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EXPLAINING THE CAUSES OF RACISM TOWARD SYRIAN REFUGEES IN
TÜRKİYE THROUGH SOCIAL HIERARCHY

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ABSTRACT

Studies of racism or racist practices toward foreign groups often rely on the Western conceptualization of racism; primarily rooted in differences of race, color, ethnicity, and religion. However, because of certain factors indicated by the literature on the interaction between Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens such as having the same religion, being neighboring countries, or sharing similar cultures, it is also suggested that the Western conceptualization of racism do not fully capture the dynamics at play in Türkiye. Drawing on the supportive actions of the Turkish state and the political rhetoric, this study aims to explore the underlying causes and expressions of public discontent and racist acts toward Syrian refugees through the theoretical framework of social hierarchy by Floya Anthias where those originating in a given country position themselves at a higher rank than the latecomers. Through a socio-political lens, the research analyzes policies, practices, and the way they are introduced to the public by the state and local governments asserting that they are highly influential upon the ways Turkish citizens approach Syrian refugees. Thus, this study suggests that the well-intentioned efforts of Turkish state for the Syrian refugees and the ways they are presented to the public might mislead Turkish citizens to the perception that they experience imbalances in the distribution of social, political, and economic rights. Accordingly, racist practices toward Syrian refugees are understood through Turkish citizens' resentment stemming from the assumption of experiencing loss of rights, being overlooked, alienated, and disadvantaged in their own country. Thus, it is argued that such a resentment leads Turkish citizens to believe that their imagined higher rank is downgraded which ignite and enforce racist attitudes toward Syrian refugees.

Keywords: Racism, Syrian Refugees in Türkiye, Social Hierarchy, Causes of Racism, Distribution of Rights

TÜRKİYE'DE SURİYELİ MÜLTECİLERE YÖNELİK İRKÇİLİĞİN NEDENLERİNİN TOPLUMSAL HİYERARŞİ
ÜZERİNDEN AÇIKLANMASI

ÖZ

Yabancı gruplara yönelik ırkçılık üzerine yapılan çalışmalar genellikle ırk, renk, etnik köken ve din farklılıklarından kaynaklanan Batı ırkçılık kavramsallaştırmasına dayanır. Ancak, Suriyeli mülteciler ile Türk vatandaşları arasındaki etkileşime dair literatürde belirtilen aynı dine sahip olma, komşu ülkeler olma veya benzer kültürleri paylaşma gibi belirli faktörler nedeniyle, Batı ırkçılık kavramsallaştırmasının Türkiye'de dinamikleri tam olarak yakalamayacağı da öne sürülmektedir. Türk devletinin destekleyici eylemlerinden ve siyasi söylemlerden yararlanan bu çalışma, Suriyeli mültecilere yönelik hoşnutsuzluğunun altında yatan nedenleri, Floya Anthias'ın, aslı belirli bir ülkeye ait olanların kendilerini o ülkeye sonradan gelenlerden daha yüksek bir konuma yerleştirdiklerini öne sürdüğü sosyal hiyerarşi teorik çerçevesi aracılığıyla bulmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çerçevede belirli bir ülkeden gelenler kendilerini toprağın sahibi olarak görürken, sonradan gelenler yabancı, ikincil olarak kabul edilir. Araştırma, sosyopolitik bir mercekle aracılığıyla politikaları, uygulamaları ve bunların devlet ve yerel yönetimler tarafından kamuoyuna tanıtılma biçimini analiz ederek, bunların Türk vatandaşlarının Suriyeli mültecilere yaklaşım biçimleri üzerinde oldukça etkili olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bu nedenle, çalışma, Türk devletinin Suriyeli mülteciler için iyi niyetli çabalarının ve bunların kamuoyuna sunulma biçimlerinin, Türk vatandaşlarını sosyal, politik ve ekonomik hakların dağılımında dengesizlikler yaşadıkları algısına yönlendirebileceğini ileri sürmektedir. Buna göre, Suriyeli mültecilere yönelik ırkçı uygulamalar, Türkiye vatandaşlarının göz ardı edilme, yabancılaştırılma ve dezavantajlı olma, hak kaybı yaşama varsayımlarından kaynaklı küskünlük yoluyla anlaşılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, böyle bir küskünlüğün, Türk vatandaşlarının sosyal hiyerarşide tahayyül ettikleri daha yüksek rütbelerinin düşürüldüğüne inanmalarına yol açtığı ve bunun Suriyeli mültecilere karşı ırkçı tutumları ateşlediği ve güçlendirdiği ileri sürülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İrkçılık, Türkiye'deki Suriyeli Mülteciler, Sosyal Hiyerarşi, İrkçılık Sebepleri, Hak Dağılımı

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INTRODUCTION

Since 2011, due to the civil war in Syria, Syrian citizens have been migrating to different countries. Among all the countries they have migrated to, Türkiye has been the one hosting the most Syrians as a consequence of being a neighboring country, its motto of not being indifferent to inhumane treatments, and its positive, embracing, and all-inclusive state policies allowing Syrians to go into Türkiye either legally or illegally. That is, according to Directorate of Migration Management, as of 2024, with its open-door policy, Türkiye hosts more than 3 million Syrians under temporary protection (T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Başkanlığı, n.d.).

Thus, it is suggested that the migration of Syrians to Türkiye have shifted the identification of the country within the global migration context in the way that the country has been known as a migrating one as Turkish people have been migrating to Western countries in order to meet the need of cheap labor since 1960s. However, with the arrival of Syrians in the country either for seeking for refugee, residence, or as a means of transition to another country, its role has been modified. Besides being a migrating country, it is now be regarded as a migration receiving or migration transit one (İçduygu, 2006). For sure, Türkiye is a country having people with different races, cultures, ethnicities, and religions as its citizens come from different origins and backgrounds. Yet, it is suggested that receiving people with different origins from a different country is a new experience both for the state authorities and the citizens of the country¹.

Depending on Tomlinson's (2003) idea of cultural differentialism which asserts that cultural or collective identities begin to matter more than ever once they meet different ones, it is suggested that since there is a newly experienced interaction between Turkish people and Syrians in Türkiye, the collective identities begin to matter more for both of the parties. In other words, conflicts and contradictions between the two parties seem to be inevitable. That is because, in migration receiving countries, the problems between the host and the immigrant society are commonly observed. Once people from different countries, cultures, religions, ethnicities, and backgrounds meet as host and the migrant, emergence of various problems such as us vs. them or reading migrants as a threat in social, cultural, political, and economic spheres seem to be inevitable (Anthias, 2006; Hall, 1988; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, John, & Brian, 1978).

Accordingly, in migration receiving societies, immigrants are easily racialized. Literature on the interaction between the Turkish people and Syrians indicates that Syrian people in Türkiye are exposed to racism and racist practices. For example, Alp (2018) examines media representations and analyzes how discriminatory discourses appearing in media tools reinforce negative representation of Syrians. Likewise, Karaman (2022) focuses how perceptions of whiteness in Türkiye affect the racialization of Syrian refugees, and discusses their coping strategies in the context of race and ethnic studies. While Kurt (2019) reveals the hate speech produced by Turkish people against Syrians on Youtube, Türk (2019) focuses on how the social position of Syrians in Türkiye is shaped by the experience of otherness and how this understanding undermines the discourse of hospitality. Oğuz and Oğuz (2023) discuss that Syrians in Türkiye are seen as a source of unrest in society and how Turkish people are concerned about the breakdown of social order. Collectively, all these studies suggest that racialization operates both discursively and structurally in the Turkish context.

According to the research conducted by Kadir Has University, with its score of 17.9% which was 6% in the previous year, the second most significant matter in Türkiye in 2022 was the refugee migrants (Aydın, et al., 2022). Generally speaking, social concerns such as Syrians' residing in Türkiye for more than 10 years despite being named temporary guest (Altunkaynak, 2016), their high probability of remaining in Türkiye even if the war ends (Tunç, 2015), the economic concerns such as Syrians' causing unemployment to increase (Özpinar, Çilingir, & Düşündere, 2016; Ünal, 2014), political or ideological concerns such as their generating a threat for secularism (Morgül, Savaşkan, & Mutlu, 2021), and cultural concerns such as their having a different culture and failing to adapt to Turkish culture (Deniz, Ekinci, & Hülür, 2017; Erdoğan, 2015) could be given as some of the major issues. As a significant subject matter, how Syrians are racialized and stereotyped (Oğuz & Oğuz, 2023; Özdemir, 2017), regarded as a threat (Eser & Uygur, 2024), how racist discourses operate in media (Alp, 2018; Kurt, 2019; Türk, 2019), how Syrians cope with racialization (Karaman, 2022), and how racism should be dealt with (Ekici, 2019) are some of the ways racism toward Syrians are studied.

After going through the literature, it is likely for one to get the impression that Syrians are exposed to constant racism in Türkiye which defines Turkish culture as a racist one. However, in order to introduce the relation and interaction between the two parties and to abstain from making the impression that the Turkish society is a racist one, by embracing an anti-racist strategy, under what circumstances racism is exercised, what the actual causes of racist practices are, what it stems from, and how it is disseminated should be dealt with. That is because, as Anthias (2006) suggests, about racism and racist practices, the question of what it is we are dealing with, what is being fought against or for should be paid attention before the question of how to deal with it, what strategies should be taken (emphasis added by the author). This means that what matters is not the basic practices of racism like prejudice, discrimination, oppression etc. Thus, what really matters turns out to be its modes, roots, and causes.

