parents. Though children who contributed to the family budget by working in a part-time or paid job were encountered, the number of them was low in this study. Only 4 children worked in a part-time or paid job to support the family budget. Children who supported their families financially and even handled it by themselves were relatively older than the rest. According to Daly & Leonard (2002:151) and Attree (2006:60), while older children directly support their family financially with their wages from work; relatively younger children and girls support their families indirectly by bearing different responsibilities. In this research, bearing their siblings' responsibilities and helping their mother with their work were the most important ones among them. Their interests towards covering house expenses and helping the family finances could sometimes cause the children to refuse consumption, detach themselves from the social and cultural activities at school, drop out of school or take a break from school. Therefore, the "we-relationship" emerged as "devotion to the other", as Coser refers to it. Accordingly, personal interests sacrificed in the family and contribution to the whole family –the "Us" – is evaluated as a contribution to collectivity (Coser, 1977: 308). As Ridge (2002) and Gedmond (2008:18) point out, most of these children live in a single-parent family. In this study, the children had single-parent families due to divorce (22 children), loss of their father (3 children) or their father being in jail (5 children).

Rescuing children also plan for the future with motivations like 'bringing money to the house', 'eluding poverty', 'helping the poor' and with ideals of having an education, having a profession and working in a good job. In other words, they draw a life route that includes their families and the significant others as the "poor others" in life to save themselves from poverty (Redmond, 2009; Gürses, 2014). Thus, as a precondition of vertical social mobility and a symbol for mobility in social hierarchy, education takes place in the children's stories. As Doğan (2011:78) argues, it is seen that some children bear the role of a "rescuer" not only towards themselves and their family but also towards "poor others". Poor others correspond to the social group that children are familiar with by the means of both children's different daily life experiences and mass media.

The Protectionist Child

Protectionist children develop rationalization and self-exclusion strategies. With these strategies, children develop a protectionist manner towards themselves and their families. The process of protection occurs on the basis of tension, conflict and avoiding danger for developing “defensive patterns” according to Sennett & Cobb (1977:212). Rationalization means developing reflexivity on poverty: When children see something on somebody else, which they do not possess, and when they cannot cover their needs and wishes, they make the financial one insignificant and the immaterial one significant and delay or postpone their needs and wishes. In this way, children indirectly internalize or adopt poverty instead of directly internalizing it.

While making the financial one insignificant, children sometimes make comparisons with “non-poor others”, especially with their friends and peers, and instrumentalize their family as “immaterial possessions” through a positive assessment of their parents. Accordingly, as Ridge (2002:98) points out, children who try to rationalize their deficiency in daily life – usually relatively older girls – try to cope with the situation in order to not upset and to protect their family, mostly their mothers. Doğan (2011: 69) argues that children do not share their problems in order not to upset their families in case of more severe poverty. The second type of rationalization is postponing needs and wishes, which is giving up on current pleasure and satisfaction. According to Sennett & Cobb (1977:168), consumption practices are future-oriented for the ones with lower socio-economic status. By using phrases such as: “It happens with time”, “I will keep waiting”, “I will buy it sometime later”, “When we have money”, children actually adopt poverty by placing their consumption practices in the future. Likewise, in the study of Doğan (2011: 71), it is observed that children postpone their consumption practices and accept current conditions. Sometimes tension and conflict can emerge between the children’s experiences and assessments toward this matter. Therefore, recklessness turns out to be a mask they use in order to protect themselves. Another mask is how they hide their poverty from their parents or friends. As Ridge (2002:103) asserts, when poor children cannot join social and cultural activities, they actively control their social relationships: Some of the children mentioned that they hid it from their friends by using excuses like: “I do not want to come” or “I do not like it there” when they could not attend these activities. Playing and home surroundings happen to be an

instrument for children to avoid their poverty. Children are trying to get their deficiency out of their mind or to avoid it by playing games, spending time with their friends and helping their mother with housework. Ridge (2002: 98) proposes that children who do not save their pocket money or work to try to rationalize their deficiency by trying to forget it stay silent and are reckless. Although their forms of rationalization are similar, the children who rationalize their deprivations in this research are also the ones who were saving their pocket money and working. Thus, it does not seem possible to attribute the rationalization strategy to children who do not work or save pocket money.

