The Effect of Psychological Trauma on Psychosocial Adaptation of Syrian Migrant Women: The Case of Gaziantep[*]

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the impact of traumas experienced by Syrian migrant women in Turkey on their psychosocial adaptation processes. The study aims to contribute to the understanding of the problems experienced by women due to migration by going beyond male-dominated perspectives. In the study, qualitative research method was adopted and phenomenological design was preferred. Twenty-five Syrian women between the ages of 22 and 60 with temporary protection status participated in the study. The data obtained through semi-structured interviews were subjected to content analysis in accordance with the qualitative method. Within the framework of 13 themes created in the analysis of the data, the problems experienced by Syrian refugee women before, during and after migration were identified. It was observed that Syrian asylum-seeking women experienced problems such as 'anxiety, violence, and sexual oppression' before migration and struggled with various difficulties in terms of 'economic, social and cultural' after migration. According to the research data, it is seen that Syrian refugee women tend to continue to live in Turkey, but they face social obstacles, especially obstacles arising from gender inequality, which make their social adaptation difficult. In this context, there is a need to strengthen social support networks, increase economic support programs and develop gender equality-based policies for Syrian migrant women who have experienced a traumatic migration experience. It is seen that there is a need for policies that will create solutions to the problems experienced by Syrian migrant women and facilitate their adaptation to the local society they have arrived in.

Keywords: Migration, Trauma, Psychosocial Adjustment, Syrian Migrant Women.

Psikolojik Travmanın Suriyeli Göçmen Kadınların Psikososyal Uyumlarına Etkisi: Gaziantep Örneği

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'deki Suriyeli göçmen kadınların yaşadığı travmaların psikososyal uyum süreçlerine etkisi ele alınmaktadır. Çalışmada erkek egemen yaklaşımların ötesine geçerek kadınların göç nedeniyle yaşadıkları sorunların anlaşılmasına katkı sağlanması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada, nitel araştırma yöntemi benimsemiş olup fenomenolojik desen tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmaya, geçici koruma statüsünde olan 22 ile 60 yaşları arasındaki 25 Suriyeli kadın katılmıştır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme tekniği ile elde edilen veriler nitel yönteme uygun olarak

içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Verilerin analizinde oluşturulan 13 tema çerçevesinde Suriyeli sığınmacı kadınların göç öncesinde, göç sırasında ve göç sonrasında yaşadıkları sorunlar tespit edilmiştir. Suriyeli sığınmacı kadınların göç öncesinde "kaygı, şiddet, cinsel baskı" gibi sorunlar yaşadıkları; göç sonrasında ise "ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel" açıdan çeşitli zorluklarla mücadele ettikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Araştırma verilerine göre Suriyeli sığınmacı kadınların Türkiye'de yaşamaya devam etme eğiliminde oldukları ancak sosyal uyumlarını zorlaştıran cinsiyet eşitsizliğinden kaynaklı engeller başta olmak üzere toplumsal engellerle karşılaştıkları görülmektedir. Bu bağlamda travmatik bir göç deneyimi yaşamış olan Suriyeli göçmen kadınlara yönelik sosyal destek ağlarının güçlendirilmesi, ekonomik destek programlarının artırılması ve cinsiyet eşitliği temeli politikaların geliştirilmesi gerekliliği bulunmaktadır. Suriyeli göçmen kadınların yaşadıkları sorunlara çözüm oluşturacak ve içine geldikleri yerel topluma uyum sağlamalarını kolaylaştıracak politikalara ihtiyaç olduğu görülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göç, Travma, Psikososyal Uyum, Suriyeli Göçmen Kadınlar.

INTRODUCTION

The Syrian civil war has caused physical and psychological trauma to millions of women. During the war, women not only faced traumas such as physical violence, sexual assault and family losses, but also lost their identities due to the necessity to leave their homes. Forced migration, while adding new difficulties to the traumas experienced, has been one of the most important factors hindering the psychological healing processes of migrant women (Şen & Vural 2014). After forced migration, asylum-seekers in the country of migration experience uncertainties about their future, their feelings of insecurity are reinforced and their psychological problems increase (Altinişik, Şanlı & Genç 2024: 1421). Studies in the relevant literature show that the traumas experienced during war and migration significantly weaken the psychological resilience of migrant women (Farley et al. 2005).

The challenges faced by migrant women are not limited to the physical obstacles of migration. Women also struggle with gender-based discrimination and social exclusion in the countries they migrate to. In Turkey, Syrian migrant women not only face economic and linguistic barriers but are often restricted to domestic roles and excluded from social life due to traditional gender norms. Studies examining the experiences of women from Syrian (Kamber & Ulutaş 2017; Karakurt & Gülerce 2022) reveal that barriers stemming from gender inequality hinder migrant women's social adaptation.

