Education in Conflict and Crisis
The case of Kurdish refugees from Syria in Turkey

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Abstract

Underpinned by Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad’s sociological theories and Erving Goffman’s theory of social stigma, this study bridges the ideas of these three sociologists by examining the relationship of capital owning, stigma, migration and the strategies immigrant families build towards education around these notions. With the aim of exploring the role of education for refugee immigrants, the research area has been restricted to a specific city in the South-East of Turkey. The city, Diyarbakir, has been deliberately chosen for this study in terms of the value it holds for the immigrant group examined. As a method, interviews have been conducted in Diyarbakir with the aim of constructing a qualitative study. The data, in the form of interviews, used in this study has been collected within one month, which took place in November 2017. With the conducted interviews and the theoretical framework shaped, the immigrants are discussed through their assets, the conversion of different types of capital within the country of immigration, the recognized values deriving from similar ethnic identity shared with the majority in the city of immigration and the strategies they build towards the education system in Turkey. The scope of this study covers the school-aged children from any level, including students in higher education. Families’ perception of education plays a crucial role in their children’s education path as they build certain strategies towards it. Accordingly, this study explores how the Syrian immigrants in Turkey perceive education in relation to their different types of capital or lack of them. By doing so, the study concludes that the perception of the families in relation to their cultural capital and encountered stigma divides the social group explored through three main categorizes, namely the pragmatic, oblivious and resistant approaches they take towards the education system in Turkey. The study also argues that immigrant children’s education in Turkey acts as an impeding condition for their parents’ return to the country of origin.

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1. Introduction

Previous studies on migration have predominantly been about the economic impacts on the host country, its labour market, race and ethnicity based housing segregation and the basic needs of immigrants. The studies that have used a sociological perspective on these topics have made essential contributions to the research area on migration. Yet, there seems to be less focus on the educational domain and relatively few studies on the field of sociology of education. Furthermore, the combination of migration and education studies requires attention through data that has been collected on the field for this specific study.

Given the influx of Syrian refugee immigrants in Turkey, their education becomes a serious issue for both the host country and school-aged children. Up until 2016, there were 833,000 Syrian school-aged children in Turkey, 491,896 (59%) who were in school and 341,000 (41%) who were out of school. Besides the numbers given regarding the influx and the school-aged children who are out of school, the Syrian children need further attention to define the problems of their education.

This study examines Syrian immigrants from a sociological point of view with a qualitative approach. Instead of investigating immigrants from a general perspective, this study mainly refers to immigrants from a certain region of Syria, being the north, who have migrated to the city Diyarbakir. The aim behind choosing to investigate immigrants from North Syria is to relate the immigrants to discussions on ethnic identity, sense of belonging and expectations. By highlighting the expectations and the social condition of the immigrants, their position towards education can be clarified.

When migration and education become two research areas for discussion, it necessitates a dimension where the impact of migration needs to be observed for the education of school-aged children. This does not necessarily mean that this study is aimed at introducing the effect of migration on the educational success of children. What this study provides is insight on education’s role for families due to their changing social and economic status as a result of migration. Children’s lives are impacted by migration whether the family is well educated and financially stable or not. This also includes immigrants’ education in their new location; but in what way? It is not that this area of study has been neglected or overlooked; quite the contrary, there has been a constant debate on the state of immigrants. However, the reason this study’s aim stands out among the other studies is because it gives the opportunity to observe the Syrian immigrants in Turkey from a point of view that is based on their economic and social background. Furthermore, instead of approaching the case only from a quantitative perspective, it manages to shed some light on the issues that the immigrants find important to discuss. Therefore, the method used and

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on which this research and analysis is predominantly based is qualitative. This eventually enables the creation of a platform where education becomes the main field studied.

A necessary distinction should be made between the words ‘migrant’ and ‘refugee’. If the dictionary terms are searched, migrants are people who choose to leave their homes in search of better opportunities for work, education, health etc. Refugees, however, “are persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution. […] These are people for whom the denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequences.”. According to certain sources, words often used such as asylum seeker or immigrant usually have negative connotations.

A differentiation in term usage manifests a problematic categorization. In other words, focusing on the differentiation that claims that refugees have a reason to leave home whereas migrants do not, may lead to a separation of two groups. Nevertheless, after having analysed the interviews, it has become clearer in the study that this differentiation between the two does not mean anything. The reason is because, in practicality, there is usually an overlap since some families may fit into both. Keeping this in mind, this study portrays the social group examined as refugee immigrants rather than labour immigrants. Throughout this study, the word ‘immigrant’ is mostly preferred over the word ‘refugee’. However, this does not mean that it ignores the different experiences of refugee and labour immigrants.

What this study aims to provide is an understanding of the economic, social and cultural assets immigrants have received through their upbringing and previous education. These elements should clarify how the country of immigration is experienced and what strategies the parents use towards the general education system in Turkey. Within the second chapter following this introduction, the study aims to provide a background to the migration that has been taking place ever since the conflict in Syria began. In this sense, the country of emigration (Syria) and the country of immigration (Turkey) is introduced through their education systems and geographical locations and the effects this migration process has caused. Through this historical background of information, the research questions for this study gain their significance. Following this chapter, the study builds its theoretical framework. This third chapter heavily discusses the works of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. This facilitates the understanding of the empirical work of this study from a sociological perspective. To strengthen the background and the theoretical chapters in relation to this study, the sections within the theoretical framework combine the geographical area and the characteristics of the Syrian immigrants in Diyarbakir, which is the city for my investigation. These sections are significant for this study as it creates a bridge between Bourdieu’s and Erving Goffman’s concepts (i.e. habitus, capital, symbolic violence and stigma) and migration studies (heavily derived from the sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad).

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6 Henceforth, the phrase "country of immigration" is used as to refer specifically to the country that the Syrian migrants have migrated to and not the more standardized understanding of it as a country that simply experiences a lot of immigration.
After the methodology is described, the study introduces each family interviewed in the sixth chapter.

The seventh chapter is where the empirical work is examined. Within the first section of the analysis, I suggest that the social group examined has certain similarities between themselves with regards to their economic conditions and social value and norms. Moreover, this section highlights the subjective values of the social group by discussing how these social, economic, cultural and ethnic values connect or detach them from the society of immigration. Furthermore, I argue that the cultural capital a family possesses has a greater impact on immigrant children’s access to and process of education than their economic and social capital. After the general picture is shaped, the sections within the analysis are divided as to build the actual social process the immigrant group experienced. As a result, it could be concluded that immigrant parents’ perception towards education shapes the educational strategies they build for their children’s education in the country of immigration. Being cognizant of the potential political boundaries this study might surpass, I aim to highlight the immigrant group’s social and economic condition, experiences and decisions in a sociological manner.
2. Background Information on the Research Area: The Dynamic Flow of Two Countries

To emphasize how education has evolved for refugee immigrants, general background information is required to reflect on why education is an important domain to analyse in migration studies from a sociological perspective. For the reader to understand the contexts that are associated with the topic aimed for discussion, background information to the research helps formulate further discussion and also narrow down the area in which the study should remain. Since this study heavily focuses on the education of the Syrian immigrants in Turkey, it is important to have an overview of the educational systems of both countries.

Having been in the conflict zone since 2011, Syria has gone through dynamic changes. These changes have not affected the educational system that the Syrian government follows on a large scale; however, these changes have affected school-aged children because of their forced movement (migration) and the damaged schools that were ruined during the conflict. There is no doubt that the Syrian crisis raises crucial questions. Before discussing the displacement of the people in Syria, recognizing the basic educational order acts as a basis for the overall understanding of the content used in this study including the interviews. As this study investigates the city Diyarbakir, this chapter describes the dynamic changes within this city and its significance for the social group examined as well.

2.1. Education System in Syria (a Snapshot)

Syria has an educational system that consists of 12 years of education, 9 years of which are mandatory. The 9 years that are considered basic education are divided into two grades; the first being from the 1st class till the 4th and the second grade being the 5th class till the 9th. Basic education is compulsory for both grades and is free of charge. The language of instruction is Arabic. What is taught as foreign language from the 1st grade since 2005 is mainly English, and as a second foreign language French or Russian should be chosen. After basic education is over, it is not compulsory for the students to continue their education at the secondary level. For the following step, the grades of the students are evaluated based on their performance in exams. Consequently, the two options available are (1) general secondary schools or (2) vocational/technical secondary schools. Secondary education (high school) consists of 3 years from grade 10 until 12. During these years, the curriculum varies according to what school the student has been admitted to; either a general school or a vocational/technical school. Religious education is compulsory until the end of the upper secondary school.

As understood from the interviews and other sources, private education is rare and does not appeal to citizens. Hence, 97 percent of all basic education

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schools are public while the remaining 3 percent are private. Moreover, 94 percent of secondary schools are public schools while the remaining 6 percent are private.\(^8\)

Education in Syria during the crisis has gone through some changes in relation to the regions within the country. Since the curriculum used in education is divided into four parts based on which control area the schools are located, there has been a significant decline in the enrolment and an increase in the number of students dropping out of schools at both the basic and secondary levels.\(^9\) The schooling of children in Syria varies whether they are located in government-controlled regions, opposition-controlled regions, Kurdish-controlled regions or regions that are controlled by the so-called Islamic State. Each region has a different curriculum adapted in their schools, hence there is a tension in the general system in relation to education. Whereas there is no detailed information on the schools controlled by the so-called Islamic State, it is known that the curriculum is not approved by the Syrian government. However, the case for the schools in the opposition and Kurdish controlled regions work differently. The ones in the opposition-controlled regions are mainly supervised by the Syrian government and receive government funding. The ones that are not supervised by the Syrian government are not recognized and their certificate does not act as a formal document. The Kurdish controlled regions act independently from the Syrian government. Therefore, the curriculum in the Kurdish controlled regions is not officially recognised, and the curriculum and language of instruction is Kurdish.\(^10\)

### 2.2. Education System in Turkey (a Snapshot)

The education system currently used in Turkey is a 4+4+4 system that was introduced in 2012. Accordingly, there are four years of primary education which are considered as the first level, followed by four years of primary education considered as the second level, and later finishes with four years of secondary education. These twelve years of education are compulsory in Turkey and it is free of charge in public schools. The system is state-supervised and consists of two main parts; (1) formal education and, (2) non-formal education.

Formal education includes pre-primary, primary school, lower and upper secondary schools and higher educational institutions. There are a variety of choices for secondary education in Turkey. Within the category of formal education, students can choose to take an exam that can act as an entrance document for a specific high school aimed for both in the public and private sectors. Moreover, there are also vocational and technical high schools that heavily focus on a specific area of study within their curriculums. Non-formal education, on the other hand, aims to teach citizens who are not able to attend the formal educational institutions or have left it on a certain level. What it encompasses is to teach citizens to read and write, and to provide them with

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\(^8\) World Education Services, “SYRIA Educational Profile: A Guide to Place Refugee Students in Canadian Schools,” 2016, wes.org/ca/syriaprofile ©. p.3.


education that might help them to adjust to scientific, technological, economic, social and cultural developments.11

Education in Turkey is centralized in the sense that the Ministry of National Education determines all things related to institutions, schools, curriculum etc. The school terms are also determined by the ministry, while this may differ for private institutions. An exception comes in for higher education which falls under the Council for Higher Education (YÖK). YÖK is authorized for both the public and privately-run universities. According to the report introduced by the Ministry of Education in Turkey for the education period 2016/2017, there has been a rapid increase in the number of private schools in relation to the 4+4+4 educational system implementation. Aside from this, there has also been an increase in the number of students transferring from public to private schools. The statistics in the report also show that whilst there are 53 .098 public school/institutions, there are 10 .053 private school/institutions in the 2016/2017 school period when formal education is considered.12

Looking at the general picture, it seems difficult to comprehend the educational system of Turkey because of dynamic changes to the system and curriculum. Therefore, parallel to this, it is also difficult to find academic sources clarifying the education system in Turkey.

2.3. A Timeline through the Migration

The aim of this section of the study is to broaden the discussion on the changes in the educational systems of both countries by first delving into the initiative factors as to why Turkey was one of the main destinations for immigration and how the process of migration escalated mainly inside Turkey. Moreover, the changes or opportunities formed (mostly related to the field of education) by the government of Turkey after the arrival of millions of immigrants is the final part of the timeline that is proposed here. With the help of the historical baseline provided, hopefully a fundamental part of Syrian migration should be covered and become clearer.

There are certain historical dimensions which need clarification for the overall comprehension of the analysis. That is why, drawing a timeline acts as a blueprint for the discussions aimed for by this study and possibly create a visual reflection of what has led to, and what is considered by Amnesty International as, the worst migration crisis since World War II.13 Since this study does not aim to dive into the political causes of the Syrian conflict, the main lines starting from the first Syrian migration flow should be covered.

In April 2011, the migration crisis began with people fleeing heavily to Lebanon and Jordan, which later by June intensified towards Turkey as well, mainly because of its geographical location having borders with the northern

part of Syria. The vast majority of immigrants stayed in the camps prepared at the arrival destination. However, as far as the interviews have shown, there are some families with different journeys due to various reasons, which are explained in greater detail in chapter 6 and 7. By March 2013, the registered immigrants reached one million and by September the same year the number had already doubled itself to two million; UNICEF claimed that half were children. Following this statement, Germany agreed to resettle 5,000 Syrian immigrants offering them to stay for two years, which was followed by Sweden offering permanent residency to the asylum seekers from Syria who already had temporary residency in the country.

In the beginning of 2014, UNICEF released a report on 5.5 million Syrian children in Syria and neighbouring countries claiming that a generation is at risk due to malnutrition, lack of education, poor healthcare, emotional distress, and the list goes on. What is referred to as the Isis crisis started in June 2014, which was followed by Isis attacks on Kurdish villages along the Syria-Turkey border, leading to an influx of immigrants into Turkey. After fighting against Isis for four months, the Kurdish forces drove the Islamic State fighters out of Kobane in the beginning of 2015. By May 2015, Isis had control over half of Syria. According to the Global Trends Report in 2015, the number of displaced people in the world hit the historical figure of 65.3 million. Later the same year, immigrants, especially from Jordan, moved back to Syria due to difficult living conditions. Based on the database of UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2016 is registered as the deadliest year with the deaths of 5,096 immigrants trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe.

The aim of this study also requires an understanding of the graphical and numeric data to portray the situation before analysing the qualitative data. According to the statistical data base by UNHCR, as from January 2018, there are 3,466,263 registered Syrian immigrants in Turkey. By observing the map provided from the same source, it seems there has been a gradual growth in numbers throughout the years.

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During the influx of refugee immigrants, Turkey also went through serious changes in relation to the rising population. To understand the migration flow, one needs to not only understand the emigrating country’s situation, but also grasp how the receiving country has experienced the dynamic changes. According to the ORSAM report published in 2015, there are certain effects that rise because of the sudden increase in the population of Turkey. The social and economic effects can be viewed and understood based on various entities’ opportunistic actions such as increasing the rental prices, an increase in inflation in border cites, which also leads to adaptation problems, hiring illegal workers and giving less than the standard minimum wage, which eventually leads to a decrease in the wages in areas with Syrian immigrants, the spreading of child labour etc. Moreover, what seems to be one of the key questions in the integration process is language and cultural differences, overall creating crucial problems regarding the basic needs of immigrants. Since each country has its own migration policies, there are differences in how immigrants are treated regarding their basic needs and rights.

