

## IRANIAN ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE PUPILS' EXPERIENCES AT A TURKISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Vesile ALKAN**

Assoc. Prof. Dr., Pamukkale University, vesile@pau.edu.tr

ORCID: 0000-0002-8630-3357

**Mustafa İÇEN**

Dr. Yıldız Teknik University, micen@yildiz.edu.tr

ORCID: 0000-0002-3289-6097

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### ABSTRACT

Turkey is the one of the country hosting a large number of refugees and asylum seekers as stated in UNCHR. In Turkish context, it is seen that there have been a broad studies about Syrian immigrants. On the contrary, it can be said that there is a lack in studies about Iranian refugees and asylum seekers even there has been a dramatic increase due to the rigid and restrictive system of governance in Iran. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate Iranian pupils' experiences at a primary school in order to draw the picture of their lives in Turkish schools. To this view, this study designed according to a case study method following qualitative approach. The data was gathered from three pupils, three parents and three teachers with semi-structured interview forms. The results indicated that Iranian pupils' experiences grouped under themes like adaptation to new temporary world, tension resulting from moving to a new place and incompetence in language. It is seen that Iranian pupils had difficulties at the beginning and are worried about possible religion conflicts in Turkey. The results of this study suggested that teachers need training courses regarding multicultural education in order to support Iranian pupils' learning process.

**Keywords:** Iranian pupil, onward migrant, Turkish school, case study, pupils' experiences

**INTRODUCTION**

*[...] My mom said to me that we would live in Turkey for some time and go to our new world (USA). [...] When I first came into the classroom they looked at my face like saying 'you are a stranger'. I was not aware why I was with them. I couldn't understand them, they couldn't understand me. [...] Now, yes, we are friends, we play together. I don't want to go our new world."*

(Pupil 1, an Iranian pupil)

Like pupil 1, some of the people have left their lives in their mother countries and settled in different countries. In addition to this, as a result of variety of reasons, some of the pupils around the world facing with such troubles like belonging to a new place, socio-cultural integration, language acquisition, accustomed to a new school system, new peers and so on. According to the information given by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) in 2017, 65,3 million individuals forcibly displaced throughout the world. After nearly one year, it is seen that there is a gradual increase in the number to 71.44 million individuals (UNHCR, 2018) constrainedly changing their countries.

After being a signatory of the 1951 Geneva Convention, Turkey accepted status of refugees considering the geographical limitation. Even Turkey did not consider itself as a country of immigration; by 1980s many asylum seekers and refugees had started to arrive to Turkey (İçduygu, 2016). Specifically, after the civil war in Syria, Syrian refugees had started to come to and live in Turkey. On the other hand, due to the rigid and restrictive system of governance in Iran and some Iranians deciding to find new lives abroad, there has been a movement of Iranian asylum seekers to Turkey. Apart from Iranian asylum seekers, the records of Turkish migration office indicated that there were many asylum seekers from Iraq and Afghanistan applied for refugee status (Soykan, 2010). UNICEF (2014) also stated that Turkey is the major destination for refugees.

The report published in the middle of 2018, showed that 3.6 million refugees moved to Turkey in where largest number of them hosted compare to other countries (UNHCR, 2018). Furthermore, it is given in the report (ibid, 2018: 6-7) that "in addition to the nearly 3.6 million from Syria, there were also 38,700 refugees from Iraq, 8,800 from Iran and 6,400 from Afghanistan" in Turkey. When considering the number of asylum seeker and refugee pupils, it is seen that there is a lack of clarity. However, both the number of asylum seekers and refugees along with the possible average of pupils shows that Turkey has a big responsibility in hosting refugees and also in educating new pupils arrived. Pupils who are asylum seeker and refugee are entirely blameless and should be taken into account to notice possible troubles they might face. Moreover, in order not to have lost generation, these pupils have to be considered significantly. Tilley (2008) emphasized the rights of pupils who are asylum seekers and refugees. Asylum seeker and refugee pupils have to feel their being child as well as having rights to be educated. To this view, it can be said that schools can play a significant role for

asylum seeker and refugee pupils to get with other pupils, (Uptin, Wright and Harwood, 2012) and schools in turn enable them to accustom to their new lives