The aim of this study is to examine how the psychological traumas experienced by Syrian women in Turkey affect their psychosocial adaptation. The research addresses the psychological effects of women's pre-migration traumas, their difficulties during migration, and their post-migration adjustment processes. It also examines how factors such as women's resilience strategies, social support networks and psychological recovery processes help them

overcome their post-migration challenges. Understanding the challenges faced by migrant women is important for contributing to the development of more effective social policies and support mechanisms.

This study was conducted with 25 Syrian women living in Gaziantep province under temporary protection status. Participants were selected by purposive sampling method, taking into account factors such as "age, socio-economic status and pre-migration experiences". It was determined that 60% of the participant migrant women were married, had children and came from different regions of Syria. The diversity in the demographic characteristics of the participants enabled the study to address different perspectives on the psychological and social obstacles faced by women during the migration process.

Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews. In the interviews, open-ended questions were asked about the experiences of migrant women before, during and after migration. As a result of the interviews, emotional and psychological feedback was received on the participants' psychological health and social adaptation processes. In addition, observations made during the interviews, women's moods and behaviors were evaluated as research data. The observations were an important tool in understanding the emotional burdens experienced by the participants as well as their verbal expressions.

The data obtained during the research process were analyzed by thematic analysis method. The responses of the participants were grouped under certain themes. The data obtained were grouped under three main headings as "pre-migration traumas, difficulties during migration and post- migration social adaptation processes". In the context of the results obtained, the traumas and social adaptation processes experienced by migrant Syrian women were analyzed. In the analysis phase, the sub-categories within each theme were further elaborated and the effects of each category on women's social adaptation were discussed.

This research was conducted in accordance with ethical rules. Ethics committee approval was obtained for the interview questions prepared for this research with the decision of Gaziantep University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee dated 17.01.2025 and numbered 441477. After ethics committee approval, interviews were conducted with the participants. Informed consent was obtained from the participants and confidentiality principles were followed. In addition, appropriate guidance was provided to the participants in cases where psychological support was required during the research process.

The main problem statement sought to be answered in this research is "what are the opinions of Syrian women under temporary protection who migrated to Turkey due to war about their migration experiences and the traumas they experienced after migration?". In this context, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What are the reasons for migration of Syrian refugee women and the traumatic events they were exposed to before migration?

2. What difficulties did Syrian refugee women face during the migration process? What strategies were used to cope with these challenges?

3. What are the difficulties faced by Syrian refugee women in the process of harmonization with Turkish society?

4. What are the expectations of Syrian refugee women about their future?

Concept and Classification of Trauma

Trauma is often defined as "an emotional response to a terrible event such as an accident, rape or natural disaster". However, in everyday speech, the term trauma is used in the sense of a reaction to an extremely stressful event (Lotfi & Başcıllar 2017). Trauma is a situation that threatens the physical, emotional and psychological integrity of individuals, often characterized by sudden and unexpected events. The traumas experienced by migrant women are directly related to war, violence, loss and dangers encountered during migration. Trauma can affect not only the current psychological state of individuals, but also their future behavior and intergenerational relationships (Kira, 2001). Migrant women's trauma is often classified as acute trauma (sudden and unexpected events), chronic trauma (long-term challenging living conditions) and secondary trauma (being affected by the negative experiences of family members) (Selimbeyoğlu 2022).

Although traumas negatively affect people's psychological and mental state, there are also situations where they are beneficial for those who experience them. In this situation, which is defined as post-traumatic growth, positive changes occur in the post-traumatic life of the individual and the individual matures psychologically. Post-traumatic growth refers to the psychological maturation of individuals by experiencing positive changes in their post-traumatic lives. In this process, the individual gains new skills, develops deeper meanings about life and becomes more resilient. Posttraumatic growth shows that challenging experiences can contribute to personal development (Ezerbolat & Yılmaz Özpolat 2016). Individuals who survived the post-war period and had to migrate exhibit typical examples of posttraumatic

growth. These individuals learn to manage the effects of trauma and gain a stronger identity while building new lives.

Impact of Migration on Psychosocial Problems

Migration is a process of change that deeply affects individuals' social ties, social identities and psychological resilience. Migration is considered as an adaptation process that requires individuals to restructure their cultural identities and maintain their psychological balance (Berry et al. 2006). Psychosocial problems experienced by migrant women are often associated with factors such as social exclusion, economic insecurity and lack of social support (Boyd & Grieco 2003; Sırma & Aslan 2024).

Migration can create intense stress for individuals. This stress is often caused by challenges such as adapting to a new culture, language learning and economic insecurity. Sevinç Yalçın and Öztürk (2018) emphasize that the stress experienced during migration seriously affects the psychological health of migrant women. Especially women who are forced to migrate due to war are under the intense impact of both physical and emotional stress. This situation increases the risk of women experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Acartürk 2016).