Self-exclusion is a strategy developed with reasons like not being able to join social and cultural activities, toy deprivation and dangerous and insecure neighbourhood conditions. Nearly one-third of the children were protecting themselves by self-exclusion. Considering the motives of a self-exclusion strategy, each seems to be determined by different factors. Gender is determinative in not being able to join social and cultural activities; age is determinative in toy deprivation; and district and gender are determinative in insecure neighbourhood conditions. In this study, the children who excluded themselves because of not being able to join social and cultural activities were mostly girls and older children. The self-exclusion strategy also causes children's peer relationships to weaken because some children – especially the girls – expressed that they did not have many friends or that they did not prefer hanging out with them. When it comes to the physical and social conditions of the neighbourhood, it was understood that particularly boys' socialization spheres and social geographies had been restricted because of gangs defined as “vagrants and drug selling or “dealing” in Esenyurt and Arnavutköy. Likewise, in the studies of Gürses (2014) and Kahraman (2015: 207, 236), it was revealed that children were not satisfied with their district and neighbourhood and wanted to leave where they lived because of such gangs that threatened their security. Children made sense of their self-exclusion strategy over this “bummer” image. Risks of neighbourhood conditions mostly stood out in boys' expressions in terms of their relation to streets in daily life.

Discussion

The research of children's coping strategies with poverty is about focusing on their ways of intervening in living conditions in the ‘simplicity’ of daily

life. These coping strategies are investigated as part of themes like getting by, harming (committing crimes, using drugs, aggressive behavior etc.), and ganging up in the related literature (van der Hoek, 2005; Attree, 2008; Redmond, 2008). Getting involved in harming actions like committing crimes, using drugs and forming gangs were not witnessed in the poor children during the field research. This is related to age and the family's role in society even though it is damaged. Especially in the context of the quality of solidarity in the rescuer child type, the family acts as a shelter while children cope with poverty. "Having each other", as Sennett & Cobb (1977: 29) names it, corresponds to children's making sense of the institution of family while coping with poverty. Dependence developed based on solidarity caused children to make sense of the family as a shelter from injuries stemming from poverty. Although half of the interviewees had single-parent families, "having a family even if it is broken" was proven as a reinforcing factor for them. On the other hand, children stated that harmful actions like forming gangs, committing crimes and doing drugs were performed by children older than 18 and young adults in their twenties, particularly in Esenyurt and Arnavutköy. Based on this, differing from Gedmond (2008: 8)'s argument, while becoming a gang has no role in the phenomenon of child poverty, it can be foreseen as part of youth poverty in Turkey. Hence, children's coping strategies have taken on a new form as part of two different themes as finding a solution and getting by during this research.

The rescuer and substituting children displayed creative agency by making a difference both in their lives and in their family lives at a certain level. The children reproduced the poverty they experienced by reinterpreting it in terms of themselves and their families in a childish way. The children attributed the contents of adult culture to their own world according to their needs and goals through "interpretive reproduction" as Corsaro (2005) argues. Children interpret the rules and knowledge of adults to create new opportunities for thoughts and actions. Siblings and peers play a significant role by influencing their situations and viewpoints in this process (Kuczynski, 2003; Morrow, 2003: 117; van Krieken & Bühler-Niederberger, 2009: 190).

In this context, creative agency and interpretive reproduction emerge in 'the world of childhood' in the substituting children, unlike the rescuer children, because substitution as a general skill of the poor is reinterpreted

in a way special to their world in children's experiences. Children's daily living spaces – street and school as a playground – in the emerging of these practices are determinative and individuate children's substitution experiences. Therefore, the source of the difference from the adult world is the spatial qualification of their daily living spaces. It was observed that the street as a playground plays a significant role in children's strategies to cope with poverty in their daily lives. It was the space of borrowing and sharing except money, while it, at the same time, functioned as a tool of the strategy of avoiding. According to Goffman (1961:309), playing in the streets shows up as a “pacification act” that allows children to run and stay away from the living conditions they have to live in and cope with. By this means, the street as a space of exclusion of children from social practices in daily life causes to concrete their deprivations because of poverty; at the same time, it allows them to cope with poverty as a means of unseeing and forgetting. Moreover, the street as a playground was the space of the social status indicator among them. During this research, instead of the social status indicators in Ridge (2002) and Daly & Leonard (2002)'s works like clothing, it was observed that the social status indicators amongst the children were bicycles, roller skates and dolls. Toys stand out as a means of being accepted and socializing in their group of peers. Hence, children's sharing and borrowing strategies except money as a significant component of joining a circle of friends were noticed.