Racism is ignited and operates through many issues such as skin color, country of origin, religion, ethnicity, culture, and even gender (Anthias, 2006). Thus, the motive to exercise a racist practice is a matter of opinion, in other words it varies from person to person. Accordingly, the following questions arise. What is the actual cause that leads a Turkish individual

¹ The primary of the 'mass influxes' that Türkiye experienced was the migration of approximately 350,000 Bulgarian Turks who were constrained to emigrate by the oppressive communist regime in Bulgaria in 1989. Amid this wave of movement, Türkiye opened its borders to its "racial kin", and took steps to facilitate their integration into Turkish society (Parla, 2003).

to exercise racism upon a Syrian refugee? Does the cause of a Turkish person appeal to another one? Do all the Turkish people approach Syrians in the same way? Do certain categories where racism is exercised define Turkish culture as a racist one? For sure the answer to all these questions is no. That is because, for example, while a republican or a secularist might regard Syrian immigrants as a threat to secularism, it might not be the case for a conservative one as s/he might approach the issue through religious fellowship (Morgül et al.). Hence, the motive that pushes one to exercise racist practices could & should vary depending on the individual's particularity.

Moreover, for a culture to be defined as a racist one and for racist practices to operate effectively and survive, there is also the need for structural racism which emphasizes the systematic way by which racism operates through institutions, state policies, economic systems etc. (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; 2021). As stated earlier and will be elaborated later in the text, depending on the positive actions and discourses of the state authorities towards Syrians such as having the most Syrian refugees, employing an open-door policy, regarding them as religious fellows, and so on, it is obviously asserted that structural racism toward Syrians does not exist in Türkiye.

On the other hand, Şanlıer (2025) argues that certain state policies in Türkiye indirectly reproduce forms of structural discrimination, particularly through the temporary protection regime, legal ambiguity, and labor market precarity. These mechanisms can generate institutionalized vulnerability and limit Syrians' social integration. However, as conceptualized by Bonilla-Silva (1997; 2021), structural racism refers to a racialized social system in which racial hierarchy is systematically reproduced through institutions, state policies, and economic arrangements. While Syrians in Türkiye experience everyday racism and social discrimination, the official state discourse and official policies characterized by open-door policy, hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees, and viewing them as religious brothers do not clearly institutionalize a racial hierarchy that organizes society along racial lines. Therefore, this study does not interpret the Turkish case as constituting structural racism in an organized manner around racial hierarchy and exclusion.

Therefore, in order to have a better grasp of the issue, there seems to be a need of a more comprehensive approach. Although some aspects of this case also recall welfare chauvinism, particularly in debates over whether public resources and social rights should primarily belong to natives (Jørgensen & Thomsen, 2016; Reeskens & van Oorschot, 2012), this study suggests that the Turkish case should be understood more broadly through perceived rank loss within a social hierarchy. In parallel with such a need, as the theoretical framework, this study employs Anthias' concept of social hierarchy (Anthias, 1998; 2001a; 2012; 2021). She emphasizes that depending on their attributions like skin color, ethnicity, origin, gender, citizen, migrant etc., individuals assemble with the ones they feel close to creating a hierarchy in which they place themselves at a rank. Such an approach allows individuals to define and empower themselves while it also serves for them to differentiate, exclude, and discriminate others. Hence, as it could be observed in different societies where others are placed somewhere below within the social hierarchies (Anthias, 1998; Hall et al.; Hall, 1988), analyzing the case of racism toward Syrian refugees in Türkiye, occurrence of a social hierarchy where Turkish people, standing at a higher rank as the host, and Syrians, standing somewhere below the hierarchy, is likely to happen.

Depending on all the given assertions, and as a contribution to the literature showing that racist discourses, behaviors, and practices against Syrian refugees in Türkiye are typically explained through familiar drivers such as the economy, language, culture, ethnicity, and security despite being neighboring countries and their partial overlap in religion and culture, this study does not ignore, deny, or seek to justify racist practices. Instead, it shifts the attention from particular instances to a more general explanatory motive that appeals to ordinary Turkish citizens. Drawing on Anthias' (1998; 2001a; 2012; 2021) concept of social hierarchy, the article focuses on how institutional arrangements and their public presentations are implicated in the production of hierarchical perceptions and emotions.

Accordingly, this study aims to answer to the questions: How Türkiye's humanitarian aid regulations for Syrians together with the ways these measures are publicly introduced and implemented contribute to ordinary citizens' perceptions of rank loss within an imagined social hierarchy, and how can such perceived downgrading generate resentment that triggers and reproduces racism toward Syrians in Türkiye?

In accordance with this purpose, the study investigates the following mechanism. First, it examines whether the humanitarian aid steps taken by the Republic of Türkiye for Syrian refugees and the ways these steps are introduced to the public and put into practice lead some citizens to the impression that their rank within an imagined social hierarchy, which is assumed to be above Syrians, is being downgraded. Second, it considers whether the belief that one has lost an imaginary social position within this hierarchy generates emotions of resentment, frustration, or anger. Third, it explores whether such emotions experienced through the impression that the conditions enabled for Syrian refugees are more advantageous than what citizens have in their own country trigger racist practices and contribute to their reproduction.

In addition, referring respectively to Tilly (1998) and West & Fenstermaker (1995), Anthias suggests that "the social organisation and dynamics involved is not only embedded within institutional arrangements or organisations, but it is also an accomplishment by actors in their everyday lives" indicating that social hierarchy is reproduced both through institutional arrangements and through everyday practices (2021, p. 31). Though, it should be emphasized that using the concept of social hierarchy, this study suggests that racism in Türkiye does not occur as a consequence of Turkish citizens' feeling empowered looking down on Syrians who are placed somewhere below but as a consequence of the resentment caused by being placed somewhere below the Syrians because of the ways that regulations of the Turkish government regarding the issue are presented.

Depending on this assertion, this study, first presents literature on the particular causes of racism such as skin color, culture, religion etc. indicating its roots and the ways it is performed. Then, it introduces Anthias' social hierarchy, how it is constructed, and how it leads individuals to discriminatory and racist practices. Then, it focuses on the regulations and discourses of state authorities covering Syrian refugees which lead Turkish citizens to the emotion of resentment or an impression that their rights are violated resulting in their being situated somewhere below Syrians in the social hierarchy.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Racism

The term race, in the most simple and concrete way, depends on the assertion that people have biological differences which could be observed through physical characteristics such as skin pigmentation (Giddens, 2009; Spears, 1999). As certain groups have the power to dominate others and as they create classifications and categories depending on their biological or physical characteristics, those who do not meet the qualifications of the powerful ones are regarded different or less which stands as the process of racialization. That is, the roots of the term race stem from biological differences used for the purpose of differentiating certain ones from the others which means that racialization or the formation of race is a socially constructed concept which is not universal or an essential one (Barker, 2004).

Likewise, even though Goldberg (1993) emphasizes the socially constructed aspect of racism, as he calls it a sociodiscursive praxis, he informs us with the idea that racial subjects are generated through discourses employing differences of people. For him, physical differences and the way these differences are employed in discourses allow subjects to recognize themselves as racialized. Hence, racism turns out to be the beliefs, behaviors, or attitudes possessed or performed by certain groups of people against those who are not regarded as the same or equal with the group in terms of certain characteristics (Giddens, 2009). As a result of separating individuals based on asserted categories, racism manifests itself through prejudice, segregation, discrimination, violence; either verbally or physically (Wieviorka, 1995).

Nevertheless, racism is such a wide concept that cannot be limited within biological differences only. It is exercised and reproduced through many issues like culture, language, religion, and ethnicity which is why the terms of cultural racism or new racism emerge (Anthias, 2006; Giddens, 2009). The so-called superiority or inferiority of certain groups are created on the basis of their cultural values. In brief, what counts for racism to operate turns out to be culture(s) of individuals rather than their color (Blaut, 1992, p. 290).

Within the framework of cultural racism, ethnicity stands as a significant term. It implies discursively constructed shared values, norms, symbols, meanings, and practices generating a sense of identification and belonging to a certain group. Though it is related to the concept of race, it is highly associated with cultural values (Barker, 2004; Barth, 1969). That being the case, ethnicity is regarded as a means to racialize certain groups of people. For example, anti-Muslim practices in Britain are not only about the religion of Muslims but also about categorizing them as a group of population with collective features who are considered to be inferior or undesirable (Anthias, 2006). Moreover, racism on ethnic differences generates ethnocentrism or group closure through which groups set barriers between other ones such as limiting or prohibiting marriage, social contact, or economic relations (Barth, 1969; Giddens, 2009).

Religion, as well, has been a major point as it is employed as a means to hierarchize and differentiate groups of people. For example, Masuzawa (2005) asserts that religion, as a means of category, is rooted in European understanding of colonialism. To her, religion is not a neutral concept which classifies groups of people and their faiths favoring Christianity regarding it normative while others are seen as static, exotic, or less developed. Having a more particular approach, Zia-Ebrahimi (2018) suggests that religion stands as a neglected signifier within the framework of racism though it manifests itself through categorizing antisemitism and Islamophobia as separate, antagonistic target populations. In the Turkish context, although state authorities frequently invoke a discourse of religious brotherhood and emphasize the unity of ummah² in reference to Syrians, some Turkish citizens nevertheless reveal subtle forms of religious differentiation. Thus, religion functions as a potential boundary-making mechanism rather than a unifying discourse in the Türkiye-Syria context.

