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INTERSECTIONALITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:
DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST
SYRIANS IN TURKEY

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INTERSECTIONALITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: DISCRIMINATION AND
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KADINA YÖNELİK ŞİDDETİN KESİŞİMSELLİĞİ: TÜRKİYE'DE YAŞAYAN
SURIYELİLERE KARŞI AYRIMCILIK VE TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYETE DAYALI
ŞİDDET

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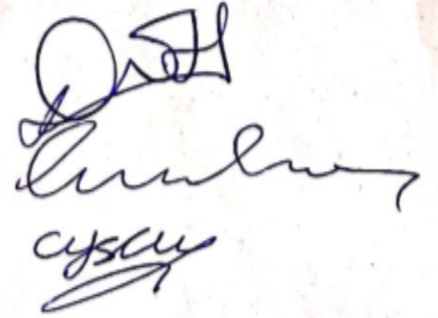
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FOREWORD

Despite the international realm efforts in ending violence against women, it is still a global issue that is targeting women from various social statuses. When it comes to forced migration and displacement, violence against Syrian migrants has been increasingly rising whilst other structural factors that are seemingly contributing to violence are being neglected. The normalization of everyday anti-immigrant sentiments enables violence to exacerbate. Forced migration intensify violence, Syrian women have been subjected to live in an environment where violence breeds from various dynamics. The reason why I have chosen to research this topic is to merely bring forth the multifaceted forms of violence that target Syrian migrant women in Turkey. Forced migration and gender-based violence are what I intended to research in hopes to elucidate some of the neglected problems migrant women face in their daily lives. There are many people to whom I owe gratitude and appreciation. The narration does not imply hierarchy and/or priority. I am foremost grateful for the support of Dr. Hasret Dikici Bilgin for the mentorship and guidance to write this research and complete this thesis. I am grateful for my psychotherapist, Katerina Tenezou for providing me with mental support throughout the duration of my thesis. I'm thankful for Dilan Damgacıoğlu for offering help and support and for being there throughout the duration of my thesis. I'm also grateful for the support of my friends, namely, Hazal Kaya and Büşra Bilekli. I extend my gratefulness to Hajer for supporting me throughout my studies. I would like to thank Dr. Fiona Murphy and Dr. Didem Daniş for taking the time to provide feedback on my work. I'm also grateful for the jury members, Dr. Ayşecan Terzioğlu and Dr. Ayhan Kaya for their feedback on my research.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFAD – AFET ve Acil Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı

ASAM – Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants

CEAS – Common European Asylum System

CEDAW – The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

DEVAW – Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

EU – European Union

FGM – Female genital mutilation

GBV – Gender-based violence

IPV – Intimate partner violence

KADAV – Kadınlarla Dayanışma Vakfı

LFIP – Law on Foreigners and International Protection

LGBTI+ – Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex

MAZLUMDER – İnsan Hakları ve Mazlumlar İçin Dayanışma Derneği

MHM – Mülteci Hakları Merkezi

NGO – Non-governmental organization

SDG – Sustainable Developmental Goals

UN – United Nations

UNCHR – United Nations Commission for

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNGA – United Nations General Assembly

UNICEF – United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

US – United States

VAW – Violence against women

WHO – World Health Organization

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ÖZET

Bu araştırma, kapsamlı bir literatür taraması yaparak ve kadına yönelik şiddet ile toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı şiddet tanımlarının merkezi kavramsallaştırmasını sunarak, toplumsal cinsiyet, cinsel yönelim, zorunlu göç ve yerinden edilmeye ilişkin şiddetin eleştirel analizi için pragmatik bir çağrı geliştirmektedir. Bu çalışmada, çalışmanın konusunu ve Türkiye'deki Suriyeli göçmenlerin yaşantılarını belirleyen süreçleri, normları ve yapısal faktörleri tanımlamak için toplumsal cinsiyet, kesişimsellik ve toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı şiddet araştırılmıştır. Kadına yönelik şiddet söz konusu olduğunda, öncelikli olarak bireye doğrudan yönelen fiziksel eylem farz edilmektedir. Ancak şiddet doğrudan fiziksel şiddetten daha fazlasıdır; ilk bakışta anlaşılması zordur, normleştirilmiştir, günlük yaşamın bir parçasıdır, meşrudur, semboliktir ve sıradandır. Bu tez, şiddetin farklı dışavurumlarını toplumsal, idari ve kişilerarası düzeylerde analiz etmek için kesişimselliği bir çerçeve olarak benimsemektedir. Aynı zamanda şiddetin çok yönlü türleri ve Türkiye'deki Suriyeli kadınlar ile LGBTİ+'ları hedef alan ayrımcılık da incelenmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Cinsiyete dayalı şiddet, Kesişimsellik, Ayrımcılık, LGBTİ+, Suriyeli mülteciler

ABSTRACT

By giving an extensive literature review and presenting central conceptualization of definitions of violence against women and gender-based violence, this research develops a pragmatic call for critical analysis of violence in relation to gender, sexual orientation, forced migration, and displacement. Gender, intersectionality, and gender-based violence have been explored in this research to describe the processes, norms and structural factors that define the subject and livelihood of Syrian migrants in Turkey. When it comes to violence against women, it is initially presumed as a direct physical act against a person, however, violence is more than direct physical violence, it is subtle, normalized, a component of everyday life, legal, symbolic, and banal. The thesis adopts intersectionality as a framework to analyze the different manifestations of violence at the societal, governmental, and interpersonal levels. As well as to investigate the multifaceted types of violence and discrimination that target Syrian women and LGBTI+ in Turkey.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, intersectionality, discrimination, LGBTI+, Syrian refugees

INTRODUCTION

Violence is a component of everyday life of asylum-seekers, refugees, and immigrants. Forced migration and displacement intensifies violence. Forced migration and displacement, although, it is a choice and movement have its agency, it does not create, however, it enables violence in all of its forms. Leaving one's home forcibly leads to detachment, thus, it creates a vacuum where violence exists in it. Violence does not simply 'just happen', it is not a random anomaly. Gender-based violence and violence in all of its forms emerge due to conditions of policies and immigration institutions (Buckley-Zistel and Krause 2017), comprehending and analyzing the underlining issues of situations and institutions where violence emerge is a necessary step toward preventing it and therefore breaking the vicious cycle. In the public sphere, migrants are prone to face violence by border control regimes, in detention centers, camps, hospitals, bureau offices, by the lack of social policies and by policies that enables and reinforces violence, particularly, against girls and women (Jansen and Löfving 2007, 6). The vicious cycle of forced migration and displacement infiltrate violence in the private sphere as well. Refugees are taken out of their everyday life in which social norms and familiarity of life rapidly changes to doubts and challenges by the new place, new demands, new institutions, new relations, and often unfamiliar languages and cultures, refugees end up in a dependency situation where they rely on institutions and people in authority that often are aware they are in a vulnerable situation, thus, exploit and abuse them. This dependency creates a power relation dynamic between the refugee and the person in power.

1.1. Research Design

The methodological approach to my thesis is based on a qualitative research method. The fieldwork research is thought to apprehend the level of violence against Syrian women in Istanbul. Qualitative research allows detailed analysis as well as providing a mechanism to learn from first-hand experiences. According to (Atkins 1984) qualitative research focuses on unearthing and understanding the

personal meaning through the involvement and participation of the researcher. In-depth interviews are preferred because it is well suited for the inquiry and nature of my research. Studying violence is a social phenomenon, conducting a fieldwork research for the study of violence allows a deeper and fuller understanding of it. According to (Babbie 2007) a field work research may allow researchers to unearth certain attitudes and behaviors that might slip other researchers using other methodologies, it is also the most appropriate method to study attitude and behaviors while investigating a social phenomenon vis-à-vis survey and experiments. In terms of data analysis, I have used Deedose to analyze my findings.

Whilst the nature of my study is interdisciplinary, viewing violence through an intersectional paradigm is suitable, primarily due to the social phenomenon of violence that targets women and girls, we cannot study violence against women without isolating the perpetrators, although women can be perpetrators of violence as well, I'd like to shift the focus to the women's agency and livelihood, according to (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002) research mainly focused on male subjects and knowledge was understood in relation to them, women have always been in relation to males, have been understood in relations to them, rather than women's independent agency, thus feminist research emphasis on the former. This research revolves around violence against women (VAW), gender-based violence (GBV), discrimination and how these social phenomenon attribute to the Syrian women experience in Turkey. The challenges I have faced in my fieldwork is due to the sensitivity of the topic and the possible re-traumatization of the victims/survivors. Domestic violence was difficult to investigate because I was not allowed to conduct in-depth interviews with women that have gone through and/or going through domestic violence for confidentiality and security reasons. Violence is a highly sensitive topic that is often still stigmatized in societies. It was difficult to interview trans Syrian women for the same reasons.

1.1.1. Case Justification

Turkey hosts the biggest numbers of Syrian refugees in the region, according to

data by the UNHCR, as of June 2019, Turkey hosts 3,614,108 registered Syrian refugees and half of the registered Syrians are women. Istanbul is the largest refugee-hosting province in Turkey, given its cosmopolitan nature of the province, the Syrian population in Istanbul is diverse from all walks of life, and thus it provides the platform to explore the intersectional dimensions of violence and gender-based violence. Conducting a fieldwork research in Istanbul is suitable for the nature of my research.

1.1.1.1. In-depth interviews

I have conducted in-depth interviews with semi-structured questionnaire. According to (Adams 2015) semi-structured are suitable when some open-ended questions require further follow-up questions and propping. Having conducted a prior field-work research project on Syrian migrants' livelihood in Istanbul have equipped me with rightful skills, training and personal networks to approach the right organizations to conduct my own field. Speaking Arabic helped me tremendously in the field-work, not that the women and I share a common language, it goes beyond that. Observing body language was not only enough in coding the patterns, for instance, a woman told me that she "married her daughter off" in Arabic which came off vague with less emphasis on it and can be easily missed, phrasing her daughter's marriage in that way signifies deep-seated issues such as financial issues and forced marriages in which later it was an intersecting pattern that was significant during the analysis phase. Besides speaking Arabic, I was able to relate to the women on a personal level for being an immigrant in Istanbul, I was able to relate to their struggles with the bureaucracy, language barrier, and state hospitals and overall navigating through the bureaucracy and authority such as the police. On a personal note, I had to deal with the police when I lost my wallet that had my residence permit, the police dismissed me several times, made me wait over 5 hours at the station while refusing to write me a report that the immigration office requires for a replacement. I was privileged to have my embassy involved, the police were still reluctant to write a 1-page report. The police officers dismissed me and told me "Leave. Get out. You are Syrian", I told the officer: "I'm not" while

pointing out my passport. He said: “Farketmez! Hepsi yabancılar” (it doesn’t matter! You are all foreigners). I was shocked by the police unprofessionalism, discrimination and xenophobia. I’m not a refugee and not protected by Temporary Protection, I’m not in the same level of vulnerability some other immigrants are, I can’t imagine how precarious and passive they feel towards authority that mistreats them solely because of their current status that displaced them in which they have no control over. Although my experience is different than Syrian women, I was still able to relate on a certain level with being an immigrant in Turkey which have created an atmosphere of trust and solidarity during the in-depth interviews. The quality of the interviews tremendously got better, the women, perhaps, felt like the interviewer is someone that can relate to their struggles which was an asset for my analysis.

Due to the nature of my research, violence against women (VAW) is a sensitive topic that could trigger re-traumatization to survivors/victims, asking indirect open-ended questions is my aim, however, some questions might need further enquiry, thus semi-structured is the most suitable for my area of study. Another advantage is that it allows the researcher to observe body language and cues, as well as, voice intonation which will provide me with more information about the situation without needing to ask probing questions which is superbly suitable for the nature of my research. I have also observed body language and voice intonation in a previous fieldwork I have done with Syrian women narrating their livelihood and the violence they have experienced; the aforementioned advantage is highly beneficial for my research. One identified disadvantage is that semi-structured interviews are time-consuming and labor intensive, it also requires tremendous time to analyze notes and transcripts (Adams 2015, 493).

1.1.1.2. Research questions

In my research I have adopted semi-structured interviews. I had two different sets of questions, one is primarily targeted to NGO’s and experts on the field and the other was targeted to Syrian women. My questions to Syrian women could be

exemplified as “when did you come to Turkey?”, “Where do you live in Istanbul? “How is your neighborhood?” I approached the participants gradually, which led them to feel more comfortable, I believe unstructured interviews can be viewed as therapeutic. When I felt the participants felt comfortable, I asked more detailed questions about their livelihood, my questions could be exemplified as: “have you encountered discrimination against Syrians in Turkey?”, “where do you live in Istanbul? How is your neighborhood? Do you interact with your neighbors?”, “how did you find out about this organization? How often do you come here? Does it provide a safe space?” Whereas when I approached local NGO’s and organizations, my questions could be exemplified as “what are types of violence does your organization consider as violent?”, “What does the organization provide as support to the Syrian beneficiaries?” “What are the most reported cases of violence?” Unstructured interviews enabled me to comprehend Syrian migrant livelihood in Turkey from many angles, it also provided a framework to observe how local NGO’s and NGO staff interpret the reality of forced migration and violence as a whole. I have interviewed NGO staff where the staff is an intersectional feminist that views the issue through gender and identity politics, a psychologist that was confirming to established norms and attitudes, an Islamic vice president that was indifferent towards VAW, viewed world’s current affairs through a victimhood and paranoia discourse. Unstructured interviews allowed me to inquire and investigate not only my research topic but also the psychology of the participant, I believe it is important in terms of how the answers were structured.

1.1.1.3. Research population

In this study, I have used snowball sampling to choose my participants for my interviews. Snowball sampling refers to having a starting point by approaching key participants who then can refer you and/or recruit other similar participants (Dornyei 2007). My research population includes: Syrian women (most of the Syrian women I managed to interview are married women with an exception of one queer Syrian), NGO staff from KADAV, ASAM, Mavi Kalem, Hayata Destek, Hevi LGBTI+, Qnyusho, MAZLUMDER, Refugee Rights, and Aman Shelter in

Istanbul. The matrix of the respondents is composed of: class (income), educational level, gender, age, marital status, having children, employment/unemployment, sexual orientation, ethnic background, religion (sector). The number of the interviewees' amounts to 15 in total, the mode of analysis has been conducted with Grounded Theory methodology.

2.1. VIOLENCE, GENDER AND MIGRATION

Researchers focus on identifying other factors that are deemed to be more important in investigating the everyday language of place and belonging, for instance, political and economic impact of migration on a host country and/or 'voluntary migration'. The study of violence is rather understudied. Conventional understandings of violence has to be defamiliarized in order to grasp and comprehend the ever-changing forms of violence in forced migration. On the contrary, forced migration is presumably believed to lack agency, where in reality, it implies both choice and agency.

Violence was a key theme concept addressed by Marx, Engels, and Weber, however, it became fragmented under subfields rather than a whole theory after the Second World War (Walby 2012). Marx and Durkheim were more invested in the praxis of violence rather than the theory. Marx glorified violence as the 'midwife of revolution' whilst Durkheim's study of suicide was merely a methodological exercise. Whereas Weber's concerns were mostly about monopolization power of the state rather than violence per se (Kilby 2013). Fragmentation of the theory partly stems from the arguments that violence declined with modernity.

Elias, Weber, and Foucault respectively claimed that violence reduced greatly with modernity, however, it remained on the margin of society where crime, war, and poverty thrived. Moreover, economic prosperity, thus, the decline of poverty and

social inequality has been correlated with the thesis of decline of violence, as well as, monopolization of violence in the state, and internalization of social controls over emotions and expressions of violence. According to Elias, in his thesis on the civilizing process, self-control is the result of the civilizing effects of modernity, in the individualistic level, that would mean suppressing violent urges, and, concurrently, in social institutions (Elias 1994).

Weber defined the modern state as an institution that had thorough monopoly over violence in a particular state. The process of this monopoly was simply a result of a historical process that illustrated violence was concentrated in states (Weber 1969). The historical process has been linked to the modern state capacity to go to war simultaneously with the development of the modern state capacity to raise taxes. Accordingly, the development of large-scale military technology provided those in power the capacity to raise tremendous amount of money that is deemed necessary for the state's development.

We observe a similar approach in international relations under the influence of Weber. Deriving from inter-state violence, international relations theory, in particular, Liberalism has contributed to inter-state violence by pinpointing that mature democratic states refrain from going to war against one another, hence, Kant's perpetual peace thesis, particularly, in The Second Definitive Article of Kant, highlights a pacific union treaty of nations that both maintains and preserves itself, avoids going into wars whilst securely expands (Kant 2003). Foucault on the other hand, emphasized on the shift of governance towards modernity and democracy that fosters a movement away from state's use of violence as a method of discipline in order to securitize the population. Foucault has expressly stressed a public execution of a convicted criminal as a form of brute power and prisons as a form of discipline, the aforementioned form of governance develops gradually over time, alongside, modernity and democratization which results in social order and cohesion (Szakolczai, et al. 1993). Foucault's form of governance embodies an ultimate goal that develops over time, as the brute power of a state over a population declines, the goal of social order and social cohesion will be met and the process

will be maintained through internalization of norms.