Besides, the difference in the quality of resources individuated the children by distinguishing them from the adult world because it was understood that they did not prefer the borrowing of money strategy, unlike poor adults, and considered it insulting. Instead, it is possible that the borrowing strategy of poor adults (Yılmaz, 2007: 218) emerged as sharing and borrowing except money in the world of the children. Accordingly, as Corsaro (2005) states, these children transmit it to their own world (having unique ways and language) from the knowledge of the adult world. Moreover, while sharing items among children was more possible in terms of the experience of poverty in daily life, sharing of money was regarded as a harming situation and a sign of poverty. Cultural dimension also stood out in terms of the quality of resources. Daly & Leonard (2002: 152) and van der Hoek (2005: 31) state that special days like Christmas and birthdays are some of children's resources for saving pocket money. The same resource in this research differed with

cultural effects: pocket money from birthdays and Christmas was replaced by pocket money from religious festivals.

On the other hand, the substituting children bear the particular impacts of the child world and perspective in terms of sharing and borrowing strategies except money, and alternative strategies are positioned out of dominant consumption patterns. The children fulfil their needs and wishes in daily life differently by converting possessed resources rather than fulfilling them in a general and common way. Since the possessed resources are interpreted by reproducing, the substituting children have a creative character. However, it was seen that the children justified alternative strategies by associating with or imitating the fun and fashion sense of the dominant consumption culture. Status symbols, which are the expression of tangible assets, are seen by Goffman (1956: 24) as a signifying instrument identified with social classes. Dressing style as a status symbol stood out from one of the children's expressions, "as if it was fashion designing", in this research.

It was seen that solidarity differed regarding their quality in the context of the relationship between children and parents because such communions occurred on the basis of 'bonding' with family and 'profiting' among their peers in the children's narratives. A couple of children rarely mentioned the strength of the bond they had with their peers about their sharing and borrowing strategies. As a result, solidarity between children and peers is mostly focused on profits and has an instant-temporal qualification. It is focused on profits since the aim is the fulfilment of a need or wish at that time, and it is instant-temporal because these communions often discontinue and decay in the interaction cycle of daily life. As for the relationship between children and their parents, it was understood that it was usually developed based on mutualism. According to Kuczynski (2003:15) and Morrow (2003:125), the interaction between children and their parents emerges in the form of mutual dependence, and children's power in the context of agency is based on the resources that can be produced through the relationship of dependency between them. Thus, although we cannot talk about equality in terms of power relations, it would not be a mistake to say that the agency of children was recognized by their parents in this research. This is because of the fact that the children's contribution to the family budget was considered by their parents and especially the oldest children or the children with more responsibility as

substituting for the other parent in single-parent families because of the lack of the other parent in their family. Accordingly, both children and parents bear converted statuses in the family order. Besides, it is seen that children go towards their parents rather than siblings for solidarity within the family. Some children accuse their siblings of acting without thinking about their mothers in their consumption practices and desires. Therefore, the possibility of conflict within a family is mostly observed between siblings. Likewise, in the study by Doğan (2011: 71), it is encountered that there is such a conflict between siblings.