Other than these, racism on ideological basis is also a significant one. Introducing ideology as a shared belief system of certain groups that generates social consciousness (either true or false) and identification, Shelby (2003) concludes that ideology is a crucial step for understanding modern forms of oppression and racism as it is employed to legitimize the discriminatory opinions and practices of certain groups. Emphasizing the significance of ideology upon the way racism operates, Spears (1999) suggests that ideologies enable both the maintenance and dissemination of the oppression exposed by the powerful, dominant groups by infiltrating social discourses through mass media, education, religion etc.

² Ummah is an Arabic term meaning community or nation. In an Islamic context, it refers to the global community of Muslims, united by their faith in Islam regardless of national or ethnic differences. The concept of the ummah emphasizes solidarity, collective identity, and mutual responsibility among Muslims worldwide. Historically, it has been associated with the idea of unified Islamic polity, but in modern times, it often signifies a sense of shared religious and cultural belonging among Muslims.

Moreover, there is also structural racism which stands for the idea that racism is deep-rooted and operates in a systematic way enabling exclusion, discrimination, oppression, and racialization of certain groups of people through policies, practices, and institutions of a society (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; 2021). Silva exemplifies this through residential segregation, neighborhood preferences, labor-market inequality, educational inequalities, or criminal justice system in all of which people of color are disregarded.

1.2. Social Hierarchy

In addition to the specific points that allow racism to emerge, Anthias' (1992; 1998; 2001a; 2016; 2021) more holistic approach to the issue could be made use of in order to have a better grasp for the nature of racism toward Syrian refugees in Türkiye. With a post-structuralist approach, even though her emphasis is on the idea that one's belonging to a category is not essential but fluid, intersectional, and translocational, Anthias (2021, p. 9) suggests that there occur hierarchies within societies made of invisible borders, i.e., categories of differences enabling individuals to be separated as rich and poor, men and women, citizens and non-citizens, dominant and dominated, normal and deviant.

For her, class is one of the most significant factors determining where one stands in a social hierarchy. However, she emphasizes that class should not be considered within only the framework of a Marxist approach but should address different issues as well (Anthias, 2012). That is, according to their possessed, inherited, biological, or acquired characteristics, which are gender, ethnicity, race, class, disability, migration, citizenship etc., individuals are located or ordered in certain places within the social hierarchies. Hence, this branding of individuals, i.e., group-making, operates as modes of power allowing individuals to recognize not only themselves as who 'we' are but also others as who 'they' are leading them to a sense of belonging and differentiating (Anthias, 1998).

She names the process of individuals' setting boundaries, putting up invisible walls, generating categories and associated forms of belonging as "making of places" (Anthias, 2021, p. 11) (emphasis added by the authors). Individuals make their places within the hierarchy by assembling with the ones they feel close to and differentiating themselves from others. By means of such asymmetries, certain groups are (dis)empowered and (dis)advantaged (Anthias, 2012).

In brief, according to Anthias (2012; 2021; 2022), individuals' categorizing themselves and others depending on the characteristics or attributions, which they and others have, are naturalized, essentialized, and homogenised which is an easily recognizable feature of societies. Accordingly, this hierarchy turns out to be a social construct manifested and articulated through lived experiences and concrete social relations of individuals. Consequently, approaching the issue through essentialism and absolutism paves the way for inequality, otherization, discrimination, exclusion, and finally racism. Thus, racism turns out to be an act against the 'different, abnormal, odd, degenerate, or deviant' (emphasis added by the authors).

As stated earlier, while making their places, the criteria for individuals depend on various characteristics such as skin color, ethnicity, origin, gender, citizen, migrant etc. In addition to these, one of the most significant criteria Anthias suggests is the resource allocation (2012; 2016; 2021). The right of making use of resources turns out to be a significant criterion which defines one's identity and determines how, when, and why one should be identified as 'us' and included in the category or a specific place of the hierarchy. Accordingly, it is always under question, contested, challenged, and struggled over.

To her, what places us at a certain rank within the hierarchy is our class. Yet, class should not be considered merely in terms of social order, economic income, and wealth as in the Marxist and Weberian sense. It should also be regarded as "cultural and symbolic facets of social life act as resources in their own right, for example in terms of the allocation of citizenship or social welfare" (Anthias, 2021, p. 104). Thus, how much or to what extent one makes use of and should be able to make use of resources is regarded as a parameter determining one's rank within the social hierarchy.

Literature also indicates how social hierarchy and cultural racism are used in order to explain negative host society responses to refugees and racism they are exposed to. To begin with, latecomers are frequently regarded as a threat which is acknowledged as a "a prior condition of hostility to immigration" (Sides & Citrin, 2007, p. 478). Regarding latecomers as a threat, citizens of a country or a society, as a defensive reaction against latecomers, develop "a sense of group position" (Blumer, 1958, p. 3). Economic, cultural, and social concerns are listed among the causes of the hostility against latecomers. In terms of economic concerns, citizens of a given society compete the latecomers while favoring and prioritizing their group members for resources, job opportunities, or social security benefits (Quillian, 1995). In addition, in terms of resource allocations such as distribution of welfare or social rights, Reeskens and van Oorschot (2012) inform us that Europeans prioritize themselves over immigrants regarding them less deserving as well as enabling them resources conditionally especially after working, paying taxes, or gaining citizenship. Moreover, Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) suggest that economic concerns generate a mass hostility against latecomers. However, market and labor competition fail to present empirical data which is why economic concerns are not the actual causes. On the other hand, they argue that public attitudes toward immigration are shaped primarily by sociotropic judgments and cultural impacts. What they define as symbolic concerns involve significantly national identity, culture, and language. Finally, European opinion regarding immigration is shaped not only by objective conditions but also by politicization and presentation of theirs through salience. That is, things begin to appear more chaotic among people who are already inclined to see immigration as a threat, especially when they emphasize disorder and a loss of control (Dennison & Geddes, 2018).

In the Turkish context, resource allocation has similarly become central to public debates regarding Syrians' position within the social hierarchy. Policies concerning access to social assistance programs, public healthcare, education, and the selective granting of citizenship to certain Syrians have shaped perceptions among segments of Turkish citizens regarding deservingness and priority (Babahanoğlu, 2018; Bayır & Aksu, 2020). Although many of these benefits are conditional and regulated under the Temporary Protection framework, some Turkish citizens perceive Syrians as receiving disproportionate state support. Research examining perceived threats in Turkish society indicates that economic competition, unemployment concerns, and social cohesion anxieties reinforce these beliefs (Ekici, 2019; Özpınar, Çilingir, & Düşündere, 2016). Eser and Uygur (2024) also reveal that perceived economic and cultural threats significantly shape negative attitudes and social distance toward Syrians. This perception contributes to feelings of resentment and relative deprivation, influencing how individuals interpret their own rank within the social hierarchy.

Above given international, significantly European, literature strengthens the study by situating negative responses toward Syrians in Türkiye within mechanisms that have been repeatedly identified across European host societies which function in similar ways for the case in Türkiye. That is because, rather than treating hostility against latecomers simply as a context-free reaction, the review indicates that perceptions of threat, deservingness, group position, regarding latecomers as outsiders, and positioning them somewhere below within the social hierarchy are regarded as causes.

Anthias's framework is particularly useful for the Turkish case because the negative treatments directed at Syrians cannot be fully reduced to conventional Western formulations of anti-immigrant exclusion. To have a better understanding, the term of welfare chauvinism, whose central issue is whether welfare benefits, rights, and services should be reserved primarily for natives and restricted for immigrants or latecomers who are constructed as less deserving, should also be emphasized (Jørgensen & Thomsen, 2016; Reeskens & van Oorschoot, 2012). That is because, it is highly relevant to the focal point of this study as the public debates in Türkiye also revolve around priority, entitlement, and the allocation of public resources to Syrians.

Besides, the Turkish case also departs from the classical welfare chauvinist understanding in important ways. Syrians in Türkiye are not regarded only as migrants or latecomers but also as a neighboring population who are frequently framed through proximity, religious brotherhood, and humanitarian obligation. Thus, negative reactions toward Syrians emerge not simply from a demand to exclude outsiders from welfare, but from a broader perception that the symbolic, social, and material boundaries separating citizens from non-citizens are being blurred in ways that unsettle established relations of belonging and entitlement. In brief, Anthias's (2012; 2021) approach connects resource allocation to wider processes of boundary-making, social positioning, and struggles over who has the legitimate right to occupy a higher place within the national social order.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

Depending on the ideas that policies do not only function to distribute resources as rights and services but also convey moral and social messages about who is regarded as deserving, entitled, or prioritized on what grounds (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, pp. 340-341) and that they operate through moralized classifications indicating who is to blame, who is responsible, who should bear burdens (Stone, 1989, p. 283), this study employs an interpretive, theory-based policy analysis in order to explore the circumstantial dynamics underlying racist attitudes toward Syrians in Türkiye.

Citing Yanow (1996), Wagenaar (2007, p. 433) states that meanings that are made out of policies by the public are not secondary but are part of what policies do. That is because, policies enable us to define what counts as a social problem, what kinds of solutions appear reasonable, and which groups are constructed as legitimate and righteous recipients or as burdens and dangerous (Fischer, 2003, p. 66; Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 340). In this view, policies cannot be regarded as neutral. On the contrary, they are considered as means for the public to interpret social situations by using certain categories, assumptions, and value judgments. Thus, they shape how people discuss and interpret issues in public life.