The aforementioned theses which argue violence declines with modernity has been debunked by new scholarship¹, research, and literature on violence by bringing forth forms of violence that has been previously ignored, denied, and neglected. Gender-based violence with its striking sub-types such as intimate partner violence, domestic violence, rape and sexual violence, honor crimes, femicide, trafficking, forced prostitution, in this context, is the best case that refutes the decline of violence arguments (Walby 2012). Moreover, gender interacts with other social status factors such as being an outsider/migrant, belonging to a lower social class or originating from other disadvantaged groups which require a deeper analysis of violence and gender-based violence in the contemporary societies. In this chapter, I will begin with outlining major definitions of violence; and then criticize the existing mainstream conceptualization. Next, I will discuss gender-based violence and its sub-types.

2.1.1 Conventional Definitions and Classification of Violence: From “Violence against Women” to “Gender Based Violence”

While the definition of violence is highly contested, adopting internationally defined conceptualization of violence by international law and international organizations yields in consensus and explicitly provides a framework. International law is composed of regulations and conventions between states in the international arena. In regards of violence, this includes, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Declaration on Ending Violence against Women (DEVAW). In these documents, forms of violence which involve female victims are referred within the

¹ Violence has been re-emerging in many forms, studies and research on interpersonal violence related to inequality, gender-based violence, hate crimes, violence against ethnicities and vulnerable groups, such as, women and LGBTI+ has been focused on and theorized. The implication of such violence in our contemporary world is rapidly manifesting across the globe in conjunction with movements to shed light on the issues and to fight for equality and a safe space.

context of “violence against women”. Violence against women was internationally recognized as a human rights violation in 1993 during the World Conference on Human Rights (UN Women 2013). The 1979 CEDAW treaty does not mention violence per se, rather, it includes recommendations that consists of violence against women to state parties, therefore, the 1993 DEVAW is the first internationally recognized treaty addressing violence against women, as well as, a platform explicitly designed to provide framework for international action for the elimination of violence against women. The Declaration on Ending Violence against Women (DEVAW) defines GBV as: any act of gendered violence that results in and/or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm and suffering to women, which includes threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether it occurs in a public space or in the women’s private life (UN Women 2013).

The UNGA composed a partial classification of the forms of violence against women: (1) physical, sexual, and psychological violence within family, (2) child sexual abuse, (3) dowry-related violence, (4) marital rape, (5) female genital mutilation, (6) rape and sexual abuse, (7) sexual harassment in the workplace and educational institutions, (8) trafficking in women, and (9) forced prostitutions (Bott, Morrison and Ellsberg 2005). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence in a similar way: intentional use of physical force and power against another person, against oneself (whether it was a threat of physical power/force and actual), a group of people or a community that results (and/or likely to result) in injury, death, maldevelopment, deprivation or psychological harm. The sub-types are defined by WHO along the same line. Intimate partner violence is defined as physical, sexual, psychological harm caused by an intimate partner or an ex-partner. Those behaviors include physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and control. Whereas sexual violence is depicted as any sexual act and coercion inflicted against a person, despite the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim and in any given setting. Sexual violence includes rape, that is, coerced penetration of the vulva/anus with a penis and/or any other body part and object used in the act

(World Health Organization 2017).

Efforts of the international organization to provide a comprehensive definition and clarify the forms of violence form a milestone for the struggle against violence. However, the conventional approach also has some limitations. Firstly, the term used for a long time, violence against women, by the international organizations is a weaker term than gender-based violence in its ability to go beyond women-men dichotomy. Secondly, it limits the scope of perceiving other forms of violence as violent, for instance, legal violence and structural violence. The proximity of the violent act is significant as well, to elaborate more on that, there is a distinction between action and harm, a certain action could be violent, however, it wouldn't be deemed as such for the lack of physical harm and in some cases, mental harm. Biological sex should be taken into consideration as well, as it arbitrates the relationship between action and harm, an action of violence by a man on a woman causes more harm than the same action by a man, therefore, adopting a definition of violence based on solely action tends to distort the actual impact of violence and thus underestimates gender-based violence. In other words, underestimating the act of harmfulness from a man toward a woman and overestimating the act of harmfulness from a woman toward a man (Walby 2017). Acts of harmfulness are gendered, as well as the intentions of harm are gendered.

According to studies, women are more likely to be subjected to sexual assault and abuse as children/adolescents/adults than their male counterparts, studies also show the majority of sexual violence and abuse perpetrators are male (Bott, Morrison and Ellsberg 2005).

In this context, revision of the conventional approach of the international organizations has been progressive, yet, it mostly remained limited to women and girls, even when gender-based violence as a term replaced the "violence against women" terminology. The United Nations' goal to end violence and gender-based violence is enunciated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), accordingly, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entrenched 17

development goals (SDGs) and 169 targets for developed and developing countries agreed upon by UN Member States in September, 2015. (UN: Sustainable Development Goals n.d.). Within the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, there are two goals that are related to violence, those goals are: (1) SDG 16: in order to achieve sustainable development, the goal is to promote peacefulness and inclusive societies and to provide accessibility to justice for all and build accountable and inclusive institutions. SDG 16 emphasizes on achieving gender equality and empowerment to all girls and women. And Target 5.2 within SDG 5 that states the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in both public and private spaces, including trafficking, exploitation, and other types of sexual violence. Target 5.3: the elimination of all harmful acts: child and early marriages, forced marriages and genital mutilation (Towers, et al. 2017).

There are indicators that distinguishes and measures types of violence against women and girls, for instance, The Friends of the Chair of the UN Statistical Commission recommended nine indicators to measure the magnitude of violence against women, the UN Divisions for the Advancement of Women published a framework for legislations and policies on violence against women and not indicators, the aforementioned policies include both implementation and protection of the victims, on the other hand, UN Women suggested several indicators, including: percentage of both women and girls who have been subjected to specific forms of violence (Target 5.2)², harmful acts such as early/child marriage and female genital mutilation (Target 5.3)(FGM), sexual and physical harassment (Target 11.7).

Regional conventions like the Istanbul Convention focuses on the gender dimension by implementing a dual focus on domestic violence and on women. Istanbul Convention foregrounds a crucial list of forms of violence and coercion that has

² Distinguishing between violence from current/ former intimate partners and from others

been underlined by international law (Towers, et al. 2017).

The forms of violence and definitions of the typology of violence indicated by Istanbul Convention are:

(1) Physical violence: infliction of acts of physical violence against another person (Article 35). The category 'physical violence' in Article 36 includes both lethal and non-lethal physical violence. (2) Sexual violence:

2. Non-consensual vaginal/anal/oral penetration of another person with a bodily part or an object.
3. Any non-consensual sexual acts with another person
4. Coercion of the engagement in non-consensual sexual acts with a third person

(3) Forced marriage in Article 37 addresses the coercion of forcing an adult or a child into entering a marriage.

(4) FGM (female genital mutilation) in Article 38:

1. Performing and excising mutilation to the women and girl's labia majora, labia minora or the clitoris
2. Coercion of the act of mutilation forced upon women/girls to undergo the procedure.

(5) Forced abortion in Article 39:

1. addresses enforcing an abortion upon a woman without her informed consent
2. Performing any medical surgery with the purpose of terminating the woman's ability to naturally reproduce without the woman's informed consent and/or understanding of the procedure

(6) Psychological violence in Article 33: Impairing a person's psychological well-

being through threats and coercion

(7) Stalking in Article 34: addresses engaging in constant threatening conduct toward another person which leads to causing fears and concerns of the other person's well-being and safety

(8) Sexual harassment in Article 40: underpins any form of unsolicited verbal/non-verbal/physical conduct with the purpose of violating a person's dignity, to be precise, by creating a degrading and/or offensive environment that has an effect on the other person's well-being. (Towers, et al. 2017).

2.1.1.1 Gender-Based Violence from an Intersectionality Perspective

Emphasizing the value and significance of the conventional approaches, more recent feminist approach suggests a more sophisticated perspective. The complexity of violence comes from how highly contested it is as a definition and concept. Violence is reduced to a sub-category, a token within fields of study, and importantly, as a tool of power that can be easily pinpointed as an element within interpersonal violence and interstate violence. In such an approach, violence is integrated within categories, concepts, abstracts that is related to power, politics, culture/symbols, and the state. Violence has been explored as a phenomenon, a form of power, set of social institutions, and a form of practice with its own set of dynamics and rhythm (Walby 2012). In other words, the meta-concept of violence manifests within its own complex reality, the meta-concept of violence comes in abstract forms, it can be material and symbolic, structural (thus normalized) and abnormal at the same time, it can be both collective and individual, visible and invisible, violence can be enforced by legal and extralegal measures, it can be illegal, it is also brutal and noticeable and subtle and invisible, violence can be sporadic and every day and lastly remarkable and banal. Violence is a tool and feature of war and peace, violence can be illegitimate and justified at times (Kilby 2013). Pain and suffering are pleasure for some but it is mere horror for others,

violence can be ignored and a source of indifference for many. Violence is a storytelling instrument for many featured stories, personal testimonies, narratives of war, abuse, poverty, and a source of a constant threat to individuals that are subjected to it.

Violence is unique and it would be a mistake to reduce it to a single interpretation, a criterion, and/or to a single academic discipline. Violence, especially gender-based violence demands interdisciplinary and comprehensive analysis in order to grasp some of the essence of it. To begin with, we need to emphasize the distinction between gender and sex, as the traditional biological sex distinctions (female and male) is not only problematic in terms of limiting the other existing non-binary distinctions but the traditional sex preferences feeds into the socially constructed gender-roles and the inequalities between male and female, thus, structural violence (and in many cases leads to direct violence) is a component within the socially constructed difference between male and female that is constantly powered by the patriarchy. Gender merely refers to the ways women and men function within a socially constructed roles of society that generally shape the individual's behavior, attitude and the way they respond and react to certain social events. Hence, gender roles and the socially constructed beliefs and expectations of what a gender should be and thus its consequences highly influence cultures and communities. Social construction of gender roles is a dangerous component of our social world, it constantly influences cultures, communities, countries, state actors, non-state actors, political actors, and religious authorities as it transcends and manifests in every social and political fabric in our world, it is purely thoughtless and banal, as well as, evil and violent. Gender influences access to employment, ownership, income, political participation and representation, and the other many roles in societies that are being affected by gender inequalities (Western 2013). To put this into perspective in order to illustrate the embodiment of violence within the construction of gender, violence against women is fueled by gender inequality that is constantly reproducing and refueling gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is a major phenomenon that contributes to the vicious cycle of gender

inequality as it aids it. Gender enables violence as it is associated with attitudes, and violence against women, in the same manner, attitudes and views of gender equality is linked with attitudes of domestic violence, correspondingly, those that do not hold any significance toward gender equality within their own societies tend to view domestic violence as insignificant, thus, normalized. Inequality and unequal rights and opportunities for power and resources between men and women is the core accelerator of gender-based violence, men are privileged with economic and social power, women are anticipated to follow societal expectations of the role of women and of the male in their family and communities, even in developed countries, these attitudes and expectations' continue to exist within the framework of the social realm, there exists a significant gap between financial and economic power between men and women, thus, a wage gap exists when women are paid less than men for upholding the same job and for performing the same tasks.

Gender occupies a central place in the context of violence, but it is also the case that other aspects accompanying to the gender dimension exacerbates the operation of violence. Several reports indicate the growing amount of domestic and intimate partner violence against displaced women, simultaneously, the pre-existing sexual and gender-based violence that migrants and displaced women have endured amidst the conflict and in their dreadful journey to a refuge (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017).

Intersectionality theory provides a framework to integrate other factors to gender-based violence. Violence intersects with various factors, gender, sex, and race are significant variables in analyzing gender-based violence. Crenshaw stresses violent experiences of women of color are the byproduct of the intersectionality of racism and sexism and how such experiences of a marginalized group of women are neglected within the discourse of feminism and antiracism (Crenshaw 1991). Black feminists, Chicana, Lesbian and Marxist feminists questioned established views of women whilst debated about the interconnection of systems of power, they argued

against a presentation of women as a homogenous group, thus, they have distanced themselves from fragments of feminism that represented women as a homogenous group, rather, they relied on patriarchy as the ultimate system of power that oppresses women (Lorena 2017).

When it comes to research gender-based violence, intersectionality is a paradigm to broadly analyze human rights violations and in particular to interpret violence against women. Gender-based violence and violence against women takes different forms, for instance, within a racist society, marginalized women are likely to be more prone in general. For example, women of color are prone to different forms of violence than Caucasian American women, therefore, identity politics, gender, race, and class are important factors to consider. Intersectionality exposed the deeply-seated layer of oppression and the multifaceted layer of inequality that were essentially apprehended by the intersectional approach. Thus, it provided multifaceted layers of analysis, it also provided multi-dimensional understandings of inequality (Lorena 2017). On the other hand, (McCall 2005) doesn't prioritize a small group in the same manner Crenshaw does and instead offers a typology of intersectionality that includes: (1) anti-categorical, (2) intra-categorical, and (3) inter-categorical (Walby, Armstrong and Strid, 451). Anti-categorical portrays the world as complex, thus, constructing fixed categories is null, intra-categorical prepositions itself in the middle ground while probing the boundary-making and boundary-defining process, despite the probing, and it acknowledges the durable relationship social that categories represent. Inter-categorical on the other hand represents the observation that relationships of inequality in social groups exist, it takes those social relationship into perspective as the core of analysis. The focal task of the categorical approach is to elucidate those social relationships in our social realm and by doing so, it requires the use of categories to analyze the existing problems in our social relationships (European Institute for gender equality 2019).

Furthermore, intersectionality refers to the acknowledgment that there is no single category of women, rather, illustrates the diversity of women in terms of background, experiences, and needs, thus intersectionality explicitly examines how

gender intersects with other forms of inequality in societies (European Institute for gender equality 2019). Intersectionality provides inclusiveness unlike “white feminism” that further neglects and marginalizes women of color. Intersectionality proves to be beneficial not only for the study of women’s livelihood but it also serves an asset for social and regional policies. The Report on Undocumented Migrant Women in the EU in 2014 adopts an intersectional approach that showcases how inequality toward migrant women is intersectional and interconnected, according to the report, migrant women are vulnerable to physical abuse, however, undocumented women are put in a risky position due to their legal status, undocumented women are put in a position where their livelihood is restricted, for instance, they can’t go to the hospital, police, shelters and/or request legal help, the abuser/preparator that knows their status is highly aware of their situation, thus exploits and takes advantage of their situation (Walby, Armstrong and Strid 2012). The report adopts a three-fold approach to illustrate discrimination against undocumented migrant women in the EU, that is, gender, race, and legal status.

When it comes to migration and refugees studies, there are other dynamics that get rather neglected in the literature. Gender and violence against refugee women have been neglected, research and studies on refugees have taken a gendered paradigm, the belief that men were the primary economic migrants and that women came in second or associational migrants was prevalent until the 1970s (Bastia 2014). Empirically, intersectionality brings forward the multiplicity of different sources of oppression and violence that targets women and minorities that has been excluded from general area of studies, since it is rooted and intersects between gender and race, it sheds light on other experience of women that has been either neglected or excluded. Intersectionality holds great importance of focusing on ethnicity, gender, class, race, social class, sexual orientation, to name a few, that tends to pull all the puzzles together of our complex social world, as a paradigm, it also shows the multifaceted forms of social identities, those that are advantage and disadvantaged, the healthy and the disabled, etc. (Anthias 2012).

Anthias on the other hand brings forth a problem of merging together all sorts of oppression on the basis gender, class, race, and ethnicity. Albeit intersectionality explores and pinpoints the intersecting of different social identities and divisions in society, Anthias argues that is not important to focus on the intersection patterns in terms of constructing people in a fixed and permanent group that tends to morph into a pluralistic form that determines their lives. Intersectionality is crucial in distinguishing patterns of oppression in terms of gender, however, in terms of belonging, it only scrapes the surface and doesn't provide a framework to address belonging and positionality³. It is difficult to construct people into a uniform in terms of social inclusion and due to this process, intersectionality can be adopted as a process to investigate migrants livelihood⁴ (Anthias 2006).

In the live of refugees and migrants, there is a phenomenon that resonates from structural violence and cultural violence that greatly inflicts the livelihood of refugees and migrants besides the trauma and violence that results from wars and conflict zones, as well as, xenophobic attitudes, hostilities, and violence in their host countries (Schneider, et al. 2017). It is clear to see that there is a dichotomy of violence that targets refugees and migrants, whether they are internally displaced or have sought a highly risky route to other countries. Those forms and patterns of violence are ambiguously affecting the precarious lives of refugees and migrants. Patterns and dimensions of violence come in many durable forms, it manifests itself within the social, legal, economic, and the political fabrics of societies. The aforementioned kind of violence is different from personal and physical violence, it is more ambiguous, this kind of violence I refer to is defined by (Galtung 1969) as structural violence Galtung makes an interesting abstract distinction between personal and structural violence, personal violence is administered as a threat, a

³ For more see Anthias F. (2005) Social Stratification and Social Inequality: models of intersectionality and identity, in R. Crompton , F. Devine, J. Scott and M. Savage (eds) Rethinking Class: Culture, Identities, and Lifestyle, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan: 1-16

⁴ Africans in Turkey that are under temporary protection might be subjected to different forms of violence, Afghan and Iranians might be prone to different forms of violence and discrimination. Place of origin might play a crucial role in determining the social status of the migrant.

demonstration of a threat, while on the other hand structural violence is a blueprint of a threat, an abstract form of a threat that is used to coerce and threaten people into subordination (Galtung 1969).