After a large number of asylum seekers and refugees arrived to Turkey, some cities were selected as areas for asylum seekers and refugees. This means asylum seekers and refugees are started to be the residents of these cities. Additionally, in these cities specific public schools were selected for newly arrived pupils' education. These schools are the point of preparing asylum seeker and refugee pupils for a new place, promoting their wellbeing and providing opportunities to develop their language skills and specifically to grow up as other pupils. However, it should be noted that teachers in these schools do not have any training about how to build a relationships with asylum seeker and refugee pupils, how to understand them and how to teach them. In addition to this, these teachers did not attend a course about multicultural education during their higher education. Therefore, it is significant to listening asylum seeker and refugee pupils' voices to discover what could be done better in schools, how to make schools embractive, how to enable their involvement in learning and social activities.

Many studies done in Turkey indicated that refugee pupils were facing with such difficulties in their new lives as much as in schools (Arabacı, Başar, Akan and Göksoy, 2014; Döner, Özkar and Kahveci, 2013; Emin, 2016; Erdem, 2017; İmamoğlu and Çalışkan, 2017; Kardeş and Akman, 2018; Solak and Çelik, 2018 and Zayımoğlu Öztürk, 2018). Considering Turkish context, there are some studies focusing on difficulties faced by Syrian pupils based on teachers' views (Arabacı, Başar, Akan and Göksoy, 2014; Solak and Çelik, 2018); troubles faced with Syrian pupils in Turkey (Döner, Özkar and Kahveci, 2013); teachers' experiences with refugee pupils (Erdem, 2017); educational support given to refugee students (Emin, 2016; İmamoğlu and Çalışkan, 2017; Kardeş and Akman, 2018 and Zayımoğlu Öztürk, 2018). In addition to this, there have been done some studies focusing same aims indicating similar results by European countries (Arnot and Pinson, 2015; Dryden-Peterson, 2015; European Parliament, 2016 and Mixed Migration Platform, 2017).

All these given studies are mostly related with Syrian pupils and are mainly constructed by teachers' views. However, there is a lack of studies focusing on Iranian pupils and also studies related with their experiences in schools. Considering the growth in the population of Iranian asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey and also their reasons for moving to Turkey, it seems that there is a need to study Iranian asylum seeker and refugee pupils' schooling experiences at primary schools. Therefore, this study is aimed to investigate Iranian asylum seeker and refugee pupils' experiences at a public primary school in Turkey. With the help of this study, it is aimed to increase the knowledge and understanding of the experiences having Iranian pupils who are 'onward migrants'.

The lack of the study about Iranian pupils and their lives at schools leaded this study in order to draw a real picture of Iranian pupils in Turkey. By the result of this study, on the one side it is aimed to make contribution to the literature. On the other side it is aimed to contribute to the knowledge gathered by Turkish Government

to support asylum seeker and refugee pupils' needs as expected. In addition to this, listening pupils' voices can let to see their needs as much as the support given them.

Apart from the given studies related with Syrian pupils, this study attempted to focus on pupils' experiences at a primary school considering pupils, their parents and teachers' views. On the one hand getting teachers' views on Iranian pupils and their experiences and on the other hand listening to pupils' voices can help policy makers or teachers to notice their lacks in teaching to asylum seeker and refugee pupils. Additionally, the findings of this study can help policy makers in designing instructional models for asylum seeker and refugee pupils. Furthermore, the findings of this study can be helpful for the projects about multicultural education programme.

## METHOD

This study followed the qualitative approach which directed the way of comprehending and treating Iranian asylum seeker and refugee pupils' experiences. Therefore, an inductive approach was used while building a relation between Iranian pupils' experiences at Turkish primary schools and the results of the study. As suggested by Bryman (2012) epistemological and ontological stances draw the process of collection and interpretation of the data gathered through the study. In this sense, interpretivist epistemological stance enabled us to get fruitful information from Iranian pupils, their parents and teachers. Additionally the constructionist ontological stance enabled us to construct the meaning through the experiences of Iranian pupils.

This study aimed to explore asylum seeker and refugee pupils' and parents' views along with their teachers' views about Iranian pupils' experiences at a primary school in Turkey. To this aim, a case study method was selected. A case study is a research method that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" Yin (1994: 13). In addition to this, this method is used to investigate an individual, a group of people or an event (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, this design helped to investigate asylum seeker and refugee pupils' experiences at a Turkish primary school based on the views of pupils, parents and teachers.