Within this perspective, as the focal point here is the analysis of humanitarian aids, their public narrations, and their interpretation by the public as significantly debated concerns within the imagined social hierarchy regarding who receives what, who pays, and who is prioritized or neglected, interpretive policy analysis is directly relevant to this study. In this sense, this paper examines not only policy measures but also the interpretive cues through which policy can become a symbolic resource for resentment and racialized attitudes in public debate.

In line with this approach, the documents in this article are used to explain a mechanism, not to measure public opinion. The analysis shows how specific policies and ways of presenting them can be interpreted as signs of disadvantage or an imagined loss of rank in a social hierarchy. Therefore, the argument is limited to what can be supported through careful interpretation of texts and the given data rather than claims about what most citizens actually think or feel.

2.2. Material Selection

The analysis of the study depends on publicly accessible documents relevant to Türkiye's ways of governing Syrian refugees and the public discussions they generate. Documents used for evaluation and analysis could be in various forms from advertisements or books to maps or institutional reports as long as they enable researchers to gain insight, understanding, interpretive or empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009, pp. 27-28).

The documents of the study include publicly available policy and legal texts such as regulations, institutional policy guidance, or official documents related to temporary protection, rights, and services for Syrian refugees. In addition to that, the study also makes use of official communications and public statements of institutions and political authorities such as speeches and press statements as well as circulating media items related to the subject matter.

Materials were selected purposively paying attention to their direct relevance to the subject of the study and their having public visibility and impact for the reason that policies and their presentations are analyzed in terms of their potential to generate public meanings which highly matters for interpretive policy analysis.

2.3. Analysis

In interpretive policy analysis, the purpose is to construct meanings out of the documents related to policies. That is because, as different participants of a policy generate different meanings on what is (il)legitimate, (un)fair, (un)friendly, or (un)necessary, it is those meanings that define problems, solutions, or create target groups (Fischer, 2003, p. 160). Accordingly, in this study, the explanation is given through an interpretive policy analysis which focuses on how certain policies and their presentations to the public can be read as signifiers of disadvantage, disturbance, and rank downgrading within an imagined social hierarchy, which can generate resentment and racist practices.

Each document is studied neatly in order to identify how a policy is presented by the authorities, how it is interpreted and problematized by the public, what values are invoked, and what social classifications are produced. While doing so, for a better understanding and interpretation, the study paid attention to i) group construction and categorization; dealing with the ways Syrian refugees are positioned i.e. whether they are regarded as burden, beneficiary, latecomers, guests, or citizens. ii) moral evaluation; how meanings and attributions like burden, blame, and responsibility are made and narrated. iii) comparisons; texts triggering comparison between the Turkish citizens and Syrian refugees in terms of having priority, advantage, or being overlooked all of which are central to the studies focal point. iv) media representations; how certain discourses and presentations of policies are given to the public and how they are interpreted by the public through media organs.

Then, the analysis proceeded by identifying recurring interpretive patterns across the selected materials rather than by quantifying frequencies. In this step, each text was examined in terms of four interrelated analytical dimensions as follows. i) how Syrians and Turkish citizens were constructed as social categories; ii) how evaluations of fairness, burden, blame, priority, and deservingness were articulated; iii) how explicit or implicit comparisons between citizens and Syrians were produced; and iv) how policy-related messages were publicly framed and circulated through official discourse and media visibility. These dimensions were then used comparatively across the examples discussed in the analysis section in order to show how meanings of disadvantage, resentment, and perceived rank loss were discursively constructed.

2.4. Interpretive Boundaries

The study does not generate reception data through interviews, surveys, or ethnography. Therefore, it does not claim to measure how audiences actually decode messages and make their own meanings. Instead, it analyzes how policies, their presentations to the public, the ways of their being implemented by the authorities, and policy-related texts can generate interpretations and meanings. As the study concentrates on how citizens interpret policy arrangements, the analysis is offered as a plausibility claim grounded in textual cues and theory rather than an empirical claim about the distribution of attitudes in the population. In this sense, the study does not claim formal content coding or frequency-based generalization but it offers a systematic interpretive reading of selected texts through analytically defined dimensions that are applied consistently across the examples discussed.

3. Conventional Causes of Racism for Türkiye

The previous section aims to indicate that racism, by and large, is motivated by skin color, culture, ethnicity, religion, and ideology. The existence and operation of these motives in Türkiye toward Syrian refugees are not denied but they are perceived as local, fragmented, and even individually conducted ones as well depending on the idea that they do not appeal to the general. Cited by Karaman (2022), Beydoun (2016) suggests that Arabs are officially regarded as white, which is a category that embraces Turkish people as well. Thus, biological differences or skin color could not be regarded as a sharp motive of racism in Türkiye toward Syrians like the one between black vs. white in the U.S. That is, being neighboring countries, it is asserted that there doesn't seem to be skin color-based difference between Turkish and Syrian people. Hence, skin color is not considered as much of a forceful motive for racism toward Syrians in Türkiye.

Şahin and Eşici (2020), in their study, emphasize that Turkish people regard having the same religion with Syrians, assembling under the title of ummah, not having much of denominational differences, sharing the same language with Turkmens from Syria, having similar proverbs, geographical closeness, and sharing a history are some of the factors that generate an atmosphere where Turkish and Syrian people seem to create a similar and a shared culture that eliminates differences between the two parties. In addition, mainly in bordering cities of Türkiye where Syrians are densely populated, there reside Arab origin, Arabic speaking Turkish citizens. That is, thanks to the religion, geography, history, language, and the mosaic nature of Türkiye, the country is asserted to be highly familiar with the Syrian culture which also allows us to disregard culture as a highly impactful motive for racism in Türkiye toward Syrians.

Ideology seems to be another significant factor for racism to emerge as well. On the other hand, as stated earlier in the text, the way a secular and a conservative Turkish citizen approach Syrians might differ (Morgül et al., 2021). Other

than that, for ideology-based racism to operate effectively, it seems to be in a need of being operated by a structure which does not hold for the case of Türkiye as the Turkish government, with its all-embracing and positive approaches, is far from having a structural racism.

These above-mentioned points lead us to the assumption that racialization of Syrian refugees in Türkiye diverges from conventional motives. There seems to be a case in which racism emerges 'despite' cultural affinity and religious brotherhood (Yardım, 2017; Yanık, 2017). Thus, it encourages a search for a cause of racism that appeals to general without dealing with particularities; a cause that evokes a sense of disturbance for a random Turkish citizen.

Considering the case of Syrians in Türkiye, it should be kept in mind that the category of refugee is a significant one within the concept of modern state (Agamben, 2005). This category emphasizes the role of national boundaries in defining political and social rights, positioning them in opposition to the idea of the citizen-subject. In the case of refugees, distinctions between national and citizenship boundaries, at different times, have contributed to exclusion, violence, and dehumanization. Depending on the idea that they are the original owners of the country, which disables any kind of an attempt to question their rights, refugees are not welcomed or included within such categories. Nonetheless, it does not necessarily mean that earning the right to citizenship would allow the refugees to be included within the category of being native (Hall et al., 1978). In this respect, Anthias' (2021) concept of place-making is particularly relevant, as it reflects how individuals construct their position within social hierarchies in terms of belonging, entitlement, and access to resources. Likewise, only a native is regarded to have such a privilege except for treason or a kind of a criminal act jeopardizing the wholeness of the nation state (Anthias, 2021). Thus, in terms of citizenship and nativeness, Turkish citizens define themselves as legitimate insiders and owners of the country, thereby positioning Syrians as outsiders. Therefore, their claims to "rights remain contested. According to Anthias (2021), it is generally accepted that only a native is considered to have such a privilege except for treason or a kind of a criminal act jeopardizing the wholeness of the nation state.

Such a statement suggests that regarding themselves empowered, the natives or the owners of the country perform exclusionary, discriminatory, or racist acts as a consequence of looking down on latecomers, differentiating and distancing themselves from them, and ranking themselves higher within the social hierarchy. On the other hand, considering the policies, regulations, and actions for Syrian refugees by the Turkish government, it is also suggested that the cause of racist actions stem from the sense of resentment that leads them, the owners of the country to the impression that they have lost their empowered, higher rank within the hierarchy. Therefore, as a comprehensive response to what racism toward Syrian refugees stems from, the regulations of Turkish government, the way these regulations are operated, the way Turkish citizens perceive the steps taken for Syrian refugees, and the reactions of Turkish citizens within the framework of the social hierarchy in Türkiye have been concentrated on.

4. Circumstances Leading Turkish Citizens to Resentment

The following examples are analyzed in line with the interpretive dimensions stated in the methodology section. In each case, the focus is on how policy texts, official statements, and publicly circulated examples construct Syrians and citizens as unequal categories, invoke moral evaluations of fairness and burden, and produce comparisons over priority, entitlement, and access to resources. Rather than treating these texts as neutral descriptions, the analysis examines how they generate meanings that can be interpreted as contributing to resentment and perceived rank loss within an imagined social hierarchy.

4.1. Open Door Policy

The Turkish government's regulation of 'open door' policy for Syrian refugees has generated substantial debate, particularly regarding its implementation. As stated earlier in the text, Türkiye stands as the country with the highest number of Syrian refugees due to its 'open door' policy that has been implemented by the Turkish government since October 2011. As a consequence of this regulation, as of June 2014, the number of refugees resettled in camps established in cities near the Syrian border was surpassed by those residing in urban areas outside the camps, indicating that this situation was not temporary or confined to the camps (Kirişçi, 2014). Consequently, it has since been imperative to develop coherent and consistent policies to integrate the rapidly increasing number of Syrian migrants in various cities in Türkiye and to address the economic, social, and cultural concerns of the local population.