It is clear to observe that structural violence is invisible and rather embedded within social, economic, legal, and political norms which makes it ambiguous and dangerous. The embodiment of social construction as a modus operandi of structural violence makes it heinously threatening as those norms are normalized and thus influenced with no foreseeable end to it. Galtung has illustrated the distinction between personal and structural violence between static and highly dynamic societies as structural violence is silent and invisible. In a static society, personal violence is seen and felt whereas structural violence is subtle and may be seen as the norm. Whereas in a dynamic society personal violence is deemed as harmful, however, still harmonizing with order of things. Structural violence becomes visibly odd that it impedes the flow of order of things (Galtung 1969).

Structural violence is invisible in most cases and thus might be conceived as subtly stable (unless if social justice activism and change take place) vis-à-vis personal violence where it is more prominent and fluctuates in degrees (e.g. in conflict zones and wars). In order to dwell deeper into structural violence, a distinction between direct and indirect violence should be addressed. Indirect Violence consists of particular social arrangements' that perpetually harm a segment of the population, for instance, women, refugees, and the poor, the violence is structured due to its subtle embodiment of the political and social realms, it is violent due to its continuous infliction of pain and suffering (Farmer, et al. 2006). Those social arrangements trigger hardships and make daily living harder, it ranges from being kept in a slum to receiving inadequate medical care (Schneider, et al. 2017). On the contrary, societal problems that arises due to being kept in a shanty town and lack of adequate medical care is a social experience that does not only exist in slums in poor societies and/or in shanty towns, it also exists in inner-towns of developed cities, such as inner-city Chicago and the South Bronx. Istanbul is a great example to illustrate this dichotomy of inner-cities, Derbent/Daruşşafaka, Tarlabası/Taksim,

Beylikdüzü/Esenyurt, and Şirinevler/Ataköy to name a few. In order to dwell more into the issue, it is important to stress that structural violence inflicts social sufferings upon its victims. Social suffering embodies structural factors that results in inflicted suffering caused by social, political, economic institutions, as well as by institutional power such as the bureaucracy, immigration offices, etc. (Kleinman, Das and Lock 1997).

Indirect violence ranges from a perpetual informal act through cultural behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs and formally through bureaucracy and laws. In other words, indirect violence takes form by restricting jobs, education opportunities, access of healthcare, housing, and simply autonomy of having control of one's life and the pursuit of happiness (self-agency), as well as it places a restriction on one's identity, whether it's a religious, sexual, and gender identity. Indirect violence that is perpetuated by cultural norms and beliefs is quite problematic, not that it is only normalized within a certain society in some parts of the world and is seen as heinous to the other parts of the world but it is subtle and invisible and accepted within the societies, thus change overnight is most likely not to occur, however, as those norms are socially constructed, social justice activism plays a crucial part in dismantling those norms in the long term. For instance, the concept of polygamy is normalized and backed by religious beliefs in certain societies, thus, it is not conceived as an indirect form of violence that targets the women's agency, as well as, female genital mutilation (FGM) in Africa, and child and spouse abuse to name a few. (Schneider, et al. 2017). On the other hand, other structural factors that contribute to VAW within the context of "culture" illustrates the West fixation on Othering women from the East by pointing out certain crimes as "cultural norms", "traditions", and "backward third world countries practices" while neglecting that women from the "West" are immune to such crimes and violence (Kogacioglu 2004). Misogyny is universal, it is not exclusive to a particular part of the world, region, religion, and culture, in simple words, misogyny kills. There is a distinction when it comes to femicides, feminicides by intimate partner is classified as IPV whilst femicides in the East is considered an honor crime. Its clear to see the East and West dichotomy

when it comes to tradition and cultural norms that perpetually influences how VAW and GBV is shaped, takes form, accelerates, and penetrates.

Indirect violence, whether its formal or informal is merely an act of thoughtless evilness that is validated by law and cultural beliefs. It is worth noting that violence attributed by cultural beliefs is not considered violent within a culture, it is rather rationalized and normalized whilst viewing cultural beliefs-based violence from a different outsider paradigm can easily stand-out as a heinous crime against the oppressed, or as Galtung described it as an enormous rock in a creek. Both formal and informal violence crystallizes dehumanization, by reducing a person's agency to a sub-human, Othering both urban and camp refugees reduces their agency to 'bare life', where their political freedom is no longer part of their life, where they are not governed and regulated at the level of the population. This bareness accelerates forms of formal and informal violence towards them, it makes violence possible and readily awaits at the corner (Agamben 1998). Dehumanization accelerates violence and hostile attitudes and behaviours against particular people⁵, whilst formal violence is structured based on laws and regulations that limit a particular group from certain job opportunities, income generation, healthcare, education, rights, and citizenship. Therefore, cultural beliefs and norms can integrate into the lawmaking body of the country, although beliefs would be rationalized in this sense, law-makers stance are mere acts of "doing their jobs" and/or "this is what we believe in" which further rationalizes and normalizes such acts and behaviors in which it boils down to thoughtless and banal violence. Additionally, rationalization and normalization in legal violence as a form of direct violence normally reflects cultural violence, in other words, cultural norms, perceptions, and attitudes contribute and feed directly into law creation, thus, the judgment is reinforced and inflicted upon the disadvantaged, in the same manner, the effect of violence is hardly viewed as a problem by the law creators and those in power due to their beliefs and paradigms that are the backbone of such violence, whether its recognized or not by those in power, their stance would reduce to actors

⁵ Sexual and gender orientation, ethnic groups, religious groups, women, and migrants.

doing their job only and what they know of, hence, they would declare innocence of such infliction and sufferings (Schneider, et al. 2017). The stance of law creators and those in power not only normalizes and conforms to such violence, however, they also contribute and feed into other dynamics of violence that manifests the disadvantaged groups in various ways, whether it deteriorates their mental health and/or their physical health (and those two go hand in hand together when triggered), in which it results in a loop of dehumanization.

There is a blurred line when it comes to informal violence, a country's economic status should be taken into consideration, whether the country is capable of providing services or not. This subcategory of informal violence is termed as structural deficiency in which a bankrupt country fails to deliver services and aid to a particular population (women, refugees, migrants, seniors, children, and LGBTI+) (Schneider, et al. 2017). However, the distinguishing difference is whether the bankrupt country harms everyone in the country equally or targets a sub-group for inequity. A great paradoxical example is Greece; Greeks are acutely aware of the structural violence that is imposed by austerity measures and believe that they are being held hostage by the IMF. Simultaneously, the livelihood of refugees in Greece face even a greater level of austerity regardless of the recognized awareness of the impact of structural violence upon people. Structural violence as a phenomenon of subtle and frequently unnoticeable violence results in direct violence, often the oppressed resort to violence (Winter and Leighton 1999). For instance, cross-national studies of murder illustrate a correlation between homicide and economic inequality across 40 nations and very often those who are in power in authoritarian countries resort to direct violence to halt the civilian unrest that was produced by structural violence, in this case, the Arab Spring is an example. US history sheds light on a unique kind of structural violence, that is, laws against lawlessness. Furthermore, according to Hannah Arendt's 1968 essay in the New York Times: *Is America by Nature a Violent Society?* Demonstrates that the US is prone to erupt in violence due to its past and its law against lawlessness that is inherited in the uprooted masses during America's colonial experience and the

waves of immigration, the law would surface yet again against the newly uprooted.

While Galtung focuses on social structures vis-à-vis physicality of actions, Sylvia Walby focuses on Actions (and intentions) and Harms (and non-consent). In order to draw upon the boundary between violence and not-violence, actions and intentions of actions and harms, duration of the action, repetition, and the seriousness of the harmfulness must be considered to measure the impact (Towers, et al. 2017).

Sylvia Walby makes a very interesting distinction that violence as a broad concept is a social relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, in other words, both the perpetrator and the victim's existing agency is necessary in the physical space where Actions and Harms take place, thus, Actions and Harms are the units that are necessary to define violence (Towers, et al. 2017). Moreover, the physicality of the perpetrator's actions to inflict harm is a process of performing the action, the perpetrator could be a person or a collective, albeit causing harm is tangible, different degrees of harm could result, whether its intentional or not intentional, however, the initial intention to perform an action that will result in harm is part of the action, in other words, whether the intentional performance of an action to cause harm resulted in tangible action and/or did not result in the intended degree of harm still counts. Accordingly, Criminal justice systems acknowledges five categories of non-completion of an intended violent action such as: threats to commit violence, aiding/abetting/accessory, accomplice and conspiracy, planning and incitement (Towers, et al. 2017). Non-completion of intended violent action is banal, i.e. thoughtless. According to Hannah Arendt, the banality of evil is thoughtlessness, the inability to think for one's self, and the lack of consciences. Hannah Arendt's essay *On Evil* illustrated that the greatest doing of evil is committed by nobodies, not by sadists, those nobodies according to Arendt are human beings who refuse to be persons (Arendt 1977).

It is the kind of evil that creates speechless muted horror, the prototype of evil that is committed by thoughtless ordinary men, not by sadists, these thoughtless men

simply obey orders and refuse to be persons merely because they refuse to think for themselves. It is the system of rules and regulations that these men obey, it is hard to punish such a system and evil and therein lies the greatest evildoer. In this context, evil arises when certain people subject women to exploitation and violence, to them, it is rationalized and normalized, they do not think of their actions that produce muted evil. E.g. bureaucrats', border guards, and NGO staff that subject women to structural violence do not realize the paradox that the social rules they are blindly committing fosters evilness. The concept of harm according to Sylvia Walby focuses on the body, thus, incomplete actions of violent acts are excluded from bodily harm, however, it is still considered to be violent due to the intentions (Towers, et al. 2017).

Over all, gender-based violence is defined as any act/action that results and/or likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering to women, including, acts of threats, coercion and deprivation of liberty in both public and private spheres (UN 1995). The aforementioned definition emerged from the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing. This type of typology of violence is gendered due to gender inequality, gender roles, and social status in the society. However, not every violent act against women can be identified as gender-based violence, for instance, being mugged in the streets and/or the robbery of one's household. Gender-based violence explicitly portrays the deeply seated problems in societies that involves gender roles and expectation of sanctioned social roles, male entitlement, sexual objectifications and inequality in power and social status, therefore, it legitimizes, sexualizes, and perpetuate violence against women (Russo and Pirlott 2006).

Globally, gender-based violence is recognized as a health, economic development, and human rights concerns both by international organizations, local and regional organizations/conventions, however, in some parts of the world, this issue is still considered to be a private matter, girls and women experience gender-based violence in many settings (at home, work places, school, places of worship, streets, detention centers, refugee camps, etc.) throughout the course of their lives.

According to data compiled by the National Violence Against Women survey in the United States, estimated one out of five women to be physically assaulted, and one in thirteen to be raped by an intimate partner (Russo and Pirlott 2006). Consequently, Intimate partner violence has been a widespread source of harm to women between the ages of 15-44. Intimate partner violence is more common than muggings, car accidents, and cancer deaths. On the other hand, physical assault against women is also a problematic widespread phenomenon. Physical assaults target any woman of race, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, age, and socioeconomic status. Initially, perspectives towards gender-based violence revolved around the psychological traits and characteristics of the perpetrator and/or the victim/survivor, however, new conceptualization and perspectives, in particular, feminist perspectives' have broadened the focus and contributed to the way scholars and researchers conceptualize, define, and even study the multifaceted forms of gender-based violence. Previous methods of research that initially focused on the physical and psychological characteristics of the perpetrator have led to emphasizing the social construction of masculinity and male violence, rather than refocusing on other attributes that facilitates the multifaceted forms of violence that targets women and girls. As a result, there has been a progressive shift from viewing violence against women as a one-dimensional phenomenon that yielded in viewing different forms of male violence against women as separate entities with diverse indicators that vary on the context (Russo and Pirlott 2006). Thus, the factors that attribute to gender-based violence posses' crucial roles in enabling and maintaining such violence, for instance, status, power, and objectification, various social institutions contribute to enabling violence, reinforcing, encouraging, and normalizing patriarchal values such as: the military, religious institutions, healthcare, academic, scientific, etc.) The power dynamic of preserving the status quo results in the stigmatization of voices of change, and in many cases, the stigmatization of seeking help. The construction and reproducing of stigma and shame is a form of social control. Stigma relies on power and power dynamics.

Due to the feminists' perspectives that contributes to theorizing gender-based

violence, gender, power, and structural dimensions of violence have been increasingly recognized as embedded forces in the dynamics of gender-based violence, thus, comprehending violence against women is seen as a complex multifaceted phenomenon, although theorizing gender-based violence have progressed, public policies have remained far behind. Furthermore, social structures and gender relationships operate to maintain the validity of male violence, for instance, the relationship between female soldiers and male lieutenants, husbands and wives, fathers and daughters, female patients and male doctors, thus gendered relationships embody structural and ideological element that reduces women to subordination to men (Russo and Pirlott 2006). The dynamics of gendered relationships portrays multifaceted inequalities that reinforce a patriarchal paradigm that fosters the idea of women's subordination as normal, natural, thus, expected and where powerful and independent women are stigmatized. Moreover, the role of the perpetrator is significant and evidences debunks the belief that the perpetrators of gender-based violence are strangers, perpetrators are known by the victim/survivor and in many cases, violent acts are planned ahead and are not random incidents. Among the list of perpetrators, The UNHCR recognizes a perpetrator as a person, group, and institutions that inflict and supports violence, perpetrators are usually in power, people with authority, thus, exertion of control and exploitation is inflicted upon the victim/survivor (World Health Organization 2002). The UNCHR recognizes the perpetrator as: (1) Intimate partners, (2) family members (relatives and friends), (3) influential community members, (4) security forces and soldiers (including peacekeepers), (5) humanitarian aid workers, and (6) institutions. The UNCHR recognizes five forms of SGBV that is used as a tool to navigate through the various forms, however, the UNCHR also recognizes the list neither as comprehensive nor exclusive, the five categories are recognized as: (1) sexual violence, (2) physical violence, (3) emotional and psychological violence, (4) harmful traditional practices, and (5) socio-economic violence (World Health Organization 2002). The five categories branch out into acts of violence, the type of violent acts of sexual violence is recognized as (1) rape and marital rape, (2) child sexual abuse and incest, (3) forced sodomy/anal rape, (4) attempted rape or

attempted forced sodomy/anal rape, (5) sexual abuse, (6) sexual exploitation, (7) forced prostitution, (8) sexual harassment, and (9) sexual violence as a weapon of war and torture. Acts of physical violence is recognized as (1) physical assault, (2) trafficking and slavery, whilst acts of emotional and psychological violence is recognized as (1) abuse/humiliation, (2) confinement. Violent acts of harmful traditional practices are recognized as (1) female genital mutilation (FGM), (2) early marriage, (3) forced marriage, (4) honor killing, (5) denial of education for girls or women, and (6) infanticide and/or neglect. Socio-economic violence is recognized as (1) discrimination and/or denial of opportunities and services, (2) social exclusion/ostracism based on sexual orientation, and (3) obstructive legislative practice (World Health Organization 2002).

Intersectionality is criticized on the grounds of lacking clear methodology. Crenshaw's approach to groups such as black women as a unitary homogenous social group, it blurs out the individual experience as important. According to (Nash 2008) intersectionality relies on binary identities to address the multifaceted forms of discrimination and oppression (Bastia 2014). Besides the lack of defined methodology, the vague definition of intersectionality and the empirical validity of intersectionality are among the challenges of intersectionality.

Something I'd like to highlight is the power relation dynamics within intersectionality, that is, the relational dynamics between the marginalized and the privileged. The privileged acquire power through this relational power dynamic, in which it will further oppress and marginalize the other, therefore makes the privileged an intersectional subject for contributing in this relational dynamic, it also means the privileged maintains power and privilege through this relation while continuously oppressing the other. Which leads to "who can be considered intersectional?", while most literature focuses on the oppressed and marginalized as intersectional, the privileged is also a subject of intersectionality, without the privileged contribution, the equation dismantles. Thus (Nash 2008) asks whether the oppressed/marginalized have an intersectional identity or all citizens. On the other hand, other critical feminist legal scholars identify an indivisible identity

when it comes to intersectional identities, for instance (Harris 1990) referred to ‘multiple consciousness’ to portray the multifaceted intersecting forms of domination, for instance: a gay African American may experience some sort of privilege merely for his maleness, however, still marginalized for his race and sexual orientation.

Despite the criticisms and acknowledging the weaknesses of its methodological clarity, Intersectionality as a theory fits my research on violence against women due to the platform it provides to inquire about the intersecting multifaceted forms of violence and oppression. According to Edna Enez: migration resides as a part of the multiple grounds of identity that shapes the experience of domestic violence. It possesses an interactive process that plays along with race, gender, class, and sexual orientation that informs and shapes the woman experience of and responses to domestic violence. Intersectionality theory recognizes the hierarchies of power that exist within the multifaceted social construct categories such as gender, race, and class. Gender/race/class construct one another via social interactions and structural inequalities, it therefore creates a matrix of intersection hierarchies that multiplies in terms of privilege, domination and oppression.