## Sampling

According to the aim of this study, purposive sampling method which is "to sample cases/participants in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed" (Bryman, 2012: 418) was used to choose participants. According to this method, one primary school was purposively chosen, since this school was selected as a pilot school for asylum and refugee pupils by the provincial directorate for National Education. In addition to this, from the sampling school three Iranian pupils, their parents and three classroom teachers were selected purposively. Silverman (2000) suggested that trying to get information from different participant groups for one situation supports validity.

After having informal conversations with classroom teachers, the selection of the group of teachers and pupils for sampling was completed. These teachers also helped us to contact with Iranian parents. When we met parents, we explained them the aim of the study, then they agreed to be involved into the study and accepted their children's involvement as well. After getting permissions, we started to have interviews with those who were voluntary participants. It should be noted that the participants involved in this study were also informed that their names would be written with numbers before the data collection process.

### **Data Collection**

The data was collected with a semi-structured interview technique. Semi-structured interviews enabled us to listen to participants' experiences interactively as suggested by Mason (2002). Three interview forms were prepared for each group of participants. Questions were mostly focused on pupils' adaptation process to the school and to their peers, difficulties in learning, in school and in interaction with each other based on the aim of this study. In order to support reliability, pilot interviews were done with other participants as two pupils, two parents and two teachers selected for pilot interviewing process.

During piloting process, it was noticed that in some cases, some of the Iranian participants needed extra help to comprehend what was asked due to the lack of language. Therefore, the pilot interviews proceeded in Turkish and English simultaneously. It was found that carrying out the procedure using two languages was helpful especially in getting examples and clarifications so that the data collection process also carried out similar.

### **Validity and Reliability**

In order to increase the validity of the data, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) suggested triangulation. In addition to this, Silverman (1985) stated that data triangulation which means using multiple data sources increases concurrent validity. To this view, in this study, the data was collected from different participants like pupils, parents and teachers. The views of these participants gathered through interviews were deeply focused on Iranian pupils' experiences during schooling. Iranian pupils' experiences at primary school were accurate based on participants' real views. This situation supported the internal validity as suggested by Verma and Malick (1999).

As mentioned earlier, based on the aim of the study, interviews forms were used with each group and they were piloted with selected pilot groups which were comprised of two pupils, two parents and two teachers. By piloting the data collection tools, the reliability of this study was increased (Silverman, 1993; 2005). During piloting process, it was considered that whether any ambiguities were noticed to be clarified. Additionally, the duration of interviewing process was checked. This piloting process also helped us to be sure that participants' understanding was as close as to our understanding. On the other hand, in order to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations due to language issue it was aimed to get feedbacks of participants. Therefore, the

transcripts and interpretations of each interview were given to the participants to be checked for accuracy of their views and also representation. Member-checking enabled participants' confirmations so that participant validation. This validation was emphasized in studies of Lincoln and Guba (1985) along with Creswell and Miller (2000) for supporting trustworthiness and credibility of the data.

Moreover, the generalisability of the data was supported by the method of sampling. Since this study used purposive sampling method in order to investigate Iranian pupils' experiences during schooling. Silverman (2005) emphasized that using purposive sampling enhances the generalisability of the qualitative data. This means the results of this study can represent the views of other asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey. Furthermore, using purposive sampling method supported external validity in this study (Creswell, 2003).

### **Data Analysis**

Thomas (2006) stated that inductive approach is a systematic way of analysing the qualitative data which enable a researcher to shorten extensive data into summary form and also to build a connection between the aim and findings of the study. To this view, in this study the data was analysed in terms of inductive analysis approach in which same views were put under groups. Based on this approach, the procedure of thematic analysis method was used in order to understand participants' views. In terms of thematic analysis method, themes and subthemes were constructed and the data grouped under these themes as suggested by Bryman (2012). Braun and Clarke (2006) differentiated themes into two as semantic and latent. In addition to this, Braun and Clarke (ibid: 84) defined semantic themes as 'are identified within the explicit or surface meanings of the data and the analyst is not looking for anything beyond what a participant has said or what has been written.' In this sense, defining themes and putting similar and different views under exact themes were considered during data analysis process of this study. Furthermore, the exact meaning of what the participants said was taken into account during this process.

