Distance Education Experiences of Syrian Students under Temporary Protection during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Keywords	Abstract
	The Covid-19 pandemic that has affected every aspect of life worldwide and in Turkey is still heavily taking effect. Formal education, one of the most affected fields, has become one of the most crucial issues of the daily life of the whole society, over 18 million students, their families, and the education community with the decision of the Ministry of National Education to suspend face-to-face education and switch to distance education in March 2020 within the scope of epidemic measures. This study aimed to examine the distance education experiences of Syrian students in line with the opinions of teachers who work at different education levels and have Syrian students in their classes. Data were collected from 16 teachers employing semi-structured interview forms. The research revealed the difficulties experienced by Syrian students under temporary protection during the distance education period from teachers' perspectives.

Introduction

Due to the sudden spread of the Syrian civil war that broke out in 2011 and the striking increase in the level of violence, millions of Syrians, especially towards the neighboring countries, had to emigrate. In this process, along with the Syrian needs for shelter, health, protection, food, employment, and their right to education, it has also been provided by, especially the Republic of Turkey, the United Nations (UN), and Non-Governmental

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Organizations (NGOs). Even though the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) issued a circular numbered 2014/21 (MoNE, 2014) intending to reach all Syrian school-age children, it ensured the establishment of Temporary Education Centers (TEC) where they can receive education in their mother tongue; the Ministry has adopted a new policy of transferring the Syrian children under temporary protection to formal education institutions by closing down TECs as of 2018, owing to the ongoing civil war in Syria and the increasing importance of social adaptation in the country. The Department of Migration and Emergency Education, which was established under the Ministry of National Education's General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, was charged with coordinating the educational needs of foreign children under protection. Accordingly, in the 2019-2020 academic year, 1.082.172 Syrian children under temporary protection were determined to be of legal education age (5-17) (MoNE, 2020). Besides, despite all the Ministry's efforts, the entire population has not been schooled yet. According to the data received from the Ministry's website, the schooling rate, which was 30% in the 2014-2015 academic year, reached 63.29% in the 2019-2020 academic year, and a total of 684,919 children under temporary protection commenced to study informal education institutions. In this regard, though many Syrian children have access to educational institutions, around 400.000 school-age children can still access educational facilities.

The Effect of the Covid-19 Epidemic on the Education Process

Since the end of 2019, when the Covid-19 epidemic broke out, it has made way for world-shaking results. Parallel to this, as an indispensable part of our social and daily life, the education process continues with changing methods and difficulties. So much so that, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF), a total of 1.2 billion students in 186 countries on a global scale have been deprived of face-to-face education in their schools, and they struggle to continue their education remotely from various digital education platforms (WEF, 2020).

As a consequence of the Covid-19 epidemic, it is surely beyond doubt that the use of technology dominating 21st-century society has risen to the top. In this respect, it has been observed that every service sector in countries with suitable infrastructure has begun to employ online tools more intensely than ever before by switching to remote working methods. In many countries, including Turkey, the use of technology has come to the forefront of educational applications. In this context, in March 2020, face-to-face education was suspended within the scope of the measures against the epidemic put into practice by the government, and the distance education method was commenced. Distance education is made available to all children studying in primary and secondary education institutions through television (EIN TV) and Education Information Network (EIN) internet portals. Nevertheless, distance education seems to have brought along various problems. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) states in a press release that at least 463 million children worldwide do not have access to distance education, which creates a global education emergency (UNICEF, 2020). In an analysis of Turkey's situation (Donmez, 2020), it is confirmed that the incapacity of the Internet infrastructure and economic realities deterring every student from having a computer or tablet paved the way for various problems such as the lack of concentration. In addition to these problem titles that may apply to all students, considering the Turkish language skills of children under protection and the limited financial opportunities of their families, it is better to observe how difficult the situation is for them. As a matter of fact, in a report prepared on the access of Syrian children under temporary protection to education in the period before the covid-19 epidemic (Tuzun, 2017), the problem areas are categorized