2.3.1. Migration’s Impact on Education in Turkey

When it comes to Turkey, there has been a serious increase in the population in the cities on the border of Northern Syria since 2011. Some families were forced

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19 Figure 2 and 3 have been derived from the data base of UNHCR.
to stay in immigrant camps, while others preferred to. The heavy population in
the camp areas caused serious problems for the education of immigrant
children. Usually, a tent was reserved for schooling purposes with the
collaboration of the Ministry of Education (MEB) and volunteer teachers, also
located in the camp or around the city. However, since Arabic and Kurdish are
two main languages that the children could be exposed to, limitations regarding
the content and quality of the education occurred. Another limitation, or
difficulty one might say, is that there was no curriculum to follow, which led to a
schedule based on teachers’ arbitrary planning.

By 2016, Turkey had 28 camps for the Syrian immigrants. Diyarbakir,
however, did not have any camps until 2014, when the attack on Shengal
occurred and 7,000 Yazidis had to flee to Diyarbakir (this number decreased
quickly since many decided to flee to Europe or to Northern Iraq). With the help
of non-governmental organizations, the camp stayed in Diyarbakir for two and a
half years, yet was forced to be moved outside the city after what was considered
to be a military coup by the current Turkish government in July 2016.

The education policies regarding the Syrian immigrants have changed
throughout the years as the population dramatically increased. For coming to an
understanding of the state of education they are currently at, it is significant to
realize the period starting from when the immigrants first arrived.

Turkey firstly provided educational opportunities within the camp, mainly
supported by NGOs and volunteers. Since the situation was viewed as a
temporary one, the policies followed for the education of the Syrian children
were limited to the camping areas. Instead of teaching Turkish, the curriculum
used was supported by the Arabic contents. However, as the conflict in Syria
continued to intensify and more immigrants flew into Turkey, the focus on the
camps shifted onto fulfilling the basic needs of immigrants within and outside
the camping areas such as housing, health care and food. Therefore, education
did not receive a primary position until the Ministry of National Education
circulated several reports in the year 2013 about the education opportunities for
Syrian children, who continued to increase in number. These reports acted more
as a preparation for an extended version published in 2014, where school-aged
children could register to the schools attached to MEB or the Temporary
Education Centres (TECs) organised for Syrians. In the beginning of its
establishment, most TECs had volunteer teachers who worked with the Arabic
curriculum. The schooling period for children in Diyarbakir escalated based
on the opportunities they were provided by the government. Though this study
does not include any information about the funding, it should be noted that
everything involving the TECs and their funding is arranged by UN agencies
such as UNICEF and UNHCR. This includes the construction of the schools, the
wages of teachers and everybody else working for the school and the materials
used.

Despite there being several schools for Syrian children in cities such as
Batman, Mardin, Gaziantep and Istanbul, the first school for Syrian children in

21 T.C. Milli Egitim Bakanligi Temel Egitim Genel Mudurlugu, “Yabancilara Yonelik Egitim-Ogretim
Hizmetleri” (2014).
p.17.
Diyarbakir opened in November 2014. The school gives courses starting from the 1st grade until the 12th. The curriculum is validated by MEB and consists of courses that are half Arabic and half Turkish. Since the courses are given in the regular Turkish public-school buildings, the program must start after 3 p.m. following after Turkish citizen students have completed their schooling time, and it lasts until 7:30 p.m. There are currently two schools that still maintain this system in Diyarbakir; however, these schools also started to increase their level of Turkish courses while decreasing the Arabic ones to accelerate the integration process.

The state in Northern Syria has also gone through changes during this conflict. The city of Kobane can be shown as a great example for it was already under the control of the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG), however it was taken by ISIS during the conflict from September 2014 until January 2015. Although most of the city was destroyed by then, some Syrian immigrants decided to return to their homeland with the intention of being a part of the reconstruction process. The education in Syria had been according to the Arabic curriculum that was taught in Arabic until now, which does not include Kurdish courses for the Kurdish population. However, since the reconstruction of certain conflict areas have been established, the schools in West Kurdistan (Northern Syria) have been based upon a curriculum taught in Kurdish. As of today, most of the northern part of Syria is under the control of Kurdish forces and there is currently a conflict in the city of Afrin.

2.4. Introducing the Hometown

Although what defines the social group studied is their status as refugee immigrants, this fact about them cannot be the only representation of their lives. In migration studies, the condition of origin should not be overlooked as if the life of immigrants began after migration. By clarifying the way their lives were before migration and focusing on the part of their identity that they emphasize the most, hopefully there will be an understanding that the social group’s life has not started from when they migrated, and that this fact about them is only a part of what defines them. For pursuing this aim, it is significant to introduce the ‘hometown’. For constructing this conception, two maps are used. By doing so, I aim to bring light to migration and the aspect of geographical proximity between the cities in Northern Syria and Diyarbakir. For this, it is important to picturize the geographical places of the cities that are mentioned in this study.

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According to the map above, North Kurdistan is mainly consisting of the cities within the Turkish border while the north-west part of the map consists mainly of the cities within the (North) Syrian border. However, while Kurdish people use these directions, they divide the regions based on Turkish, Syrian, Iraqi and Iranian borders rather than the geographical positions of the cities. Thus, all the cities within the Turkish border are considered as North Kurdistan while Northern Syria is considered as West Kurdistan. In this study, the cities that are mentioned, which families migrated from, are Kobane and Qamishli, except for one family migrating from Sere Kaniye (known as Ras Al-Ayn). The families from these cities migrated to Diyarbakir, hence the north. As it can be interpreted from the map shown above, these cities in Syria are not far away from Diyarbakir. However, before arriving to Diyarbakir, some families from Kobane passed the border through Urfa. That is because Kobane is geographically located between Sere Kaniye and Afrin, which has a closer proximity to Urfa rather than Diyarbakir.

Kurds are not an ethnic minority; nevertheless, they are a multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-racial nation with a unified, independent and identifiable national history and culture. Most Kurds currently living within the border of Turkey, and almost all living in Syria share the same language and dialect (Kurmanji-Bâhdinâni). They also share the same religion (Islam), which allows collectivized behavior and mobilizations, thus a shared ethnic identity. It is highly possible to observe how much people from similar social origins share in common. One should understand that the religious, hence the cultural, values that people in Syria live by shape their structure of life. They live and are identified as a collective group due to their ethnic identity and historical struggle of nationhood. Although Northern Syria is autonomous, it still goes

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through conflicts in the fight for recognition, which is also a problem for the non-autonomous south-east part of Turkey.

Kurds in Syria were subjected to human rights violations even before the Syrian conflict. Some of these violations include restrictions on the use of the Kurdish language, thus education, as well as employment, health and other rights. More than 120,000 Kurds were also denied the rights to a nationality and passport.\footnote{BBC, “Syria’s Assad Grants Nationality to Hasaka Kurds,” \textit{BBC News}, April 7, 2011, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12995174.} Through the map provided above, it is easier to locate the cities that have autonomous administration since 2011. As it can be deducted from the border that divides Turkey from Syria, Kobane is located on the border line. It is significant to highlight the city as most families interviewed are from this area. It should also be stated that Kobane is a small city where different family profiles cannot be deducted. Accordingly, one could claim that the families migrating from the villages in Kobane demonstrate a homogenous state. Even if families have high economic capital, this does not affect their social life within the city. Therefore, one could conclude that families from this area tend to experience similar lives in relation to their social upbringing.

In relation to the clarifications above, Diyarbakir is a significant city of Kurdistan. This reason set aside, the city is also a good place to investigate due to its central place and its developmental aspects with regards to the Kurdish movement.
3. Aim and Research Questions

Drawing upon the background information provided above, various questions can be raised for understanding the position of education within the context of migration. The aim of this study is to understand the role of education among the Kurdish refugee immigrants from Syria in Diyarbakir.

1. **What kind of resources do the immigrants possess?** Do the families still hold onto their previous resources? If not, are they lost or have they been converted?

2. **How is the language of instruction valued in educational strategies?** Does the Kurdish language have a place within the process of entering education in Diyarbakir as an immigrant? If not, what are the strategies used by immigrants for the educational progress of school-aged children?

3. **How can the educational strategies and the role of language of instruction be understood in relation to the different kinds of resources or lack of resources the immigrants have?**
4. Theoretical Framework

As this study mainly adheres to the sociological point of views to explore the situation of immigrants in relation to education, some of the sociological perspectives need to be clarified for the sake of creating the circle in which the study is planned to lay. For this matter, certain concepts should be explained. These concepts float heavily around discussions on identity, assimilation and integration, and stigmatization by linking them under their own strings. Thus, in order to make these discussions more fruitful from a sociological point of view, it seems significant to elaborate on theoretical concepts for a broader understanding on the following topics. For this, firstly the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus and capital need to be explained. Later the notion of communitarian habitus by sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad is introduced. Following this, the relationship between violence and stigma is discussed, which is based on the theory of symbolic violence by Bourdieu and theory of stigma used by the sociologist Erving Goffman. Lastly, the double absence theory by Sayad is introduced.

4.1. Concepts of Habitus and Capital as Complementary Elements

Habitus is a concept that derives from individuals who have different types of capital. The reason why habitus is focused on individuals is because it mirrors a person’s identity, actions and choices, dispositions in life that makes one exist within a society. It is “a product of a history, the instruments of construction of the social that it invests in practical knowledge of the world and in action are socially constructed, in other words structured by the world that they structure”. Furthermore, habitus is a notion that derives from the individual, yet does not take the effect of socialization away from it. It emphasizes that the personal is social, collective. An individual’s dispositions do not arise from nothingness, but from the manners one is brought up with and its historical construction, thus its collective becoming. “The world encompasses me, but I understand it”, could be a decent way of summing this train of thought up. Although an individual is the product of his history and is born to a social reality that already exists outside the individual, when he enters a field shaped by those social realities, it still enters with its habitus, or in other words, its practices, choices, and dispositions. The subjective “I” is therefore not taken away from it. In other words, an individual’s behaviour is not affected by the historical events, but more by the habitus, which is a product of a person’s history. Throughout this study, it is significant to grasp the concept of habitus as to conceptualize the collective behaviours, manners, values, economic conditions of the social group examined.

On the same note, capital is defined by Bourdieu in three fundamental forms shaping the habitus itself. These are, (1) economic capital, the assets that are directly converted into money and the knowledge about the usage of economic resources, which in the case of immigrants from Syria would be any land ownership, any sort of monetary income and possession of any financially valuable goods such as cars, houses and animals; (2) cultural capital, which does not work as the economic capital as it cannot be mechanically or quickly acquired, but can be converted into economic capital; (3) social capital, which could be defined as the social ties and networks created that may be converted into, for instance, economic capital under certain conditions. As cultural and social capital are more complex forms, a broader clarification on these terms are needed.

Cultural capital is the embodiment of the cultural dominant which can be considered as the taste, manners, skill and credentials an individual might have. In its embodied form, cultural capital refers to the knowledge that resides within us (as a way of self-improvement). In its objectified form, the culture corresponds to material objects mostly as an indicator of one’s social class. Lastly, in its institutionalized form, academic qualifications play a crucial role as one’s cultural representative. As can be derived from this definition, education is an inevitable factor which Bourdieu considers as a sub-species of cultural capital.31 Linking the theoretical with the study itself, the cultural capital of the families interviewed and observed have been analysed through their educational level, occupation, dispositions etc. The fact that cultural capital can be converted into economic capital can also be seen through the families interviewed. Besides its institutionalized form, cultural capital is also used for emphasising the linguistic capital school-aged children hold, which is discussed with greater detail in chapter 7.

Social capital is used by Bourdieu mainly as the social relations which are acquired and accumulated and provide the individual with various kinds of credentials and recognition. Furthermore, it facilitates the access to forms of symbolic, cultural and economic capital. In other words, it is the building of social relations that consciously or unconsciously act as usable elements in establishing further relations in the short or long term.32 As social networks are not naturally given, they need to be constructed over time. Social capital plays a crucial role for immigrant families in general since it provides them opportunities in relation to their position within their location migrated to. The crucial role social capital plays is that it facilitates the social mobility of the immigrant. Possessing valuable (recognized) social capital in the country of immigration translates to various opportunities in the labour market while also reducing the discriminative approaches towards the new-comers.33

All in all, it would be irrelevant to distinguish between the dispositions one might have and the practices that are a product of the habitus. This is because one’s dispositions are intertwined with one’s perception, which is an outcome of habitus.\textsuperscript{34} Henceforth, in relation to the aim of this study, the different types of capital possessed by families construct the approach and strategies used towards the education the children of the families receive. Therefore, the definitive section above aids in the facilitation of further discussions from a sociological point of view.

4.1.1. Similarities in Habitus: Shared Experience and Conditions
Although habitus as a concept derives from individuals, the historical structure of the society that the habitus has been shaped by introduces certain common structures to the daily lives of people within the same social group. To some extent, each of us carries the collective history of the group one belongs to.\textsuperscript{35} In this sense, it would be accurate to claim that the social group examined for this study share some common values as well. The description of habitus as the embodiment of history could also be accurate in terms of the usage of the concept under this section. In this sense, various writers interpret habitus through its impact on the common-sense understanding of the world which evolves from possessing similar positions in the historical and social space.\textsuperscript{36} This characteristic feature of the social group could be best explained with their \textit{communitarian habitus}, or as Abdelmalek Sayad explained in his book \textit{The Suffering of the Immigrant} (1999, edition in English 2004) about the Algerian immigrants; “Strongly marked by the communitarian habitus, they were men who (ideally) existed only as members of the group.”\textsuperscript{37} It could be deduced from this general feature of the culture that the social group’s trajectory regarding social capital is mainly consisting of family ties and people that they share the same environment with. Thus, social capital does not go beyond the social class in which they exist based on their economic and cultural capital. If this major characteristic is overlooked, it is not possible to understand the values and, norms of the immigrants examined, nor how these are exercised by the social group.

4.2. A Change in Status and Strategic Approach
Bourdieu’s notion of habitus is defined as dispositions unconsciously orienting human action embedded in various forms. The dispositions create practices and perceptions that are structured within the social conditions they were obtained.\textsuperscript{38} Assuming these social conditions, hence structure, radically change, how would this change reflect upon the dispositions of humans? With this question in mind, migration can be referred to as the objective circumstances radically changing. Immigrants move into different systems, structures, power

\textsuperscript{34} Bourdieu, \textit{Pascalian Meditations}. p.155.
\textsuperscript{35} Gillian Bottomley, \textit{From Another Place: Migration and the Politics of Culture} (Cambridge University Press, 1992). p.46.
\textsuperscript{36} Bottomley. p.130.
\textsuperscript{37} Sayad, \textit{The Suffering of the Immigrant}. p.68.
\textsuperscript{38} Bourdieu, \textit{Pascalian Meditations}.p.150.
relations that already exist outside their existence. The new setting becomes a challenge for the immigrants as they need to find a way to live and adapt within the structure existing outside their existing. This means accessing and adjusting to a labor, housing, education market that is outside their domain. Different types of capital possessed therefore play a crucial role insofar as they are recognized in the country of immigration.

Recognition is a strong aspect to capital when migration is examined. The value of the capital accumulated in the country of origin may not hold the same value within the county of immigration. Thus, it becomes significant for immigrants to strategically act in order to transfer the possessed capital into valuable sources in the host country. While migrating, the change in immigrants’ economic and social status can be interpreted in relation to, (1) the capital recognition within the country of immigration, and (2) immigrants’ experiences and what they are exposed to. These two interpretations have an influence on the education of children as they are determinant factors in the strategic thinking and decision-making process of families for their children’s education. However, before analyzing the data accumulated for this study, the two concepts regarding the change in status should be discussed. To discuss this properly, Bourdieu’s concept of capital is combined with the work of Sayad and Goffman to have a direct relation between inherited and acquired assets and their usage by immigrants in relation to notions engendering a change in the socio-economic status of families.