### **RESULTS**

In this study it is aimed to find out Iranian asylum seekers and refugee pupils' experiences at a Turkish primary school. The findings gathered from pupils, their parents and teachers were grouped under four main themes guided by the aim of the study. Therefore, the presentation of the findings was given in terms of these themes which were:

- Adaptation to new temporary world
- Tension resulting from moving to a new place
- Incompetence in Language

**Adaptation to New Temporary World**

The findings gathered through interviews with all participants indicated that Iranian pupils had difficulties in adaptation to schools, to teachers and to their peers. It was found that one of the reasons of pupils' difficulties was related with their unaccepting Turkey as a home. Considering Iranian pupils' not accepting Turkey as a home, the findings showed that these pupils knew that they were onward migrants and they believed that they would not stay in Turkey more than a year. This in turn causes feeling as not belonging in this country. For instance, the teacher 1 said that "*[...] what I noticed when I was talking with pupil 1 was that he didn't want to stay here for a long time. He had a view that America would be his real home country.*" According to this teacher, when Iranian pupils first arrived, they were thinking that they would go to the USA shortly. Another teacher 2 stated that "*I guessed their parents told them they would stay in Turkey for few weeks*".

The findings obtained from parents also supported given points. Father 1 said that "*We were dreaming that we would go to America shortly. I don't know why, but we waited for 4 years now. [...] I told my son that America was an independent country, we would do whatever we want in America*". This view suggested that Iranian families were unhappy with living in Turkey longer than they planned. Also the data showed that they preferred to go to the USA rather than staying in Turkey. In addition to this, Pupil 2 said that "*My mom told me that we were here for a holiday. [...] America would be our real country. She told me that we just waited for tickets to America*". Pupil 3 agreed with this as "*America is like a Disneyland, I will go toys shops, enjoy everything.*"

These findings show that pupils believed they would be happier in the USA compare to they would be in their mother country and in Turkey. However, it is also gathered through the data that these pupils did not know where the USA was and how the life in the USA would be. Thus, as a result of their being informed that the USA would be their new country and they would be safe in the USA, pupils had difficulties in living Turkey and especially in adaption to Turkish schools.

Pupil 1 said that "*Turkey is just a place, a mandatory place we have to stay. Our country is America*". Like in this case, other 2 pupils stated similar views about their accepted country and their real peers in the American schools. When these pupils' views were asked to parents it was found that parents suggested pupils not to be accustomed to Turkey, conditions in Turkey and also to their new peers as they wished to move to the USA soon. It seems that parents did not want to make their children unsettled. However, it can be said that parents' decision like this made their children more confused and stressful. In other words, parents unwittingly caused their children to have problems in adaptation to their new places.

After 3 or 4 years, it was seen that they were still doubtful about staying in Turkey and belonging in Turkey. However, according to the findings, it can be said that they started to get used to living in Turkey and living with Turkish people. Pupils said that they knew Turkey would not be their country, yet Turkey could be their second country. The findings got from teachers showed that pupils learnt much more about Turkey, Turkish

culture, friendships and life in Turkey so they felt comfortable. This suggests that after getting familiar with the new place, pupils started to behave much normal than they did previous years.

On the other hand, the data indicated that parents and teachers were collaborated on telling pupils that they would be in the USA soon. When asked a teacher 3 said that "*I did not want my student disappointed that's why I sometimes told her she was our guest and would go to America*". A mother 3 stated that they had to protect their children. Therefore, they believed that they had to remind their children about their leaving soon. This suggests that parents do not want their children having any more problems while leaving Turkey and when starting to live in the USA. However, it was also found that parents were suspicious of their moving to the USA.

### Tension Resulting from Moving to a New Place

These pupils are too young to undertake the responsibilities of migration. The findings indicated that they were unhappy when they moved to Turkey. Pupil 2 said "*When I first came to the classroom, they (peers) were looking at my face puzzled. In my heart I felt they didn't want me. The next day I didn't come to school*". She expressed that she felt guilty in front of her peers as she thought she was different from them. The other Iranian pupils also mentioned that they were sad to be like in that situation in that they did not know any of those pupils in their classroom.