under such headings as access, quality and inclusiveness. It is also underlined that children who can access education have problems due to language differences between both students and teachers (Kocoglu et al., 2018). According to the statistics of the Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies (MONEGDIET), between 23 March 2020 and 1 January 2021, a little over 13.6 million (individual) students entered the EIN Internet portal (MONEGDIET, 2021). When keeping in mind that there are 18 million enrolled students in the age of compulsory education in Turkey, it can be said that participation in distance education is around 70-75%. Although, following the data of the Turkey Statistical Institute (TUIK), 90.7% of households have internet access (Satil, 2020), according to the PISA 2018 report by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the proportion of children with access to computers for schoolwork in Turkey was reported to be 33% (Reimeres & Schlehicler, 2020). This situation may explain why students can somehow enter the EBA internet portal (e.g., with the help of technological devices belonging to other family members). Pretty much development has been provided in the education of children of school age in the Syrian population dwelling in Turkey. However, it is also obvious that there are still different ongoing challenges. The reality of distance education, which entered our agenda as a necessity due to the Covid-19 epidemic outlined above, caused the existing problems to become even more complex. The findings of the situation analysis study conducted by the Turkish Red Crescent with 385 children and their parents in 15 provinces (Turkish Red Crescent, 2020) also prove this argument. The study also found that only 64% of the children had television and the internet at home. In another study conducted by phone calls with 17 parents and 25 children in the Fatih district of Istanbul, it was revealed that similar rates of children did not follow EIN at all. According to the findings, 9 out of 25 children answered "I do not follow at all" (Beyazova, et al., 2020). Despite that, the Ministry of National Education's attempts to strengthen the EIN infrastructure, the efforts of the relevant institutions to supply tablets and computers for the children of low-income and disadvantaged families, and the EIN Support Points (MoNE, 2020), which the Ministry continues to establish in schools in the regions where it is needed, give the impression that there is a certain improvement in distance education. The breaking out of the Covid-19 epidemic and its impact on the whole world is still a fairly recent event. For this reason, it is not possible to mention the existence of qualified studies that examine the subject in depth in the literature. As can be seen from the various research and analyses cited above, available sources are either based on interviews with a limited number of target audiences or general statistical data studies. Besides, there is no study examining Syrian students' positive/negative experiences in this context, to contribute to eliminating this deficiency, the study presents its main question: "How do Syrian students under temporary protection experience the process of distance education."

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Methodology

In this study, the qualitative research method was used to understand the distance education experiences of Syrian students under temporary protection in line with teachers. While determining the method, priority was given to the research problem to be very current and related to a rarely encountered situation before (Baltaci, 2019). Qualitative research is a more effective method in such cases as a method that is questioning, interpreting, and trying to understand the form of the problem in its natural environment. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The

case study design was used in the research. The case study design is a method that examines current facts and events in their natural environment and the current situation in detail, regularly, and in-depth (Patton, 2014). Within the scope of the research, in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers working at various educational levels through a semi-structured interview form.

Participants

Information on gender, educational status, and the schools they work for of 16 teachers from 12 different schools whose opinions were consulted within the scope of the research are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Participant Features

	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender Distribution		
Female	7	44
Male	9	56
Total	16	100
Educational Status		
Bachelor's Degree	13	81
Master's Degree	3	19
Total	16	100
The Levels of the Study Schools		
Preschool	3	18,8
Primary School	9	56,3
Secondary School	3	18,8
High School	1	6,3
Total	16	100
Branch		
Preschool Teaching	3	18.8
Primary School Teaching	9	56.3
Social Science Teaching	2	12.5
Information Technologies Teaching	1	6.3
Biology Teaching	1	6.3
Total	16	100
Service Areas of the Study Schools		
The Privacy Level	Number	Percentage (%)
1/2	1	6.3
1/3	1	6.3
1/4	2	12.4
1/5	7	43.7
1/6	4	25
Private School	1	6.3
Total	16	100

Note: The school's service area provides information on the area of deprivation. The level of deprivation of the school increased from 1/1 to 1/6.

Table 1 showed that the participants were determined to be by the purposeful situation sampling method and have at least one teacher from each education level according to the voluntary principle. Besides, the participants were selected from teachers working in six different branches and different service regions. Attention was paid to having Syrian students in the classes of all participating teachers. One teacher (primary school) works in a harmony class (Within the scope of the PIKTES (integration of Syrian students into the Turkish education system) project, the adaptation class consists of third-grade Syrian students who do not have a certain Turkish language proficiency.) for Syrian students only, while the other participants work in classes with both Turkish and Syrian students.

Data Collecting Tool

A semi-structured interview form consisting of eight questions for the purpose was used as the data collection tool. During the form development process, the first draft was developed by the researchers. Before the questions were finalized, the teacher's feedback on the comprehensibility of the questions and whether they were appropriate for the context was received, and then the interview form was finalized by taking the expert opinion. In some cases, interviews were conducted remotely (phone-10 calls) and in some cases, face-to-face (6 interviews) due to the epidemic, and all interviews were recorded. The data collection process started on 10 December 2020 and ended in about a week.