The status of children in the family is converted regarding their responsibility and causes them to be treated as “little adults” by their parents. The basic dynamic of the conversion is that children share the responsibility of their parents regarding household maintenance and the emergence of a mutual sphere for both sides. The mutual sphere reinforces the interdependence of both sides, which already existed in the nature of their relationship. This occurs in two ways: Firstly, children’s financial support to the family budget; and secondly, children’s consideration of their deprivation as reasonable. Besides, children who save money usually manage their pocket money by themselves based on the mutual consent relationship with their parents. When children would like to use their pocket money for fulfilling their own needs and wishes, they are rarely restrained by their parents. In this way, children relatively reduce their dependence on their parents by fulfilling their needs and wishes in daily life by themselves, if they are able to. Hence, forms of relationship emerge from reciprocal sensibility rather than discipline and control imposed by their parents (Kuczynski, 2003: 12). On the other hand, the relation of mutual dependence in child-parent interaction changes parental authority in the context of power relations: negotiating relations were experienced rather than authoritarian relations between both sides. According to this, the ‘fighting strong mother’ image was taken as a role model instead of being a subject of mother’s authority in single-parent families.

In this research, it was revealed that gender roles were reproduced through children’s coping strategies with poverty. It was seen that responsibilities such as taking care of siblings or helping the mother in work were usually undertaken by girls. Likewise, Gürses (2014) asserts that girls take more responsibilities in poor families and that, because of mother’s work, illness, or illiteracy, they

deal with different affairs in the public sphere such as housework and shopping and patient-child care. In his research, Kahraman (2015: 231) argues that there is a gender-based divergence in the responsibilities that children take in the housework. While girls' areas of responsibility are identified within the house, boys take responsibility for affairs in the public sphere such as going to the market/grocery. Besides, in this research, it was revealed that the recycling strategy identified with the private sphere was experienced by girls, whereas the self-exclusion strategy developed because of hazardous and insecure neighbourhood conditions was especially experienced by boys. In the research of Kahraman (2015: 235), hazardous and insecure neighbourhood conditions mostly stood out in girls' expressions.

It was seen that the determinative factor in terms of direct services was the district in which the foundation-integrated child type lives. Due to the difference between the local government policies of the districts, and children's access to these services, their social inclusion did not occur at the same level. While there was no difference between districts in direct services provided by schools, Sancaktepe and Knowledge Houses stand out from other districts in terms of direct services provided by the local government. Access to institutional or public services as structural resources ensure the agency of children as a significant factor in some children's coping strategies with poverty, while it reduces the agency's potential as well as the possibility of the social mobility of children who do not have access to them. For example, Kahraman (2015: 205) states that only 10% of children can access such services, which consequently affects their socialization in a negative way. In the study of Gürses (2014), it was stated that, although Beyoğlu and Esenler Municipalities organized social activities and trips for children, places and services for leisure activities in their neighbourhoods were very limited and that their social lives were therefore almost non-existent. As a result, with reference to Stoecklin & Fattore (2018: 59)'s argument that resources convert to competence in children's practices of daily life, it is possible to say that institutional or public resources ensure the agency of children: By extending their restricted experience in social and cultural activities, the children have a chance of social inclusion and are integrated into the social system. Consequently, direct services show up as a strengthening factor in social and public fields.

Time perception stands out both in the rescuer and protectionist child types. It can be said that the children developed an affirmative relationship with the future by planning education and career opportunities in the first one, and through rationalizing their postponing habits in the second one. This is the connection, which occurs in time, and evolves on the basis of 'being hopeful' for the future, which is an appearance of 'time management' according to Sennett & Cobb (1977: 125) and which is about seeking desires that cannot be satisfied in the present. In relation to this, in the foundation-integrated child type, it was seen that children, who benefit from institutional or public resources, have a high level of awareness regarding their education life and career planning. This reality is an indicator of the educational rhetoric concretized in children's experiences for getting rid of poverty. While this perspective is the outcome of the children's world of senses and thoughts from time to time, it is sometimes, as Daly & Leonard (2002:89) and Sennett & Cobb (1977) state, a reflection of the cultural codes of poverty as their parents' instrumentalization of their children's education for getting rid of poverty. They remarked that most of the families regarded education as a way out of poverty for their children.