According to the views of teachers and parents, it was found that Turkish pupils were aware of asylum seekers' and refugee pupils' situations. One of the teachers mentioned that they gave information about asylum seekers and refugee pupils and their being resident in Turkey. The other teachers also affirmed that Turkish pupils were informed about migration and how they had to behave when they met new pupils. One parent's views confirmed these findings as she emphasized that her daughter was very welcomed by her peers. She also stated that "*even they were very friendly; my daughter was trembling near me*" (mother 3). This shows that moving to new environment made Iranian pupils anxious due to lack of knowledge of new pupils and new place.

It seems that these pupils had serious difficulties for a few months. The findings suggested that one of the reasons of these difficulties was Iranian pupils' thoughts of spurning by Turkish pupils. They also said that these thoughts were described by them as 'pointless' after they accustomed to the class. Another reason was communication problems between pupils and others. Teacher 1 said that "*I did not know Farsi [...] it was difficult to build interaction with them. [...] Yes, a few months I couldn't motive them as wished. So I could not help students to communicate with each other as well*". Pupils articulated that due to the lack of language they were unable to communicate with each other which caused them to feel guilty and also nervous.

Another teacher accepted that "*I can say for all asylum seekers and refugees, they felt anxiety. I can understand them as they have different culture*" (teacher 2). According to the findings, it can be said that pupils could not adapt themselves to the new culture and its new rules which then leaded them to be timid and anxious. In

addition to this, the data from pupils showed that they had negative beliefs like their peers in the classroom were making fun of them as they were foreigners, could not speak Turkish and were unaware of new live conditions. It seems that given situations induce pupils' stresses and depressions.

In supporting these views, parents stated that their children could not come to terms with the life and schooling in new a place. For instance, one of the parents (mother 3) said that "*every school day my daughter cried she did not want to go to school. [...] she felt she was foreigner to others and they were foreigner to her*". In terms of the data gathered from parents and teachers it can be said that pupils could not find in Turkey what they had in their home country or what they wished to have in the USA. It was found that pupils were willing to have better life situations in Turkey, however they believed that they were having some similarities with they had in their country. In other words, when some of the participants had difficulties like in communication or in understanding people around them, they thought that they were not accepted in Turkey like in Iran as they were Christian. It seems that they had a belief that as a result of their being Christian they were foreigner to Muslims. It can be said that religious pressure affects their life satisfactions. On the other hand, it was also found that Turkish pupils did not have information about the religion of Iranian pupils. This also indicates that Iranian pupils in their heart had that pressure.

After months passed, it was found that pupils changed their moods. This suggests that pupils are just children and in children's lives everything change very quickly. As they are innocent and they do not wish harm on another. The data from parents indicated that they had problems in Turkey like adapting to a new place to economic difficulties which then cause frustrations. It was found that parents were transferred their frustrations to their children. In addition to this even they believed that what they experienced was the inevitable corollary of emigration; they failed controlling their feelings. However it was also found that they came across the belief that Turkey and Iran had similar life conditions. For instance, father 1 said that "*I also had troubles in Turkey, think my son. [...] we live in the same geography, have some similarities in our histories and cultures. [...] now everything is ok for me also for him*." This can be meant that on the one side, parents unconsciously transferred their worries or their problems to their children then in turn made them worried. On the other side, sometime later pupils started to accustom to the life in a new place since they noticed the similar features between themselves and their peers as well as the culture in Turkey.

### **Incompetence in Language**

The data indicated that Iranian pupils had difficulties both in learning and in using Turkish Language. Teachers stated that Iranian pupils insisted on not learning Turkish for nearly 3 months. In addition to this, they said that pupils were unwilling to speak in Turkish during that period. It seems that Iranian pupils rejected to stay in Turkey in that they also refused to learn Turkish. In other words, it was seen that they believed that learning Turkish could cause their staying in Turkey longer as stated by pupil 3 "*I didn't have to learn Turkish. I would be in America soon. [...] I learnt Turkish, look I am here. I can't go America*". Based on the pupils' behaviours and

attitudes, teacher 3 decided that they did not accept learning Turkish and studying at Turkish schools. When the reason of this decision asked, she said that she got the answer from the Iranian pupils as "*I don't belong to this class. I will go soon. I don't have to be friend with others here and don't have to learn Turkish lessons*".