Data Analysis

To transform the raw data obtained in the interviews into a meaningful form, the coded interviews were reviewed, and descriptive analysis was performed. In the descriptive analysis, data are collected according to predetermined themes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). During the analysis, teachers' views were collected under various themes that could be associated with the basic and sub-questions of the research. Under each theme, a prominent opinion (code), frequency of expressing this opinion (frequency), participant code expressing the opinion, and quotations from these views are included. The information arranged in this way has been converted into tables.

Reliability and Validity

The validity and reliability of qualitative research are provided with the concepts of being credible, transferable, consistent, and verifiable (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In the research, a semi-structured interview was used as a data collection tool. In the interviews, open-ended questions were asked according to the themes determined. Later, the sound recordings were deciphered, the obtained data was put into form, and content analysis was started. In content analysis, the data obtained through interviews, observations, or documents are analyzed in four stages: (1) coding the data, (2) finding codes, categories, and themes, (3) organizing codes, categories, and themes, (4) defining and interpreting the findings. (Eysenbach & Kohler, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994) Steps are followed.

The sound recordings were listened to by the researchers, and their accuracy was confirmed. Researchers have made their analyses at different times. The researchers collected the information from the interviews at different times in various codes and grouped them under specific themes. The researchers compared the codes they determined, and a reliability analysis of "reliability = consensus/consensus + disagreement" known as the Miles & Huberman formula was performed over the codes with and without consensus, and a result

of 0.7020 was obtained. The themes and codes created as a result of analyzing the data are tabulated to increase understandability.

Results

Differences in Classroom Participation and Learning Levels between Turkish and Syrian Students in the Period before the Pandemic.

The issue of Syrian students' participation in education and their learning levels in the pre-epidemic period is not the focus of this study. However, this question is included to associate and compare the research findings with the face-to-face education period and to interpret to what extent the problems are related to distance education. The findings of this question are given in Table 2.

Table 2
The Points that Differentiate Syrian Students in Terms of Educational Participation and Learning Levels in the Period before the Pandemic

Codes	Frequency	Teacher Code	Quotation
Insufficient Language Skills	14	T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16	*(T2) Since they learn reading, writing, and speaking all three together when they come to primary school, of course, they start behind other students.* *(T9) Because you know that not all Syrian students have fully learned Turkish.* *(T11) They cannot understand much and fall behind in the class, especially when examples are given about idioms and proverbs*
Insufficient support of parents for education	6	T2, T6, T7, T12, T14, T15	*(T7) We need to meet with the parents on this issue, but they look like they will be living here temporarily, as if they will return to Syria in the future, and then I will make up for it.* *(T14) We had a lot of difficulties with our Syrian parents, even in face-to-face education. In other words, we could not explain to the child about school time or even the school time to the parents.*
Syrian Turkmens have more command of Turkish than other Syrian students	3	T1, T2, T4	*(T4) I do not want to separate as Turkish and Syrian students. I want to divide them into two groups among Syrian students. The success of our Syrian students, who are Turkmen, is so high that they are so enthusiastic that they are at a level that can suppress the success level of the students we can call Turkish.*
Integration: Social adaptation problem	2	T13, T14	*(T13) There are two different cultures in the classroom. My Syrian students are almost more than Turkish students. So there is a clash of two different cultures in the classroom. This makes it difficult for children to focus on lessons and education.*

Table 2 showed that many teachers stated that the points that differentiate Syrian students in terms of educational participation and learning levels in the period before the Pandemic were mostly due to Turkish language skills. Another striking point was the low

interest of Syrian parents in education. By stating that they would make up for the deficiencies when returning to Syria, the parents also showed the reasons for such an inadequate level of parents' interest and support. When the table is examined, some teachers stated that Syrian students also differ in Turkish language skills and learning from Syrian Turkmen and Syrians (Arabs and Kurds. Finally, when we look at the table, cultural differences, and students 'adaptation problems emerge as other reasons that (negatively) affect Syrian students' participation and learning levels.

Participation in Distance Education

The information given by 16 teachers participating in the study about students enrolled in their classes is shown in Table 3 below according to their education level and nationality. In this section, only one class of branch teachers was evaluated.