According to the literature, violence against women is the most common crime that is experienced by immigrant women regardless of the country of origin and/or country of residence (Davis & Erez, 1998; Raj & Silverman, 2002). According to (Zavratnik and Krilić 2018) female refugees are at risk of sexual and gender-based violence during their migration journey, at the borders of states, and upon arrival to destination, moreover, Jane Freedman stressed that female refugees feel insecure in their survival and resistance strategies due to current asylum policies and regulations that are contributing to the women refugee situation (Freedman, 2016). Accordingly, current legislation and limited legal alternatives have led women resort to smuggling, hence current legislations increasingly led to the level of danger women face and therefore paved a way to exploitation and trafficking (Mixed Migration Platform 2016). According to a fieldwork conducted by Jane Freedman in Kos island, all Syrian women that were interviewed experienced

violence directly and/or had a family member that suffered from violence in the Syrian conflict⁶ and/or en route, both married women that are accompanied by their husbands and widowed women experience violence, single and/or widowed women experience another level of insecurity while migrating alone with their children according to Freedman findings (Freedman 2017). Thus, leads to the question, why immigration intensify violence against women? Immigration creates vicious precarity for both males and females, however, the degree of precarity that women faces is greatly higher than their male counterparts that tends to unfold into vulnerability that impairs the women's management of domestic violence, thus it limits their agency from trying to challenge men's violence and/or to secure an exist from an abusive relationship with their partners. (Erez 2009). Immigrant women can't participate actively in public life and in networks as immigrant men, as well as, immigrant women generally arrive upon destination disadvantaged in social status and human capital resources relative to their immigrant men counterparts. Due to the gendered inequality that manifests the lives of immigrant women, lack of safety, resources, social isolation and economic dependency and/or instability emerges on one hand, and the role of immigration law, criminal justice agencies, law enforcement, government authorities dictates as barriers in accessing rights (Erez 2009), those barriers are affecting immigrant women as a whole, nonetheless this gendered experience resembles the lives of Syrian women in Turkey. According to (Erez 2009) literature on Intersections of Immigrations and Domestic Violence, intersectionality as a theoretical framework highlights the common attributes experienced by abused immigrant women regardless of their ethnicity or countries and heterogeneity of domestic violence that immigrant women from different cultures, race, sexual orientation, and ethnicity endure. Albeit my research focuses on the experience of Syrian women in Turkey, intersectionality enables me to investigate violence against Syrian women regardless of their ethnicity, as well as providing me with inclusive framework that embodies women as a whole, whether cis heterosexual women or non-binary queer women and trans sex workers.

⁶ Syrian women experienced and suffered from violence from all sides in the Syrian conflict, from the official regime, the Syrian army, from the "Islamic" state, and from rebel forces

According to (Carastathis, et al. 2018) refugee crisis and forced migration studies have been lacking an intersectional analyses, therefore they adopted race, gender, sexuality, and class power relations to investigate how the “refugee crisis” is constructed. Intersectionality highlights that the the experience of migration and displacement differ on the context of how people are placed in the hierarchies of gender, race, faith, and sexual orientation. An intersectional approach to forced migration brings to the surface the fixed categories of identity thus problematizes it in which people’s subjective experiences are misunderstood. An intersectional approach dissects people’s embodied experiences by bringing forth the universality of gender and sexuality, racial, ethnic and religious divisions and the fixity of class and social status in a trans-local perspective.

As well as how a feminist intersectional approach takes into account how those distinctions of refugee, migrant, citizen are constructed by intersecting system of white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, capitalism subheaded by their sub-dynamics of discrimination and violence. Through the intersectional approach, we can explore and identify how different relational power such as classism, patriarchy, sexism, racism, and other forms of oppression bestows hierarchal power relations. These processes are influenced and constructed by social, political, and economic changes, thus, these constructions of identity and gender is prone to change over time and space (Nasser-Eddin 2017). For instance, a Syrian woman stated that back in Syria, violence against women wasn’t that widespread, the father wouldn’t allow his daughter to get abused by the hands of her husband, the narrative has changed with the forced migration to negotiating and mediating and normalizing violence against women (ibn). In the next chapter, I will discuss the conditions of the Syrian migrants in Turkey with a particular focus on violence against refugees and gender-based violence against the migrant community.

3.1. PERSEVERENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE SYRIAN MIGRANTS

3.2. Violence and Gender-Based Violence against the Syrian Community in the Host Countries

Since the eruption of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, it has led to a massive influx of refugees in the region. Syrian refugees have been fleeing the brutality and atrocities of their war-torn cities in Syria and have been seeking refuge in neighboring countries. According to UNHCR, Turkey hosts the biggest number of Syrian refugees in the region and as of the 15th of November 2018, Turkey hosts 3,597,937 registered Syrian refugees (UNHCR 2018). It is worth noting that the number of Syrian refugees could estimate more, due to the number of unregistered refugees in the country. Those that are unregistered with the UNHCR and/or lost their registration status are in dire vulnerability and are prone to further marginalization and dehumanization, particularly, unregistered women are vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence and more likely to be more precarious with the lack of formal protection and the fact that they cannot seek or rely on local authorities (forced sex trafficking and prostitution and undocumented marriages are a major problem women face) (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). When refugees are excluded from legal rights, they do not only cease to exist in a system but it reduces refugees to what Agamben refers to Zoë ‘bare life’ or ‘naked life’. Agamben argues that refugees are vital subjects of ‘biopolitics’ that can be regulated and governed in a permanent ‘state of exception’ at the level of the population, however, refugees are reduced to Zoë, ‘bare life’, where humans are reduced to animals in bio ‘nature’ without political freedom, particularly in camps (Agamben 1998).

Jordan and Lebanon host the highest number of Syrian migrants after Turkey, and as of 30th of September, the official number of registered Syrians in Lebanon is 952,526 and in Jordan 673,414 (12th of November) (UNHCR 2018). Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon have implemented austerity measures to reduce the flow of Syrian migrants in their own countries by gradually halting both formal and informal border crossing points, strengthened border control with frontiers and walls that were constructed, and restricted the escapees’ movement by initiating legal barriers

that included visa requirement; which illustrates structural violence (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). The regional responses have triggered and escalated further precarious livelihood of the Syrian migrants despite the pre-existing problem of the lack of resources (healthcare, food, and education) for both the internally displaced and the registered Syrians in their host countries. Albeit a Regional Response Plan (RRP) has been established by the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to direct other UN agencies and non-governmental organizations in how to respond to the crisis efficiently, however, the reality of displacement and the pre-existing political tension in the region have led to limited response.

LGBTI+ is at greater risk of vulnerability, dehumanization, and prosecution from host countries as well as from homophobic attitudes and behaviors that could lead to direct violence. Being a refugee queer woman leaves the individual at greater risk of dehumanization from both the host country's locals and from their own community, as well as, by confronting lack of basic services, emotional and financial resources and daily life obstacles from every angle that does not approve and/or frowns upon their queer lifestyles' choices and identification. Accordingly, LGBTI+, women, girls, elderly, and people with disabilities that live outside of refugee camps have limited access to resources and services according to a study done by the Women's Refugee Commission (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). Similar gender and women's rights problems are being faced by refugees in regional camps according to several studies, although international organization and NGO's, including, UNHCR has assured that gender and sexual minorities needs will be taken seriously and will be on the agenda to facilitate the lives of Syrian women and queer individuals, alas, in reality, those needs have not been addressed nor fulfilled. It is clear to see that the density of vulnerability among Syrian women and sexual minorities, they are not only being denied of their own agency and humanity but also with basic rights and protection which results in further traumatization of their psyche and has an impactful damage on their livelihood. Structural violence appears to be emerging from many aspects toward

Syrian women and sexual minorities and in their dire situation, direct violence is dreadfully one step away. Galtung has expressed that he views violence as insults to basic human needs that can be avoidable, it also tends to lower needs below a satisfactory level, thus an insult to quality of life as well (Galtung 1990).

Accordingly, WRC's report on the livelihood of Syrian migrants in Jordan states: intimate partner violence and domestic violence targeting women and girls in homes is becoming more common, reporting domestic, intimate partner violence, and sexual violence remains underreported. Violence against women and girls may be aggravated due to the fact that cases go unreported and the households where the women and girls reside in are socially isolated. Other factors include financial problems, lack of privacy due to overcrowding spaces which may escalate the existent tension that would lead to violence that are often perpetrated by a male head of the household (Women's Refugee Commission 2014).

Correspondingly, there is a sense of fear in reporting violent incidents to the local authorities among Syrian migrants, whether it's the fear of their unregistered status or fear of the perpetrator and lack of protection. Reportedly, women have expressed dreadful fears of having being sent back to Syria by their husbands if they will report the abuse as a consequence (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). Respectively, cultural problems manifest in the discourse of battered women, several studies have unveiled that although both Arab men and women share the common belief that the husband is the perpetrator and this responsible for abusing his wife, however, there is also a tendency to sympathize with the abusive husband and blame the wife for the situation (Haj-Yahia 2002). The battered wife will justify the abuse she is enduring and her husband's abusive behavior solely due to difficult living conditions and the circumstances. Alas, this is a global issue that women endure in their daily lives, consequently, global studies and statistics estimate that a third of women in the world have experienced violence from a partner or a family member (Western 2013). Data from World Health Organization (WHO) prevails: the number of ever-partnered women who had experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner ranged 15 to 71%. Between 13 and 61% of women

had experienced physical violence from an intimate partner. The amount of women who had experienced sexual violence ranged from 6 to 59%. Intimate partner violence and intimate partner sexual violence involves repeated and severe physical and sexual assault which has an extreme risk to the women's safety and overall well-being (Garcia-Moreno, et al. 2005).

Women throughout the globe are prone to face violence, subsequently, indigenous women are 40 times more likely to endure family violence, women with disabilities are at higher risk of gender-based violence, and immigrant women are more likely to face greater risks of violence (Western 2013). Moreover, unequal rights and opportunities for power and resources between men and women is the core accelerator of gender-based violence, men are privileged with economic and social power, women are anticipated to follow societal expectations of the role of women and of the male in their family and communities, even in developed countries, these attitudes and expectations' continue to exist within the framework of the social realm, there exists a significant gap between financial and economic power between men and women, thus, a wage gap exists when women are paid less than men for upholding the same career and for performing the same tasks.

Furthermore, Syrian women migrants who reside outside of camps face daily harassment and difficulties in obtaining any sort of income, accordingly, nearly half of the Syrian women-led household living outside of camps in Jordan had no income and highly depend on donations, due to their dire living conditions, these women endure sex trafficking and forced marriages (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). In Turkey, AFAD stated that 80% of Syrian women that live outside of the camps live in extreme poverty, many claims that they cannot sustain sufficient food and water supply for the next week (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). Similarly, a Syrian woman I interviewed in Dolapdere that manages a social entrepreneur project that benefits Syrian women in Istanbul by generating income by selling hand-crafted knitted wear claimed that majority of the women in this project can't secure their meal for the next day if there are not able to sell one knitted piece. In Lebanon, it has been reported that 53% of Syrian women

feel unsafe in Lebanon and 41% of the women have thought of committing suicide (Samari 2015). Many of the forcibly displaced Syrian women have been subjected to sexual violence and rape (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu, Gender, migration, and exile 2017, 4). Respectively, in the amid of war and conflicts women compose a great majority of victims of sexual violence whilst violence targets men as a direct result of combat (Hilhorst, Porter and Gordon 2018). There is a vigorous gender-essentialist view in portraying the women as primarily a victim during conflicts, for instance, the refugee women-led households is portrayed through the lens of women's primary victimhood of being forcibly obligated to provide for the family and generate some sort of income to sustain the household without bearing in mind that those women are under such circumstances for a certain reason (death of their spouse, missing persons, separation, divorce, etc) and it wasn't optional (Hilhorst, Porter and Gordon 2018). The aforementioned gender-essentialist view problematically asserts all men are militias and all the women are victims (Eloe 2004).

The women victimhood discourse have been proven null by multiple studies that focused on the role of female combatants in conflict zones, however, it still is embedded within the language of international donors and it dominates policy discussions and journalism depiction of the effects of crisis and war (Hilhorst, Porter and Gordon 2018). There is a perpetual victimization toward refugee women that influences and feeds into self-victimization due to the constant state of the discourse being normalized by various people, organizations, social workers, and governments that would lead to a dire effect on the agency of an individual in a society, they will be portrayed as a burden on the host government and society. Women are socially viewed as nurturing and there is a forced emotional-labor attached to it, international organizations are constantly feeding into this notion that women are the sole caregiver that are obliged with emotional-labor in which it continues to normalize it, thus, morphing the notion and depiction into a self-fulfilling prophecy (Hilhorst, Porter and Gordon 2018).

In Turkey's state hospitals, doctors and nurses find this state of victimization not

genuine, according to a field-work research conducted in Istanbul's state hospitals by (Terzioğlu 2018), a nurse from the newborn intensive care unit stated that Syrian women are 'reproducing like rabbits' and another doctor stated:

“Syrians, and some Turkish people who believe them, portray the Syrians in Turkey as victims who have had to flee from a bloody war. But some of them look really rich and comfortable, having so many children around them ... Also, if they escaped in such dire conditions and have such difficulties, why do they keep giving birth? They reproduce constantly and expect the Turkish state to take care of their children. This seems quite unfair to me, especially as Turkey is not a rich country and its health and educational infrastructure is not adequate to take care of that many Syrian and Turkish children!” (Terzioğlu 2018)

In the Turkish healthcare environment, access to healthcare to refugees has become a burden, the paradigms have shifted from a basic given human right to a burdened duty (Terzioğlu 2018). While violence manifests and takes shape in many forms, whether it is subtle or direct, being a woman becomes highly vulnerable in times of conflict as violent measures such as rape, alas, is a byproduct of wars and conflicts embodied as a medium to not only intimidate, terrorize, humiliate but it's also a form of submission and control. Tools of wars and conflicts besides direct usage of weaponry and counter-attacks, such as rape, create societies of rape victims/survivors, as well as, it normalizes rape in some extent as inevitable and thoroughly nourishes rape culture. According to a report by Women Under Siege: 8% of their findings include female victims, the age range of the women and girls vary from 7 to 46 years old. 85% reported rape, 10% reported sexual assault without penetration and 10% reported sexual violence and enslavement that took place in detentions and lasted for a period longer than 24 hours (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017).

In the case of Lebanon, rape is highly stigmatized and many are reluctant to report it for various reasons, thus, many cases go unreported and it is significantly scarce

to find accurate data on rape and sexual violence, Syrian refugee women have been subjected to sexual violence and due to the limitation of equitable medical intervention and psychological help to recover from the trauma, consequently, on the situation in Lebanon, a researcher reported:

“Here, there are no viable comprehensive medical options for survivors of rape. Considered taboo and seen as a family issue, rape survivors are left with nowhere to go to seek clinical care. Life-saving treatments to prevent HIV, unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections require immediate action, such as the limited window of 72 h for HIV post-exposure prophylaxis. This lack of access to care has emerged as a humanitarian crisis all of its own.” (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu, Gender, migration, and exile 2017, 5).

3.2.1. Forced Marriages and Child Marriages

Syrian women and girls are subjected to forced marriages and early marriages, the prevalence of forced/early marriages are crucial to highlight the intersectionality of violence against women, although the reasons and motives for such practice is diverse, however, prior to the Syrian War, according to the data on Syrian children and women in 2006 by the UNICEF, 17.7% of girls married before the age of 18 and 3.4% of girls married before the age of 15 (Spencer 2015). Between the year 2000 and 2009, women aged between 20 and 25 had been married as a child, the percentage of the women amounts to 13% which means 1 in 8 women were subjected to child marriage (Spencer 2015).