Immigrants are in a disadvantaged position since they do not own the characteristic skill levels of the host country (being the education, work experience, social network, cultural assets etc.). The devaluation of immigrants’ capital translates into the labor market, which is an inevitable concept to discuss for understanding the socio-economic status of the families. Syrians work for longer hours and lower wages than natives in Turkey. This creates a change wherein objective circumstances, being living and working conditions, have radically shifted.

The devaluation of immigrants’ capital may act as a strong influence for parents in relation to their children’s education in the host country. In the context of education, this can be seen in the school enrollment rates. According to a report published in 2017 about the Syrian immigrants in Turkey, there are over 40% of school-aged children who remain out of school. This argument can be drawn from Bourdieu’s statement that cultural, or more specifically educational, capital of families determines the social upbringing of their children.

Strategy is a useful concept to link the individual resources with available opportunities within the educational domain. If these resources are devalued in any sense, the available opportunities may change as well. Thus, the strong relation between capital devaluation and strategy building cannot be

39 Bottomley, From Another Place: Migration and the Politics of Culture. p.39.
41 Kutlu, “From the Ante-Chamber to the Living Room: A Brief Assessment on NGO’s Doing Work for Syrian Refugees.” p.25.
overlooked. As the aim of this study requires, it is then significant to discuss how families perceive education and build strategies for children’s education as immigrants based on their acquired assets. The discussions within this theme also use immigrant children’s educational background as a determinant matter in chapter 7.

The second interpretation mentioned above, being immigrants’ experiences and what they are exposed to, can be clarified through the concepts of symbolic violence and stigma. Therefore, the next section could be interpreted as a framework in relation to the change in immigrants’ social status.

4.3. Symbolic Violence through Pedagogic Work and Stigmatization

Violence does not have to be in a physical form to be an exercise of domination and power, it might as well be rationalized force which dominates through its recognized power because “no power can be satisfied with existing just as power, that is, as brute force, entirely devoid of justification.” As this force is not a visible act, it is considered symbolic violence and according to Bourdieu, education and educating is one of the main paths where this form of power is being exercised. Oversimplifying the exercise of power and its relation to symbolic violence would necessitate claiming that individuals internalize the power structures of a society. These power structures are considered as the product of history, thus the order of things as Bourdieu likes to call it. As they are the order of things, these structures tend to be normalized, thereby being accepted.

Authority plays a part in all pedagogy which makes the concept of symbolic violence in education a key discussion matter as there is an imposition of the cultural arbitrary. The curriculum used in education of a country mirrors the values, beliefs, social norms, and more generally the dominant culture. Therefore, it could also be claimed that the education system used by a country constructs dominant culture as well. This constant interaction, where the dominant culture affects the education system and vice versa, facilitates a deliberate exercise of power (authority) and as it is through education, this power is justified. In other words, as a pedagogic action is exercised with pedagogic authority and the pedagogic work is exercised through the dominant pedagogic action by imposing the recognition of the legitimacy of the dominant culture on the dominated groups, it tends to also exercise symbolic force.

From this argument onwards, for the students that are not equipped with the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the dominant culture, the pedagogic work becomes a question in relation to assimilation and integration.

For the Kurdish immigrants in the city of Diyarbakir, families’ perception of the educational system of Turkey varies according to the capital they own or lack. Their capital also affect the strategies the families use with regards to their

45 Bourdieu and Passeron. p.41.
children’s education. Having a stand which considers education (or more specifically the education system in Turkey) as an open door for assimilation or considering the education system of the country as a key part for integration shows the juxtaposition of two different perspectives. Whether education is perceived as a rationalized force wherein your unconscious acceptance to the arbitrariness is given, or as a natural process where integration to the society in general or a specific culture is aimed, it still does not take the imposition of presupposition from it; because even the process of naturalization is applied to thought itself, which can be considered as a violence symbolically exercised.46

4.3.1. Stigma
To facilitate the discussion of this sort further in this study, it seems significant to introduce the notion of stigma by Erving Goffman in the book *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (1963). Through the theory of Goffman and its relation to the interviews conducted for this study, it can be argued that relatively powerful thoughts and acts impose stereotypes and prejudices. In other words, it could be argued that a discriminative act derives from stereotypes quintessentially giving rise to prejudiced opinion. Quite naturally, the individual or social group possessing a stigma have certain reactions that either may prevent them from involvement in society and dominant culture due to a resistance in the form of negative conduct, or their reaction might be to acknowledge the stigma. In the former case, an individual or social group would inevitably be alienated; however, in both cases a social group would have the tendency to stick together.47 In the case of the immigrants in Diyarbakir, the experience and the reaction to the social identity attached, being stigma, are both heavily dependent on different types of capital families own.

The concept of stigma can be further discussed and developed through its relation to immigrants by using Sayad’s work. Sayad defines stigma with Bourdieu’s discussions on embodiment. Being part of a social group, which in this case would be a social group based upon the shared aspects of their habitus, is inscribed on the body, gestures, and postures. According to Sayad, everything we consider as culture can become a stigma because the body is that which embodies a culture. Accordingly, the immigrant has a feeling of being under surveillance, whose actions and gestures are object to accusation. This feeling of not being welcomed creates crisis in their daily lives which affects their social status. Thus, to the extent of being immigrants, even ordinary problems become problems of identity within the nation.48

Considering stigma within the context of this study, stigmatization may not show itself in its purest form, as the immigrants examined share the same ethnic identity with most native people living in Diyarbakir. However, it may show itself in the space where immigrants are not valued for their immigrant identity. Assuming stigma could be avoided through naturalization, families can aim to become naturalized, not solely with the purpose of accessing certain domains, but also to avoid stigma. In this sense, immigrants may promote a

self-image close to the legitimate identity, being the dominant one. It could be
deducted from this statement that immigrants do not behave differently from
any other dominated group.49

The discriminative act encountered due to stigma can cause families to act
strategically in selecting the school environment for their children. This reveals
itself among the social groups examined mainly through a strategic act in
relation to language. Families tend to consider language as the main element for
their decision process. This is further discussed under the chapter ‘Analysis’.

4.4. Two Aspects of Naturalization

Divided between two countries, immigrants experience two societies and two
nations, which eventually can create a setting for naturalization. This setting
evolves within the frame of contradiction. Immigrants, trapped between two
societies, arrive to a point where they are bound to decide to overcome the
inevitable contradiction defining their identity.50 Drawing from Sayad’s work,
this paradox and autonomous reality can take form in two opposite exercises,
which are both defined as an element of naturalization.

In its first form, naturalization naturally takes the form of allegiance to the
dominant country. Accordingly, there is an undeniable structure to which one
must accommodate. As exemplified above, this adaptation and naturalization
can open various doors in terms of accessing various markets and socializing
within the country of immigration. For Syrians, this can take shape in a cultural,
linguistic and social form where the immigrants accept a gentle violence.
Through this, the immigrant becomes accustomed to the nationality that is
useful and in certain cases undeniable.51 Allegiance to the dominant country can
be perceived as a betrayal to one’s nation of origin which, could mean being
rejected from their own community. In this sense, the immigrant has betrayed
his position of immigrant through naturalization, despite still not being a full
member of the dominant country.52 Thus, he has been through a subordinate
inclusion.53 This form of naturalization does not have to be purposely chosen,
rather it can be a consequence of the oblivious approach of the immigrant as
well.

In its second form, naturalization takes the form of resistance to the
dominant country. This derives from considering naturalization as a threat to
their identity. Denying the naturalization process, the immigrant is in a
reluctant state for adaptation. Immigrants may be hostile to the idea of
naturalization because of their attachment to their nationality of origin.54 This
may create challenges in accessing various markets and socializing in the
country of immigration. For Syrians in Diyarbakir, this aspect of rejection is not
a problem since they live among people sharing the same ethnic identity.

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49 Sayad. p.256.
50 Sayad. pp.82-4.
51 Sayad. pp.229-34.
52 Sayad. p.236.
53 ‘Subordinate inclusion’ is a concept derived from Behtoui’s (2013) study and it describes a situation in
which stigmatized immigrant is included in the native system, yet placed in subordinate positions in all
spheres of life.
However, this does not answer the difficulties they might encounter in relation to accessing various markets.

Education plays a crucial role in integrating immigrants. The integration that the immigrants need is mostly a structural one where the immigrant can acquire a certain position within the host country which can translate to economic, social and cultural capital. The other integration dimensions are cultural integration, social integration and emotional integration (identification). Emotional integration may be of great use in understanding how education contributes to the adaptation process of immigrants as it helps the immigrant to identify with the host society by also facilitating the development of a sense of belonging.  

If the term of integration is replaced with assimilation, it immediately gives a negative connotation to the discussion. This is because “integration presupposes the integrity of the individual who is absorbed but not dissolved into the group, whereas assimilation is, [...], equivalent to the negation and disappearance of that integrity.”

As for the specific social group that is analyzed for this study, within the context of education and contrary to Sayad’s case, the first form of the naturalization process can be seen mostly with immigrants who are lower in the social hierarchy, meaning families with low educational and cultural capital. Without any disconnection from their ethnic identity, this group allows the dominant country to naturalize them. This leaves the second form of naturalization to immigrants who are higher in the social hierarchy. The two aspects of naturalization may answer several questions regarding families’ strategic acts towards education as well. However, this should be further discussed later in the study.

4.5. The Double Absence: no home in Syria nor in Turkey

According to Sayad, “immigration is a presence which, if it lasts too long and manifests itself elsewhere and in every domain of public life, will eventually become illegitimate [...]; emigration is an absence which, if it lasts so long as to become complete, will eventually become illegitimate.” This way of thinking about the immigrant can be shifted into an understanding where the immigrant is absent and present at the same time. There is a paradox requiring attention to fully understand the condition of the immigrant. Being present mainly with the physical form, the immigrant fails to be complete, hence is absent. This temporal contradiction is solely based on the integration process of the immigrant, which is a considerably indefinite and long process. As the writer states, on the one hand, the immigrant is absent from the society of origin; on the other hand, the immigrant is an outsider despite naturalizing (integrating) as stigmas cannot be erased.

57 Sayad. p.128.
As far as the social condition of the immigrants in Diyarbakır, this concept shows itself in their question of returning to Syria. Although the migration has not exceeded a decade or in most cases five years, the immigrants experience a double absence. The immigrant may not become accustomed to the host country, however there are still conditions that may bind the immigrant to the host country insofar as it prevents the return.

5. Methodology

Although there is a quantitative perspective used to some degree to demonstrate general number and figures on the immigrants, the main window through which this study aims to base an understanding derives from qualitative tools. Choosing interviews and observations as the qualitative tools for this study facilitated the possibility of a comprehension from the insiders’ perspective and gave the study a depth, that helps to shape the understanding of the relationship between migration and education. Moreover, by conducting qualitative methods with the research questions aimed, there is a better chance in describing immigration with narratives instead of numbers.

Understanding the language in the field is one of the most important factors for the researcher to be able to make a communication when needed and feel comfortable within the social context. The use of native language facilitates the conversation during an interview, especially when it comes to interviewees feeling natural and comfortable in the relatively difficult and vulnerable process they have been through. Thus, thinking pragmatically, it seemed more reasonable to limit the study to people with Kurdish descent located in Northern Syria. With the realization that a qualitative method consisting of interviews suits the initial aim better, there was a certain need to also narrow the space and focus on a city rather than the whole country of Turkey. Therefore, Diyarbakır in the south-east part of the country heavily populated with Kurdish people, also considered as the largest and most developed city of Kurdistan, became the first option for this research.

The investigation process after arriving to the city of Diyarbakır expanded quickly since the necessary arrangements for the meetings were previously established. Two main methods were followed with the aim of reaching the family profiles intended. One of these methods was through Egitim-Sen, which led to meetings with teachers, hence to families of their students from Syria. The other method was through social networking and the possibilities it had to provide. Through the help of a friend from Syria who has been working in Diyarbakır for several years, it became easier to target the families and grasp their daily lives. Thus, this study does not solely base its information on the interviews, but also on the interaction and observations made on a daily basis for the time period active in the city.

After having spent twenty-five days of (re)arranging interviews, ten in total were conducted, all of which took place with members of the families. The

conducted interviews are available in voice recording formats apart from one which was due to the family’s request. It should be stated here that several families denied being interviewed due to their fear of being exported from Turkey. This also reflected on the 4th family interviewed, where the parents agreed on the condition solely based on the aim of this study and the trust from sharing the same ethnic background. The interviews were predominantly carried out in Kurdish and occasionally in Turkish due to some children’s choice.

Each interview approximately lasted between an hour and two hours depending on the narratives used. As the interviews are in Kurdish, I have translated the sections necessary. Apart from one carried out in a school, all the other nine interviews were conducted in the immigrants’ houses with occasional moving to show their working places. This facilitated observations on the condition of their daily life routines. Therefore, it seemed important, ethically speaking, to make the interviewees feel safe about what they discussed and where they positioned themselves within the dynamic conversation. The questions were prepared and asked to the parents as their different types of capital have a better reflection on their children’s education compared to the immigrant children’s inherited and acquired assets. By doing so, it was also possible to focus on the identification of the husband and wives, and their life in Syria. However, this does not mean that the questions were solely answered by the father and mother. There were certain occasions where the child intervened and became part of the conversation. This added another perspective to the study as it set forward an understanding from the child(ren)’s perspective, without the purpose of bringing a pedagogic approach.

The interviews followed a semi-structured approach which allowed for a general structure, yet opened a free discussion on whichever topic the participants preferred to develop. The interview questions were initially divided into four categories being identification, process of migration, life as an immigrant and education, and lastly the future. This division was purposely chosen for the natural flow of the interview (conversation). Within the identification part, it was important to understand how life before war and migration was, as well as what the statuses of the families were regarding their economic, cultural and social capital. The second stage of the interview was mainly important to grasp how and for how long the migration process evolved and why Diyarbakir was chosen. The first two stages, which mainly led to an easier conversation, differs from the third. In the third section, a heavy focus was put into understanding how education is perceived from an immigrant’s perspective and how it may change based on the background and disposition of each family in general. Moreover, the final stage was mainly included as to observe what narratives the parents use to explain their future and where the potential educational career or process of their children stand in this regard. This structure for the interviews enabled a conversation on topics such as their journey, living conditions, financial worries, children’s access to education, and limitations due to lack of citizenship. Realizing that all these stages consist of

62 For the complete interview guide, see Appendix.
questions which supposedly may lead to a conversation found too personal for some, it was significant for me as a researcher to draw a picture of the cultural and social status of the place and people whilst also managing to protect the necessary lines of ethical boundaries.

Drawing from what Durkheim has stated on the rules of sociological method, as a methodological principal, the sociologist is bound to position himself in a mental state where the social universe examined is analysed through objective eyes. Failing to do so opens the door for dogmatic thinking, which enables the researcher to evaluate the social world examined based on preconceptions. Consequently, the decision to be methodologically ignorant to the immediate knowledge can be considered as a precautious act.63 However, one would deceive oneself by claiming allegiance to the objective truth and eliminating the subjective stances. Taking a single path towards the study would be to submit to the problematic side either path might possess. Hence, as long as a conscious construction is established towards this dualism, where a distance is put when needed and a subjective approach is used when necessary, this study hopefully manages the balance aimed for.