Table 3
The Number of Registered Students and Participation in Live Classes

The Number of Registered Students			
	Turkish	Syrian	Total
Preschool	49	10	59
Primary School	228	101	329
Secondary School	81	35	116
High School	15	18	33
Total	373	164	537
Participation of students in the live class			
	Turkish	Syrian	Total
Preschool	27	4	31
Primary School	72	18	90
Secondary School	22	8	30
High School	10	4	14
Total	131	34	165
Participation rates in live classes			
	Turkish	Syrians	Overall Average
Preschool	55.1%	40.0%	47.6%
Primary School	31.6%	17.8%	24.7%
Secondary School	27.2%	22.9%	25.0%
High School	66.7%	22.2%	44.4%
Overall Average	45.1%	25.7%	

Table 3 showed that participation in live lessons is low among both Turkish and Syrian students. In line with the information provided by the teachers participating in the research, while participation in distance education is around 45 percent among Turkish students, this rate corresponds to 25 percent among Syrian students.

Barriers and Other Reasons for Participating in Distance Education

Teachers were asked to state their thoughts on the barriers to participation in distance education in general. It should be thought that the findings emerging in this question and given in Table 4 can be interpreted in both groups of students without separating the Turkish and the Syrian.

Tablo 4

Barriers and Reasons for Participating in Distance Education

Codes	Frequency	Teacher Code	Quotation
Internet problems	10	T1, T3, T6, T7, T9, T10, T11, T12, T14, T15	*(T9) Students who cannot attend the course cannot participate in the classes because they do not have access to the internet, computer, or telephone.*
Overlapping classes of those with more than one sibling	8	T2, T7, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15	*(T2) These students regularly attend the classes as long as they do not conflict with their brothers and sisters because they enter on the phone.*
Lack of technological devices	7	T6, T7, T9, T10, T11, T12, T14	*(T13) Due to technical infrastructures, there are homes without internet, and families without computers, laptops, and smartphones. Of course, these limit participation in the live class.*
Parental Indifference	4	T8, T11, T12, T16	*(T8) I think the biggest problem about not participating is the parents. In other words, each parent can ensure that students participate in the live lesson if they want to.* *(T12) In face-to-face education, the parents were comfortable; they sent them to school in the morning, and the child was staying at school until two and a half in the afternoon. However, now that the houses are schools, parents do not care; that is, they do not show a teacher's interest. However, S/he has a phone and internet, but s/he does not let the child in; he does not want to deal with it.*
Understanding distance education as a holiday	3	T2, T11, T13	*(T11) The pandemic process is unfortunately perceived as a holiday.* *(T13) Also, during the pandemic period, children have turned live lessons into entertainment due to the problems brought by the period—few who attend to listen to the lecture.*
Social anxiety	1	T13	*(T13) After all, these children are children of families with a particular socio-economic structure, so some do not have their rooms. Some students do not want or cannot attend the live class just because of this.*

Table 4 showed that the obstacles to distance education are mainly attributed to Internet Problems by teachers. Technological device inadequacy emerged as the most significant obstacle teachers later saw. This problem was followed by having more siblings and, accordingly, the inadequacy of the devices. Of course, these limit attendance to the live lesson. " Parent attitudes and indifference of parents have also been the points that draw teachers' attention to the subject. It was stated that the situation created by distance education creates a perception that the school is in service.

Barriers and Other Reasons for Participating in Distance Education Specific to Syrian Students

This question focused solely on the problems and obstacles Syrian students face in the distance education process. Information about this is given in Table 5.

Table 5

Obstacles and Reasons for Syrian Children's Participation in Distance Education

Codes	Frequency	Teacher Code	Quotation
Absence/lack of device	12	T1, T3, T7, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14	*(T6) First of all, students must have a phone or tablet, especially for Syrian students to attend the lesson. Our lessons are usually during the daytime between 08:30 and 18:00 in the morning and usually because they attend classes on their father's phone. The fathers of the children are also at work during the day, so the children cannot attend the lessons. This is the first factor.*
Language Factor	11	T5, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16	*(T5) The language factor is a critical factor. Because I look at Turkish students they had such a hard time connecting to that system even though they knew our language!*
Lack of Internet	10	T1, T3, T6, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14	*(T13) Due to technical infrastructures, there are homes without internet, and families without computers, laptops, and smartphones.*
Economic Conditions	6	T8, T9, T11, T14, T15, T16	(T15) *Many families of Syrian students are unemployed and in need of help. Children do not have the opportunity to purchase an internet package and participate in the class. First of all, the economic conditions of the families are not suitable. Unfortunately, many Syrian families live in challenging conditions and try to survive under challenging conditions. It is said that more than one family lives in the same house.*
Parent Attitude	6	T7, T8, T11, T12, T15, T16	*(T8) When I ask parents, they make excuses like I do not have internet, I do not have a phone, I do not have a tablet, of course, we do not know how realistic it is.*
Social Anxiety	3	T1, T7, T13	*(T1)* They do not want to show the disorder in their homes, and they refrain a little. *(T7) Since they do not understand Turkish, they feel a little humiliated or humiliated with their other friends, so they do not have self-confidence. That is why they are not very keen to participate. Children do not want it or let me say they are not willing.*
The anxiety of doing wrong	1	T1	*(T1) Predominantly Syrian students with low academic success were following EBA TV a lot. ... They watched these broadcasts too much because they did not put themselves under such stress as there was no concern for the wrongdoer.*