Migration trauma is a phenomenon that directly affects individuals' ability to sustain their lives. Traumas experienced during migration deeply affect not only the psychological health of the individual, but also their social ties and adaptation processes. The social exclusion experienced by migrants negatively affects their identity and sense of belonging (Goffman 2014). The dangers and uncertainties experienced by migrant women during migration make their psychosocial well- being more vulnerable (Kurtuldu & Şahin 2018).

Migrant women's mental health is directly affected by the traumas they experience during the migration process and the difficulties they face while trying to adapt to the new society. Acartürk (2016) states that forced migration leads to the emergence of mental disorders such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder in women. Women's lack of access to psychological support mechanisms after migration causes these problems to become chronic (Sevinç Yalçın & Öztürk 2018).

Psychosocial variables affecting the migration process include language proficiency, economic status, social support and cultural differences. Berry et al. (2006) argue that these variables determine the capacity of individuals to adapt to society. While migrant women

struggle with factors such as language barriers and economic insecurity, they are also exposed to gender-based discrimination (Boyd & Grieco 2003).

Psychosocial Problems Experienced by Syrian Migrant Women

Asylum-seeking women face many challenges both physically and psychologically during the migration process. These women are often exposed to traumatic events such as war, poverty and sexual violence. Kurtuldu and Şahin (2018) state that such difficulties experienced by asylum- seeking women seriously affect their mental health and make their social adaptation difficult. In addition, social exclusion and discrimination reduce the psychological resilience of asylum- seeking women (Acartürk 2016).

Migrant women's psychological traumas are often exacerbated by external factors such as harsh living conditions and violence. These traumas are compounded by the experiences of women during migration, such as security threats, family loss and sexual violence. Farley et al. (2005) argue that migrant women's psychological health is shaped not only by physical violence, but also by emotional traumas, social exclusion and loss of identity. While migrant women struggle with the traumas they experienced before migration, they also have to reconstruct their identities and social adaptation in a new society.

Kamber and Ulutaş (2017) discuss how the traumas women experience during migration leave lasting effects on their psychological states and how these effects hinder women's social integration processes. Psychological traumas experienced by women are not only an individual problem, but also a factor that affects social structure and social integration. Especially in the post-migration period, women face problems such as social exclusion and economic insecurity due to the traumas they have experienced.

Migration and Social Cohesion

The social adaptation process of migrants is not only an effort to be accepted in the society they migrate to, but also a process of reconstructing their identities and belonging. Lecaj (2019) argues that migrant women have to redefine their identities in interaction with different cultures and that the gender-based barriers they face in this process hinder their social adaptation. Migrant women need not only language skills to adapt to their new societies, but also cultural adaptation and the ability to confront social norms.

Goffman (2014) discusses the stigma and social exclusion experienced by migrants and how this exclusion damages their identities. Migrant women are often treated as second class and experience more difficulties in social adaptation processes. This exclusion and

stigmatization worsens the psychological conditions of migrant women and negatively affects their social adaptation. Goffman's work helps us to better understand migrant women's trauma and exclusion processes.

Social support networks play an important role for migrant women to be successful in social adaptation processes. Boyd and Grieco (2003) state that social support is a critical factor for migrant women to cope with the difficulties they face. Family support, religious beliefs and support from local communities accelerate women's psychological recovery processes. These supports enable them to heal their traumas during migration and make their social integration processes healthier.

Çakır & Çevik (2021) draw attention to the importance of resilience strategies in the social adaptation processes of migrant women. Women develop various strategies to cope with the challenges during migration. Coping strategies help us understand how individuals respond to stress and trauma and how they overcome these challenges. For example, strategies such as religious beliefs and social solidarity help women to develop a stronger psychological structure.

Gender-based barriers faced by migrant women are an important factor that hinders their social adaptation after migration. Migrant women's conflicts with gender stereotypes in the countries they migrate to can complicate their integration into the settled society (Sevlü 2017). Syrian migrant women in Turkey face gender-based inequalities and traditional norms, which further complicates their social integration processes. In addition to economic insecurity and language barriers experienced by migrant women, gender-based discrimination practices also negatively affect their social cohesion and integration processes (Çakır & Çevik 2021).

Intergenerational Migration Transmission and Cultural Conflicts

"Migration" is not limited to its effects on only one generation; the psycho-social effects of "migration" continue across generations. Selimbeyoğlu (2022) states that the traumas experienced by migrants are not limited to the first generation but are indirectly transmitted to the next generations and this creates subconscious effects. This shows that traumatic experiences in an immigrant family can be transferred to children through mechanisms such as empathy, attachment and collective identification. Intergenerational trauma transmission reveals that the traumas experienced by migrant families have long-lasting effects on the psychological health of their children. By witnessing the traumas experienced by their parents, migrant children carry these traumas in their own identities, which can affect their psychological

and social development. Kira (2001) explains the transmission of trauma across generations through dynamics such as "symbiosis, dependency and acculturation". As migrants pass on their difficult experiences to their children, these traumas shape their behavior and identity development.