Balancing the subjective and objective stances on the social study pursued brings challenges; however, the methodological approach I followed for this study seems to highlight the awareness of this dilemma.64 Besides the path taken for the methodological part of the study, I would like to add that being familiar with a particular social group, culture and social relations brings a twofold perspective to the table. On the one hand, there is an ease that demands one adheres to its rules with the relatively natural context. Besides speaking the native language and knowing the geographical location, familiarity with the cultural values and social interactions enabled me to have an advantaged position for the study.

Keeping this in mind, this familiarity and ease sets methodological challenges by which my perspective as a researcher has been blurred or even blinded. In other words, some of the elements which could have been observed and acknowledged by someone foreign may not have been found useful as data for me. Keeping an objective eye while having a subjective position in the group as far as sharing cultural and social ties, makes the situation rather difficult. Therefore, as far as possible, I tried to position myself within the familiarity context while interviews were conducted with the purpose of naturalizing the process. Nevertheless, as far as the observation and analysing process, there has been a recognition in being diligent since an objective stand is aimed.

6.Brief Introduction of the Families Interviewed

As the interviews are used as the base structure and as reference for the following analysis in this study, the families need to be pictured in a clearer form. Keeping in mind the above mentioned semi-structured approach and the

four categories within the interview guide, the families are introduced based on a summary of their interviews. Each family is introduced separately, without being categorized. By doing so, 10 family profiles are presented. It should also be clarified that Kurdish is the first language, meaning the native language, of the immigrants interviewed. Thus, every other language acquired throughout their lives is considered foreign. In the descriptions provided below, the linguistic capital of individuals are described through the languages they can speak besides Kurdish.

6.1. Family 1

The first family interviewed has seven children and migrated from the region Kobane. They migrated from their hometown in 2014. The family first stayed in the camps for immigrants in Birecik for a short while after deciding to move to Diyarbakir for labour. The eldest son left the house during the conflict in Kobane and the family has not heard from him ever since. The eldest daughter is married and living in another city in Turkey, while the second daughter is studying art in Syria by also taking care of her grandparents. Thus, the household consists of the couple and their four children (two daughters and two sons) who are still school-aged children. The daughter, who is 17 years old, and her elder brother both work to provide for the family and do not receive any sort of education. The daughter works in textile and the son works in bazaars or any job he can find. However, the youngest two children currently study at the Temporary Education Centre (TECs) in Diyarbakir.

Both parents left school before finishing primary education, thus both are illiterate. When in Kobane, the father worked in drilling both nationwide and abroad; however, the mother did not work. Drilling work takes months to finish, which means that the father was not home for long periods. Their economic status was only based upon the father’s work, which means there was no stable income. As they owned their house and general life expenses were not excessive in Kobane, the family described their life as easily lived. The father also owned a car.

Based on the education received and the public authorities being in Arabic, the father speaks some Arabic. The mother, on the other hand, does not know Arabic, yet knows Turkish because her father was living in Turkey (Kurdish-inhabited area). The four children living in Diyarbakir know Turkish because they were exposed to Turkish by their mother even when they were in Syria. The youngest two children going to school are still taking Turkish courses to later transfer to Turkish public schools.

On a daily basis, in Diyarbakir, both parents stay at home while their two children go for work. As the TEC starts education after 3 p.m., the youngest daughter and son spend time at home or spend time in their neighbourhood with other immigrant children. The parents socialize with other immigrant families as they live in a small neighbourhood where many immigrants have located. The neighbourhood is considerably cheap in terms of renting houses and daily expenses. Based on the low income provided by their two children, the family pays the rent for a two-bedroom house, which can be considered extremely old. The father also owns an old car which is mainly used for occasional drilling work. Their house in Kobane has been destroyed by Isis, thus they do not own anything in Syria anymore.
6.2. Family 2

The second family migrated from Kobane in 2013. The reason behind their migration was the lack of job opportunities due to the war in Syria. As the conflict in Kobane began after their arrival to Turkey, they have not been back ever since. The family migrated to various cities before their arrival to Diyarbakir with the aim of finding work. During this time, they always stayed in tents. They have been living in Diyarbakir for more than three years.

The family has four school-aged children. All children go to the Temporary Education Centre in Diyarbakir. Hence, they currently have half Arabic and Turkish courses with other immigrant children from Syria.

While the father has not received any education at all, the mother has finished secondary education (9th grade), which means she knows Arabic. The father worked as a mini-bus driver while the mother did not work in Syria. However, they are both working to be able to pay the rent for the house and daily expenses. The father works as a carrier to move houses and the mother does handcraft (sewing dresses). They also receive financial support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) each month.

In Syria, the economic status of the family was based upon the father’s regular job, hence they had a stable income. The family also owned the house they lived in, which is currently empty and damaged. The mother describes their economic profile as easy and free of challenge. The family’s daily life in Diyarbakir is economically very challenging as both parents work and state that they can only afford to pay for the rent and bills.

6.3. Family 3

The third family migrated from Kobane with everyone else in the city and migrated because of the conflict in Kobane. They first stayed in another city in a two-bedroom apartment for three months with three other families (approximately 27 people in a house). After the Kurdish forces took Kobane back from Isis, the family returned to their village for more than two years. However, as the conflict started to intensify, the family was forced to migrate back to Turkey and have been living in Diyarbakir for four months. The parents have five children, and three of them are school-aged children, two of whom go to the TEC and one who goes to school with the Kurdish curriculum in Northern Syria.

Both parents are illiterate because they have not been to school in Syria. Hence, neither of them knows Arabic. The father repaired electronic appliances; however, the mother did not work while in Syria. In Diyarbakir, the father works as a carrier to move houses and the mother does handcraft (sewing dresses). They currently have applied for IFRC financial support and it was still in process during the interview time.

In Syria, the economic status of the family was based upon the father’s work, which was a stable job. Therefore, although they had a considerably low income, they described their life as trouble free because the family owned their house and their daily expenses were not excessive. The family’s daily life in Diyarbakir is economically very challenging as they can only afford to pay for
the rent and bills. Their house in Kobane is currently destroyed, thus they do not own any property anymore.

6.4. Family 4

The fourth family migrated from Kobane during the conflict in 2014 with everybody else and arrived at Diyarbakir with the help of their relatives. The family has four children. The eldest one goes to the religious vocational high school (public school), and the others go to the Temporary Education Centre in Diyarbakir for primary and secondary education.

The father holds a university degree and worked as a teacher in Syria for fifteen years. The mother finished the upper secondary school in Syria, however did not work while in Syria. Hence, both parents are fluent in Arabic. The father also speaks some Turkish but the father is not interested in learning Turkish. Before the migration and conflict in Syria, the family had a stable income and owned a house. Hence, they described their life as trouble-free. The mother was involved in helping their children with their homework and both parents arranged weekend activities for their children. In Syria, their children went to English courses as well.

Once in Turkey, the father started to work in different cities in construction work to earn money for twenty days because he could not convince anyone that he is a teacher. After transferring his diploma in Turkey, he started to work in one of the TECs in Diyarbakir as an Arabic teacher to teach other immigrant children. His income is the minimum wage in Turkey, which is 1300 TL. The wage is paid with the money the Turkish government receives from UNICEF. The rent of the house they currently live in is 350 TL. Although the family has a stable income, they cannot send their children to various courses and weekend activities in Diyarbakir due to economic worries.

On a daily basis, the eldest son goes to the religious vocational high school while the father takes the other three children with him on his way to work. The mother stays at home and still helps the children with their homework as she speaks Turkish. The family does not socialize and try to avoid it as much as possible since they do not feel safe in the city.

6.5. Family 5

The fifth family migrated from Qamislo to Iraq to stay with relatives in 2013. However, as ten people were staying in the same room and the father could not find any work, the family went back to their hometown. As the war intensified, the family decided to pass the border of Turkey and stayed in Kızıltepe where they had relatives. Since they passed the borders without any permission, the family had to pay a large amount to the smugglers in order to get inside Turkish borders. The family stayed in Kızıltepe for three years and moved to Diyarbakir in 2016.

The father left school after finishing secondary education; however, the mother finished upper secondary school in Syria. Hence, both parents speak Arabic. The mother did not work, yet the father was a self-taught doctor in the village they came from since he had this occupation for generations in his family. Thus, he was well-known and had a status in the village. The family owned the house they lived in and a car which the father used for going to
patients within and outside the village. After migrating, the father did not possess the same status, which forced him to start to work as a barber. He worked as a barber in Kiziltepe for three years. After moving to Diyarbakir, he rented an extremely small local market with two rooms. One of the rooms is used as a minimarket and the other room is used as a barber shop. Both parents work in these shops located behind the house they live in on an everyday basis. The parents stated that they get concerned if they cannot work for a day since they do not have the luxury to lose one day of work. As neither of the parents know Turkish, they cannot get involved with helping their children with their homework despite desiring so. Thus, the father visits the school on an everyday basis to talk to the teacher about his children. As the teacher speaks Kurdish, this method satisfies the parents in learning their children's educational progress.

The parents have three school-aged children. Their first children are twin brothers and are currently in the 5th grade in a public school near their house. The third child is going to the same school and is in the 1st grade. As the children did not receive any education in Syria, they do not speak Arabic, hence the decision to send the children to public school.

In their everyday life in Diyarbakir, children go to school and the parents work in their shop. When the father takes the children from school, the mother is taking care of the house while the father sits in the local store until late at night. The family pays for the rent of their house and store. Thus, they live according to the daily income they earn from the store. The parents do not receive any money from IFRC as the father has another wife (whom is his first wife and whom he has no children with), and this is against the organization's provisions. The first wife of his lives above the family on the second floor. She is illiterate and does not get involved in the work process of the parents or the education of the children. Aside from their economic worries, the family feel comfortable and socialize with other immigrant or local families in the neighbourhood.

6.6. Family 6

The sixth family interviewed migrated to Diyarbakir before 2011 due to a job offer. They left Sere Kaniye and immediately started to work after their arrival to Diyarbakir. Hence, this family is the only one that could be considered as labour immigrants rather than refugee immigrants. Both parents are university degree holders. The father finished an archaeology degree; however, he has been working as a writer, director and producer. The mother has a university degree and works in her own profession, which is music. Thanks to their education, both parents speak Arabic and some English and Turkish as well. They have two children, one who is school-aged. Their eldest daughter (8 years old) started school in a private Kurdish primary school in Diyarbakir and studied there until it was shut down by the Turkish government due to its Kurdish-based curriculum. Ever since the school was shut down (in 2016), the family has not sent their child to the three options available for them, which are the TECs, public or private schools with the curriculum decided by Turkey's Ministry of Education.

In Diyarbakir, both parents continue with their occupations. Their economic status is based upon their income, which is sufficient to live in a
calmer neighbourhood where the house is more equipped compared to the houses of other families visited. The father still works in the cinema sector, while the mother works in a culture and art centre. They are surrounded by their colleagues and friends on an everyday basis. Both parents are aware of their children’s upbringing and invest time for their children’s cultural and social life.

6.7. Family 7

The seventh family interviewed migrated from Qamislo in 2014. The father has not received any education throughout his lifetime; however, the mother finished secondary education and was preparing for the exams to finish high school and become a sports teacher. The mother speaks Turkish thanks to her family and Arabic because of her education. In Syria, the father did agricultural field work, yet as the conflict began and the labour market changed, the father migrated to Turkey for labour and started to send money to the family in Syria. After the conflict intensified, the family escaped from the bombings to pass the border and meet the father. The family went to surrounding cities, and they worked in farms until Diyarbakir where they settled and have been living for the past two years. The parents currently have four children, two of whom are school-aged. Both go to public schools for their primary education as there are no TECs for their current grade.

The economic status of the family was low in Syria, however the mother described their life as trouble-free as they owned the house they lived in. As immigrants, the father works in any daily work he can find, yet the mother does not work despite wanting to continue her education. In Diyarbakir, the family has difficulty in paying their rent and affording their daily expenses. Their main income is from the IFRC. Due to the family’s low educational experience, the parents are not aware of their children’s schooling. However, the mother does not want the children’s education to be incomplete as hers. The family has some relatives in Diyarbakir, yet they do not visit each other as they do not feel welcomed. They only socialize within the neighbourhood area with other immigrant families.

6.8. Family 8

The eighth family migrated from Kobane in 2014 escaping from war and is the oldest couple interviewed. The couple has ten children; however, six of them are married and live in different countries. The eldest two, a son and daughter, are married and live in Kobane. Two other children live in Germany and one lives in Denmark. The family also has a married daughter who lives in Diyarbakir. In their household, the couple currently live with two of their youngest sons and daughters, three of whom are studying in Dicle University and the youngest who was born in 2001 and is currently taking Turkish courses to start his education at the same university.

The father finished 5th grade; however, the mother has not received any education at all. Thus, the mother only speaks Kurdish. The father, however, knows Arabic, Turkish and some Ottoman Turkish and Persian. He spends most of his days reading history books and tales.
In Syria, the family owned the house they were living in aside from land property and animals. Their economic status was dependent on their property and their children who worked when they were in Syria. After the conflict began in 2011, three of their sons migrated to Diyarbakir to work in construction and drilling because of limited job opportunities in Syria. Therefore, they could arrange the housing before the family arrived in Diyarbakir in 2014. After arrival, the elder son started to work in an organization called Support to Life, which is a non-governmental organization running humanitarian assistance projects. Currently, he also studies law in Dicle University. The two daughters started learning Turkish and took exams to transfer their transcript to adapt to Dicle University. Currently, one studies to become a doctor while the other studies agricultural engineering and works in a textile factory.

The family manages to pay the rent and daily expenses thanks to their son and daughter who both work and study. Three of them still find it difficult to study in Turkish, yet they are eager to finish their education. The youngest son finished high school in TECs in which he studied in both Arabic and Turkish. When the interview was executed, the 17 years old son was taking Turkish courses to start his education at Dicle University to study English Literature, which he has already been admitted to. Besides studying Turkish, he spends most of his time in the culture and art centre where he learns how to play piano, baglama and daf.

### 6.9. Family 9

The ninth family interviewed has migrated from Kobane in 2013. The family first migrated to Urfa and stayed there for two days in an apartment with 110 people. The family could not rent another house as houses were only rented out with annual payments and they did not know whether they would have to stay in Turkey for that long. Later, the father went to Diyarbakir to find a job and housing. After moving there, the family stayed with other immigrant relatives, living with 25 people in the same house for three months while the father went back to Raqqa, Syria. However, as Isis conquered the city, he moved to Qamislo and later migrated to Iraq, staying there for three years. As the mother and children were still in Diyarbakir and the father could not stay apart for longer, he moved back with his family.

Both parents are illiterate, thus they only speak Kurdish. In Syria, the father did drilling work nationwide and abroad; however, the mother did not work. The family was not wealthy, but they owned the house they lived in and had renovated it recently. The parents have six children.

In Diyarbakir, five of the children are receiving education and the youngest one is two years old. The children did not start their education right away. The family decided to wait for two years as they thought the school started late (3-7:30 p.m.), and they felt unsafe. Later, all the children continued with their schooling. The eldest daughter is twenty years old and finished high school in Diyarbakir graduating from the TEC. Currently, she is taking and paying for Turkish courses given by the university so as to start her education to become a nurse. The family does not mind paying for the Turkish course, despite being a high amount, because they trust in her. The second child is studying in high-school studying in both Arabic and Turkish. The younger daughter is going to TEC, yet has to transfer to a public school as there are no classes for 6th graders.
in TECs. The youngest two school-aged children are both going to public schools and do not know Arabic at all.