Table 5 showed that, when the obstacles to the participation of Syrian children are examined, it is seen that the most frequently repeated answer is the absence/lack of equipment.

In addition, the lack of internet was seen as a significant problem for Syrian students and Turkish students. The poor economic conditions of Syrian students 'families and their parents' attitudes towards education are among other obstacles. Finally, teachers state that students have various social anxieties, such as the anxiety of making mistakes, and emphasize that these also pose obstacles.

EIN Functionality of Support Centers

The teachers interviewed within the scope of the research work in 12 different schools. It is stated that three of these 12 schools have computer rooms serving as EIN Support Points (EIN SP) where students who do not have the necessary equipment and facilities can come and participate in distance education. All of the teachers who have EIN SP in their school and some of the teachers who do not have expressed their opinions about EIN support centers in Table 6.

Table 6

Teachers' Views on the EIN Support Point

Teacher	EIN SP,(Yes/No)	Reported opinions
T1	Yes	*... the general majority of our school's students should carry. Make as many EIN support rooms as you want in a school with bussing, if these students cannot come to this school and live in that school, you will not get results anyway. There are (beneficiary students) .. even five or six students (Turkish) who do all their life lessons from EIN support rooms. There is no Syrian family in the village where the school is located, so there are no Syrian students (EIN does not benefit from the support point).*
T9	Yes	*Yes, there is an EBA support point in our school, but we do not have many computers due to the school's facilities. However, despite this, we see that the participation of students is low. In other words, I see that the students do not demand the support points of the students who do not have the opportunity to enter online education, at least as far as I can see.*
T10	Yes	*Yes, there is (EIN SC); I observe that our Turkish students benefit more from this center.*
T7	No	*We do not have such a class*
T11	No	*Unfortunately, we do not have a computer classroom in our school due to the lack of equipment.*
T12	No	*No, I wish it had. Then 15-20 students could come and attend classes. I think if we had 15-20 computers, children would come and join ...*
T3	No	*There is no such class in our school; we could not open such a class due to financial difficulties and inadequacies.*

Table 6 showed that when teachers' opinions about EIN SP are examined, it is seen that this initiative of the Ministry is welcomed, but it has not yet become a common practice. On the other hand, it is understood from the emphasis made by the teachers, who are the support points in his school that the students at a certain level actively use it and the students who benefit are mostly Turkish students.

Suggestions of Teachers for Distance Education

The teachers' opinions about distance education during the interviews are in Table 7.

Table 7

The Opinions of the Teachers about Distance Education

Codes	Frequency	Teacher Code	Quotation
Improving Internet Infrastructure	12	T1, T2, T3, T4, T6, T7, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T15	*(T13) First, I want to express ideas about the internet capacity in Turkey because they are already one of the countries that use the slowest internet in the world. In distance education, which requires a lot of participation, the internet with such low capacity becomes an extra burden; it is one of the different problems.*
Elimination of technological device deficiency	10	T1, T3, T6, T7, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T15	*(T6) ... If the materials such as phones or tablets are provided to students all over Turkey, I think the overall rate will rise from 80% to 85%.*
Taking measures for Syrian students' language problems	9	T1, T4, T7, T8, T10, T12, T13, T14, T16	*(T12) Syrian students need to be considered a little different from Turkish students. Why? Because our Turkish students can reach them, but they can be sure that they do not understand even the information you provide or the information given on TV because of the language problem* *(T14) If we do something to solve the language problem, distance education will be more beneficial for Syrians.*
Enrichment of EIN TV	6	T7, T8, T9, T11, T13, T4	*(T14). EIN TV, which provides preschool education, can give lessons about children's language education appropriate to the children's level and preschool level.* *(T11) Lessons can be given from TRT EIN. This platform could be improved a little more.*
Informing Families	5	T6, T7, T11, T12, T16	*(T12) … For example, there are interpreters in our schools. We have it at our school. Group calls can be called 3 and 5 each, and information meetings can be held on Zoom with those interpreters. If it is taught as training in their language, they know how to access EIN or EIN support point or Zoom. Or They can realize that this education is continuing and encourage their children to work towards the school again.*
Regulation of EIN course hours	4	T7, T8, T11, T12	*(T7 … These hour intervals may be slightly changed according to the class. Instead of defining 9 hours, we can define a maximum of 6 hours or 4 hours. If defined in this way, if the students have a technological device at home, they will not have any problem with the technological device. For example, we define a lesson in the afternoon; the lesson time we define coincides with 7 to 8 in the evening. At that time, whether it is dinner or working at home, the father comes from work; that is the process. There is only one room in the house that gets warmer; in the evening, everyone is in that room. These cause significant conflict. In this way, hours can be arranged.*