As mentioned before, these pupils felt anxious in the classroom due to their being foreigner to others which then caused isolation. In addition to this, they insisted on unaccepting to be accustomed to a new atmosphere and new language. This means pupils refused to interact with their peers as well as their teachers. However, they were not aware that this could be problematic for their education. Teachers stated that these pupils did not have role in learning process and found it too difficult to motivate them. Teachers also stated that they could not get the support of parents during they were dealing with Iranian pupils' involvement into lessons.

It was found that Iranian pupils could not understand Turkish pupils' efforts to form friendships. For instance pupil 2 said that "*Ayşe asked me why we came to Turkey. At that day I thought she didn't love and want me. [...] Now, I know she loves me, it was my misunderstanding [...]*". Teachers also stated that even they tried to support pupils' interactions; they noticed Iranian pupils' avoidance. Teacher 1 mentioned that whenever he tried to motivate pupils, he noticed that these pupils isolated themselves and refused to be involved in classroom activities with their peers. This situation then affected their success in learning process according to the data.

In terms of the data, it can be said that language barriers led Iranian pupils, Turkish pupils and teachers to fail in communication. Therefore, there could not be any successful communication among them which in turn influence their interactions on the one side and their future learning processes on the other side. It is seen that the lack of common language created difficulties in Iranian pupils' school lives during 3 months. After 3 months passed, teachers mentioned that Iranian pupils started to talk with others, tried to be involved classroom activities and tried to have communication with their teachers. One of the teachers said that "*they were expecting to go earlier but time passed and now they know they may stay here longer than they wished*" (Teacher 3). It was found that after Iranian pupils beheld that they could stay in Turkey longer, they started to learn Turkish. Father 1 said that "*I know we're so late to tell the truth about our staying here. [...] now my son is happy with attending the course*". According to teachers and parents, the improvements in learning Turkish helped pupils to be involved in learning activities. However, it seems that the delay in pupils' learning the language caused falling behind the other pupils.

On the other hand the data indicated that not only pupils' deficiencies in Turkish but also teachers' deficiencies in Farsi caused difficulties during learning and teaching process. The data suggested that teachers found that the lack of language was significant problem in classroom setting. Since teachers agreed that they could not help pupils to get efficient knowledge during the class. For instance one of the teachers said "*I could not speak Farsi and English either. So I couldn't have any way to build a connection with them*" (teacher 1). While teachers were sad about not directing pupils' learning, parents were also unhappy with the lack of their

supports in their children's schooling. Mother 2 uttered that "[...] here teachers don't speak Farsi or English so we had to learn Turkish [...] maybe as a parent we did wrong, we didn't pay attention our daughter's education. [...] we thought that we would go, she wouldn't use the information given in Turkey". This indicated that inadequacies of languages caused communication problems between teachers and pupils as well as teachers and parents. This problem then resulted in learning difficulties.

In addition to this, teachers emphasized that they have no training for teaching foreign pupils. They also stated that they had difficulties in reacting, motivating and teaching pupils from a different country. Teacher 2 said that "[...] their age, the reason they moved to Turkey, their lack of language made me stressful during first few months. [...] I taught like I did with Turkish pupils but yes I paid attention their differences". The data gathered from teachers indicated that they put considerable effort to motivate Iranian pupils and to enhance their learning. On the other hand, the data gathered from pupils showed that Iranian pupils had difficulties in involving learning activities due to the lack of motivation and as a result of their feeling shame and anxiety. In other words, the inability in the language invoked anxiety which caused pupils' unwilling to attend the learning activities. The data also suggested that Iranian pupils felt that other pupils could make fun of them due to the inability in the language and their failure in lessons.

#### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

This study aimed to investigate Iranian asylum seekers and refugee pupils' experiences at a primary school in Turkey. To this view, this study was designed as a case study research based on qualitative approach. Semi-structured interview forms prepared for each group of participants were used for data collection. The data was analysed in terms of thematic analysis method following inductive approach. The results were grouped under the themes derived from the aim of this study. This study aimed to gain insight about pupils' experiences at a school in that a school is a significant atmosphere in where pupils have opportunity to get new peers and to learn more about the new culture while communicating with each other. In addition to this, a school is an important place in where it is expected to provide educational supports for new comers. Furthermore, a school is crucial place for protecting pupils from problems outside the school and to support them not to leave them behind of others.