On a daily basis, the father does ironwork and the family receives IFRC support. They live at a low standard compared to their economic status in Syria. The eldest daughter is usually responsible for the education of her siblings as the parents are illiterate. The family socialize within their neighbourhood as there are other immigrant families and relatives there.

6.10 Family 10

The tenth family migrated from Kobane during the conflict in 2014. They first migrated to Urfa and stayed in tents for two years. During that time, they also received IFRC support. The children continued with their school in the camp for immigrants within a tent. After two years, the family decided to move to Diyarbakir to be around their relatives.

The father finished secondary education in Syria and did agricultural field work as a living. He can speak Arabic thanks to his education. The mother, however, is illiterate. She has not received any education and has not worked. In Syria, the family lived a low standard life, though they owned the house they lived in. The mother did all the housework while the father worked in the field.

The parents have six children, all who are still involved in education. The eldest is 18 years old and is taking Turkish courses to be able to start studying in Dicle University where she was admitted for the English teaching program. She also works in a textile factory during the weekends to support the family with their daily expenses. The younger second child is going to the religious vocational high school. The family thinks it is a plus as the school provides courses in Arabic as well. The other three children go to TEC, while the youngest child is going to a Turkish public school. The family did not send their youngest child to the TEC as there was no other choice due to the Turkish government’s integration policy in shutting down certain classes to accelerate the integration process.

In Diyarbakir, the father works in agricultural field work, thus does the same work he did in Syria. The family receives IFRC support and is economically dependent on the money they receive from the organization and the father’s income. They live at a lower standard compared to their economic status in Syria. The parents and children socialize with relatives and other immigrant families in their neighbourhood.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th></th>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Occupation before migration</th>
<th>Occupation after migration</th>
<th>Language Knowledge</th>
<th>No. of children</th>
<th>(No.) School-aged children not receiving education</th>
<th>IFRC Financial Support</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Drilling (nationwide/abroad)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Language</td>
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Nubin Ciziri: *Education in Conflict and Crisis*
7. Analysis

This last chapter of the study includes an analysis that is based on the families interviewed within the context of the theoretical framework introduced previously. Thus, the analysis is conceptualized as the empirical section of the study. Within this part, it is essential to relate the sociological theories previously introduced. In this case, sociological theories by Bourdieu, Sayad and Goffman shape the arguments discussed.

7.1. Socio-economic Profile Dependent on Capital Owning

The two elements that caught my attention during the interviews and the observations carried out in Diyarbakir with the help of the familiarity that I share with the culture and ethnicity are the hometown area (meaning Western Kurdistan) and the ethnic identity that the social group share in common, which are factors that construct and eventually shape the habitus. As this group needs to be introduced through their ethnic, cultural and social values, the theoretical framework structured is used to clarify these values. In this sense, Bourdieu's development of capital and Sayad's development of communitarian habitus would best suit as research tools. With the help of these research tools, the distinctive position of cultural capital can be realized among the similar aspects of the economic and social capital for the immigrant group interviewed. To be able to discuss these factors properly, the hometown area and the importance of ethnic identity for the social group should be clarified. As educational, and hence to a certain degree cultural, aspects change for each individual, it seems more reasonable to mention the shared aspects of the social group's economic and social capital to help construct how life in Northern Syria (West) was before the conflict. That is why it is significant to shape this section through the theory of communitarian habitus by Sayad, which was framed earlier in this study.

7.1.1. Shared Aspects of Economic Capital

The social group that has been interviewed for this study does not demonstrate a large scale of variation when it comes to their economic status. The extent of how they live their lives showed more similarities than differences. This does not only clarify the economical state of the Kurdish territory in Syria, but also the general profile of the families that chose Diyarbakir as their destination. Before starting with the shared aspects of economic capital, it is significant to add the observational part that took place in Diyarbakir and could not be found in the interviews.

For me to be able to construct the city of Diyarbakir in relation to the profile of the immigrants and their relation to their capital possession, a necessity of observing the city raised. Through the visits I paid to a public school and the Education and Science Workers’ Union talking to some teachers, it was possible to understand the general socioeconomic profile of the families living in Diyarbakir. With the help of these conversations and observations of the city, it can be stated that the neighborhoods are highly segregated in that it translates to the way the city is structured which, yet again, justifies the distinction element that Bourdieu mentions in terms of his social field theory. In other words, while observing the city of Diyarbakir, without any particular focus on
the immigrants, it could be seen how differences in different types of assets (especially from an economical perspective) distances the neighborhoods from each other. Furthermore, despite deliberately searching and asking for immigrants that possess a high amount of economic resources, wealthy immigrant families could not be found in the city. Instead, the observations and conversations with the Union, more specifically people who work with UNICEF in immigrant projects in Turkey, clarified that families possessing economic assets had migrated to larger cities in Turkey, European countries or Canada due to their broader labor market opportunities (in the case of Turkey) or humanitarian rights provided (in the case of Europe and Canada).

In Syria, the economic status of families was mostly dependent on their economic assets such as land property, house, car and animals, all of which cannot be moved while migrating. While the migration took place, families migrated to escape from war, which prevented them from selling their property and converting their assets to monetary resources. Since their houses and land are either damaged or destroyed, it would mean that there has been a loss of economic capital. Furthermore, parents’ occupations and income in Syria is another variable of their economic status. However, as their occupation, and hence income, has changed after migration, a decrease in economic capital can still be considered. In other words, families’ financial condition was dependent on their economic assets, which they do not possess anymore; families who still possess their assets have either migrated to Europe or larger cities in Turkey with better labor markets such as Istanbul, Izmir, Mersin etc. Accordingly, one would have to agree that this answers the reason why the ten families interviewed show many similarities regarding their economic capital.

Another economic factor that should be considered is the housing situation in the West Kurdistan. All families owned the house they were living in, which allows for the notion of paying rent to be perceived as strange and excessive. The economic status of families was not necessarily constructed based on their ownership of a house because everybody owned a house. Instead, families’ economic status was dependent on their occupation, and hence income, in Syria. However, the loss of property generates extra expenses in Diyarbakir, which is paying for rent within this context. This makes the occupation and income of the family important factors for their economic status as immigrants.

7.1.2. Shared Aspects of Social Capital

Deriving from the concept of communitarian habitus introduced above by Sayad, social networking is formed thorough existence and integration within the community. It is an art of living, a way of being, thinking and acting, a way of perceiving the world, or in short, a whole ethos. In other words, belonging and socializing through the community is the only way of being.\textsuperscript{65} In the case of the social group examined, this can be interpreted based on where they have migrated from. Since all families come from small cities and villages, their way of socializing is through family ties and neighborhoods. The cities families migrated from are small and rural areas, thus there is a sense of sticking together as a social group due to having the same cultural and national values.

\textsuperscript{65} Sayad, \textit{The Suffering of the Immigrant}. p.68.
The way of socializing in these villages and small cities is mainly through weddings, funerals or frequent gatherings. This way of being and acting socially creates a collectiveness where strong social ties are embedded. However, as Diyarbakir is a large city, that way of socializing has faded or is not as strong as it is in the West Kurdistan. To the immigrants in Diyarbakir, one could claim that their inherited and acquired social capital does not hold the same value it did in Syria, yet this does not mean that it cannot be converted and used in Turkey. Most families prefer to socialize with other immigrant families coming from the same area, sharing the same ethnic identity. 66

As far as the immigrants interviewed are concerned, the social capital both inherited and acquired is a major factor for their mobilization. Although they mostly did not know about any organization to translate their social network into credentials, their social capital was valued inasmuch as it facilitated mobility during their migration and allowed access into the labor market.67 68 In short, the social network immigrants have in Turkey preserve their social order, which is referred to as an orderly emigration. The social ties that already exist in the host country facilitate a supporting community, allowing the immigrants to keep order and keep alive the memory of home.69 Thus, despite not being converted to any economical resource, the network of social relations with which they were familiar has strengthened their sense of belonging.

Although, through a Bourdieusian perspective, social capital is mostly used with the aim of converting it for a considerably high position and economic assets, this study draws outside its lines. The Syrian immigrants mostly need to access the labor market in order to survive rather than receiving a higher position, thus they use their social networks. Their social networks act as capital for them to be able to survive in the country of immigration.

7.1.3. Cultural Capital as a Distinctive Element
As it can be understood from the discussions previously established, immigrants share certain aspects when it comes to their economic and social capital both in Northern Syria and in Diyarbakir. Owning property that does not reflect upon a wealthy status and losing it after migration creates similarities in the economic status of families. The same train of thought can be considered for the shared aspects of their social capital in Syria and its use for the families as immigrants. Thus, it would be accurate to claim that there is no direct relation of children’s education when the economic and social capital of the social group is considered. However, this cannot be claimed for their cultural capital. This statement should only be considered for the immigrants in Diyarbakir as these elements may not be valid for other immigrant groups.

Considering educational capital as an extension of cultural capital, one realizes certain differences where the husbands and wives in the families are concerned. This puts the cultural capital of immigrant parents in a crucial place in determining their children’s education. Children of immigrants and natives

69 Sayad, The Suffering of the Immigrant. p.36.
show different patterns when it comes to the school choice process and educational success because of immigrants’ disadvantageous capital possessions; yet, these different patterns show less differences if one considers parents’ education and social background. In other words, well-educated parents are likely to devote resources and time to facilitate a ‘better’ schooling period for their children. Thus, family backgrounds and parents’ cultural capital play a crucial role in terms of the educational success of their children. Accordingly, it would be accurate to claim that families’ higher education degree is considered to have a positive impact on the school choice process and educational success of their children.

One could apply discussions about the role of cultural capital as a determinant element in immigrant children’s education in Diyarbakir. While some of the parents have not received any education at all, some have finished a certain grade in school. This can be seen through their daily lives as far as its cultural aspect. It can also be exemplified through the upbringing of the children of parents that hold a university degree versus the parents that do not. Despite the limitations in relation to the cities or villages they lived in, the cultural opportunities the educated parents provided for their children in Syria, separated them from parents that did not have any educational background. Therefore, the change in approach towards cultural activities and value given to education in relation to the academic degree of parents reveals differences. This is discussed in greater detail in section 7.4.

7.2. A Sense of Belonging: Why Diyarbakir?

Ethnic identity that derives from the social group’s background can be interpreted through group identities which are expressed through collectivized behavior and movement. This subjective meaning of one’s ethnicity generates a feeling of belonging. In the case of Kurdish people, the fact that they are divided among four countries challenges, yet, at the same time, strengthens the feeling of belonging. For the immigrants studied, these elements can act as decisive factors for migrating to Turkey rather than another country.

Although the focus of this study is on the Kurdish immigrants that have migrated from Northern Syria, millions of people migrating to Turkey are not all from the same ethnic background. Thus, one of the main questions that arises regards why the social group examined chose Diyarbakir and not any other city in Turkey or another country. What is it about Diyarbakir that attracts the group compared to other places? As an answer to this question, there are four outcomes which stand out according to the social group examined.

In no particular order, the first one is how Diyarbakir is perceived by Kurdish people. As Diyarbakir is considered one of the big and modern cities because of the developments and steps taken regarding politics, art, education etc., it holds an essential place among Kurdish people.


When we heard about Diyarbakir there [in Syria], we would always wonder whether we would ever have a chance to see it.

All the families interviewed considered Diyarbakir as the capital city of Kurdistan, which gives rise to large expectations regarding the opportunities the city holds.

The second reason deduced from the interviews in relation to the reason Diyarbakir was chosen is what strengthens the first reason. As stated within the theoretical framework, practices generally harmonize with the other members of the same social group or class, and this could also apply to people sharing the same ethnic background. In other words, one should understand that the religious and the cultural values that people in Syria live by shape the structure of their life beyond their social class. They live and are identified as a collective group due to their shared religious values and ethnic identity, hence communitarian habitus. The interviewees stated a sense of belonging with regards to their ethnic identity that is based on shared language and customs. In this case, it can be stated that ethnicity may act as a reason for mobilization. The reason Diyarbakir was considered as one of the finest destination places has a direct relation to its ethnic community.

In the following quote, the father of the 6th family interviewed explains how the border between Turkey and Syria cannot divide the people.

We cannot talk about two parts when speaking for the north and the west, [...], we just cannot. Even if there are a hundred borders, the mind can’t accept it, because all are the same families, let alone tribe.

The issue of language can be one of the major problems in the case of migration. There can be constant struggles over the adjustment to the new society, one of which is the struggle of language and socializing. However, this dilemma seems to be less of a worry for the social group examined due to their deliberate choice of locating in Diyarbakir. The eldest daughter of the 9th family interviewed described this through the families’ similar ethnic background to the people in the city of Diyarbakir.

We Kurdish people all visit each other here. In Urfa for example, it felt very unfamiliar. I suffocated a lot there, but when I came to Diyarbakir, it was an instant relief.

[after asking how her parents feel, she continued]
They say that people here are Kurdish like us, so they find comfort here. They don’t get so homesick. For example, if we move somewhere else now, we will be considered as foreigners, but in Diyarbakir, with your family and surroundings, you don’t get so homesick. Everybody is Kurdish. All our neighbors are Kurdish. For example, you are Kurdish, I am Kurdish and we speak Kurdish now so I don’t feel so homesick. However, if you speak another language and I am Kurdish, then I wouldn’t be able to express myself and that would make me feel more homesick. One of the reasons we came here was because this is a Kurdish city.

The third reason is the labor opportunities that Diyarbakir provides and that other cities in Turkey do not; either through the social capital that the families hold or in relation to the first fact mentioned, being the developmental aspect of the city. Although the social group did not have any family members or any kind of social network in Diyarbakir before migrating there, it is rare that they do not know anyone living in Turkey. Thus, it became easier to find work in Diyarbakir through their social ties. Possessing and using one’s social capital can be seen as a strategic act performed for the creation of a new social identity (a social identity that holds the stigma of immigration), which is eventually shaped by one’s position as worker, more so for immigrants.77 The same argument can be valid for possessing and using one’s ethnic network for labor opportunities and creating the new social identity.78 The networks within the city of immigration act as a useful source in facilitating access to the labor market in a relatively new setting. The father of the 1st family interviewed explained how they located in Diyarbakir:

Let me tell you, my uncle’s son came to me from Birecik. He used to sell some electrical products back in Syria. He told me that there is a factory in Diyarbakir that he buys equipment from. He then called them, and we jumped into the car and drove to Diyarbakir.

The fourth and last reason deduced from interviews is the fact that the city of Diyarbakir is, geographically speaking, close to home. The geographical proximity seems to be used as a strategic tactic by the immigrants for a future possibility of having to or wanting to go back. The eldest daughter in the 9th family interviewed described this proximity as a reason for settling in Diyarbakir.

From here [Diyarbakir], it takes you 2-3 hours to get to Kobane. It is right across the border. But, for example, from Izmir, it would have been too far; it takes around 7-8 hours. We would always think ‘today or tomorrow is the day we go back, so we should be close [to home] not far away’. We thought they [people in Diyarbakir] are Kurdish just like us, we [people in Kobane] are the same, we like each other, we share the same language. [...] My father said he was going to register us in Canada, but we all said we did not want to go.

According to the trajectories of the families, although Diyarbakir may not have been deliberately chosen, the shared ethnic values, hence the familiarity of the city, was still an active element in deciding to ‘settle’ there. This sense of belonging made adaptation slightly redundant when it comes to the socialization of the group into the new area. Since the families within the social group examined possess the necessary linguistic capital to socialize within the city they have migrated to, they were not exposed to a completely different social surrounding. In other words, their ethnic identity as a shaping feature of their habitus demonstrated similarities that affected the social group’s actions and dispositions in relation to their destination.