Supporting with additional materials	3	T7, T14, T15	*(T7) It is already tricky for children to reach the live lesson, ie EIN, or different things. Instead, photocopies, materials, and books with much visual material can be distributed to children.* *(T8) We have six lessons per day, 6 hours of lessons. How long is it appropriate for a student to stay at the computer for 6 hours?*
Children should have separate rooms	1	T2	*(T2) He always turns off his microphone while studying with me; his mother, grandmother, and father are constantly sitting there because it is hot in the house, so he turns off the microphone while listening to me so that the sound does not come to the students and me. Consider how effective this could be. He should generally have been alone in his room.*
Conducting live lessons in the classroom	1	T4	*(T4) … It was possible to see both the teacher and the classroom environment. I think this was nice for the student. I think it would be better to have life lessons in front of the board in the classroom.*

Table 7 showed that when teachers' suggestions for distance education are examined, it is emphasized chiefly that the biggest problem is the lack of internet access and technological devices and that improvements should be made towards them. It was stated that there were problems in accessing distance education due to the inadequacy of the Internet infrastructure, and this problem was most intensely followed by the obstacle to access to technological devices. Again, taking measures against the language problems of Syrian students was most frequently mentioned in the interviews. Teachers deemed it necessary to enrich Eba TV's content and intensify family information pieces of training. Organizing live class hours was considered necessary by the teachers. It was stated that this situation might cause health problems for both students and teachers.

The suggestions of Teachers for Distance Education from the Perspective of Syrian Students

In this section, considering only Syrian students, the question "what kind of suggestions teachers would make to provide Syrian students with distance education" was asked, and the answers were given in Table 8.

Table 8

The Suggestions of Teachers for Distance Education from the Perspective of Syrian Students.

Codes	Frequency	Teacher Code	Quotation
Turkish education and training	6	T1, T4, T9, T13, T15, T16	*(T9) It is necessary to open Turkish language education to Syrian students and online courses to learn Turkish.*
Content Echancement on EIN TV	5	T7, T8, T9, T11, T13	*(T8) As I said, suitable classes for Syrian students should be offered at different times on EIN TV for Syrian students.* *(T13) Namely, we explain mathematics and Biology to these children, but for a child who hardly understands Turkish, these do*

			not mean anything. Apart from the courses scheduled on EIN TV, a separate Turkish course can be opened for these Syrian students.
Parent Information	4	T6, T12, T14, T16	*(T6) When the school is opened, Syrian families pay special attention to sending it to school. But when it is turned to the distance education process, especially families need to be informed correctly.*
Interpreter Support	3	T10, T12, T14	*(T10) The distance education process can be structured in the presence of an interpreter. If the language problem is solved, the distance education process can be better quality, and I believe this can be achieved with an interpreter.*
			(T14) If interpreters help teachers plan distance education, if we communicate with the parents through interpreters, it will be healthier for us and the students. The child's language proficiency is insufficient, and the family does not understand us.
Preparation of special course materials in Arabic	3	T6, T9, T12	*(T12) As I said, employing the Ministry, booklets, books, and CDs can be prepared and sent.*
Education in the mother tongue	2	T9, T12	*(T12) In other words, they can be educated, especially in their mother tongue, namely Arabic. I think the education given in the mother tongue will have positive results.*
Organizing their social life	2	T2, T11	*(T2) Our Syrian students' homes are very crowded, they have five or six people living in one room, and they need to study in a separate room.*
			(T11) Apart from education, Syrian students have a diverse social life outside. They also have to work and earn money. Since they have to work, they cannot attend the live lesson adequately. These can be prevented. If necessary, inspections can be increased, and restrictions can be imposed.
Economic support	2	T11, T16	*(T16) Support can be given to students with poor economic conditions.*
Cultural document	1	T1	*(T1) During Turkish lessons, more works that contain much more about our national culture and our view of life should be taught.*