The practice of forced marriages has been highly prevalent in the lives of Syrian refugees; it is reassuring to the families if they marry off their daughters as a way of securing their lives in addition to the belief that the marriage will protect them from sexual violence from other men. Another reason justified by this practice is a form of structural violence that revolves around Family Honor, it is believed that it will protect and, in some cases, where the girl/women have been sexually violated, it will save the family honor (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). However,

in reality, there are various heinous reasons, according to a study conducted by (Baklacioglu 2017) in Istanbul about Syrian refugees flight to Turkey, a various number of women that have been interviewed narrated that their families “who did not have money and had to leave their daughters with warriors and soldiers as a bribe for crossing the Syrian–Turkish border”. The pervasiveness of structural violence operates through deep biopolitics that not only constructs but reproduces and normalizes hegemonic power relations (Baklacioglu 2017). Syrian women residing in towns near the Turkish borders have opted for informal marriages and have been marrying older Turkish men as a desperate viable solution to secure their lives and future, however, as those marriages are informal and commonly conducted as religious marriages, most of these women are not protected by the law, thus, are in danger of a greater degree of vulnerability and violence (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). The notion that religious marriages are merely a normalized social practice imported from peripheral Syria to their host countries is a form of abiding to violence that is neglected by authorities and organizations, without addressing this problem as a result of economic, social, and political circumstances, it further facilitates and accelerates gender-based violence to vigorous degrees without having any sort of protection to rely on and no rights to be protected. Not only locals are exploiting this dire situation, according to an elderly woman I have interviewed in ASAM, her daughter is a victim of such informal marriage, a Syrian man has convinced the family that they cannot get married legally in Turkey without the authorities in Syria knowing their whereabouts, thus, the fear of arresting their son arose according to the mother, due to the fear of this blatant lie, they married their daughter off to a Syrian man that have subjected her to violence and abuse, the elderly woman sought to seek legal measures against him, alas, the daughter cannot be protected due to an informal marriage that cannot be protected by the law, the family live in dreadful fear, the woman confided that the abusive man has been targeting the entire family with verbal and physical threats, according to the mother, a mafia was sent to them by him to strike fear and terror. Their situation is both merciless and precarious with no legal protection. Correspondingly, legal measures against

forced/early/polygamous marriages are developed within the immigration legalization in European countries, however, it is problematic as it falls under the ‘white savior’ façade of an on-going battle between western and non-western cultures and the victim-hood discourse of oppressed Muslim women by her own backward culture/society. The European approach toward forced/early/polygamous marriages came under critique by feminist scholarship, feminist scholars argued against the argument that forced, early, and polygamous marriages reflect a non-western culture and rather argued that it is based on imbalances concerning gender and sexuality (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). Similarly, feminist scholars argued that the answer to remedy this problem is by enforcing empowerment to ensure women’s sexual and social agency instead of enforcing legislation mechanism based on degrading the women even further, scholars critiqued and pointed out that legislation to halt forced and polygamous marriages results in consequences’ that harms the women instead of protecting them.

There are reports that indicates child marriages among the Syrian population has been alarmingly increasing in Jordan, amid the outset of the Syrian War, the registered Syrian marriages in Jordan in 2011 that involved marriages of girls between the age of 15-17 years old was 12%, in 2013 the percentage increased to 25% and in 2014’s first quarter it rose up to 32%. Lack of women’s social agency contributes to the prevalence of child marriages, a Syrian refugee has explicitly stated in a meeting in the UK House of Lords in 2014 that child marriages are merely a strategic tactic employed by armed forces in Syria to disperse the population, albeit the aforementioned claim needs to be investigated further, it is not the root cause of child marriages, the root cause of child marriage can be simply put into perspective, gender discrimination, abuse of power, and lack of respect for human rights are among the root causes of child marriage and gender-based violence (Spencer 2015). The perpetual effects of child marriages on girls is embedded with formal and informal violence, in many cases, the girls will be deprived of formal education and attending schools due to the rapid change of their

roles, the girls will be burdened with sudden emotional labor that they have to provide, as well as, sudden responsibilities placed upon them by the forced societal expectations of what a wife should be and how she should behave, as well as, impacting the girl's overall physical and mental health, and in the long-term, the effects will have a direct impact on the society as a whole. Syrian women endure extreme levels of violence and vulnerability in refugees' camps in the region. Single women and single mothers flee to exile have strengthened masculine hegemony in their lives due to poverty and degradation of their livelihood, as well as, the viable option to sustain their livelihood is family solidarity that has empowered the role of men and further gendered the role of women. Likewise, the masculine hegemonic powers have strengthened in the urban refugees lives that have created hierarchical power dynamics, explicitly, crowded living arrangements in shared living spaces, joint lives in small apartments with other families, sharing bedsits room, and a small room that accommodates more than the capacity results in more precariousness of Syrian women, henceforth, the new power relations are extremely gendered and are behind the mechanism of producing and reproducing violence in the private sphere (Baklacioglu 2017). Previous studies have indicated the obstacles that prevent women from migrating that involves lack of financial resources, the responsibility of their children and the risks that would inflict upon them during the journey, restrictions of traveling within and out of their countries, and the embedded violence that is in the upfront of the journey, thus, women decide to migrate when there is no other viable option and migrating is the last resort they would seek, despite of the obstacles that are in the way and during the journey, these women are willing to risk it all in return for the possibility of sustaining their livelihood (Freedman 2016).

3.2.1.1. SGBV and the Asylum System

Henceforth, the worsening situation of the Syrian War is highly prevalent in the pattern and increasing numbers of migration, Syrians have conditioned themselves to risk their lives by crossing the Mediterranean to reach Europe in order to escape the dehumanization, alas, continuous dehumanization awaits them en route to a refuge. It also reflects that their livelihood in Turkey is not sustainable or promising that the women are willing to seek a dangerous route (Freedman 2016). Many women have been subjected to gender-based violence in their countries, within the walls of their homes, thus, many are fleeing pre-existing violence with a possibility to endure more violence. Survivors of gender-based and sexual violence are abruptly aware of this, however, yearning for a dignified livelihood trumps their current situation, it is safe to say that it takes tremendous courage and willpower to endure this monstrosity. Accordingly, Human Rights Watch reports: there has been incidences of SGBV against refugees in Macedonia's detention centers where women were subjected to transactional sex in order to 'ease' and 'speed up' their cases if they engage in sexual relations with the guards (Freedman 2016). This exploitive discourse resembles the embedded sexual violence that takes place in prisons that is empowered by inequality and hierarchical powers of masculinity. Not only the police and military institutions need provisions and education to unlearn gendered violence, but the asylum-seeking agencies and directives also need to oblige to take gender issues and gender-based violence seriously. In theory, Common European Asylum System and the Frontex Operations have brought forth directives to oblige EU states to take gender issues in consideration and to implement training to equip the officers to handle such issues upon the arrival of asylum-seekers, however, in praxis, these directives had merely any effect in improving refugee women's experience in accessing protection in Europe's national asylum systems. Victims/survivors of GBV face legal obstacles when trying to obtain protection, rights, and services (Freedman 2016). Despite the lack of robust implementation of directives and training, a refugee woman recounted her experience with an officer in a detention center by stating:

“He tried whatever he could to get me alone in a room with him. He used to approach me and whisper to me that I am very beautiful and that he would help me out, that he would personally look into my case.” (Freedman 2016)

Although it has been pointed out by politicians and NGO staff that smugglers are exploiting the women’s situation for “transactional sex” and are the sole perpetrators of sexual violence, this severe reality should not overshadow the proneness of sexual violence Syrian women face at the hands of police officers, this saddened reality ceases any opportunity to feel safe, even by local authorities. Similarly, Syrian women have been subjected to sexual violence by Turkish police officers and coastguards en route to Greece. European politicians have suggested bombing smugglers boats in order to decrease the flow of refugees, given the fact that those smugglers are the sole reason behind importing refugees into their soils (Freedman 2016). The aforementioned atrocity does not only portray the disregard of sexual violence retaliated against refugee women but the utter thoughtless and selfish evilness embedded within the already existing evilness that women face amid their journey.

Women en route to exile and refuge endure violence, however, the journey of being subjected and prone to violence does not end upon destination, the vulnerability and the monstrosity of violence and discrimination remains and continues in camps and outside of camps. In asylum-seeking centers in Germany and Sweden women are still subjected to sexual violence, assault, and rape due to the lack of gender sensitive measures taken in those centers where they are no separate living arrangements for women and no-sex segregated shower facilities (Asaf 2017). Living situations in camps are in dire conditions and for many Syrian women camps are a place for rape and gender-based violence, an 18-year-old woman have elaborated on the living conditions in a camp in Turkey by stating:

“We never could go to the toilet or bathroom alone, always accompanied by other family members or friends. We never could sleep all together, always some of us should keep guard of the tent. This is how we could survive

there, but all this was very exhausting.” (Baklacioglu 2017).

The sense of fear and dread are significant to observe in camps, many women would prefer to move to cities and suffer from inhumane conditions and discrimination rather than to endure the prevalent sexual violence that takes place within the camps. In Lebanon, many Syrian women reside in overcrowded space with minimal privacy, many have indicated facing difficulties in their daily lives, including, water shortages, insufficient food supply, and lack of access to health care (Usta, Masterson and Farver 2016). Accordingly, eligibility to access aid and health care for refugees that are registered with the UNHCR, however, it has been indicated that many women did not register with the UNHCR in the fear of their names being exposed at some point to the Assad regime and due to lack of official papers, a Syrian women stated the precarious situation of lack of official papers by narrating that her documentations and papers were left behind in Syria due to the sudden move, she could not take everything along with her in her journey to refuge (Usta, Masterson and Farver 2016). Various amounts of discrimination have been reported in camps in Lebanon perpetrated by local NGO’s or international agencies, consequently, the distribution is not equal to everybody, there is discrimination and a system of preference. The distribution of aid and the lack of it toward certain individuals is perpetually a tool to gain political powers in order to empower and feed into the community hierarchy and to create religious division with the community, as a consequence it created a sectarian and religious division between Sunni, Shia, and Christians (Usta, Masterson and Farver 2016)

Correspondingly, the division of religious structures is embedded within Lebanon’s social, political, and economic fabric. Lebanon is divided between 30% Christians, 30% Shiite, and 30% Sunni, while the Druze population in Lebanon are overshadowed between this triangle conflict. Henceforth, Lebanon views Syrian refugees from many aspects, they are viewed as an economic, political, and even a sectarian threat (Baklacioglu 2017). It is explicitly prevalent how religious divisions exist within camps in Lebanon in a country that has been divided by religious conflicts for decades, sectarianism plays a crucial paradigm within the

lives of Syrian refugees in the camps in Lebanon, thus, the host country attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors transcends and integrates into the refugees livelihood. Moreover, the UNHCR reports that 10% of Syrian women and children are in dire need of resettlement, due to their dire living conditions, many women and girls spiral down involuntarily within social and sexual exploitation, and in many cases, forcibly to slavery and human trafficking (Baklacioglu 2017). According to data by the Eurostat, 75% of the victims of human trafficking are women and children and alarmingly 96% of sex trafficking. subsequently, the growth of human trafficking has been on the rise since 2013 in Lebanon, as well as, slavery markets.

Furthermore, the relatively high costs and restriction of renewing residence permits facilitate formal and informal violence against women in camps, bureau administration offices, and in the workplace, correspondingly, 86% of the Syrians are residing without any official permits, hence, many women live in a state of fear of being deported and tend to be isolated within their households to avoid further bureaucratic difficulties that would aggravate their already dire conditions. The status of being unregistered with the UNHCR and the lack of official residence permits accelerates violence against women due to lack of legality and protection, many unregistered women endure sexual violence and exploitation, yet, have no legal basis to report it to local authorities due to their status (Baklacioglu 2017). It truly resembles violence within violence with nowhere to return to for protection. Constructed and empowered by problematic asylum policies. Legal and structural violence limits any opportunity for building a promised sustainable future.

3.2.1.2. Violence against Syrian women: Turkey

Syrian women experiences in Turkey are characterized by the multifaceted forms of violence that intersects with discrimination, gender, ethnicity, lack of employment, and early/forced marriages, alas, gender-based violence has become an epitome of the live of Syrian women. Albeit violence and GBV is a global patriarchal issue, however, the vulnerability of being a female refugee with no

refugee status accelerates violence. Syrian women face dichotomous violence from the host community and from their own community. Being vulnerable in a state that does not have sufficient social policies against gender-based violence tends to empower violent acts and actors by the state's ambiguous indifferences. Being subjected to any form of violence embodies a great risk of psychological and physical effects, however, it also results in gendered consequences, for instance, the possibility of losing one's job due to the employer's harassment and/or pressure from the family after knowing about the GBV incident, it could lead to forced marriages to retain the family's "honor", it also leads to shame and domestic violence, in this case, victim-blaming, and it could also lead to limited social mobility. According to data by UNFPA, 17,870 Syrian women sought safe spaces in 2017 and only 3,189 Syrian women obtained GBV services in the region (UNHCR 2018). The aforementioned data problematically portrays the number of Syrian women that have accessed services is drastically low comparing their population in the host countries. Interpersonal violence is seen as a social phenomenon created by certain arrangement of social institutions that differ greatly between time and space (Walby 2012). It is worth noting that the geographical limitation of the 1951 Geneva Convention is an obstacle when it comes to Turkey's asylum system. Geneva Convention recognizes European asylum-seekers and grants them a refugee status in Turkey, thus non-European asylum seekers are not recognized as refugees and instead are protected with Temporary Protection in Turkey (Dromgold 2015). Temporary protection has paved the way for acute structural violence to take place that has been targeting Syrian women, temporary protection triggered marginalization, securitization, victimization, and have restricted access to human rights, thus, violent (Baklacioglu 2017). Structural violence embodies biopolitics that not only constructs but produces, reproduces, and normalizes hegemonic gendered relations. Temporary protection targets both sexes, however, it further marginalizes women and the LGBTI+ community (Baklacioglu 2017). Violence intercepts the private sphere by its rapid public sphere manifestation. Which resembles what Purakayastha defines as continuum of violence, where violence from public spheres (international, national, and

community arenas) manifests the private sphere (Purkayastha 2009).

Similarly, in Turkey, Syrian women in camps seek safety and self-sustainability through employment, however, due to lack of employment in the border cities of Turkey where the camps are located, many resettled in Istanbul in search of jobs and self-sustainability (Baklacioglu 2017). It has been accounted for in Istanbul that Syrian women endure inhumane conditions and reside in dire accommodations', and in many cases, with low income or no financial resources, and are subjected to further violence and exploitation in order to secure a shelter, measures of violence inflicts women in many degrees that various women were coerced into putting up with transactional sex and/or rape by landlords and employers to keep their accommodation and/or job, in many cases, to secure the husband's job, there has been an incident in Küçükpazar where a woman had to engage in a sexual relation with her husband's boss in order for him to keep it (Baklacioglu 2017). Another form of violence against Syrian women that takes place in Turkey is women enslavement. The discourse of vulnerability of refugee Syrian women provides both the mechanism and the basis for the victimization, legitimization and supremacy of the male in Turkey that feels entitled to buy/sell/abuse and enslave Syrian refugee women. The aforementioned structural violence directly targets the young women from all aspects, precisely, from the man that are enslaving, from the degradation, from the society, from local authorities', and from her community. According to (Baklacioglu 2017) field-work research, a young man working at the bazaar in Bakirköy was bought a 15-years-old Syrian bride by his father for 500 TL, when he was asked why he sought the marriage, he stated:

“She has a mouth, but not tongue! Always loyal and silent. I do not let her go out, to not open her eyes! She fully depends on me! She is fully mine! Everybody buys Syrian brides! Give her some bread, and this is enough, no need for more.” (Baklacioglu 2017)

According to another research that was conducted in Izmir, forced displacement paved a way for violence against Syrian women and girls, due to the families'

financial strains, early and forced marriages are seen as a tool of survival and a viable option to secure both an income and to ease financial burden on the family, according to the respondents, both adult Syrian women and young Syrian women did not approve of early marriages, referring it as a shameful act. On the other hand, some young Syrian men thought early marriages are acceptable in order to relieve some financial burden on the family and/or to support and contribute to the family financially, the participants also acknowledged the occurrence of intimate partner violence (IPV) due to early marriages regardless of the benefits of early marriages and the notion of early marriages as a tool to protect adolescent girls from sexual violence that is associated with employment for example, the changing social dynamics is prevalent due to financial hardships, accordingly:

“Before, in Syria, if the husband beat his wife and she talked about it to her parents they would decide to bring her back home. But when you arrive to Turkey... your financial needs became different. The father of the girl turned out to be like: “Be patient dear, all men beat!” stuff like that...Beating women has become more acceptable... I mean you used to be scandalized by news concerning women being hit by their husbands... now...some people think that you have come to accept these things...because you are unstable and an immigrant” (Wringe, et al. 2019)

Employed Syrian women and girls face street harassment whilst en route to their workplaces, as a result of the pervasive occurrence of street harassment, many Syrian women resort to being escorted by a male family member due to the lack of safety, some young Syrian women that did not get married nor are employed are prone to violence at home. Due to limited social mobility, KADAV’s social worker, stressed:

“It’s easier to visit them [Syrian women] in their households, they feel more safe and they can express themselves more freely”- Project Coordinator, KADAV

Due to the prevalence of violence that targets Syrian girls and women in Turkey,

many families imposed strategies to protect girls and women, one of the strategies is (1) imposed limited mobility (in order to keep them safe at home), (2) early marriages, and the (3) escort of a male family member (in case of commuting to work), all of the aforementioned communal strategies imposes restrictions and disempowers Syrian women which leads to risks of other forms of violence, for instance, early/forced marriages lead to intimate partner violence (IPV), employment in a domestic setting and/or in a factory leads to street harassment and gender based violence at work, and staying at home leads to violence at home (Wringe, et al. 2019).

According to a report conducted by MAZLUMDER, only 6 out of 72 women spoke about their incidents of sexual violence and harassment they have endured in Turkey due to the fear and anxieties of both their community and local population attitude and perceptions. According to the report, a 16-year-old Syrian girl in Izmir stressed about being abused at the hand of a 40-year-old Turkish man in the neighborhood that targeted both her and her friend, she deliberately expressed about being harassed at work by her employer that offered to pay 1000 Turkish Liras to marry his son. Violence and discrimination take different forms in Turkey, a 36-year-old Syrian woman from a Kurdish ethnicity endured discrimination and violence due to her Kurdish ethnicity by relief agencies, stating relief agencies discriminate against their Kurdish ethnicity and tend to help Arab Syrian refugees by providing them with inadequate aid and/or with nothing (MAZLUMDER 2014).