7.3. Legitimate Expectations versus Present Reality

Before stressing the socio-economic condition of the Syrians in Diyarbakir by using the interviews, it is important to realize the provisions about the basic rights of Syrian immigrants living outside the camping areas. By doing so, it becomes easier to dwell on the practical side of the provisions in Turkey when it comes to Syrians in Turkey in general. Instead of laying out legislation on all areas, the legislation concerning this study are introduced. In this sense, there are four acts that need mentioning.

The first one is about the open-border policy. Turkey has had an open-door policy to Syrian immigrants who hold a passport since 2011, which means that every Syrian who has a passport has the right to be registered in Turkey. This, however, has not been implemented fully as borders have occasionally been closed. This brings questions to the registration process as well. There are groups who would not like to be registered in Turkey as it creates problems with exiting or re-entering the country. Nevertheless, at the same time, the immigrants do not hold the rights provided by the government unless they are registered. In the case of the registered immigrants interviewed, it has been stated that there is a difficulty in exiting Turkey as they are afraid of not being able to re-enter the country. The same is valid for the city they are registered in. To travel to another city within Turkey, they should inform the government about their travel and ask for permission.

The second legislation that requires attention is regarding accommodation for immigrants outside the camping areas. According to Amnesty International, the current legislation permits governors to provide facilities for Syrians, yet places no obligations on them. The situation on the ground, however, shows that 25% of immigrants living outside of camps find shelter in ruins (this number is from October 2014). This is mostly related to the high rents that the citizens charge to immigrants in connection with the housing market.

The third provision is regarding the right to work and terms of employment. In January 2016, Turkey allowed Syrian immigrants in the country to apply for work permits. The situation is, however, that the immigrants usually work for low wages. As discussed with the devaluation of capital possessions, this can be

80 Kutlu, “From the Ante-Chamber to the Living Room: A Brief Assessment on NGO’s Doing Work for Syrian Refugees.” p.6.
caused because of various reasons, being the lack of characteristic skills required by the host country or even stigma. Furthermore, it should be noted that the devaluation in wages is not only experienced by the immigrant who had to change occupation, but also by the immigrant who still performs the same occupation. The teacher interviewed explained this by stating his payment.

Our [immigrant teachers working in TECs] wage is 1300 TL here, which is the minimum wage. It is very low. I have been a teacher for fifteen years, maybe even more. The Turkish teacher who is currently working with us, for example, just got in school and earns 3800 TL. [...] Everything that we receive is from UNICEF. Our wage, for instance, is from UNICEF. The government has nothing to do with it. In fact, the government takes advantage of the situation. Our wage from UNICEF is supposed to be at least 3000 TL.

The teacher also elaborated on the difficulties encountered in the TECs by stating the problems regarding the lack in numbers of teachers.

People who have taken an education for it [being a teacher] would know how to teach children, let’s say, if they need something. [...] Now, what are the difficulties encountered here? Let’s say there is someone who has studied law. Well, they have made him a teacher here because it is required. Someone who is an engineer in our place [in Syria] has become a teacher here [in Turkey]. None of these are performing their own thing [discipline]. They come into the class and have no idea how to teach these children.

What the teacher tries to explain is that the immediate need of Arabic teachers in the TECs has led to a problem for the education immigrant children are receiving.

The fourth and most significant legislation for this study is the access to education. According to the legislation for immigrants in Turkey, every child has the right to access education. The legislation does not mention anything regarding mother tongue in general. In practicality, this is implemented through Temporary Education Centres where children receive half Arabic and half Turkish education. The situation, however, demonstrates low schooling rates where over 40% of Syrian school-aged children remain out of school.\(^{81}\) Accordingly, one can claim that language becomes a major problem for Kurdish immigrant children with no previous education in Syria, and therefore no Arabic. This makes language a determinant factor in choosing a school for their children. This area of study needs further attention; thus, it is discussed in section 8.3.

7.3.1 A State of Disappointment and Loss of Control
The sense of belonging raised certain expectations for the immigrant group before they immigrated. When these expectations were not met by the government nor the people from Turkey, this led to a state of disappointment. There are also some present realities that the immigrants face due to their

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change in status, specifically the change in their economic and social conditions. To a certain degree, as the families do not have control over their situation in the country of immigration, the disappointment could also be interpreted through losing control. For this section, the shared aspect of economic and social capital is discussed thoroughly and justified through interviews around the topics of disappointment and loss of control.

The change in the socio-economic status could be dependent on various factors. Converting capital, as mentioned earlier in this study, could be a strategic act in adapting to the country of immigration. For the family profiles examined, the economic resources of families have been destroyed, which prevents any sort of conversion for economic assets.\(^\text{82}\) However, the fact that families did not have a high economic capital before migration does not make the change in status invalid. This could be exemplified through families interviewed in various scenarios.

Before analysing the economic and stigma related disappointments on the basis of changes in the socio-economic status of the immigrants, an example regarding a change in social position should be described. As it can be seen through the profile of the 5th family, the father was a well-respected self-taught doctor in the small village he migrated from. Due to his position within the village, he held a status despite not having a proper academic education for his occupation. After immigrating, however, this position could not be validated in Turkey. Thus, it could be claimed that his lack of educational capital regarding his occupation drastically affected his social and economic status in the country of immigration. Given the fact that the father’s educational capital could have been converted into economic resources in Turkey, it could be claimed that he has lost his social status, and hence his economic stability. In other words, even though the families interviewed did not possess a high economical capital which corresponded to a wealthy life in Syria, at least there was a stability which brought order.

The first condition experienced regarding the state of disappointment is related to their economic state and how the change has affected their current life. As it can be deduced from the interviews, the interviewees described their life in Syria as economically trouble-free. As stated previously in this study, the economic capital of the families in Syria is through land ownership, house ownership, animals, cars etc. Since the living expenses are also described as low, it would only require one individual to work to be able to financially provide for the whole family. This was described by the 1\(^{\text{st}}\) family interviewed as below:

> In our place, everything was free. Only one [person] would work and provide for the whole family, send the children to school, give them money and still have money left. Things were cheap. There is also something else, there [in Syria], let’s say your child is not good in Arabic. You would find an Arabic teacher and give him 500, 300, 100 SYP a month. It was cheap, around 10 dollars a month.

What is defined as an easy life by them regarding their economic assets in their hometown naturally leads to a comparison to their lives as immigrants in

\(^{82}\) This argument may not be valid for other families from Syria whose economic capital was higher than the profile examined and who could convert their capital to other assets.
Diyarbakir. All the families interviewed have been living in rental houses, which is a strangely perceived concept by them. This is especially true for houses that do not feel like home. This was described by the mother figure of family 2 as below:

There [in Kobane] we didn’t know what rent was, what bills were at all. We owned our own house. Everybody had their own property. Renting was shameful for us. Do you think that our house there was a pit as this one? We had a big house with a big garden.

[...]

Here [in Diyarbakir], you always worry about the rent, the bill for electricity, water. They become a struggle for you. However, in Kobane there were no rents, no problems about the electricity or water. Our lives were very nice [...] There are always some things missing here, so we cannot spend purely for our pleasure. We can barely spend on our basic needs.

It should be clarified that the cities or villages the immigrants migrated from are considerably small and rural places compared to a city like Diyarbakir. Thus, the focus should be put on the difference the social group is experiencing on the housing situation instead of taking this to a general statement valid for every immigrant. The father of the 4th family interviewed described the house they live in Diyarbakir as follows:

Look at my house here that I have been living in for three years now. Three years. I have been living here ever since I came [to Diyarbakir]. Look at it yourself, ... the kitchen is 1-meter squared, the walls are dirty, this is nothing, it is worse there [pointing at the bathroom and kitchen area], but what can you do?

As a teacher in Syria with his own house, it seems like the family was able to afford to feed the household and cover the expenses to send their children to various sports, language or music courses during the weekend. However, in Diyarbakir, with the payment he receives by being a teacher in the Temporary Education Centre as an Arabic teacher, he can barely pay the rent of the house (which has a considerably low rent because of the neighborhood they are in) and provide for the family. Although this family receives a stable income through UNICEF for being a teacher, they cannot provide their children with extra courses as they used to. This does not only have to do with their economic situation, but also with how they are perceived as immigrants and how they struggle with that identity in their day-to-day lives.

Another dimension into the state of disappointment is related to social disconnection with regards to stigma. According to what the interviewees have described, immigrants experienced a welcoming environment when they first arrived. However, as their number increased and they were more involved in the labor market, they started to be stigmatized by Turkish citizens, contrary to what they were expecting from living in Diyarbakir.

When we came here, we thought we were coming to the Kurdish city Amed [Diyarbakir] and that we would live at ease. We came and we didn’t see anything.”
“When we first came [to Diyarbakir], it was very nice here. We used to go out, sit with neighbors, socialize. We were valued [being welcomed]. When our number increased, the value disappeared. [...] People always point at us as Syrians, they look down on us. You can conquer the world, but you are still a Syrian.

The expectations immigrants coming to Diyarbakir might have had due to the ethnic, linguistic, religious similarities disappeared and turned into alienation, fear and discomfort. This reflects how they live their lives as they find it difficult to maintain a positive environment for children’s development. Nevertheless, I would state, based on the observations made and the analysis of interviews, that except for some families, most of them realize there is an easiness to the life in Diyarbakir; be it the language or the naturalization of the people. However, instead of accepting it, the immigrant tends to exaggerate his condition because he finds himself struggling over his immigrant identity as an isolated individual.83

Why do we say that we want to go to Europe? It is for the children. Here [in Turkey], we are close to our country and then there is the language. We don’t encounter many difficulties regarding language here [in Diyarbakir]. [...] However, the education is a little bad here. In Syria, it was better. Back in our place [in Syria], we used to take care of the children, but here [in Turkey], it is not like that. Children don’t know about manners and teachers can’t teach them in schools.

The teacher interviewed refers to the disappointing feeling regarding the children’s education in Turkey. Despite Diyarbakir’s proximity to Syria and the easiness deriving from the shared ethnic identity with the city’s people, the family considers Europe as a better option for their children’s education.

The difficulty the immigrant children face due to the change in the educational system, especially in the beginning of the influx, challenged and continues to challenge them. This can be interpreted more through losing control rather than a disappointment as the families are not, to a certain degree, aware of the system in the country of immigration as they were in the country of origin. The argument could be exemplified from what the eldest daughter of the 9th family interviewed expressed.

There [in Syria], I knew what I wanted to study. I was familiar with the textbooks and I knew that I should study and finish them. But here [in Turkey], the first half year was exactly like Syria [meaning the implementation of the Arabic curriculum] and then in the middle of the year they started with the Turkish education [...] That’s why it was difficult for us. We didn’t know what to study.

Even though other families expressed similar concerns, the challenges and disappointments cannot disguise the ease of living in Diyarbakir. The ease of familiarity could be justified by a comparison with immigrants migrating overseas. These immigrants usually spend more money on their travel to pass borders illegally, take the risk to drown on a boat, and spend weeks travelling until they arrive to their destination. Furthermore, they experience different conditions regarding their social environment as they do not share similarities

in relation to their language, culture and many other dimensions. Sayad discusses this with the Algerian case by stating that there is no sense of belonging in Europe; you are neither an Algerian nor French. However, in Diyarbakir, the immigrants migrating from Northern Syria are Kurds and share similar aspects of their identity; thus, they are neither Syrian nor Turkish, but Kurds. Despite having challenges in relation to being immigrants and having to go through a different system and structure, being at ease in certain areas of their existence as immigrants cannot be overlooked. It can therefore be concluded that immigrants in Diyarbakir are not victims of exclusion and stigmatization based upon their origins, but on their state of being immigrants.

7.4. Educational Strategies

Thus far, the refugee immigrants in Diyarbakir have been defined in terms of their socio-economic profile both in Syria and Turkey, their dispositions regarding their immigrant status, their state of disappointment due to previous expectations and so on. Recognizing all these elements and their effects upon immigrants’ daily lives facilitates the understanding on families’ strategic acts towards education. The discussions that take place henceforth demonstrate how these elements may have affected the education of the children of these immigrants. This section does not aim to use or define the economic and social capital of the families, rather it aims to focus on parents’ inherited and acquired cultural capital by mostly examining the educational and linguistic capital.

Given that linguistic capital is one of the crucial elements constituting the relationship between social origin and scholastic achievement, immigrant families’ relation to language is self-explanatory. In the sense of the immigrants from North Syria in Diyarbakir, one should realize that Kurdish is their first language, being the mother tongue. Thus, every other language acquired throughout their lives is considered foreign. In Northern Syria, school is the place where Arabic is learned. This clarifies the fact that it is the ones going to school who can speak Arabic, while the ones that have not been to school usually only know Kurdish. The families interviewed show a similar profile, where the parents and their children only speak Arabic if they have been to school in Syria. When migration comes into the picture, parents go through a different experience compared to their children as they have already completed their education period. This puts the focus on the immigrant children. In their case, there are children who have left their education incomplete in Syria, which means that they have been exposed to and can speak Arabic; yet, there are also children who had not started their schooling in Syria and completely started their compulsory schooling in Turkey as immigrants.

Before getting into the strategies used, the options immigrants have in Turkey should be reminded. As the first and most preferable option, there are Temporary Education Centres where the children are taught in both Arabic and Turkish. This is aimed at easing the adaptation process for Syrian immigrants in general by teaching them in their native tongue and in the host country’s

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language. The TECs are not separate school buildings in Diyarbakir. Children studying in these schools are in school between 3-7.30 p.m. as the school is occupied with its students of Turkish citizenship earlier in the day. As it can be predicted from the families introduced, language becomes a problem for children who do not possess any information regarding the Arabic language. This is because they do not speak Arabic nor Turkish, which makes these schools a difficult choice. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education in Turkey is gradually eliminating certain classes to accelerate the integration process for the immigrant school-aged children. Accordingly, as from 2017, there are no first and second grades in TECs in primary school, no fifth and sixth grades in secondary education and no ninth and tenth grades in upper secondary education. Given the fact that TECs can only teach school-aged children in certain classes, students must be transferred to a public school if they are in the aforementioned classes. This means that an immigrant child in the fourth grade in the TEC must continue their education at a Turkish public school in the fifth grade. As a result, the school-aged children are first exposed to a half Arabic and half Turkish schooling and then changed to a completely Turkish-based curriculum. The gradual elimination process of certain grades and the change in curriculum could be interpreted in terms of symbolic violence. This is further discussed in following sections. The second option is the regular public schools in Diyarbakir where the education is in Turkish mostly with citizens rather than immigrant children.

Talking about the Temporary Education Centre, where the teacher from the 4th family interviewed works, he states the difficulty the children go through because of the languages they are exposed to.

These children go to school here and they are exposed to Kurdish, Turkish, Arabic and English. It all becomes a mess in their head. It is very difficult.

As the situation requires, families build strategies for, somehow, making the process of integrating into education easier for their children. The strategies may differ, however, based on the intention of the parents and their educational and cultural capital or the lack of their children’s linguistic capital. Consequently, there are three approaches that have been observed. This is where different types of assets become crucial for parents’ decisions. The approaches are not categorized through their different types of assets, as families do not show extensive variations. Instead, the categorizations are divided by naming the families’ strategic approaches. Although the first two strategic approaches are overlapping through the data collected for this study, this overlap should only be considered for the social group examined. In other words, different variations (data and materials) could cause different categorizations. The approaches deduced from the conducted interviews are the pragmatic approach, the oblivious approach and the resistant approach.