Table 8 showed that teachers think that the problems caused by the language differences of students are intense and that Turkish education should be given priority and emphasized that Turkish online education should be emphasized, especially during the pandemic process. Likewise, they stated that it would be appropriate to enrich the content of EIN TV, which can be accessed relatively quickly in the distance education process for Syrian students, to include repeat programs and different sources on this channel. It has been expressed to raise awareness of parents on this issue. Besides, the importance of interpreter support in both parent education and student education process has been deemed worthy of highlighting by teachers. Although some teachers thought education should be given in their mother tongue, other teachers emphasized the opposite. Teachers also expressed support for improving the economic conditions of Syrian students and improving the socio-economic status of Syrian students who live in crowded families and have to work.

Discussion and Conclusions

The decision to switch to distance education, taken by the Ministry of National Education in March 2020 to slow down the Covid 19 epidemic, has undoubtedly been a practical decision to combat the epidemic. On the other hand, discussions on the extent to which students can benefit from distance education, especially the inequalities of opportunity created by distance education, continue to be discussed in detail in all segments of society. However, as stated in the reports of some education actors, one of the groups that benefited the least from distance education is Syrian students under temporary protection status (Muşlu, 2021). Within the scope of the study, the opinions of teachers from different branches and levels in Gaziantep province with Syrian students in their classes were taken, and the distance education experience of these students was closely examined. The findings reveal that Syrian students' continuing disadvantage in terms of participation and learning levels before the distance education process is shown together with the distance education process.

Within the scope of the research, teachers were asked whether there was a significant difference between Turkish and Syrian students in terms of participation and learning levels in the period before the Covid-19 outbreak. The data obtained showed differences between the learning levels and class participation levels of Turkish and Syrian students before the Covid-19 period distance education process. It has been strongly demonstrated in the research that Syrian students had difficulties before the Pandemic due to their Turkish language command and communication problems and that this situation creates differences between their learning levels (Koçoğlu & Yanpar Yelken, 2018). Supporting the literature, the data obtained from the study revealed that the most significant difference in the educational status of Syrian students is related to Turkish proficiency. Besides, considering the data obtained from the studies covered by the teachers, it is stated that Syrian parents do not consider education as a priority as they do not think that they will constantly stay in Turkey. This case in the pandemic period leads up to a severe obstacle to the educational integration process of the students. Previous studies have also revealed that Syrian families are indifferent and remain in the background in the education process of the student, and they have difficulties communicating even though they know Turkish because they are not interested (Gozubuyuk Tamer, 2017).

Findings show that both Turkish and Syrian students have a low rate of access to distance education. The most important reason for this is the lack of internet and technological devices, frequently expressed by the teachers. Although studies have been made in Turkey in recent years to increase the internet speed (Mestci, 2007) still has not reached the desired level of internet infrastructure. The inadequacies of internet infrastructure in internet-oriented distance education activities were stated by the teachers who participated in the research as one of the biggest obstacles to distance education. On the other hand, the fact that students who have no technological devices or who have more than one sibling and whose courses overlap cannot access sufficient devices is one of the severe obstacles to participation in distance education. In the findings, it is concluded that parent attitudes and indifference also prevent distance education activities. Although the Ministry announced the process with the slogan "Distance education, not a vacation" at the beginning of the distance education process (MoNE, 2020a), some students and parents see the distance education process as a holiday, and due to this perspective, educational activities are not shown. It has been concluded that it is one of the obstacles.

Within the scope of the research, when Syrian students were asked about the reasons for not participating in distance education, the answer received with the highest frequency was

the lack of equipment, as was the case with Turkish students. This was followed by the problems caused by the language problem. In a study previously conducted by Akalin (2016), it was stated that the biggest problem of Syrian students is language. Internet infrastructure inadequacies follow these problems. It has been concluded that Syrian students are at a more disadvantage than Turkish students and cannot benefit from distance education sufficiently due to their more challenging access to the internet and electronic devices.