The first policy to be implemented in response to this growing challenge was the regulation of Syrian refugees' legal status. Primarily, granting refugee status to Syrians was not legally feasible due to the 'geographical reservation' imposed by Türkiye in the 1951 Geneva Convention. According to this geographical restriction, only those from Europe were to be considered as 'refugees' and granted certain legal rights and social opportunities in Türkiye. Therefore, it was necessary to legalize the status of Syrians as non-European refugees, whose numbers were increasing, who had been placed in camps with the assumption of temporary residence, but whose prospects of returning to their countries in the short term were highly unlikely (Bayır & Aksu, 2020, p. 348). Thus, to address this need for the increasing number of Syrians seeking asylum in Türkiye, 'temporary protection status' was granted to Syrians entering Türkiye legally under Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection (Yabancılar ve Uluslararası Koruma Kanunu, 2013). The Directorate of Migration Management was also established in 2013 under the same law, and detailed regulations were enacted regarding procedures for foreigners and temporary protection in Türkiye.

Depending on the given information about the actions that Turkish government has taken for Syrians in Türkiye, having Syrian refugees and legalizing their status are the consequences of an official necessity or a requirement. However,

what seems to be problematic for Turkish citizens is the way of regulating the 'open door' policy as it allows anyone to be able to enter the country including not only Syrians but also Afghans and Pakistanis as if the country does not have a control over its own border. That is to say that even though in theory, the procedure involves the irregular comers to be controlled, checked, and legalized, in practice, they seem to be able to step in the country without any control or legal regulations. As a result of such a regulation, videos showing masses of people going into the country or their getting off the trucks and running around the city have taken a great deal of attention which has led Turkish citizens to question the saying 'border is honor', a phrase traditionally associated with national pride, unity and security.

In addition to that, temporary protection primarily guarantees that persons under this protection will not be returned to Syria against their will. Moreover, with the EU-Türkiye Readmission Agreement signed on 16th December 2013 with Türkiye, calling it a safe country, Türkiye took on the role of being a buffer zone guaranteeing that it would accept all irregular comers fleeing to Europe. About this case, once again, not the regulation but the way it is implemented and introduced is problematic for Turkish citizens. For example, Binali Yıldırım, the prime minister between 2016-2018, stated that

What would have happened if it was not for Türkiye? All these refugees from the Middle East, from the regions where chaos and war are experienced, will flock to Europe and the Europeans will have to experience a very big problem. Türkiye is a country that can absorb all these problems and manage them within itself. Europe needs to see this (Milli Gazete, 2022).

This statement of Yıldırım frames Türkiye as a buffer zone for Europe, managing Middle Eastern migration to prevent problems for European countries. Even though it depicts Türkiye as a strong and capable state, it also delivers some messages that are interpreted by Turkish citizens in a way that their country is supposed to embrace responsibilities and workload burdens while Europeans benefit from it. In other words, this statement frustrates Turkish citizens as it reinforces a sense of neglect and disregard triggering the idea that their government disregards its own citizens while it prioritizes refugees and Europeans. In brief, framing Türkiye as a country shielding for Europeans and catering for external actors more than its own citizens ignites a sense of resentment.

Analytically, this discourse does not merely describe migration management; it constructs a comparison in which Türkiye appears as the bearer of burdens while external actors benefit, thereby reinforcing a perception among citizens that they are unfairly positioned within the wider distribution of responsibility.

4.2. Economic Costs

As highlighted in the introduction, Türkiye hosts more than 3 million Syrians. Since 2011, to address the immediate and growing needs of Syrians arriving en masse, the European Union has allocated nearly €10 billion in financial aid to Türkiye (European Commission, 2023). The commitment's supporting efforts of Türkiye was further underscored during the EU-Türkiye Summit on 29th November 2015, where the European Commission pledged to create a €3 billion fund for Syrian refugees in Türkiye. Subsequently, during the second summit on 18th March 2016, the EU promised an additional €3 billion if the initial funds were exhausted, culminating in a €6 billion commitment. Of this total, €2.4 billion was initially spent on meeting the basic needs of refugees, such as health, education and protection. Through projects in these areas, EU-funded initiatives have been providing basic livelihood support, enabling children to access education, constructing schools and hospitals, and offering protection services to asylum seekers (Mülteciler Derneği, 2022).

In addition to these initial efforts, on September 7th, 2023, the EU and Türkiye signed a €781 million contract providing EU funds for social cohesion assistance to the most vulnerable refugees. The Social Cohesion Assistance for Foreigners (SCA) contract is a continuation of the program initiated in 2016, which provides monthly cash transfers to refugees in Türkiye to assist them in meeting some of their basic needs. The funds are intended to assist Syrian refugees with monthly payments via ATM cards distributed by Türkiye in collaboration with Kızılay, the country's humanitarian organization (European External Action Service, 2016).

However, despite these significant financial commitments, several Turkish politicians have expressed concerns that the EU's support is insufficient for managing such a large community. From an analytical perspective, the President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's statement in a rally in Gaziantep, on October 7, 2014, which could lead people to position refugees as recipients of extensive support while Turkish citizens as those who finance this support but do not receive equivalent recognition or priority, seems to be significant as it combines moral evaluation and comparison. The statement goes as follows.

As of now, there are 1.5 million refugees within our borders. Accommodating such a large population presents significant challenges. We have exerted our utmost efforts and will continue to do so. Regrettably, the West remains passive. The UN assumes the role of a spectator in this situation. They engage in discourse without taking substantive action. To date, we have expended 4 billion dollars solely for the refugees residing in our territory (Karakuş, Karaaslan, & Ünal, 2014).

Even though these remarks by the president were likely intended to highlight Türkiye's efforts, depending on the suggestion that those latecomers of a country are the main "scapegoats for recurring economic and social ills" (Hall et al., 1978, 50), money related regulations and such discourses of state authorities lead Turkish citizens to the idea that Syrian refugees constitute an economic burden on the society which causes their taxes to be spent not for themselves but for others. That is, such perceptions can deepen feelings of inequality and resentment among Turkish citizens who

perceive that state attention and aid are disproportionately directed toward refugees. In this sense, the resentment articulated here also resembles welfare chauvinism since public resources are interpreted through the expectation that natives should come first and refugees should be treated as less deserving.

This perception of economic burden is further complicated by the Turkish government's approach to the employment of Syrian refugees. The Turkish state implemented a Regulation on Work Permits for Foreigners under Temporary Protection dated 15.01.2016 for the employment of Syrians granted Temporary Protection status. Consequently, those with Temporary Protection Identity Documents are permitted to apply to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security for work permits in sectors, business lines and geographical areas (provinces, districts, and villages) to be determined by the Council of Ministers (T.C. Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, 2022).

Furthermore, in conjunction with this measure taken to prevent the employment of Syrians as undocumented workers, provisions have been made for Syrians who wish to establish their own businesses. Thus, those who intend to operate their own workplace could apply for a work permit following the completion of the requisite documentation (T.C. Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, 2022). Consequently, there has been a substantial increase in the number of Syrians under temporary protection who have obtained work permits since 2017, with a nearly seven-fold increase to 91,500 between 2017 and 2021 (Karadeniz, 2023). Similarly, in 2018, 2019 and 2020, Syrian nationals established or became partners in numerous companies across various sectors. In aggregate, Syrians have contributed 311,935,000 TL in capital to the Turkish economy during the 2018-2020 period alone (Elmas & Seven, 2020).

Relatedly, Prof. Dr. Yasin Aktay, advisor to the president of the Justice and Development Party, posited that Syrian refugees in Türkiye have made substantial contributions to the economy, stating that “employers, investors and industrialists are highly satisfied with Syrians. If Syrians were to be withdrawn from certain critical sectors, the economy of this country would collapse” (Cumhuriyet, 2021). Those kinds of narratives, though seeming to have a positive meaning, highlight the complexities of refugee integration, as their economic contributions are simultaneously seen as a source of competition with local labor. That is, while such statements emphasize the economic benefits of Syrian participation, they coexist with a growing perception that Syrians represent an economic ‘burden’ (Çağlar & Özkır, 2014).

In addition, framing Syrians as essential to the country's economic stability inadvertently contributes to a sense of neglect among Turkish citizens, particularly the working class. The suggestion that the economy would collapse without Syrians implies that the labor and contributions of Turkish workers are insufficient or undervalued. This narrative risks portraying the native workforce as secondary in the eyes of state authorities, reinforcing a belief that the government prioritizes refugee labor over investing in and supporting its own citizens. Such sentiments deepen social tensions, as they suggest a reordering of value within the labor market that sidelines the local population.

Moreover, while it is essential to recognize that the participation of Syrians in the economy is an inevitable consequence of such a mass influx, the scale of this involvement extends beyond the framework of the laws mentioned above. That is, the number of Syrians employed through obtaining work permits within the legal framework is significantly lower than the number of unregistered Syrian workers (Karadeniz, 2023). Although this informality provides employers with access to inexpensive labor and is perceived as a means of income generation for Syrians, it also contributes to an increase in the unemployment rate among the local population and insufficient wages for their labor. As those latecomers are commonly regarded as one of the main causes of economic distress and unemployment in migration receiving countries (Hall et al., 1978, 149), it is highly expected for the local population to attribute the primary cause of the country's economic challenges and unemployment to the disruption of supply and demand equilibrium due to the large Syrian refugees and the subsequent increase in unemployment.