7.4.1. The Pragmatic
The pragmatic individual, or in this case parents, is acting in accordance with the system, yet with a strategy in mind, which does not necessarily have to be a conscious act. This is where linguistic capital and the concept of stigma stand out in comparison to the two other options. As to exemplify how the pragmatic parents are thinking during the decision-making process for their children’s school choice, several families’ interviews are used.

One of the ways of implementing pragmatic thinking is when children have had a certain portion of their compulsory education in Syria and can speak Arabic as well as Kurdish. In this sense, parents register their children to TECs in which they have Arabic courses and learn Turkish. The 4th family implemented this thinking with their twin sons. This way, their sons would be able to learn Turkish and be amongst other immigrant children. This decision is also supported with the purpose of avoiding stigma. The father tries to exemplify the stigma by explaining what his eldest son is going though at the religious vocational high school.

For example, my son goes to public school now and all the Turkish students beat him up. They point and scream ‘you Syrian, you Syrian!’ The other day they have said that Syrians should clean the school. We went and called the coordinators immediately. […] They don’t accept him. However, even the bills of the schools, the electricity, water and all are being paid by UNICEF. They don’t know though. Even the teachers look at you and don’t like you for they think that the government is paying for them [immigrant children]. Even the teacher is paid through us.

To understand this, one should realize that some public schools are being funded by UNICEF for having a certain number of Syrian immigrants within their school. What the father tries to explain is that their son is a victim as he is an immigrant, which makes the parents disturbed and afraid of the situation. The mother explains this throughout the interview as below;

My eldest son is among them [Turkish citizens] and we get very scared until he arrives back home. We say to ourselves, ‘what if they have picked up a fight, what if something happens to him at school or on his way back home’, so we tell him to come straight home after school is finished.

The reason the religious vocational school seemed like the best choice, despite the stigma, is because Diyarbakir does not have a TEC for high school level and the religious vocational school is the only one with an Arabic course. This means that their son is not completely exposed to Turkish, which facilitates his educational progress.

We had two options. It was either the religious vocational school or the vocational school [where certain disciplines are heavily taught]. Later, I read that the religious school is better than the vocational one, plus it has an Arabic course, so we decided to register him there.

This family purposely chose to register their twin sons to the TEC in which their children would not face any difficulties due to stigma or language. For their eldest son, as it was not possible to avoid stigma in school, language was the crucial element for their final choice. This is related to their educational capital,
which enables the parents to act consciously strategic with their children’s education as immigrants. The mother’s aim to facilitate the educational progress of her children also reflected her will to learn Turkish.

I want to learn [Turkish] quickly so that I can teach them [her children].

Another usage of pragmatic strategy is when children do not speak Arabic and cannot function in the TECs. This becomes a problem for the family since there is no options for Kurdish education either. This situation necessitates and invites a challenge in which parents need to decide. The decision is either to send children to TECs and let them learn both Arabic and Turkish during their education or to send them to the Turkish public school. In the latter option, the parents may see it as a risk for their children if they are not able to learn Arabic, thereby creating a problem if returning ever becomes an option. This is discussed further in the study (see section 7.6).

The 5th family interviewed can be shown as an example for the pragmatic approach where parents decided on their children’s school. Parents’ decision was based upon two factors. The first, in this case, is language. As both school-aged twin sons did not receive any education prior to their migration, the parents agreed on sending their children to the public school. Based on Bourdieu’s conception of linguistic capital, the language of dominant is linked to power and resources. When newcomers invest in learning Turkish, they believe they will have access to symbolic and material resources. The second factor is due to the concept of stigma. It becomes a determinant concept in decision making as families are afraid of their children being exposed to any sort of stigma. As the family lives in a neighbourhood that is considerably far away from the two TECs existing in the city, they prefer to send their children to the closest public school, which also makes it easier for the father to take the children to school and back home. This way, parents would not risk their children being exposed to stigma on their way to school. The father also makes sure that he asks about his children’s educational progress to their teacher as to also learn if there are any discriminative acts against them. The pragmatic thinking of the family could, thus, be related to the acquired educational capital of the parents, which leads both to value education more than families who have not acquired this sort of capital. Although the father has not finished high-school as his wife, his position in Syria due to his inherited status (self-taught doctor) positions him in a different place compared to other parents who have the same educational level.

The gradual elimination process of certain grades, despite accelerating the integration process, challenges the children to become adjusted to a single curriculum. Thus, a different form of pragmatic strategy use is when the parents act with the aim of preparing their children for their return to Syria, in case

there will ever be a return. The mother in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} family introduces the problem by stating their initial aim:

We send them to school [TEC] in case we return one day. Now, if we go to Aleppo or Damascus, it is all Arabic. The other day, she went there [pointing at her neighbour telling about when she went for a visit to Syria] and took her daughter to Damascus. Imagine if her daughter could not speak Arabic, what would she do? She would need a translator. With that thought, we want them to begin with Arabic. There is no Kurdish [schools in Diyarbakir] anyway... Arabic is valid everywhere [meaning within Syria], but Turkish is not. [...] We send our children to school so they can learn Arabic [not Turkish].

The parents of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} family send all their children to TECs not necessarily with the aim of facilitating the integration process, but rather as to prepare their children for a possibility of returning to Syria. With this in mind, the family decided to send their 8-year old son to the TEC even though he does not speak Arabic. This way, the son encounters difficulties in school regarding his integration since he only speaks Kurdish. This could be further exemplified by the mother of the 9\textsuperscript{th} family.

We appreciate it [the TECs], why? Well, because if we return to our country they would know Arabic, and if we stay here [in Turkey], then they would know Turkish. That’s why, it is nice if there are both languages.

This particular form of pragmatic approach can be related to seeing oneself as temporary rather than permanent immigrants. It can be observed in families who do not possess any or low educational capital, yet it differs from the ‘oblivious approach’ where families do not hold any strategic act in relation to their children’s education.

The three examples of the pragmatic approach shown above contradicts each other in the sense that all derive from similar reasons, being language and stigma, yet have different outcomes. In other words, parents register their children to TECs solely so their children can be among other immigrant children, which facilitates the integration process with other immigrants and the Turkish community, while it also eliminates the risk of stigma at school. On the other hand, parents may also choose to register their children to public school for the same reasons. However, it should be noted that this contradiction does not take anything away from the strategic thinking process families go through in order to facilitate the educational progress of their children.

A distinction regarding how acquired capital may differ within the same family could be observed through the way two brothers have different views on their children’s education. The teacher from the 4\textsuperscript{th} family interviewed compared his situation to his brother’s where he stated the difference in how they value education. Despite being part of the same family, the teacher’s educational capital differentiated him from his brother who does not apply a similar strategy for his children’s education.\textsuperscript{89} This way of contradiction could

\textsuperscript{89} The different position of two brothers was only briefly mentioned during the interview by the interviewed teacher. Thus, it is not clear what kind of strategy the brother might use.
be exemplified through some families interviewed as well, which can be clarified with the family that is described in the following section.

7.4.2. The Oblivious
The comparison stated above can be further discussed here in order to clarify the oblivious approach. This oblivious approach can be interpreted through the lack of informative capital of the parents. The oblivious approach can be understood better if firstly a comparison is established with the pragmatic approach. For this, the teacher in the 4th family can be further discussed in relation to their stand on education while talking about the importance of education for children.

“I call the parents of children who are absent at school asking them where their child is. They tell me he is working. How much does he earn a day, I ask. Well, 10 TL. What are you going to do with 10 Liras sending your child to barber shops for work! For example, we came from Syria, West Kurdistan, and we needed our education. If we went to construction work or so, then it would have been very difficult. They would have taken advantage and they did [talking about the construction work he had to do before validating his diploma].”

The teacher in the 4th family tries to explain how their position as immigrants in Turkey is due to his diploma. Stating that they would have been working with unstable lower income for longer hours had they not possessed a diploma, the teacher values education for what it brings in one’s future career and position. This is contradicting the oblivious approach where families do not possess any information regarding the educational system and simply make choices based on what they have heard or seen. The wife from the 1st family interviewed explained their migration as below, which clarifies the family’s different approach compared to the previous quote from the teacher in the 4th family:

We came to Diyarbakir afterwards so that our children can work and provide. I didn’t work, no. My daughter, the son that came after this daughter and my eldest daughter, the three of them worked. They didn’t go to school, no; but we registered the youngest two right away, in Birecik and here as well. They study both Turkish and Arabic in school now.

As it can be understood from the quote above, the parents do not send two of their school-aged children to receive any sorts of education. Instead, the school-aged children work. The husband of the 1st family explained the reason behind why they do not send two of their school-aged children to school:

Let me tell you, I want to send them to have an education. However, if our daughters go for an education, that education is not valued because they don’t have their citizenship here. Even if they study for twenty years, they won’t be able to gain anything out of it. If they were in Syria, they would have had their citizenship and finish their high school. They would even become a doctor, lawyer, whatever. But here, they don’t have their citizenship, so having an education for twenty years even, what will it give them?

Here, it is obvious how families contradict each other in their approach towards education. This can, strongly and directly, be related to their different types of
capital. As both parents from the 1s family interviewed do not have an educational background, they also do not possess any information regarding the education system in Turkey. This affects their children’s educational outcome in the sense that they either do not go to school and work, or they go to school with no ambition. Two of their children who do not go to school could be exemplified through their parents’ oblivious approach. Although the 17-year old daughter can speak Turkish and answered the questions in Turkish rather than Kurdish, she did not find education necessary due to parents’ lack of informative capital, or in other words oblivious approach.

Edcuation..., it is not necessary for me. I mean, it is better if I work. I wouldn’t get a job if I study, it is unnecessary.

Children who go to school, however, become disoriented as they start in a temporary education centre one year, and continue in the public school with a Turkish-curriculum the next due to the changes in the education system. As the family do not realize the options provided, the school-aged children fail to finish their education.

7.4.3. The Resistant

Resistance is where language does not necessarily demonstrate a problem, yet the education system implemented by the Turkish government is not trusted. This approach is observed with the family who has a high education and cultural capital, which is the 6th family interviewed. According to this family, education does not serve its purpose in Turkey as it is considered to be an assimilation process where the system is constructed as to educate the children to become passive members of the society. This statement is clarified by the family in relation to their 8-year old daughter whose education was left unfinished as the private Kurdish primary school she was going to had been shut down by the government due to its Kurdish-based curriculum. Consequently, the parents have decided to not send their daughter to the TECs, public or private schools run by the Turkish government. Instead, she is continuing her education in an illegal community which is run by the same teachers of the school shut down.

We are a little tired of this matter. It was a decision we made. If there is a Kurdish school, she will go to it, why send her to a Turkish one?

[...]

We didn’t want to send her to the Turkish school. It was a decision. We didn’t want to. We don’t trust the Turkish mentality at all. There was only one Kurdish school and about 150 children went to that school [talking about Ferzad Kamenger], she was 6 years old then. If a government shuts down that school and says ‘come to me’, then there is a psychological problem, a social problem, a national problem, a cultural problem. [...] What kind of a child will that [system] make. What kind of child will be fostered through the mentality that would not even accept a single school.

The decision to send their daughter to this community currently does not create problems as of her age. However, as she does not possess any legal educational
background, the family has decided to move back to their hometown, where the education is in Kurdish.

Furthermore, the resistance against the education system in Turkey is explained through its assimilating politics. Thus, drawing from the two aspects of naturalization discussed above, this leads towards a thinking of seeing the Turkish government as a threat, hence its education system as an assimilation rather than an integration process. Through a sociological perspective, this can be related to seeing education as a violation process. In the sense of families with a high educational and cultural capital, this violation could be towards their ethnic identity and character. Education, then, becomes a process for raising passive children with no critical thinking rather than a process wherein one becomes an independent individual within society.

The children from the [Turkish educational] system that go to the park with my daughter, the ones that are in school, they are like a fish out of the water. There are three children of my daughter that go to this Kurdish school. If they go to the park, they can control the whole area. Their courage is different, their mindset is different, their art is different. The other children however, you feel sorry for them.

[...]

[Education should not have] a discipline that will make my daughter an employee working thirteen hours a day, no; but a discipline that will make her believe in herself knowing she is a rock in the world as she lives and is within the society.

One should note that, however, this resistance is solely towards the educational system Turkey is implementing rather than a resistance against education in general. This is the reason behind why the family prefers to go back to their hometown.

My daughter goes to school and we believe in her. Nevertheless, the alternative that is ahead of us, because of the situation we are currently in, is very bad. It is about the ideology. For me, if it is a Kurdish school with this ideology, it is still a bad alternative.

The family’s resistant approach could be due to their possession of social capital in Syria, besides their cultural capital. As this family has social capital in Syria, it gives them the opportunity to act resistant compared to the other families who have different approaches as they lack the social capital that might be converted into revenue. Thus, the resistant approach cannot solely be connected to the family’s cultural and educational capital, but also their social capital in the country of emigration. Besides the family’s ability to return, their resistant approach can be further discussed in relation to family’s decision regarding their children’s education. The family has the necessary and recognized economic, social and linguistic capital to be able to return to their hometown, whereas these types of capital are not owned by the other families interviewed, hence the different approaches.

Drawing from the theoretical framework introduced previously, the educational structure that exists in Turkey for immigrants is exercised through a power structure which has become the order of things. The structures are, therefore, normalized by the majority. However, considering the family with a
high cultural capital, this leads to a resistance where the power structure is denied. To conclude, the pedagogic work implemented by the Turkish government is considered as a symbolic violence with the purpose of assimilating children into the society rather than integrating them.

7.5. Discussion on the Three Approaches

As can be concluded from the discussions above, education is perceived by immigrant families differently based on their educational upbringing and cultural capital. Due to the similar profiles of families, it becomes difficult to distinguish families from each other. Thus, although the three categories introduced above are not necessarily divided based on the possession of educational and cultural capital, the categorization manages to draw a picture of how education is perceived or being used through a strategic act by immigrants.

One could thereby claim that the pragmatic family, in its original form, is implementing a strategy to facilitate the educational progress of the children in relation to language and stigma. This is implemented by families who have educational capital and perceive education as a significant factor for their children’s integration process. The oblivious family, in its original form, is implementing no strategies as the parents fail to fully comprehend the educational system and progress of their children. This is implemented by families who mostly have no educational capital and perceive education as a burden. This way, children of this family either work instead of going to school, or go to the TEC and transfer to the public school when the government deems necessary. There is also a section where both overlap. The families within this section act pragmatic, yet lack the educational capital which differentiate them from the pragmatic’s original form. The families within this section do not want to make their children work and realize what the system provides them. However, their aim in sending their children to school lies behind their ambition to return. This way, the families act pragmatically by sending their children to the TECs so they learn or do not forget Arabic. Yet, due to their low educational capital, they fail to facilitate the schooling period of their children. Thus, they perceive the education in Turkey as a stepping stone rather than an integration process.
The resistant, on the other hand, differs from the others. This is implemented by the family who has a high educational capital together with a high cultural capital. Education is a crucial part in their children's upbringing to the point where they resist the existing system if it collides with their ideology. Within the context of Syrian immigrants in Turkey, children of this family would return to West Kurdistan where the education system is based on a Kurdish-curriculum. Moreover, through the discussion on naturalization, it could be concluded that the families who have pragmatic and oblivious approaches evaluate naturalization differently compared to the resistant. Whereas the families who have pragmatic and oblivious approaches accept the assimilation or “at least do not thwart it” by evaluating the process as an integration, the resistant family denies it and considers education as the main domain where assimilation is happening.\(^\text{90}\)

7.6. Language and Stability

Another distinctive conclusion that could be drawn from the interviews is the language. Most of the parents interviewed do not speak Turkish and the same argument is valid for their children. Although parents based most of their strategies on language, there are still certain points which need clarification. According to various treaties, immigrant children have the right to education, which in the case of Turkey is being provided. Nevertheless, governments are not obliged to open special classes for minority languages if those languages are not considered as a national language within a certain state, which is also

\(^{90}\) Sayad, The Suffering of the Immigrant. p.220.
implemented by the Turkish government. This illustrates a contradiction in which the right to education is limited. Although immigrants have the right to education, this right becomes restricted as the language of instruction is not meeting the specific needs of children regarding their mother tongue. The 17-year-old daughter of the 1st family interviewed discusses this matter as a reason for why she did not continue her education in the country of immigration.