The rationalization strategy is a display of power in agency as a "capability of explaining", to use the words of Giddens (1979: 83), within the context of children's capacity of explaining and interpreting. It is possible to define self-exclusion as avoidance in terms of a "capacity of acting otherwise" according to Giddens (1979: 56) and in terms of children's own preferences and "voluntary withdrawals to reduce anxiety" according to Sennett (2012: 183). By masking their deprivation through regardlessness and concealing both in rationalization and self-exclusion is a defence mechanism (keeping up appearances, covering up) for concealing the injury stemming from poverty, which is an appearance of the manipulation skill of the agent. This corresponds to Sennett & Cobb (1977: 200)'s argument of "self-division" which expresses the construction of a reality through action so that individuals' real egos feel free in front of others' demands when their freedom material is restricted. However, as Ridge (2007: 401-402) states, these children are actually caught in a trap between the restrictions and tensions of poverty and the demands of childhood. Hence, given both the context and outcome of the agency and other child types, even though Redmond (2008:9) and van der Hoek (2005) involve the rationalization strategy in solving strategic agency which they

name “positive reappraisal”, the protectionist children were evaluated as an adaptable kind of agency due to their having an accepting and expressing character rather than having a solution making character in this research.

Conclusion

This research contributes to the literature on children’s coping strategies with poverty by questioning the potentials of children – as a group of poverty’s social actors – to cope with life struggles on their own within certain and special contexts. In this context, in the phenomenological model of child poverty, common facts from the exclusive world of children as well as from the shared world of children and adults were taken into consideration. Moreover, power relations between adults and children were considered. This model also contained in-group differences: Poor child typology brings out the in-group differences instead of the monotype appearance of child poverty. According to this research, even if children are doubly disadvantaged because of being both poor and children, they - especially the substituting and rescuer children - display an agency that can be viewed as a ‘success’ in coping with poverty. Yet more, even if the protectionist child type takes part in an adaptable agency type, they have a character in which children’s manipulation skills are observed. However, it is important to consider the temporary and day-saving character of the themes of solving and managing in order to understand the agency of poor children properly.

It was revealed that gender generally emerged as a determinative factor, whereas structural factors, such as institutional and public services, migration and neighbourhood, led to differentiation at the district level. The usage of direct services towards children coming from governmental and non-governmental organizations as a structural factor for children, who did not take place in qualitative researches conducted for helping children cope with poverty, underlined the importance of the child-focused service perspective and the necessity of making these services more common. In this context, based on the positive impact of public services at the local level, such as the Knowledge Houses, on children in terms of coping with poverty, the proliferation of such services that would reach children directly was thought to be a significant opportunity in combating child poverty. Likewise, Akıllı and Dirikoç (2016: 219) and Gürses (2014) suggested that community centres,

youth centres, sport halls, and libraries established in the neighbourhood by governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as municipalities and the Section of Social Services, would provide an opportunity for children to socialize, and emphasized the fact that the proliferation of such services were significant. On the other hand, it was understood that the disadvantaged conditions of the neighbourhood and the problem of integration with the city because of migration were factors that further deepened child poverty. In this context, the significance of social policy practices, which consider structural problems accompanying poverty, emerges in combating child poverty at the local level. For example, since the disadvantaged conditions of the neighbourhood negatively affect the socialization and integration of children with the city, it is especially significant to establish given public and civil society services in such neighbourhoods. Likewise, Akıllı and Dirikoç (2016: 218) stated that new plans and projects could be made and enforced for combating child poverty within the frame of needs analysis for the poor regions of the city. A relationality generally emerged between children's restricted access to technology in terms of internet and computers, especially for boys' social practices in daily life, and the street as a significant social sphere and place. Considering the function of the street as a playground for children's coping strategies with poverty, in the context of urban planning, local governments should adopt a child-friendly approach and consider their points of view and benefits by organizing their living spaces, which would actually be a significant step in combating child poverty. Akıllı and Dirikoç (2016: 219) put forward that mechanisms developed for the participation of children in urban management provide an opportunity for the integration of children with the city.

The intensity of the broken family form in the study group and the fact that the mother was the only parent in these families and that the children expressed their "mothers" as "strong", "struggling" mothers point to the importance of strengthening the social position of women in the fight against child poverty. In this context, the relationship between mother's employment and childcare services should be considered since there is a two-dimensional relationship between parent employment and childcare in terms of affecting the dimensions and depth of children's poverty: Because the mother works, child care becomes a problem, whereas the mother cannot work due to the child care problem. Therefore, supporting working mothers through social

policy practices on child care (opening centres such as day care centres) can be taken into consideration in combating child poverty.

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