Another crucial aspect of structural violence that manifests the lives of Syrian refugees is legal violence, in particular, living under legal temporality that is the temporary protection in Turkey. Unlike Lebanon and Jordan, Turkey is a signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention, however, the geographical limitation of the 1951 Geneva Convention still remains an obstacle as it benefits European asylum-seekers and not non-European asylum-seekers (Dromgold 2015). Correspondingly, Temporary Protection grants individuals with certain basic rights and services, mostly to Syrians in camps being provided with shelter, food, education, medical and psychosocial support and services (Dromgold 2015) however, in reality,

Temporary Protection in Turkey have subjected Syrian refugees to experience structural violence on the basis of securitization, victimization, and marginalization with a limited access to basic rights (Baklacıoğlu 2017).

It is apparent to observe how structural violence and ambiguity manifest themselves deeply within refugees in Turkey and it is crucial to underline how deeply rooted they are within the Turkish migration policies. Stemming from this aspect of uncertainty, Biehl illustrated the experience of uncertainty that refugees face in Turkey as ‘protracted uncertainty’ that is correlated with indefinite waiting periods, lack and/or imperfect knowledge, precarity of legal status illustrates the picture of the experience of being an asylum seeker in Turkey (Biehl 2015). Furthermore, Biehl illustrated the modus operandi of governmentality that embodies uncertainty with a tremendous governing amplification that serves to contain, demobilize and criminalize asylum-seekers through the normalization of uncertainty (Biehl 2015). Whilst Syrian lives are in a limbo, Syrian women are obligated to survive under the mercy of institutions and NGO’s, despite navigating through the dreadfulness and fears of deportation, loss of shelter, discrimination, and exploitation, violence that exposes the dynamics of formal and informal violence that Syrian women face in exile. Power relations produce violence that is explicitly empowered by institutions and social exploitation which results in the accumulation of the discursive construction that reduces the notion of Syrian women as hopeless victims, thus, reinforces victimization, these discursive discourses are merely governmental strategies to justify and normalize what is already, to some extent, normalized in societies, the justification of gender-based violence against Syrian women. In other words, living throughout conflict and/or in exile tends to create a dynamic where the threat of sexual violence and exploitation is used as a medium of control, intimidation and humiliation (Baklacıoğlu 2017).

Turkey introduced Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in 2014 and thereby it was considered to be a milestone of its kind in Turkey that would remedy gaps in the asylum system (Soykan 2012). The implementation of this law coincided with the influx arrival of Syrian migrants in Turkey, however, this law is

embedded in gendered legal violence that inflicts the lives of Syrian women. Stemming from Menjivar and Abrego conceptualization of legal violence, they emphasized that legal violence tends to strengthen the gender axis of stratification as well as the dynamics legal violence possess by reinforcing the rationalized and normalized gender-based violence by its legislation. In other words, law plays a significant role in reinforcing structural violence, it feeds into the discursive discourse that allows female immigrants and refugees to conform to their own dehumanization as part of the social order. Within this context, the state, as an actor, is an enabler of such gendered violence by simply reinforcing more vulnerability and exposure to various ambiguous forms of abuse that targets women and girls as part of their exile journey (Kivilcim 2016). Consequently, Menjivar and Abrego noted the structural violence that is amplified by the law by addressing that legal violence takes place without identifiable perpetrators, we can say, legal violence seems symbolic in that sense, it is normalized as part of the social order. It is safe to say that legal violence amplified by the law reinforces and reproduces discrimination, sexism, and racism as part of the social order that targets vulnerable individuals within the society. Moreover, the Law on Foreigners and Temporary Protection Regulation reinforces gender-roles and reduces the agency of the women to dependency. According to the aforementioned legislation, the women agency comes in two forms: (1) a mother or a wife or (2) a victimized women listed under the category of ‘persons with special needs’, in the women’s case, the special needs fall under pregnancy, a single struggling mother, or the victim of physical and sexual violence (Kivilcim 2016). The legislation ensures women’s constant victimization that reinforces further vulnerability in which feeds into social exploitation and direct violence. It is quite paradoxical that the law implements a gendered paradigm that view women as a vulnerable group instead of implementing measures to prevent abuses. Accordingly, the law and regulations under ‘persons with special needs’ prioritize certain ‘vulnerable’ women to access certain rights, however, ‘vulnerability’ warrants limited privileges for Syrian women within the regime of temporary protection. Albeit it warrants limited privileges, it still limits these women to obtain international protection (Kivilcim 2016).

3.2.1.3. Syrian Trans Sex Workers: The Invisible and the Invincible Queens

According to a report conducted by (Ordek 2017) Syrian trans sex workers face violence due to various socio-political, cultural, and economical reasons, however, there are other factors that contribute to the livelihood of Syrian trans sex workers vary from the local population, among these reasons: xenophobic attitudes and racism towards Syrians, Turkish language skills, attitudes and behaviors toward Syrian trans sex workers from clients and the police, accessibility to services from NGO's, and conservatism within the Syrian neighborhoods, to name a few. Syrian trans sex workers are prone to stigmatization and discrimination and the violence toward them is driven by hatred and xenophobia. Accordingly, the perpetrators are the trans sex worker's intermediaries, clients, criminal groups, police officers, and other sex workers (Ordek 2017). A 26-year-old Syrian trans sex worker in Istanbul narrated their experience as a sex worker by stating:

“We cannot be protected because we work on the street. Sometimes we get more clients than Turkish girls because we are Syrian. The more clients we have, the more perpetrators of violence we encounter. Some clients think that we cannot speak out because we are Syrian. They use violence and extort our money. They spit in our face. They fire at us from inside their car. We go through a lot of things. We cannot go to the police, we are afraid.”

Another 27-year-old trans women in Istanbul that has been targeted by law enforcement stated:

“A couple of weeks later, another police van attempted to capture me. I ran away. They got down the van in the middle of the road and followed me. I thought they'd kill me. They were two of them this time, of whom one was the same cop present in the previous incident. They swore at me. One of them grabbed my hair, kicked at my back. What did I do to be blamed? I am just struggling to earn my bread, nobody gives me a job so I do not do this work.”

The abuse of the law enforcement further stigmatizes syrian trans sex workers, as well as, trigger ambiguous precariousness in their livelihood. Unregistered trans sex workers are live in dire fear due to their illegal status and their illegal work thus limits the chances of seeking help which leads to increased violations and abuse, a 27-year old trans syrian woman in Gaziantep stated:

“I do not want to see cops. I am not registered, I do not have any document. I don’t know how they would treat me if I went there, with such looks. And if I get caught doing this work, they would send me back to Syria. There is a war in Syria. There is DAESH, they throw down people like us from top of buildings. They cut off heads. They rape. So I should not get caught by the police.” (Ordek 2017).

Violence against trans Syrian women intersects with transphobia and xenophobia and they are exposed to vigorous measure of violence vis-à-vis Turkish trans sex workers. Social violence and police violence are the most addressed complaints by Syrian trans sex workers.

4.1. TURKEY AS A REFUGE: BANALITY AND CONTINUUM OF DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE

4.1.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

I interviewed 11 Syrian women during my field-work research and 8 local NGOs, in total I have conducted 19 in-depth interviews. Given the difficulty of reaching the respondents, of course, there is not a representative distribution of the places of origin. 8 out of the 11 women are from Aleppo, 1 is from Homs, 1 is from Latakia, and 1 is from Raqqa. The women were from different social backgrounds.

Majority of the Syrian women I have interviewed are married whilst three women were divorced, 2 out of the 3 divorced women were struggling with their divorce in court, 1 of the cases is not a registered marriage, the marriage was conducted in a religious ceremony. The Syrian woman with the unregistered marriage was subjected to domestic violence, threats of physical violence, with no legal measures and/or protection that can help her due to the nature of her marriage. The other Syrian woman was married in Syria and got a divorce in Turkey, however, when I interviewed her, she was waiting for the judge to finalize her divorce in court in order to process her third country settlement documents, the woman faced tremendous levels of precarity due to the waiting time, financial instability and lack of accommodation.

The age distribution of the women I have interviewed vary between the ages of 23 to 46. 3 out of the 11 Syrian women are between the ages of 23-26, 2 are between the ages of 27-30, 2 are between the ages of 35-38, 2 are between the age of 43-46, and 1 is between the ages of 39-42. The age distribution is in the appendix.

When it comes to the educational level of the women I have interviewed, 3 out of

11 are university graduates with a bachelor degree⁷, the others are equal, 2 are illiterate, never received education and/or was enrolled in an educational institution, 2 women only finished elementary school, 2 finished Middle School (both of the women got married after finishing Middle School) and 2 women hold a diploma from a vocational training institute.

All of the married Syrian women I have interviewed have children except of 1, the number of children vary. 2 women have 2 children, 6 women have 3 children, and 1 woman has 1 child.

I used Snowball as a methodological method to find potential participants for my in-depth interviews, thus the demographic result of the women's town of residence in Istanbul is randomized. 3 out of 11 women I have interviewed live in Yedikule, the interview took place in a cultural center in Yedikule. I have conducted an online interview with a Syrian woman that resides in Mersin. The majority of the women I have interviewed live in the Fatih district of Istanbul.

The majority of the Syrian women I have interviewed declared they are stay-at-home mom and never held a job in their life. 2 out of 3 are illiterate and never received official education, the other woman holds a diploma but never held a job. When I asked the women if they want to work in Istanbul, those that have children said they can't work, those that are older said they have health problems and can't handle working outside of the house.

4.1.1. Basic Factual Information

The most reported form of violence is discrimination followed by domestic violence and verbal harassment. Whilst violence, particularly, indirect violence can be hard to identify/distinguish, other forms of violence such as: (1) verbal

⁷ One of the Syrian woman I interviewed was in her last academic semester in University of Mersin

harassment, (2) psychological abuse, and (3) structural violence. Syrian women are more prone to other forms of violence that could lead to (1) marital rape, (2) coercion, (3) domestic violence, (4) polygamous marriage due to policies and eligibility criteria imposed by international bodies and NGOs. On the other hand, Syrian trans women are not only prone but they are exposed to other forms of violence such as: (1) street violence, (2) kidnap, (3) hate crimes, (4) sexual assault and rape, (5) physical violence and abuse, (6) Intimate partner violence (IPV). Whilst Syrian trans women are not eligible for financial aid, there is a tremendous amount of lack of protection toward trans women. Syrian LGBTI+, in particular, queer men are prone to be subjected to digital violence, Syrians live in a closed community, being queer and visible is seen as a threat, majority of Syrian LGBTI+ prefer to live outside of their community's populated areas due to homophobia that could lead to discrimination, harassment, and hate crimes.

I have interviewed 8 NGOs in Istanbul. 7 out of 8 mentioned domestic violence as severely reported within their organization and/or have handled cases of domestic violence. 4 NGOs mentioned insufficient implementation of policies as a cause of enabling violence against women whilst 6 out of 8 mentioned insufficient policies.

4.1.1.1. Intersecting violence: Domestic violence, role of aid regulations, and state shelters

During my fieldwork in Istanbul I have stumbled upon multifaceted typologies of violence that reproduces and reinforces violence, it's not only a vicious cycle, it's a vicious cycle that produces, reproduces, enables, and reinforces. Due to current financial aid regulations, a family is eligible for financial aid if they have 2 children and above, this kind of regulations have encouraged reproduction among the Syrian community in Turkey solely for eligibility. Syrian women have been subjected to conceive more children due to Red Crescent's financial aid policies. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, I was not able to ask if they have been subjected to marital rape, many lacks the knowledge and/or the acknowledgment of marital rape as well.

However, reproduction to gain more financial aid is a widely spread common practice among the Syrian population in Turkey. According to a local Turkish NGO I have interviewed, the project coordinator stressed about the domestic problems that arises due to these regulations

“Her husband told her that I will divorce you and I will kick you out from the house and I will get another one [wife] to make the kid, it is your choice”
- Project Coordinator, Cultural center, Yedikule

Coercive control intersects with the dynamics of the structural violence that are enabled by governmental institutions such as the Red Crescent and the husband/spouse control of the wife’s mobility. The project coordinator of the local NGO and cultural center have observed certain behavior by their regular women beneficiaries that showcases fear of their domestic partner that clearly prevails coercive control

“I’m always seeing them all of a sudden just 3 of them will stand up from the table and they would just pack up and go and they would say: my husband is coming or he called me and I have to go and hurry and they are just running away” – Project Coordinator, Cultural Center, Yedikule

A Syrian woman have confined her problems with the project coordinator when the coordinator was concerned about her absence and her lack of activity involvement in the center

“Why are you not coming every week or something? Then they'd say: my husband doesn't like me coming here every time, even though he is working, he doesn't want me to spend my time outside the house” – Project Coordinator, Cultural Center, Yedikule

Inequality and constructed gender relations imposes societal expectations of how women should act and behave within not only a society but within a family unit (Western 2013). Gendered patriarchal societal norms and expectations reinforces

violence against women. This often results from societal attitudes that consider men as superior to women which results in the rigid power men occupy in the world and the power they are given to make decision on women's livelihood and on how a family unit should function and behave in the real world (Western, 27). Women are expected to follow the expectation of a worldview that has been put forth by the patriarchal system, alarmingly, women are also expected to be amendable.

According to a local Turkish NGO that provides a cultural and a learning space for Syrian women and kids in Yedikule, the Syrian women beneficiaries are composed of residents of Yedikule, among the 4 women I have interviewed in the center, 1 one of them resides in Zeytinburnu, however she used to be a resident of Yedikule, due to her sons jobs, she moved to Zeytinburnu, she expressed loneliness and lack of a similar cultural center in Zeytinburnu, she visits Yedikule's cultural center very often to mingle around the women and to ease her mental state. The center's project coordinator has stressed that domestic violence is an issue that is extremely sensitive to talk about, due to the nature of the NGO's aims and activities, they lack support to provide psychological help and training in approaching women that are subjected to GBV. Albeit the absence of a structural center that provides help/support to victims/survivors of GBV, Yedikule's project coordinator stressed that the women don't feel safe living with their husbands

“Maybe toward 3 women were being subjected to gender-based violence at their homes by their husbands” – Project Coordinator, Cultural Center, Yedikule

According to another Turkish NGO that provides legal aid to refugees, their Syrian women beneficiaries approached the organization to seek legal help to file for a divorce from their abusive husbands

“They approached Syrian women, mostly to divorce with their husbands because of domestic violence, emotional and psychological and physical abuse, ah, let me see, yes, due to these kind of things and they also approached our organization to change their cities because they have

someone who is interrupting them in the city they live in, as you know, they cannot just change the city where they registered in” – Mülteci Haklari Merkezi, child officer

The child protection officer has informed me that many Syrian minors flee their homes due to domestic violence, there is also a gendered dimension in fleeing from domestic violence within Syrian minors, according to the child protection officer, 80% of the minor beneficiaries were male and 15% are Syrian girls, the low percentages is due to the cultural control that imposes immobility upon the girls, females’ movement is more restricted and controlled vis-a-vis their males’ counterparts. Moreover, MHM’s child officer stressed that there were between 2-3 Syrian girls that have sought to seek refuge in a state shelter due to domestic abuse and child marriages, given the gendered nature of Turkish state shelters, the girls faced restricted movement

“They are mostly locked in the shelter because they are girls you know? And they were not able to use their and they just had one day off, it was more like prison, it’s the word from the girls from the shelter.” – MHM, Child officer

State shelter gendered inequality and control raises many concerns to the livelihood of women and girls one on hand and concerns with exploitation on the other due to lack of transparency and monitoring by local NGO’s

“We were not allowed to go into the shelters, we were more able to visit the shelters that male unaccompanied minors stay, this is the state policies, you know? And the girls were staying with other Turkish girls but they are more special shelters for male refugees’ shelter, male foreigners in Istanbul but not for girls. you can imagine female children are more open to exploitation so they are more careful with NGOs and they just allow their NGOs, you know, politically they were like, some NGO was established by the wife of the president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and they were able to go there any time you want but we were not allowed that much” – MHM, Child officer

Alas exploitation, violence, and gender-based violence has been a common practice in detention centers', shelters, and camps, this exploitative discourse prevails that those gendered issues are not taken as a serious problem by nation-states although it is a human right violation. Common European Asylum System (CEAS) directives indicated the obligation of taking gendered issues into consideration however in practice these directives have so far had slight impact in improving refugee women's livelihood and protection within European asylum systems. Victims/survivors of GBV face both legal and practical obstacles within European asylum systems when trying to access their rights such as services and/or protection (Freedman 2016). Intersectionality provides a framework to not only recognize but analyze this exploitative discourse that is being neglected as a human right violation. Marginalized women are more prone to different forms of violence that is not targeted towards non-marginalized women. In the context of my research, Syrian women refugees are prone to various forms of violence, depending on their location and livelihood status. Women and girls in state shelters are prone to gendered restriction of mobility that is derived from unequal gender relations and the patriarchy, whilst women living with abusive intimate partners, husbands, family members are prone to other form of violence that could be similar to state shelters, women that were subjected to labor exploitation and transactional sex by their employers are exposed to other forms of violence, although the narrative and the setting differs, they all share one common denominator, that is unequal gendered relations. Intersectionality exposes the violent layers marginalized women face in their daily lives, it also reflects women's livelihood while the unequal gendered relations deflects it.