In brief, the expenditure on Syrian refugees from Türkiye's budget has also shaped public opinion and attitudes towards Syrians, leading to beliefs that Syrians negatively impact the Turkish economy and development. Many Turkish citizens are aware that government-funded programs, including those related to education, social life, and healthcare are financed through the taxes they pay. In 2017, Deputy Prime Minister, Recep Akdağ, in a statement published by the Anadolu Agency, provided insight into the financial scale of this support. He noted that the total cost of hosting Syrians in Türkiye, accounting for both direct expenses and broader societal costs, amounts to approximately \$200 per person per month. He added as follows. “In years, the total cost spent on Syrians is 84 billion 880 million liras. In dollars, we estimate that 30 billion 285 million 573 thousand dollars were spent” (Ergül, 2017). This large expenditure, which includes public services and infrastructure, has led to a perception among the local population that Syrian refugees are straining the country's resources and negatively affecting the national economy. Regardless of the skin color, race, or religion of the Syrians, all these cases are perceived as giving ‘their’ money to a ‘foreigner’ and as a violation of rights by Turkish citizens, all of which arouse a feeling of discomfort for Turkish citizens.

Another significant issue that leads to resentment is the disparity in tax obligations. It is a case widely seen on mass and social media in Türkiye that Syrians are allowed to establish business without paying taxes and without obtaining a tax plate, while it is not possible for Turkish citizens to own a business with the same conditions. For example, when Murat Aydın, the mayor of Zeytinburnu, visited shopkeepers, a shop owner seriously complained about workplaces run by Syrians with no license or tax plates saying that Turks are regarded as secondary citizens. His complaint did not emphasize that the Syrians were allowed to run workplaces but that they were allowed and enabled to do so without having to meet the necessary requirements Turks had to (tvem, 2015).

A similar case has been highlighted in a report published on November 27, 2024 when Hakan Bahadır, the mayor of Bahçelievler in İstanbul, visits a grocery shop run by a Syrian refugee, and inquires the owner whether he has a license. When the owner answers to his question negatively, he kindly tells him to apply for a license as soon as possible and leaves even though he is the one with the authority to check on the workplaces without license and tax plates (Kızıltepe, 2024). Since the mayor issues a kind warning rather than taking the legally required steps, as it would typically be expected in such cases, it has sparked considerable public backlash, with many criticizing the leniency shown toward Syrian-owned businesses compared to those owned by Turkish citizens. Here, the key issue is not simply the existence of Syrian-owned businesses, but the perception that different rules are applied to citizens and Syrians. This makes the example analytically relevant in terms of comparison, deservingness, and the construction of unequal entitlement. That is, with the assumption that it would not have been the same for a Turkish shop owner, the attitude of favoritism for Syrians causes Turks to harbor resentment and anger towards Syrians. That is, administrative practices like these lead Turkish citizens to the impression that they are placed somewhere below the social hierarchy causing them to feel disadvantaged in their own country. Even though all the above-mentioned state practices are intended to facilitate the integration of Syrians, but on the contrary, they cause tension between the two communities, especially the reaction of the 'local' side not accepting the 'foreigner'.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), the number of unemployed persons aged 15 and above reached 3.098 million in November 2025, with the unemployment rate increasing slightly to 8.6% (2025). At the same time, discussions regarding Syrians' participation in the labour market often focus on informal employment. A 2020 report by the Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations, TİSK (2020, p. 120) argues that the informal employment of Syrians under temporary protection may reduce tax revenues, undermine tax justice, distort resource allocation, complicate the accurate assessment of economic data, contribute in some cases to child labour exploitation, and strain the social security system. While such reports do not establish a direct causal link between Syrians and unemployment levels, they illustrate how economic pressures and narratives surrounding labour market competition shape public perceptions of unfairness.

As a result, Turkish citizens have had the impression that while the Turkish government provides Syrians with financial aid, employment and business opportunities, it seem to be usurping the rights of its own citizens, disadvantaging them in their own land. Therefore, they position themselves somewhere below Syrians in the social hierarchy. As previously discussed, this situation triggers the feelings of segregation or even racism. As Anthias (2021; 2012; 2016) argues, since the questions surrounding who belongs, who is entitled to resources, and how these resources should be allocated are central to these feelings of injustice, the sharing of resources between the host community and latecomers, particularly when it is perceived as inequitable, leads to resentment and frustration.

4.3. Social Support and Facilitation

Temporary protection status granted by Türkiye not only ensures the provision of basic rights and services, such as healthcare and education for Syrians, but also necessitates the implementation of significant measures in key social sectors. Among these, education stands as one of the most critical areas, especially for Syrian children who have fled civil conflict and found refuge in Türkiye. Initially, the Turkish government provided education in the native language for Syrians residing in camps. Over time, this provision extended to those living outside of the camps, with a focus on integrating them into the national educational system. In this regard, the Circular on Education and Training Services for Foreigners No. 2014/21 was issued, ensuring that all Syrian children of school age could access education alongside Turkish students in public schools and temporary education centers (Çataklı & Taşdoğan, 2024).

To further address educational challenges, the Ministry of National Education, in collaboration with the Directorate General for Teacher Training and Development and UNICEF, initiated a project to train 20,500 Syrian teachers in 21 provinces across Türkiye in 2016. This project sought to enhance the quality of education and address the language barrier that existed between Syrian students, their families and Turkish schools. Notably, Syrian teachers do not instruct in the schools to which they are assigned but serve as interpreters, helping to bridge communication gaps and facilitating the integration of Syrian students into the Turkish education system. As a result of these efforts, a significant number of Syrian students under temporary protection have been provided with education in Turkish schools, facilitating their integration into the system. On December 25, 2024, Minister of National Education, Yusuf Tekin announced that approximately 900,000 Syrian students are pursuing their education in Türkiye (TRTHaber, 2024).

Regarding higher education, students under temporary protection who have completed their primary and secondary education either in Syria or Türkiye must take the Foreign Student Examination for admission to public universities in Türkiye. The exam is a requirement for all nationals; and candidates must meet the score thresholds set by the Council of Higher Education. To be admitted to private/foundation universities, they must meet the requirements set by each university. According to current data from the Higher Education Information Management System, 60,750 Syrian students are enrolled in Turkish universities in the 2023/24 academic year. Notably, two years after the events in Syria began in 2011, only 1,785 Syrians were studying in Türkiye but at the end of the decade, this number had risen to 336,589 (Apak, 2015; Babahanoğlu, 2018; Çalıřkan, 2019; Duđan & Gürbüz, 2024).

However, alongside these positive developments, certain political discourses and media reports have led to a perception of advantages granted to Syrians, particularly in the field of education. A prominent example of this was in 2015, by then-Prime Minister Ahmet Davutođlu, in an interview with Al Jazeera Arabic journalist Ahmed Mansur who stated that in order to enter universities in Türkiye, students are obliged to take an exam at the end of which only 40% of the

students are enrolled into the universities. However, Turkish government gave instructions for all Syrian students to be enrolled into the universities without having to take an exam. As a response, Davutoğlu claims that it is too difficult to enter universities in Türkiye. If Syrians apply, they will be enrolled. They will not take an exam. Turkish students are tested but not the Syrians (Al Jazeera Turk, 2014).

Although that doesn't seem to be possible in terms of regulations in educational institutions in Türkiye such as Council of Higher Education, YÖK, this statement, regardless of its truth, sparked controversy and highlighted a perceived disparity in educational rights between Syrians and Turkish citizens. In analytical terms, this example is important because it constructs educational access as a field of comparison between citizens and Syrians and frames that comparison through a moral language of unfair advantage and reduced priority for citizens. Such reactions also echo welfare chauvinist reasoning, as access to educational opportunity is judged through the belief that citizens should retain priority over latecomers. In other words, the allocation of educational resources to Syrians, juxtaposed with the intense competition faced by Turkish youth to gain university admission, has led to public discontent.

Similarly, many opportunities have also been provided to Syrians in basic health services in Türkiye. That is, Syrians under temporary protection could benefit from free health services in Türkiye if they have a 'temporary protection' ID card. They can apply to hospital services for emergencies, to Family Health Centers for primary health care services, and could be referred to outpatient clinics of public hospitals when the family physician deems it necessary. Likewise, they could obtain prescribed medicines from pharmacies by paying a certain percentage just like Turkish citizens. Thanks to these facilities, Syrians including cancer patients, patients on dialysis, women giving birth and even patients undergoing surgeries in various health fields receive treatment in Turkish hospitals (Girit, 2015). According to compiled national healthcare data, between 2017 and October 2023, Syrians under temporary protection received more than 97 million medical services in public health institutions in Türkiye, including over 3 million inpatient treatments and 2.6 million medical procedures, and approximately 754,000 births took place in public hospitals (Asylum Information Database, 2025).

All these regulations and opportunities are, without a doubt, a must and basic humanitarian need provided by the Turkish state. However, as they are largely funded through the taxes collected from Turkish citizens, they have raised concerns among the local population. These concerns are rooted in the belief that the financial contributions of Turkish citizens are being directed to support healthcare and education of Syrians, further fueling a sense of resentment and inequality within society. For example, 'Syrians entering universities without exams', 'Syrians being appointed as teachers in schools without exams' or 'Syrians accessing health services free of charge and without waiting in line' are some of the inferences that have become ingrained in the public opinion. This perceived inequality in the allocation of healthcare and educational opportunities reflects broader tensions about the distribution of resources and opportunities in a context where Syrians are regarded to have access to privileges that many Turkish citizens do not which causes them to be situated somewhere below in the social hierarchy.