While first-generation migrants mostly adhere to the cultural identity of their homeland, second-generation migrants experience a state of conflict between this identity and the culture of the society in which they live. Rudwan (2020) notes that these cultural conflicts can affect the educational and career success of young migrants in particular. If their children do not conform to their traditional values, parents may perceive this as a devaluation of their life goals. This can create psychological and social pressures and complicate the social adaptation process of migrant children.

In this context, the psychological trauma experienced by migrant women can affect not only them, but also their children and future generations. Sevinç Yalçın and Öztürk (2018) argue that trauma can have lasting effects not only on one generation, but also on subsequent generations. This transmission takes place through strong collective relationships and emotional bonds between family members and deepens over time.

Factors Preventing Social Cohesion and Resistance Strategies

One of the most important factors affecting the social adaptation processes of migrants is obstacles based on gender inequality. Kurtuldu and Şahin (2018) state that women migrants have to cope with problems such as sexual violence, economic insecurity and roles within the family, especially in post-war migration. Syrian migrant women experience more difficulties in adaptation processes due to both social exclusion and gender norms. This situation makes the integration of Syrian migrant women into social life even more difficult.

The gendered violence and social exclusion that women face during the migration process creates psychological trauma not only for the first generation but also for their children. The transmission of such traumas across generations makes the process of social integration more complex. Berry et al. (2006) associate the difficulties faced by migrants in social integration processes with the internal conflicts they experience while trying to adapt to the cultural norms of the society they migrate to.

Coping strategies developed by migrant women during their social adaptation processes play an important role in their coping with psychological traumas. Boyd and Grieco (2003) state that migrant women use strategies such as social support networks, religious beliefs and

family ties to cope with traumas. Such strategies not only help them cope with the difficulties during migration but also accelerate their psychological healing process.

Research Method and Data Collection Process

This research was conducted using phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research methods. Qualitative research focuses on the diverse and deep nature of individual human characteristics. Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of depth and authenticity of knowledge rather than generalizations. It focuses on in-depth and specific data obtained from smaller study groups rather than large samples (Baltacı 2019). Therefore, in -depth semi-structured interviews, it is possible to observe in detail the existence of many situations that cannot be observed in generalized numerical data. Another advantage of the semi-structured interview technique is that the researcher can prepare the participant before asking sensitive questions and provide the opportunity to explain complex questions to the participants personally. This ensures that the questions posed to the participants in the study are asked in a nuanced and understandable way. The qualitative interview technique, which is more suitable for examining complex and sensitive areas, is the preferred data collection method when in-depth information is required. An interview is an interaction between two or more people, face-to-face or otherwise, for the purpose of collecting data. In the data collection process, the researcher can use verbal responses as well as non-verbal elements such as physical reactions and facial expressions as data worth interpreting in the research (Kumar 2011).

After reviewing the literature on the research topic, semi-structured interview form questions were prepared. In the literature review on the research topic, attention was paid to establishing a theoretical background for the study and comparing the findings with other research results. With the open-ended questions used in the semi-structured in-depth interview technique, additional questions were asked to the participants depending on the content of the interview. During the interviews, the answers of the participants were recorded in writing and their emotional states and behaviors worthy of interpretation (indicators of joy or sadness, crying, laughing, etc.) were also noted.

In this study, qualitative research method was adopted in order to determine the views of Syrian women under temporary protection residing in Turkey on migration traumas. The data obtained from the interviews with the participants were evaluated in detail through content analysis. Within the scope of the research, descriptive analysis and content analysis techniques

were preferred to analyze the collected data. Content analysis is an analysis that aims to examine the collected data in detail and to reach concepts, categories and themes that explain these data. While the data collected in the analysis are categorized according to their content, coding is done and a systematic analysis of the answers given is made (Baltacı 2019). The population of the study consists of Syrian migrant women under temporary protection, between the ages of 18-62, living in Gaziantep and Nurdağı district. The sample of the study consists of 25 Syrian immigrant women selected from the population of the study with the criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods. The participants were asked questions prepared in accordance with the semi- structured interview technique and their opinions were obtained on issues in line with the scope and objectives of the research. The interviews lasted an average of 60 minutes. Audio recordings were also taken during the interviews with the permission of the participants. Since the researcher knew Arabic, there was no problem in communicating with the participants whose mother tongue was Arabic and in understanding the questions clearly for the participants. The participants' answers to the questions were translated into Turkish by the researcher and analyzed. During the data collection process, the subject and purpose of the study were explained to the participants, and the importance of learning about their migration experiences and the problems they experienced was explained. It was observed that the participants responded sincerely to the questions posed to them with the effect of the need to contribute to the research and share their personal experiences. Participants were informed that their personal information would be kept confidential and that abbreviated coding would be used. The qualitative data obtained as a result of semi-structured interviews were analyzed. The participants who took part in the research were coded as P1, P2, P3. Information about the demographic characteristics of the participants is given in Table 1.