If it was our language, in Kurdish, then it would have been better for us. Instead of Arabic I mean, if it was Kurdish, it would have been easier for us.

[...]

No, I don’t [go to school], not here. It is not my language. If it was my language, then I would have gone.

The Kurdish language is not being used in the educational system of Turkey despite the country’s Kurdish population, which is a battle continuing to take place. As this study does not aim to discuss the right to education in one’s mother tongue, one could follow this argument with the notion of stability for immigrants.

Sayad discusses the notion of stability as an order that has been broken. Accordingly, the immigrant is nostalgic and melancholic. “Although immigration is itself a rupture, [...], it does finally become ‘ordered’ and allows an order to be imposed on it.” It can be concluded by analysing the family profiles introduced above that most families have been through changes regarding their economic and social status. The stability of their lives in their hometown would have also reflected on their children’s educational progress differently.

For education... Back in our place, no matter how hard it was for us, it was easy. I knew that when my children studied and got a diploma, it would have benefitted them. With her ID and citizenship, she could use it. But imagine if I send my children to school here and the government says goodbye to us [makes them leave the country].

As can be deducted from this statement by the father of the 1st family interviewed, their position as immigrants has affected their children’s education. In other words, the families’ stable life in Syria would have made the children continue with their education; yet, as their position has changed due to migration, the children have taken another path. This could also be interpreted through immigrants’ temporal position as the legislation of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LEIP) and the Regulation on Temporary Protection (RTF) fails to indicate that their temporary status may

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lead to a permanent residency. Overall, it could be concluded, according to the interviews conducted, that the lower the cultural capital, there is a higher chance that education motivations may become secondary due to basic needs not being fulfilled and stigma related issues.

7.6. The Return: “Why don’t you go back?”

The discussion of double absence is used in this section to facilitate the understanding of how immigrants adapt to the country of immigration. Thus, this section uses the concept of double absence as a baseline for the discussion on the return of the immigrant. Sayad’s discussion on double absence is initially used to describe the Algerian immigrants in France after generations by stating the conflict regarding their absence in Algerian society due to their new French identity and their absence in the French society due to their immigrant identity. Within the context of this study, however, as migration has not spread through generations yet, this double absence could be interpreted differently.

The Syrian immigrants in Diyarbakir illuminate the argument by Sayad by the fact of their state of ambiguity. Immigrants’ presence in Diyarbakir is constantly incomplete due to their possibility of having to return. Henceforth, this has also given rise to a condition in which they are not able to settle. The emigrant condition and the temporal contradiction, which it naturally evolves within, affect his whole existence in the country of immigration. This, according to Sayad, is due to his awareness of temporality. As immigrants are still within the borders of Kurdistan (map provided above), their presence within their own country has provided them resources which facilitated their migration process and its early stages. On the same note, their situation gets complicated because they are from Syria.

People here always ask us why we don’t go back now that Kobane is rebuilt. But put yourself in our shoes. We have suffered, we have been oppressed. We left our homes behind. For example, there is nothing left out of my house. Isis settled into it and burned it later.

The mother of the 2nd family interviewed, as all the other interviewees have shown, explains how people treat them. The 4th family describes the same situation as below:

Many people who used to help us here [in Diyarbakir] came and said, ‘why don’t you go back?’ after Isis left there [Kobane]. ‘Why don’t you go, isn’t it over?’ In his mind, everything is suddenly in place. He doesn’t think that there is no law, all houses have burned down, there is no school, the language [of instruction] has changed, there is no legislation left […] These things are very difficult.

If you go there [to Syria], it is just like prison. You can’t come here [to Turkey], nor can you go anywhere else.

The 3\textsuperscript{rd} and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} family interviewed compares their life in Syria to Diyarbakir respectively as below;

There [in Kobane], you would go out and buy anything you wanted. It was your city and you had money. But here [in Diyarbakir], you don’t have any validity.

It is as if you are always a tenant [meaning, temporal]. You don’t even know when you would have to move out of the house. The things [meaning furniture and house equipment] become a burden for you. You just move from this house to another. There [in Kobane], it was our own house.

Here, the families demonstrate the notion of absence within the country of immigration due to their struggle to settle. As they find it difficult to settle, yet at the same time cannot return and settle in their hometown, they are in a double absence. The conflict in Syria has caused the immigrants to lose significant resources in their hometown. The condition that comes with this loss forces them to submit to an order that is against their will.\textsuperscript{95} The crucial question then has to be on why they do not prefer to return to their hometown. Despite the economic constraints and stigma immigrants are encountering, there is a crucial aspect to their stay in Diyarbakir that prevents their returning. The education of their children acts as a barrier in between the parents and their hometown. The father of the 8\textsuperscript{th} family interviewed explains this dilemma by referring to his three children in university and the youngest son who prepares to enter the university. Although it may seem that the parents do not have any school-aged children they are bound up with, they still find it economically challenging to separate the family by going back to Syria. In their current state, it becomes more manageable to fulfil the basic needs as two of their children work along their study.

Do you assume we don’t think about it? I want to return tomorrow. But my children don’t [want to return]. They want to study and finish their education. They are free to do that.

[the daughter who is currently studying in the university continues]

No matter how nice it can be, it is never like one’s hometown. But if I go back to Kobane now, I wouldn’t be able to do anything. For me to be able to do something for Kobane and my country [meaning Kurdistan], I would have to study and improve myself.

Given the fact that children are going through a process in which they are investing in their linguistic capital to be able to learn Turkish, it becomes more difficult to detach from the system. The eldest daughter in the 9\textsuperscript{th} family could be exemplified in this matter. The family is currently paying a considerably high amount of money for a Turkish course provided by the university. The aim is to learn and validate her Turkish language skills so that she could start her education at university. This sort of investment is not only a metaphoric one, yet

also a financial one. The same argument could be made for the 5th family interviewed as their strategic act in sending their children to the public school has enabled their children to learn Turkish, however simultaneously prevented them from learning Arabic. This has been elaborated as a crucial aspect of not being able to return. Thus, one could claim that the investments made and the lack in linguistic capital of children act as a barrier between parents and their possibility of return. The teacher in the 4th family interviewed explains this barrier with the following words:

How would you not want to go back, who wouldn’t want to go back!

[...]

The ones that become attached to the countries [of immigration], the ones in Europe for example, are all bound up because of their children’s education.

[...]

It is all about the education. If you go back, you wouldn’t know what to do with your education. You wouldn’t know which language you would be able to study in.

What the teacher refers to could be adapted to all immigrants. The children had either started an education in Syria with an Arabic curriculum or in Turkey with a Turkish curriculum. Considering this study has already discussed how migration has affected the educational progress of the immigrant children, one should also recognize the dilemma arising in terms of their return. Although immigrant children experience difficulties regarding the language paradox, their naturalization process is a path they have adapted to one way or the other. Returning, however, would require another dimension of naturalization considering Kurdish has been the language of instruction in West Kurdistan (Northern Syria) ever since 2017.96

8. Conclusion

This study has aimed to emphasise the connection between refugee immigrants and education. As familiarity with a system is a result of a whole education, the immigrants are in a disadvantaged position when it comes to their entrance to the country of immigration. Access to education is not considered a problem by immigrants in Turkey, yet the language, the education system (i.e. curriculum) and the (constant) transfer from TECs to public schools create problems in relation to their ambition to pursue an education. All these elements are strategically approached differently by families according to their initial aim and different types of capital. Through the research questions aimed for, there are certain findings that stand out among the others.

As it can be concluded from the analysis, some significant findings can be deducted from this study about the Syrian immigrants in Turkey. These findings should be considered for the specific immigrant group studied, yet some could be adapted to the general state of the immigrants in Turkey. It can be stated through the analysis that families held certain expectations prior to leaving Syria due to their shared ethnic identity with the majority of the people living in Diyarbakir and the social networks they possess within the city. These expectations were heavily reinforced by being welcomed and by experiencing a sense of belonging. However, due to the radical change in families’ economic and social state, they were disappointed with their socio-economic position in the city. The stigma they encounter acts as a significant part in this as well. Although parents considered their immigrant identity to be less of a worry as they migrated to another city of Kurdistan, it became more vivid due to their increasing number and the disadvantages it brought for the citizens of Turkey. It could be stated that their immigrant identity almost disguised their ethnic identity and sense of belonging to Diyarbakir. Therefore, it seems important to grasp why the analysis firstly clarifies the sense of belonging to the city of immigration and how it was followed by a state of disappointment as the expectations were not met, and the families lost control over the ambiguity of their situation. These factors are crucial in understanding the strategies used by families in relation to their children’s education.

This study has investigated how families perceive education through their immigrant identity and how it may vary due to their cultural capital. The study therefore aimed at demonstrating the distinctive element of the cultural and educational capital of the parents rather than their economic and social capital, which do not differ from each other to have an impact on the education of their children. In other words, it could be claimed that parents do not hold onto their economic capital in their hometown, yet they manage to convert their linguistic and academic capital into valuable assets in the city of immigration. Accessing the labour market by converting their educational capital and linguistic capital, which are the only elements that could be transferred in this case, some of the families have managed to transfer their existing capital into material assets within Diyarbakir. When children’s education become the centre of discussion, however, different types of capital, or lack of them, affected the education of the immigrant children.

As can be concluded from the three approaches discussed, families’ educational capital affects the way they perceive education for their children and how the value given to education might have an impact on the educational aspirations and decisions of immigrant children. The strategies they use towards education, however, are mostly built around children’s linguistic capital. It could be stated that although being Kurdish acted as capital for the parents for their access into the labour market in the city of immigration, the same argument is not valid for the children. The children of immigrants lacked the Turkish language knowledge to be entering the education domain. Thus, parents were required to either build upon the languages the children could speak to pursue their education or use education for their children as a tool for returning strategies.

The immigrants with a pragmatic approach who invest in learning Turkish aim to stay in the country to convert their linguistic and educational capital into monetary sources. Education, thus, is perceived as an open door for entering the
markets of Turkey and an important step for the integration process. This pragmatic approach differs from the families who do not perceive education as an integration step, rather as a returning strategy. Although families have the chance to adapt their children to Turkey’s system through education, they may not follow this idea with the constant possibility of returning, thus preventing the child to adapt to the country of immigration or delaying the integration process. The immigrants with an oblivious approach do not express a high educational aspiration due to their lack of basic needs and factors of disappointment. This could also be interpreted through the lack of informative capital the parents possess in relation to the country of immigration’s education system. The resistant approach, however, does not overlap with the prior two. In this sense, it could be claimed that the more educated the parents are, the less they are willing to stay in Turkey, or the less they trust the education system in Turkey due their position as immigrants and as Kurdish people. As a result, contrary to what could be expected, families with higher educational and cultural capital do not have a positive attitude towards the education system. Furthermore, one could claim that this enabled a setting where non-formal (non-legal) learning centres were the answer. The negative disposition towards the education system provided for the immigrants could be related to their stable position within the country of immigration compared to other families.

One of the most significant findings that could be deducted from this study is about how migration has impacted the continuation of children’s education in some cases. The stable position of the families in their hometown regarding their economic status would not have prevented children’s education. Nevertheless, as the change in their economic status led to basic needs being prioritised, the economic challenges of the families may prevent their children’s education in the country of immigration. Therefore, had the families not experienced migration, their children would have continued their education in their hometown. Due to their current position as immigrants, however, education may become a burden as children could work and earn money instead. Furthermore, the investments that have been made to the education of children in Turkey act as an impeding condition for their parents’ return to the country of origin.

Although this study is restricted by its location, it could be expanded further by creating more space for the data. By doing so, the position of other immigrant groups could be explored, rather than a focus on the immigrants with Kurdish descent. The study could also be discussed further through the second-generation immigrants, which would be the children born in Turkey. As the immigrant group investigated has experienced a relatively recent migration, it creates space for assumptions in relation to their long-term stay. Thus, this study can expand on this spectrum by furthering this topic on how the second generations in Turkey are to experience the conditions discussed above. This way, it would also be possible to observe the return of the immigrants’ acquired capital in the long-term within the city of immigration.

97 In this case, the non-formal education centre is the school with a Kurdish curriculum.
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# Appendix

## Interview Guide

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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers expected to be provided</th>
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| **Identification** | Could you help me understand how your daily life was before the conflict in Syria? | ✓ When the parents got married, how it was (arranged marriage or not)  
✓ Which city they lived in  
✓ Housing conditions  
✓ Educational degree of the parents  
✓ Occupation of the parents  
✓ How many children they have, their ages  
✓ What language they speak at home, school back in Syria  
✓ What schools their children went to (public/private) and on what level they were before leaving  
✓ Their economic and social status back in Syria based on their daily life activities and dispositions |
| **Process of migration** | Have you travelled to or lived in other countries before?  
Why did you choose Diyarbakir and not another city or country?  
Could you tell me how the journey here was?  
How would you describe the first days of arriving to your final destination? | ✓ How it was decided to migrate to Diyarbakir rather than somewhere else  
✓ Did the social network have any effect on the decision  
✓ What transportation or other method/strategy was used for the migration  
✓ If the family migrated all together or separately  
✓ If anything was planned in Diyarbakir before migrating (housing, equipment, food, other expenses)  
✓ Where they ended up staying the first days of arriving |
| **Education & Life as an immigrant** | Do all your children go to school, if not, why?  
Do you think education is important for your children? If so in what way?  
Could you explain how the schooling period for your children proceeded?  
Do you think there are differences between the educational systems of both | ✓ How fast/slow the schooling process proceeded in the city  
✓ How significant the role of education is to the parents  
✓ How the schooling process evolved for the children and if they had to change schools often until they arrived at the place they are now  
✓ What the differences are between the previous education system and the current one and what challenges these |
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<th>Past</th>
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<td>countries? How so?</td>
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<td>- Do you talk with your children’s teachers to learn about their success in school? If so, how regularly?</td>
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<td>- Do you have any thoughts about your children’s educational practice that you think can be provided or improved by the authorities?</td>
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<td>- Do you feel like there is a language barrier in Diyarbakir/Turkey that prevents you in any case? If so, how do you as parents comprehend it and communicate about it with your children and their education?</td>
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<td>- Do you feel disoriented, like you don’t belong here, or does this place and culture feel natural to you? In either case, why?</td>
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<td>- Did you have any contact with anyone in an institution (school, office, NGO, etc.) in this city before arriving and do you have them now? If so, in what way do you think they have benefitted you?</td>
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<td>- Do you follow/watch/read any news from Syria and/or Turkey? If so, how do you get hold to them?</td>
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<td>Future</td>
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<td>- Could you tell me about your future plans as parents if you have any?</td>
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<td>- How do you think your children will pursue their educational career?</td>
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<td>- Have I missed something you think is important or you would like to add to this conversation?</td>
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<td>- What narratives the parents use to explain their future plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>- If they have hope over their children and are dependent on them because of their educational success or unsuccess</td>
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