4.4. Granting Citizenship

As stated earlier in the text, with the concept of ummah, the Turkish government frequently underlined the religious solidarity and cultural familiarity between Turkish citizens and Syrians. One of the first of those kinds of statements was by President Erdoğan in Kilis in 2016. However, at the very same rally, he also broached the possibility of granting citizenship to Syrians, by stating that

I address my Syrian brothers and sisters. If we regard you as our brothers and sisters, and you reciprocate this sentiment, you are not far from your homeland; you are merely distant from your domicile and your land. Türkiye is also your homeland. ...I believe that among our brothers and sister, there are those who aspire to become citizens of the Republic of Türkiye. Our Ministry of Interior is taking steps in this regard (Çimen, 2016).

Formally, according to Article 5 of the Citizenship Law No. 5901, Turkish citizenship could be acquired either by birth, or after birth (T.C. Nüfus ve Vatandaşlık İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009). As a rule, a child is considered a Turkish citizen if they have a Turkish parent under Article 66 of the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye (1982). Regulation No. 2010/139 on the procedures and principles regarding the implementation of the Citizenship Law No. 5901 further loosened the link between citizenship and Turkish ancestry. For example, it has become possible to provide protection to stateless children in cases where they cannot obtain the citizenship of their own families as per Article 11(1) and to grant citizenship in exceptional cases as per Article 14(1-b) (T.C. Nüfus ve Vatandaşlık İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009).

However, a few days after Erdoğan's speech in Kilis, the steps taken by the Turkish government for granting citizenship to Syrians were also mentioned by Interior Minister, Efkan Âlâ as follows.

Taking into account the developments in Syria, the difficulty of the recovery there, and the time it will take, we have made arrangements on dual citizenship, we have made changes and we have accelerated the work as the Ministry of Interior in all regions of Türkiye where there are migrants. Türkiye is handling it file by file (GazeteDuvar, 2016).

Once again, this could have led to the public misperception that many Syrians would be granted with citizenship. Although formally it takes many procedures to obtain citizenship for Syrians in Türkiye, the persistence of the discourses of granting citizenship/dual citizenship (by the authorities) could be perceived (by the Turkish citizens) as Syrian refugees becoming permanent in Türkiye and the problems experienced becoming chronic. Therefore, granting such a right has not been welcomed by the Turkish citizens. Despite Turkish citizens' cultural affinity and religious solidarity with Syrians, the prospect of granting citizenship to those 'others' has exacerbated concerns of Turkish society. The

potential conferral of citizenship upon Syrians, granting them with equal rights, allowing them unrestricted access to social opportunities, permitting them to vote, and other such considerations have engendered serious apprehensions that could have led to exclusionary attitudes among Turkish citizens.

In other words, the distribution of the resources should not be regarded only within the framework of economy as allocating and sharing of resources could be approached in a broader sense such as including legality, citizenship, political rights, safety, sociality, or recognition (Anthias, 2021, 56). Therefore, in this case, the dissemination of the legal and political rights of citizenship could boost the discriminatory tendencies of Turkish citizens towards Syrians.

4.5. Military Operations

Türkiye, dealing with the social integration of a massive influx of Syrian refugees, has also been endeavoring to address both security and migration challenges through the region at the border between Türkiye and Syria. Therefore, to ensure border security and to eliminate the threat and prevent the establishment of a terrorist organization on its borders against ISIS and PYD/YPG terrorism, Türkiye has conducted military operations in Syria. The most comprehensive of these operations were the Euphrates Shield, Olive Branch and Peace Spring Operations (Kadioğlu, 2020). While the Euphrates Shield was initiated due to the continued threat of DAESH terrorism in Türkiye and around the world which ended in victory after a 7-month struggle by the Turkish army, The Peace Spring lasted only eight days and concluded with the agreement reached with Russia. Operation Olive Branch, on the other hand, focused on the PYD/YPG threat at a time when the threat of DAESH was diminishing.

During the civil war in Syria, as the Syrian regime lacked the capacity to eliminate terrorist organizations, those terrorist groups also continuously sought to gain control of critical regions in northern Syria, in the region close to Türkiye. Hence, by conducting those military operations, Türkiye has undertaken the responsibility of both protecting its border security and ensuring the safety of refugees residing in the region proximate to the borders.

However, during the Euphrates Shield Operation, Türkiye martyred 72 soldiers in Syria. Moreover, the convergence of loss of Turkish soldiers in Syria with the discourses of politicians about 'granting citizenship' led to an intensification of Turkish citizens' resentment and perception of violation of their right of life. Turkish citizens who are situating themselves below Syrians within the social hierarchy, from now on, have had more concerns about the security of their lives. In other words, they have begun to think that while Syrians, especially Syrian men of military age, are granted with citizenship, getting financial help, being included in educational institutions, briefly, living peacefully in Türkiye, the fact that Turkish soldiers are fighting and even martyred in Syria is basically a transfer of their most fundamental right to live for the sake of others. Furthermore, for some, in a way, stigmatizing, discriminatory, and exclusionary discourses and actions directed at refugees, who are categorized as others and perceived as disruptive, hedonistic, indolent, disloyal, incapable of defending their territory, invaders, and occupiers, have been legitimized (Doğan & Ünal, 2021).

To sum up, in subsequent years, Turkish military operations such as Olive Branch and Peace Spring have also heightened societal security concerns, resulting in Syrians being perceived as a threat to both internal and external security. In addition to these military operations carried out in Syria, Syrians were also perceived as a problem in terms of internal security in Türkiye. There have been numerous criminal acts committed by Syrians that generate the belief in Turkish society that Syrians do not respond to this moderate, tolerant, and compromising attitude with appropriate gratitude, and that Syrians are disturbers, pleasure seekers, lazy, unfaithful, unprotective for their lands, incapable, and invaders (Doğan & Ünal, 2021).

In recent decades, instances of increasing prejudices and apprehensions towards migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Western societies have become prevalent. Consequently, cases of xenophobia, including crimes against foreigners, similar to those encountered in many European countries, have also become apparent in Türkiye. In this framework, Syrian migrants are subjected to scapegoating, held responsible for various adversities in their regions of residence, and experience stigmatization, discrimination, and violence. However, to grasp triggers of all these conflicts and chaos between two parties, it is apt to detect that the Turkish nation-state seems to be acting as legitimizer of unequal distribution of most basic rights, and once again the Turkish citizens in their own land might have been permeated by the feelings of exclusion, marginalization and inferior treatment. At the same time, official statements attributed to Turkish Interior Ministry indicate that in 2022 Syrians were involved in approximately 1.9% of recorded criminal cases, compared with about 2.2% for Turkish citizens. This evaluation of official records indicates that crime statistics become part of public debates and perceptions regarding migration and social conflict in Türkiye (Eraslan, 2023).

5. Discussions

This study has argued that the discriminatory and exclusionary reactions of Turkish citizens towards Syrian refugees cannot be fully understood through attitude based explanations alone, but must be examined in relation to policy practices, public communication and shifting perceptions of social hierarchy. The discriminatory and exclusionary reactions of Turkish citizens towards Syrian refugees have been read through "attitudes" in most of the studies conducted in this field, and this negative attitude has been proven with quantitative data in many studies (Apak, 2015; Babahanoğlu, 2018; Çalışkan, 2019; Duğan & Gürbüz, 2024). However, the causes of negative attitudes and their evolution into the circumstantial racism; the circumstantial discrimination (a resentment in Turkish citizens) that we introduce have not been elaborated before. The number of social incidents toward Syrians have been studied statistically yearly, but unfortunately, the reasons for this, that's, the triggering factors have not been emphasized.

From the very beginning, with a sense of moral responsibility, Türkiye has positioned itself as a regional leader to balance power with its neighbors. Türkiye has welcomed more than 3 million Syrian refugees through its open-door policy, providing protection, healthcare, and education. Consequently, Türkiye is widely regarded as a model for hosting refugees. To address the financial challenges of hosting, the country has concluded a series of agreements with the EU and international partners focused on migration management and border security. However, as mentioned earlier in the text through examples, these policies have affected the social and cultural relations between refugees and citizens of the country. Moreover, these practices, which were anticipated to bring the two parties closer together, have resulted in unexpected consequences at the social level. In other words, while the Turkish government implemented an open-door policy with an emphasis on religious solidarity and cultural affinity, the social result that it has generated such as offending its own citizens could have been missed out.

Besides, as the duration of Syrians' residence in Türkiye has extended and developments that diminish tolerance for foreigners in the country (such as reports of casualties during operations in Syria and increased unemployment rates) have occurred, social reactions toward Syrians have begun to appear more frequently on media. The main reason for these reactions and backlash against Syrians could be that they are too numerous and therefore too visible in social life, and that this 'temporary guesthood' lasts too long.

Apart from that, the policies implemented by the government have also led to the economic, social and security concerns of Turkish citizens. Even though all policies are implemented for the social integration of Syrians and are carried out in a humanitarian manner, the way in which policy implementers share these policies with the public has had a significant impact on the way citizens perceive the presence of Syrians.

That is to say, the fact that the Turkish state's aid, sometimes in cooperation with the EU, as well as the facilities it provides in the fields of education, health and security, are not explained to the public in a transparent manner without distortions, or the statements of various politicians that do not comply with the procedures applied, have reinforced the perception that there is a situation of 'favoritism' for Syrians.