The results indicated that Iranian asylum seeker and refugee pupils experienced such difficulties as adaptation to a new place, tension due to moving to a new place and incompetence in language. Considering the adaptation difficulties, it was found that as a result of Iranian pupils' refusing Turkey as a home; they had difficulties in adapting to new school, to new teachers and to new peers. Additionally, according to the results it can be said that the delays in Iranian pupils' move made them more confused and stressful. It was also found that Iranian pupils preferred to go to the USA rather than staying in Turkey. The data suggested that both Iranian parents and pupils believed they would be happier in the USA compare to they would be in their mother country as well as in Turkey. However, due to the problems between Turkey and the USA, there

appeared to be delays with their moving. It seems that this situation caused parents to be worried and stressful about living in Turkey and not moving to the USA. As given before, parents were also worried about their religion choice in a Muslim country. The results suggested that parents' worries affected their children's feelings negatively and caused their unwillingness to get used to the life in Turkey.

According to the results it can be said that pupils' preferences for moving to the USA rather than staying in Turkey longer made them consciously isolated from their surroundings nearly 3 months. The results suggested that pupils' isolation in one sense may be resulted from their parents' misleading them like their moving could be finished shortly. Additionally, it is seen that even though parents tried to protect their children from being sad while re-moving to a new place, they also caused their children being anxious and depressive. Furthermore, the results indicated that due to this isolation and negative feelings the language started to be a crucial problem faced by both sides. In other words, pupils refused to learn language not to live in Turkey longer and this leaded their anxiety level to be increased. It was found that both sides had difficulties in communication as well as in interaction during learning process. According the results, it can be said that their lack of language caused them to be unwilling to engage with learning activities as they felt shame and anxiety. It can be said that pupils put themselves in a downward spiral in which their unwillingness to be in a new place leads to language barriers then to learning difficulties.

It should be noted that these pupils were too young to undertake the responsibilities of migration. However, according to the data, it can be said that parents consciously or unconsciously leaded their children to be the silent hero of their stories. For instance one pupil said that "*My dad, each week insisted on warning me that we would move soon. [...] So I didn't play any of my peers. [...] didn't talk my teacher. Here isn't my real city*" (pupil 3). These sentences are not only drawing how pupils were isolated from their peers and learning process but also drawing the emotional depression created by parents. On the other hand, it was the normal life procedure that Iranian pupils had to change their lives and had to adapt themselves to the new conditions. According to the results, it can be said that these pupils started to get used to living in Turkey and living with Turkish people. This result also indicated that learning more about Turkey, Turkish culture and Turkish peers enabled Iranian pupils to be positively motivated in learning process.

The results of this study indicate some similarities with the wide body of studies conducted Syrian participants in terms of language difficulties, adaptation problems (Arabaci, Başar, Akan and Göksoy, 2014; Döner, Özkar and Kahveci, 2013; Emin, 2016; Erdem, 2017; İmamoğlu and Çalışkan, 2017; Kardeş and Akman, 2018; Solak and Çelik, 2018 and Zayımoğlu Öztürk, 2018). In addition to this, the results of this study show matching results with the projects conducted by European countries (Arnot and Pinson, 2015; Dryden-Peterson, 2015; İçduygu, 2016 and Mixed Migration Platform, 2017). This suggests that language and adaptation to a new place are common problems for all refugees and also immigrants. On the other hand, it should be noted that this study done with Iranian asylum seekers who might face corresponding difficulties when they reach their last station.

This study tried to draw the picture of Iranian pupils' schooling experiences in terms of pupils', parents' and teachers' views. The results of this study showed that all participants presented nearly similar views about their experiences. In addition to this, it is seen that Iranian asylum seekers are worried about possible religion conflicts. It should be noted that Iranian pupils differ from Syrian pupils considering their religion choices as some Iranian are Christian. This suggests that further studies can focus more on this issue. Furthermore, the results suggested that teachers had difficulties in managing their interaction with Iranian pupils therefore it can be said that there is a need to arrange training courses regarding multicultural education which is also required to build interaction between parents and teachers in order to support Iranian pupils' learning process. This study can be the first step of realisation of Iranian pupils' experiences at a primary school. Therefore, it could be helpful for the area to conduct a study about Iranian pupils or Iranian refugees. It should be also considered that this study is limited with three pupils, three parents and three teachers' views. Another study can be done with large number of participants. Additionally it is noticed that their interaction during data collection may be fruitful which means collecting the data by focus group interviews can produce detail information.

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