A 30-year-old single Syrian mother I have interviewed at ASAM in a previous fieldwork confided in me when I asked her if she can describe herself generally that her ex-husband was physically abusing her and her children until the landlord evicted her from her home due to complaints of her neighbors, arguing that she is causing a lot of problems as a reason for the eviction. At the time of the interview which took place in 2018, her ex-husband kept threatening to take away her children

“I live in fear, I live in horror due to the threats from his relatives, they are all threatening me.” – 30-year-old Syrian single mother, ASAM

Although the single mother got a divorce, she was waiting for the judge to finalize and sign the divorce paper which was the last required document for the UNCHR third country resettlement, the waiting period created a tremendous amount of precarity

“I really feel that my fate is unknown, I don’t know what will happen then, how my situation will be, and how I will manage to stay in Turkey, I have 4 children, they are not responsible for all of this. I spoke to my lawyer and I started crying a lot... I went to him and narrated my story to him that I have 4 children, I’m on my own, I ended up in the street and the government will take 5 months the least to sign my proof of divorce... What am I going to do during these 5 months? On top of all of this, the actual process of processing my papers, the system... the government... there has to be something quick to be done about this.” – 30-year-old Syrian single mother, ASAM

Unregistered marriages are a common practice among the Syrian community in Turkey, unregistered marriages also intersect with early/forced marriages. All the Syrian women I have interviewed phrased their daughter marriage as “I married her off” in Arabic instead of “she got married”, the latter shows willingness and independent agency of the women while the former shows how the family view young women and girls as a burden. In the case of the Syrian community in Turkey, albeit the reasons are complex, however, the practice of marrying their daughters occurs in order to ease the financial burden as one of the reasons, another reason is a way to protect the daughter and to guarantee her future. According to the literature, early/forced marriages is a practice to secure young women and girls from getting sexually assaulted, it is also a form to protect the “family honor”, these forms of early/forced marriages are more common in camps (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017). A 45-year-old Syrian mother that I interviewed in ASAM

have informed me that her 20-year-old daughter that got married off to another Syrian man has been subjected to abuse

“My daughter Fatima got a divorce and her husband is threatening us with a mafia and he is threatening us with other things so I came here for a consultation, yeah, my daughter doesn’t have a marriage certificate, they couldn’t help us.” – 45-year-old Syrian mother, ASAM

According to the mother, she tried to seek legal help through ASAM, due to the marriage being unregistered and was conducted through a religious ceremony only, no legal help avails due to this situation. When I asked about the nature of the marriage, the Syrian mother informed that this practice is quite common within the Syrian community in Turkey, upon their arrive to Turkey, her Syrian neighbors informed her that this has been the practice of getting married within the community in Turkey, there could be other reasons why this practice has been widely spread, however, according to the Syrian mother

“They fooled us my darling. He told us if we get an official marriage in court, the Syrian regime will take away my son and his life will depend on the Syrian regime, they fooled us, they fooled her father, fooled her brother. We are isolated, we didn’t know what her rights (...) are. The regime will take our son away from us and his papers will end up with the regime... I don’t know... whenever I asked, the neighbors said no one is getting an official marriage, they said we are all getting married without a marriage certificate” – 45-year-old Syrian mother, ASAM

When I asked Mavi Kalem, a local Turkish NGO in Balat about cases of early/forced marriages and child marriages, the program director and the NGO’s psychologist have informed me that those cases are being monitored. I have asked if they consider child and early marriages’ as a form of forced marriage, they informed me that all of them are forced due to lack of consent, according to the organization, there are two reasons why this practice has increased drastically among the Syrian community in Turkey

“The families are afraid that something bad will happen to their daughters so they force them to get married and also most of the husbands are relatives like cousins and the family have a mindset if their daughter stays within their family she’s going to be safe and protected, I think that’s the main motive, also the economical, the second one is the economical motive because one people is... in the household if one person is left then it will affect their economical situation” –Psychologist, Mavi Kalem

Child marriage and child pregnancy tends to be invisible, Multeci Haklari Merkezi child officer informed me that they find out about a child pregnancy when the girl gives birth in the hospital, that’s when they also find out about child marriages solely because they are not registered. The girl’s agency morphs into a forced motherhood

Most marriages have been between cousins and/or family members according to Mavi Kalem’s psychologist, most of the married couple’s age range are either close to each other or a gap of 10 years between the spouses. When I asked if they consider it as a form of incest, they didn’t hesitate to say yes. The program director has always identified another dimension of this problem

“I witnessed that child care giver but legal care giver and they got married but they don’t have any... they are not related but according to the law it’s a care giver but because in law it’s a care giver, it’s also incest, we witnessed that kind of 2 or 3 samples” – Program director, Mavi Kalem

According to the data collected, incest intersects with marriage within the family and early/forced marriage intersects with financial burden. Most of the Syrian women I have interviewed got an early marriage between the ages of 16-17 years’ old. Most of these women come from a rural background with an elementary to Middle school educational status with the exception of 1 that is illiterate. Although reasons for early marriage in Syria has cultural dimensions, however, it has not been as drastic. According to UNICEF, 17.7% of girls married before the age of 18 and 3.4% of girls married before the age of 15 in Syria prior to the eruption of the Syrian

war (Spencer 2015). The practice has morphed into another dynamic where violence and exploitation thrives in it, according to the literature, forced migration intensifies violence. KADAV's psychologist concluded that forced migration intensify violence

“It's the gun of the system as well, rape is the gun of the system as well, towards women and LGBTI+, it is the same, people who are in power use it as a gun, this violence, specifically sexual violence is increasing in war times and also not only towards women but towards men as well, in prisons, in... how can I say? You know there is migration ways? while you are changing from one country to another country, while on the way as well, military forces, some religious groups they are all using this gun towards people and yeah of course its increasing and I think it has a specific name, conflict-based violence towards women and LGBT and children” – Psychologist, KADAV.

Forms of violence Syrian women are subjected to vary from domestic violence, forced marriages, child and unwanted pregnancies, structural violence, and threats of violence embody their livelihood and experiences in Turkey. Lack of protection couples with the risks of living in an isolated community which may be aggravating violence in all of its forms toward the women and girls. Structural violence is a crucial form of violence Syrian women are subjected to that is discussed in details in the next section.

4.1.1.2. Structural violence

Structural violence has been observed and noted during the fieldwork, the manifestation of structural violence is complex, however, like the other typologies of violence, structural violence manifest into a vicious cycle. Besides the labor exploitation Syrian migrants go through in order to secure a living, families inflict structural violence upon their children, mostly, their sons by restricting education

and pressure them into work to support the family. This has been quite a normalized common practice among the Syrian population in Turkey. According to the fieldwork, it is more common among single mothers with no financial support and/or an income. A 35-year-old widowed⁸ Syrian mother from Raqqa narrated her journey to Turkey, although she didn't want to leave Syria, she decided to take the journey to Turkey after the US and allies' operation to take Raqqa from ISIS that took place in 2016. Prior to the US operation, two of her sons migrated to Turkey for work and wired her money to sustain herself. Due to the war in Syria, one of her son's was not able to enroll in a school, after the journey to Turkey, he was not enrolled in a school solely because he had to work to provide for the family, alas he is illiterate. Due to the widowed Syrian mother status, her children are being denied the right of education solely to secure a living. According to the mother, the family's residence status was registered in Bursa, she stressed how they are not eligible for the Red Crescent financial aid in Istanbul due to their province of registration, although Syrians that are registered elsewhere in Turkey have been asked to relocate to the province of residency, the widowed Syrian mother criticized the regulation

“My residence permit is registered in Bursa so I'm not eligible for the Red Crescent card, I'm not eligible for any aid here, not even my children, why? because my residence permit is in Bursa, it's not my fault that it is in Bursa, I came directly to Istanbul but they stopped the registration in Istanbul and I was forced to do it in Bursa, I didn't live in Bursa, my sons work in a tailoring workshop here, if people say why don't you go to Bursa? My children jobs are in Istanbul, and not any employer would hire someone in this age, 13 and 17 years old, only a minority would hire someone in this age, we are scared, my son's employer knows them and they are used to him and that's why I can't risk going to Bursa.” – 35-year-old widowed mother

⁸ The widowed Syrian mother has informed me that her husband was killed by ISIS in Rakka, I didn't ask any further question regarding her husband's death in order not to trigger re-traumatization

of 5, Yedikule

It is clear to see that structural violence is being inflicted initially by the war circumstances, forced migration, governmental institutions and bodies, Turkish labor market, and finally by the mother where she projects structural violence that she has been subjected to upon her children

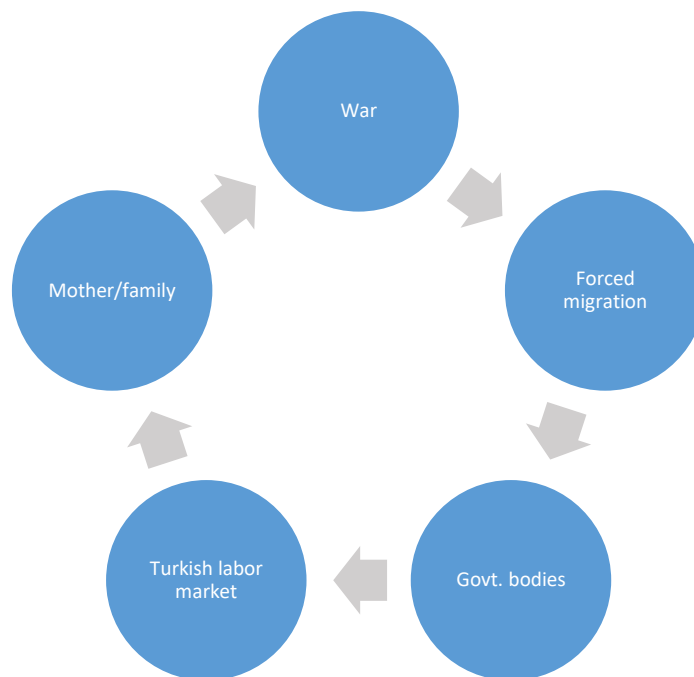


Figure 1 the figure illustrates how violence circulates, reproduces, and enables, thus reinforces multifaceted typologies of violence toward Syrian migrants

Another Syrian mother I have interviewed in ASAM has revealed to me:

“My kids had to leave school, my dream is to provide education to my kids but the situation here is very difficult and my kids are working, we are forced to live this way” – 38-year-old Syrian mother, ASAM

A Syrian woman depicted a story of another married Syrian woman that lacked a residency in Turkey. According to the Syrian woman, Sultaneyup Kaymakamligi informed the woman that she will be eligible to apply for residency if she becomes

pregnant, although the woman had no plans of pregnancy, she got pregnant to be eligible for the residency. The governmental body enforced pregnancy into a precarious woman, the pregnant woman was not entitled to get proper medical care in state hospitals due to lack of residency

“She can’t get a normal residency, she has to be here under temporary protection and the problem she is facing is... well her husband came illegally, he got the temporary protection card but then he got hired in a university so YÖK issued him a work permit so legally he could have a family residency permit for his wife but because she is Syrian she couldn’t get it, it’s so weird... every person tells you a different version of the same rules but she couldn’t get it [...] and they told her if she gets pregnant we will give you the card which it doesn’t make sense, u can either issue a card or not” – 26-year old Syrian woman, Kagithane

Refugee women have been subjected to structural violence that mirrors their social sufferings. The clustering factors that attribute to their livelihood, ranging from the bureaucracy, social policies, healthcare, education to labor exploitation, police violence, discrimination and bigotry from the local population forms their social suffering. The women that I have interviewed that have been relying on their sons to generate an income instead of going to school portrayed a tremendous sense of guilt. I have felt their despair during the field, as an outsider observing their psychopathology, I have felt that there could be a way to this problem, there could be, perhaps, a way for their sons to receive some sort of education through the help of local NGOs, however due to their situation that is merely a situation where one’s needs to solely survive and anything else is a privilege. A woman I have interviewed in ASAM showed a tremendous amount of guilt when she told me her sons have to

work instead of going to school, the woman also correlated it with her own past⁹, there is a link between trauma, pain, and other forms of human sufferings that transcends and re-forms the human experience current situation. It is interesting to observe how the modes of human suffering such as pain and trauma is both individual and collective, local and global.

4.1.1.3. Impact of Insufficient social policies and implementations

Exploitation intersects with insufficient state policies; thus labor exploitation feeds structural violence in a way where it manifests in a multifaceted form of violence. According to Mavi Kalem's psychologist and program director, the livelihood of the family has to be sustainable, taking the boy out of the factory is not a solution, due to lack of financial aid and/or inadequate financial support, it will restrain the family financially, especially in the case of divorced and single mothers. However, this is a sacrifice done on behalf of the child that embodies many structural problems that deprives the child from education and places a great amount of responsibility where they are obligated to perform like adults in order to provide for the family, it transforms the child agency from a pupil to a worker. According to Mavi Kalem's director, the boy will be replaced with another one the next morning and it won't end the vicious cycle.

The lack of sufficient social policies and implementation is fostering structural violence upon Syrian migrants in Turkey. Mavi Kalem's psychologist strongly affirmed insufficient social policies are affecting the lives of Syrian women in Turkey, the psychologist added that there should be a support mechanism to support the women financially. MHM's child officer concluded the lack of social policies,

⁹ The Syrian woman was born and raised in peripheral Aleppo. She didn't receive any education and had to work in the family's farm from a young age. Her duties included milking the cows and harvesting vegetables. She had dreams of educating her children, however due to the war and forced migration, providing education was still a mere dream that seemed impossible to attain. The woman believed that it is a cycle that is repeating, indicated some sort of karma.

implementation, and protection that has been enforced by the patriarchal system

“In law everything is great, especially the law for foreigners and international protection, there are really good articles about asylum but we cannot see it in the implementations, yeah, it’s different, completely different, if you look at the news, you will see the difference, maybe you follow the case of other women that were abused and killed by their husbands or partners and we see that like law officers do not do their work well, we see if the woman gets murdered by her partner, we see that in the process there were too many things to be done but were never done by the police, by the judge, and so on” – Child Officer, Mülteci Haklari Merkezi

When I approached the same topic with KADAV’s psychologist, she illustrated the lack of social policies in Turkey and how the lack of policies and implementation is a problem that is paving the way for violence against women in Turkey

“Not only social policies but also in law, the law doesn’t mean it’s written somewhere, it has to be in the implementation, and it has to be very connected to each other with lots of ministries and NGO’s and it’s all connected with media or, yeah, they are all connected to each other, social policies are of course not enough, and in every sense it has to be inclusive in every kind of policies, I mean, they are creating something and they are... the process is not like this, they will, for example, in creating a policy for any kind of problem, they cannot change to make it inclusive, in the beginning they have to make it inclusive, to be organized for all people regarding the societal norms as well, so in the society when the woman is exposed to violence and its increasing day by day then you have to consider from the beginning, you can’t make this policy inclusive after some steps, so yes, in every sense, for example, I’m very entering prisons and the woman in prisons that are LGBTI+ prisons, when we check the policies, we see nothing regarding the women, and nothing regarding LGBTI+ people, for example, all prisons are organized and built for men, it is something like

this, a woman cannot even commit a crime” – Psychologist, KADAV

KADAV’s psychologist illustrated the lack of inclusivity and implementation and how such a system is enabling violence against women, as well as the socially constructed concept of how such a system is constructed for men. Mavi Kalem’s program director and psychologist referred to lack of implementation by authority as a way to protect the family unit. Accordingly, domestic violence and violence against women are not taken seriously by the police and the judicial system

“You might hear this a lot, women going to police to complain about domestic violence and the police says that’s your husband, go back home and give him another chance, or even giving the decision to be apart a man can kill them or if this case is going to court, the judge says okay that man is well behaved in court.” – Program director, Mavi Kalem

The lack of social policies is prevalent; however, insufficient implementations of existing policies are rather acute. Due to lack of social policies and insufficient implementations, lack of protection is part of the equation. People in authority endanger women live by the lack of protection in which it contributes to violence against women in general. Mülteci Haklari Merkezi Child Officer addressed this problem by narrating the reality of it:

“Women were abused and killed by their husbands or partners and we see that like law officers do not do their work well, we see if the woman gets murdered by her partner, we see that in the process there were too many things to be done but were never done by the police, by the judge, and so on” – Child Officer, Mülteci Haklari Merkezi

Inadequate and/or lack of implementations is acute in Turkey. 7 out of 8 NGO staff I have interviewed emphasized on the lack of implementations and social policies.

According to the data I have gathered, insufficient policies intersect with domestic violence. It is clear to see how the lack of policies fosters domestic violence and

violence against women.