As can be seen in Table 1, the ages of the participants in the study ranged between 22 and 60. The average age of the sample group was 36.41; in terms of marital status, 18 of the participants were married, 3 were widowed, 2 were divorced and 2 were single. Regarding the educational status of the participants, it was determined that 7 of them were bachelor's degree graduates, 7 were primary school graduates, 5 were middle school graduates, 4 were high school graduates, 1 was a master's degree graduate and 1 was illiterate.

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Table: 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Participants	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Education Level	Occupation	Family Income (TL)	Duration of Residence in Turkey (Years)
P1	30	Divorced	1	Bachelor's Degree	Psychosocial Support Activities Facilitator	18,000.00	7
P2	23	Single	0	Bachelor's Degree	Psychosocial Support Activities Facilitator	18,000.00	8
P3	39	Married	2	Middle School	Housewife	7,000.00	8
P4	35	Single	0	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	18,000.00	7
P5	31	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Psychologist	40,000.00	7
P6	42	Married	6	Elementary School	Housewife	4,000.00	11
P7	43	Married	5	Elementary School	Housewife	8,000.00	13
P8	45	Married	6	High School	Housewife	15,000.00	9
P9	32	Married	2	High School	Housewife	8,000.00	8
P10	38	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	20,000.00	8
P11	44	Married	6	High School	Housewife	20,000.00	8
P12	45	Married	2	Middle School	Housewife	8,000.00	11
P13	47	Widowed	6	Elementary School	Housewife	5,000.00	9
P14	34	Married	3	High School	Housewife	7,000.00	10
P15	29	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Psychologist	50,000.00	5
P16	32	Divorced	3	Elementary School	Housewife	3,000.00	11

Participants	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Education Level	Occupation	Family Income (TL)	Duration of Residence in Turkey (Years)
P17	35	Widowed	3	Illiterate	Housewife	4,000.00	7
P18	31	Married	2	Master's Degree	Pharmacist	45,000.00	7
P19	25	Married	5	Middle School	Cosmetics Seller	20,000.00	4
P20	43	Widowed	4	Middle School	Housewife	0.00	9
P21	35	Married	1	Elementary School	Housewife	30,000.00	5
P22	31	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Housewife	17,000.00	5
P23	22	Married	2	High School	Housewife	18,000.00	4
P24	35	Married	3	Elementary School	Cosmetics Seller	35,000.00	10
P25	60	Married	6	Elementary School	Housewife	8,000.00	8

It is shown in Table 1 that 16 of the participants in the study were not engaged in any occupation as they were housewives, 9 were employed in various jobs, 2 were teachers, 2 participants were facilitators in psycho-social support activities, 2 participants were psychologists, 2 participants were cosmetics sellers and 1 participant was a pharmacist. According to the data obtained, it is seen that the average monthly income of the families of the migrant women in the sample group varies between 3,000 TL and 50,000 TL. It is understood that participant P20, who is a widow, receives financial support from her husband's family and has no other income. The average monthly income of the participants' families was found to be around 19,800 TL. According to the research results, the duration of the participants' living in Turkey varies between 4 and 13 years.

FINDINGS

This section presents the results of the analysis of the interviews conducted with Syrian women under temporary protection. Using the descriptive analysis method, a total of 13 main themes were identified, including "reasons for migration, pre-migration traumas, post-migration

moods, positive and negative experiences during the migration process, motivation levels for adaptation, difficulties in the social adaptation process, factors that facilitate and hinder social adaptation, the effect of language proficiency on social adaptation, obstacles faced by migrant women, decision to return to Syria and future expectations". These themes were then further elaborated by dividing them into subcategories. This analysis is an important step towards understanding the multidimensional and complex experiences of Syrian migrant women and provides valuable insights into the factors affecting their social cohesion processes and the challenges they face.

Causes of Migration

Among the reasons for migration of Syrian migrant women, factors such as war, bombardment, economic difficulties, concern for life safety and family reunification stand out. In particular, war and bombardment were stated as the main reasons for the decision to migrate. Participants stated that they had to seek refuge in Turkey due to the destruction and insecurity caused by the civil war in Syria. In addition, family reunification through marriage was also identified as an important reason for migration. Women generally preferred to move with their families due to the difficulties of migrating alone. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Tuzcu and Bademli (2014). In Tuzcu and Bademli's study, it is stated that the driving factors of migration are war, economic difficulties and security concerns. Regarding why they migrated, Participant 14 said, "We were patient with the bombing for five years. People were dying in front of our eyes and airplanes were bombing with barrels. We had no other choice, we had no other direction but Turkey. It was Friday, there was a bombing, many people died, we decided to migrate the same day".