Furthermore, Presidency of Migration Management, and some non-governmental organizations for refugees have been publishing reports and explanatory texts under the title of 'common misconceptions' about Syrians in order to justify themselves and as they are aware of the reactions of the public. It is even possible to find pamphlets with pictures and short anecdotes designed to attract the public's attention and make it easier to understand. The main purpose and common language in all these and similar statements is to refute claims that are widely accepted by the public, such as 'Syrians go to university without exams', 'Syrians are paid salaries', 'Syrians benefit from health services without paying'.

At this point, the findings of this study suggest that beyond the humanitarian scope of these policies, their sustainability depends significantly on how they are communicated and perceived at the societal level. In this respect, a more transparent, consistent, and publicly accessible communication strategy, implementation, and funding of refugee-related policies could help prevent misinformation and reduce public resentment. Instead of responding to misconceptions after they spread, a more consistent and inclusive communication approach that takes citizens into account may contribute to a more balanced perception. Therefore, policy effectiveness should be evaluated not only through the services provided but also through its capacity to maintain social legitimacy and trust among the host population.

In this regard, this study also contributes to the literature by moving beyond going beyond explanations that focus only on attitudes and by bringing together policy practices, public communication, and perceptions of social hierarchy. By doing so, it offers a way of understanding how everyday forms of exclusion and discrimination may emerge not only from fixed ideas but also from changing social and political conditions. Focusing on the case of Türkiye, it also provides a contextual perspective that shows how humanitarian policies can lead to unintended social consequences. In this sense, the study aims to open up a different line of discussion for future research on migration and social relations.

At the same time, it should be noted that different theoretical approaches may offer alternative, yet partly overlapping, explanations for the same phenomenon, and some of these perspectives have already been touched upon throughout this study. For example, perspectives based on economic competition, such as Blumer's (1958) group position theory, may explain these tensions in terms of perceived threats over resources and the relative position of groups. In a similar way, approaches focusing on structural inequalities, such as Bonilla-Silva's (1997; 2021) theory of structural racism, would interpret these reactions as part of broader and historically embedded power relations rather than as situational developments. From a more cultural perspective, studies influenced by Stuart Hall (1988) and Hall et al. (1978) draw attention to representation, media discourse, and the construction of 'the Other' in shaping such tensions. While these approaches offer useful insights and overlap with some parts of the analysis in this study, the framework used here is mainly based on Anthias' understanding of social hierarchy, translocational positionality, and unequal access to resources. This perspective makes it possible to bring together policy practices, public communication, and changing perceptions of social position in explaining how such forms of racism emerge. Nevertheless, future studies may benefit from engaging more directly with these alternative approaches in order to develop more comprehensive and multi-layered analyses of host and refugee relations in Türkiye.

To sum up, it should be emphasized that the effort Türkiye has been making for Syrian refugees are well-intentioned and should be considered within the framework of humanitarian duty. However, as the steps taken in accordance with this purpose seem to have been interpreted as generating circumstances where citizens of the country regard themselves as overlooked and left behind while Syrians are prioritized and favored. This could have caused Turkish

citizens to experience resentment within their own country against their own state with the belief that that they are the strangers of their own country, their higher rank within the social hierarchy has been downgraded which could ignite them to perform racist acts against Syrian refugees.

Therefore, public communication by governments is critical, beyond humanitarian provision itself. Public authorities should benefit from transparent communication strategies through which they can better explain the scope, purpose and sources of policies. To prevent misinformation and reduce misunderstandings, governments could frame integration policies to emphasise social cohesion rather than one-sided benefits. This could also help to mitigate resentment and reinforce a more inclusive sense of belonging within Türkiye's social hierarchy.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

TÜRKİYE'DE SURİYELİ MÜLTECİLERE YÖNELİK IRKÇILIĞIN NEDENLERİNİN TOPLUMSAL HİYERARŞİ ÜZERİNDEN AÇIKLANMASI

2011 yılında Suriye'de başlayan iç savaşın ardından Türkiye, uyguladığı açık kapı politikası doğrultusunda dünyada en fazla Suriyeli sığınmacıya ev sahipliği yapan ülke hâline gelmiştir. Türkiye'nin coğrafi yakınlığı, insani sorumluluk anlayışı ve kapsayıcı devlet politikaları, milyonlarca Suriyelinin ülkeye girişini ve geçici koruma statüsü altında yaşamlarını sürdürmesini mümkün kılmıştır. Ancak uzun yıllara yayılan bu süreç, Suriyeli sığınmacılara yönelik toplumsal tepkilerin ve ırkçı söylemlerin artmasına da zemin hazırlamıştır.

İrkçılık literatürü çoğunlukla Batı merkezli yaklaşımlara dayanmakta ve ırk, etnik köken, din ve ten rengi gibi kategorileri temel almaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye örneğinde Suriyeliler ile Türk vatandaşları arasında ortak din, tarihsel yakınlık, kültürel benzerlikler ve coğrafi komşuluk gibi unsurların bulunması, klasik ırkçılık açıklamalarının yetersiz kalabileceğini göstermektedir. Bu nedenle çalışma, Türkiye'de Suriyelilere yönelik olumsuz tutumların yalnızca kültürel, etnik veya dini farklılıklarla açıklanamayacağını savunmaktadır.

Araştırma, Floya Anthias'ın geliştirdiği sosyal hiyerarşi yaklaşımını teorik çerçeve olarak benimsemektedir. Anthias'a göre bireyler, vatandaşlık, sınıf, etnik köken, göçmenlik durumu ve kaynaklara erişim gibi unsurlar üzerinden kendilerini belirli toplumsal konumlara yerleştirir ve başkalarını da bu hiyerarşi içinde konumlandırır. Bu süreçte aidiyet, hak sahipliği ve kaynakların dağılımı önemli belirleyiciler haline gelir. Çalışma, Türk vatandaşlarının kendilerini sosyal hiyerarşide Suriyelilerin üzerinde konumlandıklarını ancak devlet politikalarının sunuluş biçiminin, bazı vatandaşlarda bu üstün konumun zayıfladığı algısını yarattığını ileri sürmektedir.

Araştırmada nitel bir yöntem benimsenmiş ve yorumlayıcı politika analizi kullanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda geçici koruma düzenlemeleri, yasal metinler, kurumsal raporlar, siyasi söylemler, basın açıklamaları ve medya içerikleri incelenmiştir. Çalışma, kamu politikalarının yalnızca hizmet ve kaynak dağıtan araçlar olmadığını, aynı zamanda hangi grupların öncelikli, hak sahibi veya dezavantajlı olarak algılandığını şekillendiren sembolik mesajlar içerdiğini kabul etmektedir.

Analizler, Suriyelilere yönelik toplumsal hoşnutsuzluğun özellikle beş temel başlık etrafında yoğunlaştığını göstermektedir. İlk olarak açık kapı politikası ve sınır güvenliği tartışmaları, vatandaşlarda devletin sınırlar üzerindeki kontrolünü kaybettiği yönünde bir algı oluşturmuştur. İkinci olarak Suriyelilere yönelik ekonomik destekler, çalışma izinleri ve iş kurma imkânları, kamu kaynaklarının adaletsiz biçimde dağıtıldığı düşüncesini güçlendirmiştir. Özellikle ekonomik kriz ve işsizlik ortamında, Suriyelilerin işgücü piyasasında haksız avantajlara sahip olduğu yönündeki kanaatler yaygınlaşmıştır.

Üçüncü olarak sağlık ve eğitim hizmetlerine erişim konusunda kamuoyunda dolaşıma giren bazı söylemler ve yanlış bilgiler, Suriyelilerin Türk vatandaşlarından daha ayrıcalıklı olduğu algısını beslemiştir. Dördüncü olarak Suriyelilere vatandaşlık verilmesine ilişkin siyasi açıklamalar, geçicilik beklentisini zayıflatmış ve Suriyelilerin kalıcı hâle geleceği endişesini artırmıştır. Son olarak Suriye'de yürütülen askerî operasyonlar sırasında yaşanan can kayıpları ile Suriyelilere yönelik destek politikalarının aynı dönemde tartışılması, bazı vatandaşlarda hak kaybı ve adaletsizlik duygusunu derinleştirmiştir.

Çalışmanın temel iddiası, Türkiye'de Suriyelilere yönelik ırkçı tutumların doğrudan kültürel veya biyolojik farklılıklardan değil, sosyal hiyerarşide konum kaybı yaşandığı yönündeki algıdan beslendiğidir. Başka bir ifadeyle, vatandaşların kendi ülkelerinde önceliklerinin azaldığına, haklarının ihlal edildiğine ve devlet tarafından yeterince gözetilmediklerine ilişkin inançları, öfke ve küskünlük duygularını tetiklemektedir. Bu duygular ise Suriyelilere yönelik ayrımcı ve dışlayıcı tutumların yeniden üretilmesine katkı sağlamaktadır.

Sonuç olarak çalışma, Türkiye'de Suriyelilere yönelik ırkçılığın yalnızca bireysel önyargılar veya ekonomik kaygılar üzerinden değil, kamu politikalarının toplumsal anlamları ve sosyal hiyerarşi içindeki konum mücadeleleri üzerinden değerlendirilmesi gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bağlamda, göç politikalarının yalnızca insani boyutu değil, kamuoyuna sunuluş biçimi ve vatandaşlarda oluşturduğu adalet algısı da toplumsal uyum açısından kritik önem taşımaktadır.

KATKI ORANI BEYANI, ÇIKAR ÇATIŞMASI BİLDİRİMİ VE YAPAY ZEKA KULLANIM BİLDİRİMİ**AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION, CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE DECLARATION**

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