Furthermore, looking at the findings, it is concluded that some Syrian students are anxious to make mistakes due to their inability to speak Turkish sufficiently, and this causes social anxiety. In the research report published by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (DEMP, 2017), it is stated that some Syrians live in the same house with more than one family. This situation is also determined by the teachers who participated in the study. It is stated that at homes where there is more than one family in the same house or even in the same room, students experience social anxiety in front of the camera, and they do not attend live lessons because they do not want to show this to their classmates and teachers. The research conducted by Ahsan (1997) highlights the security and livelihood problems experienced by family members who were subjected to forced migration, and it is emphasized that each individual takes responsibility for the livelihood of the family. It was emphasized that in such societies, importance is given to working life rather than education. Parallel to this, it has been revealed in various studies that Syrian families stay away from education because of economic problems and that children participate in working life instead of education (Sarıer, 2020). Referring to the findings, although the Syrian parents have the necessary facilities, due to doubts about building the future in Turkey, it has been concluded that they do not prioritize their children's education. Similarly, Sarier (2020) mentioned this issue and stated that Syrian parents do not even attend parent meetings, their communication with the school is insufficient, and Syrian parents do not support education because they do not expect from the country's education system. Finally, the conflict between the live class hours conducted via EIN in case of having more than one child in the same house is seen as a reason for Syrian students not to attend class, as is the case with Turkish students.

In the research findings, the solution suggestions of the teachers for distance education coincide with the problems presented. Teachers state that the most important solution is to solve the internet problems experienced by students. It has been emphasized as a common belief that the internet, which will be provided to students in good conditions and free of charge, will significantly improve participation in live lessons. In addition, the lack of devices is frequently highlighted, and the need for technological devices is insistently emphasized. Even if these conditions are not met, it is suggested that the quality of the education provided on EIN TV should be increased and continue broadcast with enriched content for this. In a sense, moving schools home with distance education has caused families to assume more responsibilities regarding learning and teaching processes (Bozkurt, 2020). The importance of communication with parents is emphasized in the research findings, and it is concluded that the quality of distance education could be increased by providing education to families in this process. It has been suggested that the weekly EIN live course hours (MoNE, 2020c) planned by the Ministry are overlapping for different school levels and are too long, so they should be organized. The teachers who participated in the study were also asked about measures for Syrian students to improve the distance education process. In the suggestions for solutions, it is frequently emphasized that measures should be taken against the language problem of Syrian students. Uzun and Bütün (2016) state that for the lessons given to Syrian students to be functional and valuable, the situation that needs to be solved first is language, and it is

challenging for students with language problems to benefit from education. The solution suggestions that teachers bring to the language problem differ from each other. Most of the teachers suggest that Turkish education should be focused on solving the language problem, continue Turkish education online, enrich Turkish education via EIN and improve education with additional materials, while some teachers state that the support of translators, Arabic documents, and education in the mother tongue is necessary. However, it is open to debate whether students who already have language problems continue their education, and communication in their mother tongue will bring the ongoing problems to something other than moving forward. On the other hand, it is revealed that the economic and social conditions of the students are among the obstacles to education, and it is stated that financial support activities should be provided for students.

There is data that will form a biased opinion about the functionality of EIN support points. It is stated that only three of the 12 different schools where 16 teachers participated in the research work have EIN support points and no EIN support points in the other nine schools. According to the data of the Ministry, there are 248 support points in Gaziantep province as of February 2021 (MoNE, 2021). Considering the student population of Gaziantep province, it is evaluated that the number of available EIN SPs is not sufficient. However, teachers with EIN SP in their schools within the scope of the study state that the students benefit very little and that Turkish students primarily benefit from this service.

Conclusion

The study results were reached within the scope of the opinions of teachers who have Syrian students in their classes. However, because the Syrian population does not exhibit a monolithic feature, further studies should be conducted, including themselves, the access of Syrian students from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds to access education. It is necessary to expand the scope of the applications such as the fast deployment of the most frequently mentioned devices and social policy tools for the lack of internet access for access to distance education, tablet distribution, internet support, and the EIN SP opening. It is evident in the research results that Syrian parents do not attach sufficient importance to integrating their children into the Turkish education system and their regular participation in classes for various reasons. It is thought that determining the reasons for parents' behavior in this direction and conducting studies to change them positively will contribute to the process. The main problem regarding the education of Syrian students is seen as the language and communication problem. Teachers frequently state that they cannot communicate with the student and parents due to language differences and cannot communicate effectively. It is thought that the Ministry will increase the scope of Turkish language education for both Syrian parents and students, thus enabling Syrian students to participate more effectively in the formal education process.

Acknowledgments

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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