Traumatic Experiences Before Migration

Syrian migrant women stated that they had serious traumatic experiences such as "air strikes, loss of relatives, fear of arrest or rape" before migration. These experiences left deep marks on their lives after migration and continue to have psychological effects. Especially migrant women who lost their relatives stated that they still carry the pain caused by this loss. These findings overlap with the studies conducted by Sağır (2014). Sağır emphasized that traumatic experiences during war have long-term psychological effects.

Emotion-State after Migration

In the post-migration period, participants reported mixed emotions. While some felt happy with

the prospect of security and a new life, others felt sadness at leaving their homeland and memories behind. Although post-migration emotions vary from person to person, they are often complex and contradictory. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Adıgüzel (2019). Adıgüzel stated that the cultural differences that individuals experience in new societies in the post- migration period lead to adaptation difficulties. Emotions and moods after migration are one of the most critical factors affecting women's psychological adaptation processes. Most of the participants stated that they experienced feelings of uncertainty and alienation after migration. Participant 6 emphasized the feeling of loneliness arising from the lack of a sense of belonging in a new country, saying "the negative side of the process is being away from family and feeling lonely and alienated because we do not know people".

The emotional state of women after the migration process is largely shaped by uncertainty and anxiety. Many women expressed feelings of "alienation, loneliness and lack of belonging". Participant 14 described her feelings after migration as follows: "I don't feel like I belong here. People always look at us differently. I came across some Turks who think that we are second class in science and culture. Or they generalize too much and think that we live on financial aid even though we do our best".

Positive Situations during the Migration Period

Participants emphasized positive aspects such as the presence of relatives in Turkey, the ability to enter legally, living in safety and the assistance they received from the Turkish people. Especially the hospitality and helpfulness of the Turkish people was a great source of support for the participants. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Coşkun (2022). Coşkun stated that kinship relations and religious affinities of Syrian migrants in Turkey facilitated the adaptation process. Boyd and Grieco (2003) state that social support networks have positive effects on the adaptation process of migrants and that social solidarity can alleviate the difficulties in the migration process.

Negative Situations during Migration

Among the difficulties experienced during the migration process, "the dangers of the migration route, fear of deportation, feeling of alienation, difficulty in finding a job and economic difficulties" stand out. In addition, "encountering hate speech and prejudiced behaviors" also constituted an important obstacle for the participants. These findings overlap with the studies conducted by Tuzcu and Bademli (2014). In Tuzcu and Bademli's study, it is stated that migrants face difficulties such as unemployment, loss of social status and language barrier.

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The migration process has led to both positive and negative experiences for migrant women. While Syrian migrant women have sometimes found social support and solidarity, they have also had negative experiences such as economic difficulties and social exclusion. In this regard, Participant 10 said, "It is difficult to find a job here, our financial situation is bad. It took a few months for us to start working and my husband works long hours, but he is underpaid". "Economic difficulties, language barriers and social exclusion" stand out among the negative situations experienced by the sample group during the migration process. Most migrant women stated that they had serious difficulties in finding a job and felt excluded from society. Participant 2 described the difficulties she experienced as follows: "In my opinion, language is one of the most important barriers to adaptation, it makes it difficult to accept the other side and prolongs the adaptation period". In the relevant literature, the poor supply of female labor in both source and destination countries is considered as a result of traditional gender stereotypes attributed to women. It is observed that women are less likely to be involved in recruitment processes in both the public and private sectors. Gender stereotypes and the existence of practices involving gender inequality reinforce the negativity for migrant women (United Nations 2024).

Motivation for Social Adaptation

Participants stated that factors such as their children being educated in Turkish schools in connection with the duration of their stay in Turkey increased their motivation for social integration. Love and respect for Turkish people is also seen as an important factor that facilitates the adaptation process. These findings are consistent with the studies conducted by Doğangün and Keysan (2022). In Doğangün and Keysan's study, it is stated that the support of non-governmental organizations and the public in Turkey facilitates the adaptation process of Syrian women.

Difficulties in Social Adaptation

Language barrier stands out as the biggest challenge in the social integration process. Participants stated that not speaking Turkish makes it difficult to communicate and integrate into the society. In addition, the rejectionist attitudes of some Turks and the stigma of foreignness also negatively affect the integration process. These findings overlap with the studies conducted by Coşkun (2022). Coşkun emphasized the importance of language learning in public places.

Factors Facilitating the Social Adaptation Process

Language learning, interacting with Turks and mutual respect were cited as important factors that facilitated the social integration process. Participants stated that learning the traditions of Turkish society and Turks' understanding of the difficulties faced by Syrians supported integration. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Adıgüzel (2019). Adıgüzel stated that those who migrated to the regions where their relatives were located carried out the adaptation process more easily.

Factors Hindering the Social Adaptation Process

Language barrier, rejectionist attitudes of some Turks and the stigma of foreignness stand out as the biggest obstacles in the social adaptation process. In addition, generalization of individual mistakes and prejudiced behaviors also make the adaptation process difficult. These findings overlap with the studies conducted by İlgar and Goşgun İlgar (2015). They also stated that the sense of alienation has serious psychological effects on immigrants. Berry et al. (2006) state that language barriers are one of the main factors that slow down the social integration process of immigrants.

Social adaptation is one of the biggest challenges Syrian women face. Most of the participants stated that factors such as language barrier and social exclusion made their integration process difficult. Participant 1 stated, "If we knew the language, we could communicate without any obstacles, we could also express ourselves more clearly, we could talk more about our lives. This would prevent us from misunderstandings and misunderstandings". However, participants noted that in some cases, factors such as social support and family solidarity helped them overcome these difficulties. Another important obstacle experienced by migrant women was "social exclusion and discrimination". Many women stated that they sometimes encountered discriminatory attitudes in the Turkish society and that this caused demoralization. Participant 12 expressed the discrimination she encountered by saying, "I encounter words and negative attitudes from Turks such as 'why did you come here, you have too many children, don't have any more children". This kind of discrimination stands out as one of the main factors preventing the social cohesion of Syrian migrant women.

The Effect of Language Proficiency on Social Adaptation Process

Participants stated that knowing Turkish is 90-100% effective in the social adaptation process. Knowing the language plays a critical role in communicating, integrating into society and

preventing misunderstandings. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Coşkun (2022). Coşkun emphasized that knowing the language is the most important factor in the cultural adaptation process of immigrants. As one of the main findings of this study, language barrier emerged as the most important obstacle in the social adaptation processes of the participants. Most migrant women stated that they had difficulty in communicating in daily life because they did not speak Turkish and that this situation made the social adaptation process difficult. Participant 6 emphasized the positive effects of language learning on social cohesion by stating that "not learning a language is the biggest obstacle to social cohesion".

Barriers Faced by Migrant Women

Fear of harassment and rape, having to leave the workplace and the complexity of women's roles stand out among the obstacles of being a woman. However, some participants also stated that they did not face any obstacles. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Erdoğan (2022). Erdoğan stated that the monogamous marriage system in Turkey has a positive impact on Syrian women.

Decision to Return to Syria

While some of the participants stated that they would return to Syria if the conditions were favorable, others preferred to stay in Turkey. Better living conditions in Turkey and protection of women's rights are important factors affecting the decision to stay in Turkey. These findings are consistent with the studies conducted by Harunoğulları and Cengiz (2014). Harunoğulları and Cengiz stated that Syrian migrants do not favor the idea of returning due to the trauma they have experienced. However, some participants still keep the idea of return on the agenda. Participant 5 says, "After Assad's departure and the regime change, maybe one day we will return and rebuild our home" and despite all the negativities, he carries a hope for the future. At the time of the interviews with the sample group, the regime change in Syria had not yet taken place. The decision to return to Syria is directly related to individuals past traumas, security concerns and socioeconomic conditions. While some participants emphasized their attachment to the land where they were born and raised, they attributed their decision to return to conditions such as security and regime change (Rahmani 2019). For example, Participant 5 said, "Of course I am thinking of returning, but after Assad's departure and regime change. My husband is wanted by the state. If the situation is safe for my husband, I will return to Syria because it is my country". However, the proportion of those who do not want to return is also noteworthy,

especially among women, due to the liberal and protective environment in Turkey. The perception that women's rights are better in Turkey, the implementation of policies that include positive discrimination against women, and greater individual freedoms strengthen the tendency of Syrian migrant women to stay in Turkey (Doğangün & Keysan 2022). For example, Participant 1 expresses this opinion by saying, "Life in Turkey is more liberal, it is difficult for me to return to my family's home after I get used to independence, and as a divorced woman, my existence in Turkey is better than my existence in Syria". However, those who decided to return to Syria did not return to Syria. However, those who decided to return to Syria were motivated by the desire to contribute to the reconstruction of their country and a sense of belonging (Dalaman 2022). This shows that the decision to return is shaped by individual experiences, socioeconomic realities and cultural ties. However, it is expected that return rates may increase if the political and social uncertainties in the country decrease recently after the fall of the Assad regime. Asylum-seekers' experiences of seeking a safe and dignified life are often framed by factors such as "gender, age, religion, ethnicity" and stereotypes such as "patriarchy and xenophobia". From the studies conducted so far, it is seen that the possibility of return of forcibly displaced asylum-seekers in case of nomalization is difficult both in theory and in practice (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014: 19).

Future Prospects

Syrian migrant women's future expectations include goals such as "staying in Turkey, obtaining Turkish citizenship, migrating to a third country and ensuring a better future for their children". Improving living conditions and ensuring security in Turkey are the main factors shaping Syrian migrant women's future plans. These findings overlap with the studies conducted by Gülyaşar (2017). Gülyaşar stated that Syrian migrants' desire to have Turkish citizenship reduces their future concerns. Considering that there had not yet been a change of government in Syria at the time of the research, the fact that the women in the sample group tended to return is an important finding. It can be said that the focal point of all these positive expectations for the future is the hope of being able to build a better future by leaving the bad experiences behind.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The social adaptation process of Syrians in Turkey is complex and challenging. In this process, migrants need to revise and improve their existing social skills in order to adapt and adapt to the new society. Social adaptation involves not only language learning but also adopting social norms, cultural values and behavioral patterns. Syrians need to act with mutual understanding,

empathy and cultural sensitivity to integrate into their new social environment. In this context, education, employment and social support services play a critical role in the social cohesion process.

The level of social cohesion of migrants is determined by the demographic profile of Syrians in Turkey, their expectations and the attitudes of the host community. The balance between social cohesion, acceptance and satisfaction is crucial to ensure that the refugee crisis does not lead to xenophobia. Therefore, it is expected that Syrians in Turkey will exhibit behaviors towards social cohesion and the government will develop public policies to support this process. Steps to be taken especially in education and labor market are expected to contribute to the social cohesion process.

Prioritizing the position of women as the basic figures who raise children and keep the family together, solving the problems faced by migrant women will contribute to a faster and more effective social cohesion process.

According to the findings of the study, factors such as "the war in Syria, threats to life, bombings, terrorist attacks, sexual violence against women and inadequate economic conditions" stand out among the reasons for Syrian women's migration. On the other hand, factors such as "family ties in Turkey, cultural and religious similarities, language affinity and geographical proximity" were effective in choosing Turkey as the destination country. Among the traumatic experiences during the migration process, participants mentioned "exposure to airstrikes, lack of a secure environment, threat of physical and sexual violence, separation of family members and the necessity to constantly move". In the post-migration period, emotions such as anxiety, stress and uncertainty were observed to be common.

Migrant women highlighted factors such as "receiving help from Turks, living in safety and the presence of relatives" among the positive experiences they had during the migration process. On the other hand, negative experiences include issues such as "language deficiency, economic problems, fear of deportation and xenophobia". In the social adaptation process, it was observed that women were willing to learn the language, interact with the community and cultural adaptation. However, factors such as "language barrier, discrimination, prejudices and social isolation" make the adaptation process difficult.

The results of the study show that in addition to the difficulties Syrian women face in the social adaptation process, there are also factors that can facilitate this process. In this

context, the following recommendations can be offered:

- Psychosocial Support Services: Psychosocial support programs should be developed to help migrant women overcome the traumas they have experienced. These programs will help women maintain their mental health and adapt to their new lives.

- Language Education Programs: Learning Turkish is one of the most important factors that will facilitate the social integration process of migrant women. Therefore, language training programs should be expanded and migrant women's access to these programs should be facilitated.

- Vocational Training and Employment Opportunities: Vocational training programs and employment opportunities should be provided for women to gain economic independence. This will accelerate women's integration into society and increase their self-confidence.

- Social Awareness and Empathy: Awareness-raising campaigns should be organized and empathy-based communication skills should be developed to reduce host community prejudices against migrants.

- Women's Rights and Protection Mechanisms: In order to combat gender-based violence and discrimination faced by Syrian migrant women, protection mechanisms for women's rights should be strengthened. In this context, services such as legal support and shelters should be expanded.

- Local and International Cooperation: In order for the social cohesion process to be successful, cooperation between local governments, civil society organizations and international organizations should be increased. This cooperation will ensure effective use of resources and allow for a faster response to the needs of migrants.

In conclusion, the difficulties faced by Syrian migrant women in the social adaptation process require solutions at both individual and societal levels. In this process, empowering women and ensuring their integration into society is of great importance for the success of Turkey's migration policies. Steps to be taken in this direction will increase the welfare not only of migrant women but also of the host society.

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The Effect of Psychological Trauma on Psychosocial Adaptation of Syrian Migrant Women: The Case of Gaziantep

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Etik Beyan:	Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan edilir.	***Ethical Statement:***	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
Çıkar Çatışması:	Çalışmada kişiler veya kurumlar arası çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.	***Conflict of Interest:***	The authors declare that declare no conflict of interest.
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