4.1.1.4. From Living in Limbo to Forced Deportation

Due to recent regulations, Syrians that are not registered in Istanbul were given a deadline to relocate to their province of registration. There have been various cases of personal testimonies and from local NGO's that signify some of the deportations were forced rather than voluntarily. I asked a Syrian woman that manages a social entrepreneur project in Istanbul about what she thinks of the deportations, she stated there has been political tension between the Turkish and Syrian community due to the raise of nativism that was deteriorated in Turkey's recent local elections

“The Syrian card was used in speeches in the elections. Some people found this as an opportunity to express that they don't want us. Some people don't know Turkish and they had to sign Turkish papers without knowing that it's deportation. They caught people everywhere but the center of deportation buses was in Esenyurt.” – 45-year-old Syrian woman

Another Syrian woman narrated the deportation story of her friend:

“it's terrible, my husband's friend was deported, he was living in a shared place with other guys and somebody knocked on their door and it was the police, everyone was deported, they didn't even have the chance to get their stuff, they were taken, put into a bus, there were like 6 buses and they went straight to Idlib and the problem is if you are in Idlib, you can't go to any other city in Syria.” – 24-year-old Syrian woman, Kagithane

Some of the women I have interviewed stressed fear of deportation

A Kurdish Syrian single mother narrated to me her worries of the possibility of getting deported, fear of being deported overshadowed her daily anxieties besides securing an income when her financial aid was going to come to an end. Her fear

of deportation emerged due to the social tension that was prior to ‘forced deportations’ that took place in August, 2019.

“To be honest, when people in Turkey talk about deporting Syrians, that scares me a lot honestly because I don’t want to go back to Syria” – 28-year-old Kurdish Syrian Single Mother, ASAM

Although seeking refuge in Europe seemed more promising, however, I have observed from the woman that familiarity of the livelihood in Turkey seems more comfortable than immigrating to a foreign land alone and starting over again. The woman elaborated more on how beautiful Istanbul is and how Islam is an important factor to her positionality. The woman also stressed fears of her son being exposed to norms in the West that he is not familiar with. Despite her lack of financial security, choosing to reside in Turkey than in Europe was the mother’s way of “protecting” her son.

Due to recent policies, Syrians were asked to relocate to their province of residence in Turkey, this policy triggered a collective fear of deportation whereas prior to the policy it was subjective to the refugee condition, like the example of the Kurdish mother. A 23-year-old Syrian mother confided in me her families’ fears and acute anxiety of deportation

“I’m struggling with the kimlik [residence]. My residence permit is not from here [Istanbul], I got my residence in Hatay and until now they didn’t change our city and due to the recent regulations [deportation] we are suffering. I’m trying to change our city to Istanbul, I have an official document from a state hospital that indicates my son needs to be treated in Istanbul, we’ve been told that we can change the registered city in the residence permit, we tried but it didn’t work, its hopeless...” – 23-year-old Syrian Mother, Cultural Center in Yedikule

I have asked the woman if they were trying to change the province of registration with the official document they have obtained from the state hospital that indicates

her son has to be treated in Istanbul instead of Hatay

“A lot, we are not even entitled to get the Red Crescent financial aid card due to the residence permit because the registered city is not Istanbul, not even the school card, my daughter is not eligible to get the student card too due to the residence permit, I have been to many NGOs’ here and because my residence is not registered in Istanbul, they decline to help, there is no help” – 23-year-old Syrian woman, Cultural Center, Yedikule

It is clear to observe how temporary protection and Turkey’s residency regulations created various obstacles to Syrians living in Turkey. They are not entitled for any aid due to their province of registration. Syrians migrate to Istanbul for many reasons, I have observed during the two field-works that I have conducted that Syrians preference to migrate to Istanbul is mainly for job opportunities and for established networks and community. When I asked the woman about the difference of the livelihood in Hatay and in Istanbul, she recounted:

“There is a huge difference, its expensive here [Istanbul], in terms of living expenses and rent however work opportunities are better here [Istanbul]. My husband’s work is better here. In Hatay, we were able to save money, here we can’t save money at all! Rent in Hatay was 400 Turkish Liras and here it is 1000 Turkish Liras, there is a huge difference when it comes to bills... sometimes our rent and bills go up to 1400 Turkish Liras” – 23-years-old Syrian woman, Cultural Center, Yedikule

Working and living elsewhere in Turkey is more affordable according to the Syrians I have interviewed who have lived briefly in Hatay before relocating to Istanbul, however, work opportunities are scarce. Although Istanbul is a hub for various job opportunities, alas, they are exploited. It is apparent that job opportunities and/or established community trumps the compromise of not being eligible for financial aid and due to recent regulations, free healthcare in state hospitals.

The woman has also confided in me that her husband was caught twice by the police

when the regulation was passed in the summer, the woman stated:

“It happened to my husband twice! While he was going to work but the police officers were decent enough, they told him: ‘why are you here? your kimlik is in Hatay’, he said: ‘I work here and I’m trying so hard to get a work permit’ and they let him go” – 23-year-old Syrian woman, Cultural Center, Yedikule

All the women mentioned financial struggles while emphasizing how beautiful Istanbul is and how Istanbul beauty attracts them, alas, they can’t afford to experience Istanbul

“Here in Turkey, specifically in Istanbul there are many pretty things all around however the problem is finance. It’s mostly financial, you feel like you are lacking, you feel less.” – 28-year-old Kurdish Syrian Single Mother, ASAM

Temporary protection impedes refugee women’s access to services and protection, “forced” deportation and every day threat of deportation has a major impact on the women’s overall well-being. I have observed during the in-depth interviews the women showed great amount of distress when they talked about the topic. The level of acute anxiety coupled with despair transcended the dreadfulness of living in limbo within the asylum system. As an immigrant woman in Istanbul, Turkish bureaucracy is a scary tell-tale that only comes out of Kafka’s books. It is what Arendt refers to “tyranny without a tyrant”. Living undocumented and/or in a different registered province in Turkey overshadows

4.1.1.5. Violence is not on the Spectrum: Violence against Syrian LGBTI+ and Sex Workers

When it comes to Syrian LGBTI+, the varying degrees of violence they are subjected to is horrendous. The different dynamics forms ultra-level of horrific levels of violence. According to KADAV’s psychologist Syrian LGBTI+ have been

exposed to digital violence. Accordingly, Syrian LGBTI+ receive online threats and texts from family and radical religious terror groups such as ISIS. According to KADAV's psychologist, ISIS affiliated people find out about the LGBTI+ individual either because Syrians live in a closed community, thus, chances of the LGBTI+ individual might get exposed to the community and/or they come out to their families in Syria and flee to Turkey for refuge, due to stigmatization and shame, the family arranges it with ISIS affiliated in Turkey individuals via Syria to threaten them and alas, might led to hate crime and death. On the other hand, the coordinator of the previous AMAN LGBTI+ shelter in Taksim informed me that digital violence is quite common in the Syrian LGBTI+ community, however, Syrian LGBTI tend not to come out to their families, most cases, the families found out and the LGBTI+ individuals fled to Turkey for refuge. KADAV's psychologist have had cases of Syrian LGBTI+ fleeing violence from family and/or radical groups

“if it come out then generally families are threatening and the person for example after migration or maybe violence from Syria escape from this threat to turkey or within turkey then some families are create connections with organizations to find this person in order to kill and also in for example Iraq or Syria this religious groups are also, without the family connection, are... it's really like this, it's like they are catching LGBTI+ if they come out and then they're killing and on the news we know they are, I don't know how can I say... so sometimes its directly from this religious groups or it is from the family connection as well and when a person arrive to Istanbul or any other satellite city lots of times if they know the mobile phones, they are sending so many threatening messages and if for example a kind of video or picture or something that tells this person is gay or lesbian or something and then it's used as a threat for this person and generally people are trying to change their mobiles and their social media and everything but you know it's a very closed community as well so it's not easy to, yeah, some people can do it and for some of them is very threatening and some of them are

followed by and yeah It's the general thing happening..." – Psychologist, KADAV

Living in a closed community can act both as a safe space and as a space that enables violence. In most cases, closed communities act as a safe space for men. On the contrary, forced migration fosters and intensifies violence. According to a Syrian woman that manages Knit Istanbul¹⁰:

"They've got the proper timing to show up this trait. It's like a virus that found a decent environment to produce. I'll tell you about some incident. In case of wars and public displacement, people don't change but the masks they wear fall down and everyone look clearly who they are. Those who didn't manage to find a way out of Homs city, they used to move to my neighborhood in Waer. And when Waer neighborhood was bombed we all had to leave. Those who have family used to stay with their relatives and those who don't have family they used to rent. And those who couldn't rent they stayed at schools. I worked on receiving families and provide them with simple things in order to give them opportunity to stand up on their feet. I saw two talking about someone who threw his mother and his brother away to the street because he thought it's a temporary displacement a few months and then he couldn't stand them in his house so he kicked them out. This person was acting like he cares. He put his mother and his brother on door and told them to go find their lives away from him. i.e.: any bad action it has motives inside the person which are being triggered by certain circumstances. He's trying to find an excuse to himself. Deep inside they have the intention the only difference is war circumstances" – 47-year-old Syrian woman, Knit Istanbul

The psychopathology of the individuals is also crucial in order to analyze violence as a whole. According to a 23-year-old bisexual Syrian girl in Mersin, one of her

¹⁰ Knit Istanbul is a social entrepreneur project that involves knitwear and knitted toys produced by Syrian women as a way to generate a minimum income

gay Syrian friends was abruptly threatened and stalked by an ISIS affiliated person in Gaziantep due to living in a closed community, the neighbor found out he was gay and proceeded to terrorize him

“Some of his neighbors found that he's gay. One of them is ISIS member. My friend lived in Gaziantep. And one of his neighbors was one of them. He used to scare my friend. Sometimes waits until my friend goes outside the house. He breaks into the house. He wouldn't steal anything just to scare him that I know about you. He would send him messages that he knows if he's inside or outside the house. I'm watching the lights and I know everything. And my friend was terrified he used to sleep with lights on because he was scared. He changed the house 2-3 times and the guy followed him for 2-3 houses and he was real.” – 23-year-old bisexual Syrian woman, Mersin

The bisexual woman recounted her struggles of coping with verbal harassments, although the woman speaks fluent Turkish and is an active member of the queer community in Mersin, she still faces verbal harassments

“As a Syrian I get harassed like a lot. Would be like: you ran away from your country and you're a traitor and they say bad things about Syrians [in front of me] so it is still harassment” – 23-year-old Bisexual Syrian woman, Mersin

The bisexual woman position reminds me of how some women and girls that don't fit in a particular stereotype of a social identity often hear: “you are not like the others” and when queer women stand out against the norm from a particular geographical location, their identity losses belongingness that does not fit in the East and West dichotomy. In short, too “eastern” for the West and too “westernized” for the East. This is something I have seen many queer women from the Middle East struggle with. On the other side of the coin is the fetishization of queer women from the Middle East in the “West” that need to be “saved” is problematic as it reinforces stereotypes against a sexual orientation minority group.

Besides the fetishization of queer women and the West savior complex, digital violence is an acute problem that targets Syrian LGBTI+ in Turkey. I have interviewed Hevi LGBT, an LGBTI+ NGO in Taksim about digital violence, the coordinator informed me that this kind of violence has been drastically increasing against Syrian LGBTI+. Syrian LGBTI+ are threatened by Islamic groups and/or people that are affiliated with Islamic groups, mostly, ISIS. Syrian LGBTI+ get threatened by unsolicited text messages, online harassment that leads to physical stalking. Many Syrian LGBTI+ were forced to change their phone numbers and their accommodation due to unsafety

“We have a beneficiary, she is in Urfa. She contacted us from Urfa, she is being threatened by her family and from a religious group there. We assigned a lawyer and our lawyer friends applied for help but we can’t do anything more than that. Because LGBT killings and murders in Turkey are not seen as hate crimes... it’s like telling the woman [beneficiary] go and die then we will see what we can do...”– Hevi LGBT

According to Hevi LGBT, Syrian trans women face physical and sexual violence by clients, partners, and are subjected to street violence as well. Syrian trans sex workers, according to Hevi, work in the Tarlabaşı, they are marginalized in the society and more marginalized in their sex work due to their social status and identity. 80% of the sex workers in Tarlabaşı are Syrian sex workers.

When I approached Aman Shelter’s¹¹ former manager for an interview, he narrated to me the different intersectional forms of violence that Syrian trans women face on a daily basis in Istanbul. Given the fact that Syrians tend to live in a closed community, accelerating amount of homophobia and transphobia is highly to occur, according to the manager of the LGBTI+ shelter, Syrian trans women and sex workers prefer to live in Beyoglu, to be more precise, in Taksim, away from the

¹¹ Aman shelter that was located in Taksim was shut down in February, 2019. The shelter continued its activities in a private accommodation in the same area. Although it has been shut down, the manager is still carrying the same activities through the help of online findings by individuals

Syrian populated areas. Moving away from the community could serve as a protection mechanism to protect one's identity and liberty, however, socially could be more isolating. According to Aman's former manager, Syrian trans women prefer to stay away from the Syrian community as much as possible, there has been unavoidable interaction between them through applying to third country resettlement, Syrian trans women were verbally harassed by other asylum-seeking Syrians in the waiting area according to Aman's manager. Violence against Syrian trans women take form in various intersectional ways, the most reported forms of violence are: (1) Intimate partner violence (IPV), (2) violence by clients (if they are sex workers), (3) violence in the streets, and (4) transphobia. Intimate partner violence (IPV) was reportedly mentioned 5 times in the interview. IPV took place both inside the shelter and outside of the shelter.

“Transwoman was beaten by her ex-boyfriend. She wanted to go to police. She had scars but her eyes were bad so she went to the police.” – Aman LGBTI, ex-manager

The manager has informed me that there has been a kidnap situation where a trans woman was kidnapped by one of her clients and was kept captive for the 3 consecutive days until she escaped and went to the shelter. The lack of police protection is highly apparent when it comes to trans women. According to the data I have collected, trans women get dismissed by authority, minimized and further dehumanized by the police. When Aman went to report the kidnapping to the police, the police simply said: “how do you know she was kidnapped, give us a proof!” When a group of trans women were beaten up in Taksim square by a group of people, the police dismissed them by saying: “get out of here! You are prostitutes”

Syrian trans sex workers tend to work around Tarlabaşı. It has been their sex work territory, Hevi LGBTI informed me that Syrian trans sex workers work for as low as 20-30 Turkish Liras and the maximum amount has been 50 Turkish Liras. Lack of protection accelerates violence towards trans sex workers, however, being a Syrian trans sex worker, a refugee, and unregistered in Istanbul creates a dynamic

where horrific forms of violence takes place in. Thus, direct violence is only one step away. Violence takes place both in public and private spaces. According to the data, transphobia intersects with hate crimes. Hate crime surge up at any given moment in the streets of Tarlabası, the lack of police protection is enabling further hate crimes against trans women. A transwoman was stabbed in the streets of Tarlabası and had her phone stolen by a potential client according to Aman's manager. Hate crimes can occur at any given moment, although the perpetrators may be individuals that are not clients and/or potential clients, it could be someone the trans women had zero interaction with which may trigger a horrifying thought that danger is lingering at every corner

“The other incidents they happened by strangers. One time it happened by taxi drivers. They ganged up on 2 transwomen and they beat them” - Aman LGBTI Shelter, Manager

The embodiment of violence against Syrian trans women in the public space is street violence and in the private sphere is intimate partner violence (IPV). Violence against trans women embodies multifaceted forms of violence, however, its banal and thoughtless. The patriarchal system views gender as binary, two genders on the extreme end of the spectrum, blurring everyone else that exists on the spectrum, thus dehumanized. KADAV's psychologist articulated her view towards masculinity, that is, fragile and toxic

“Homophobia, it's also gender-based violence because you know this is the dynamic, I am the man and this is my manhood and you are not of this manhood and I have the right to do anything, I can do, I can change you, you can become a man, or then you have to obey my manhood, so then it's of course... even, for example, heterosexual white non-trans cis males from upper classes also do this gender violence to males who are coming from lower classes, you know, so not only... the one who define themselves part of this patriarchal system” – KADAV, psychologist

Violence and discrimination against Syrian LGBTI and trans women emerge from

the social existence of homophobia and transphobia from the local population and people in authority and from the Syrian local community. Homophobia and transphobia transcend all social, race, and ethnic divisions and manifests abruptly within the lives of LGBTI+. Trans women are exposed to violence from the police, streets, clients, community, and intimate partners. The lack of protection to LGBTI+ people in Turkey couples with regulations of temporary protection that enables further risks to their livelihood in Turkey. In the next section, I will discuss discrimination Syrian migrants' face in Turkey.

4.1.1.6. Violence as a Metaphor: Discrimination

Discrimination is an everyday reality for Syrian migrants in Turkey, the level of discrimination that Syrian migrants face have reached a dehumanized level due to the social sufferings that is attributed to their current conditions as refugees with no refugee status in a country where social tolerance toward Syrians have been drastically decreasing. Discrimination intersects with violence due to its ambiguity and the impact it has on the lives of the dehumanized. Discrimination, in the recent months, has led to the deprivation of receiving medical care and dispersing medicine prescribed from state hospitals. Syrian migrants receive free medical care in state hospitals and free medications. However, many factors, such as discrimination, nativism, and xenophobia have led to some individuals to pursue an individualistic act of structural violence.

Recent state regulations of relocating to the province of registration have drastically increased discrimination and dehumanization toward Syrian migrants in Turkey. Some of the women I have interviewed have faced discrimination and their medical needs have been rejected in state hospitals, although these xenophobic attitudes were present before the recent state regulations, however, the regulation has led to an increase of xenophobic attitudes that accelerated discrimination to extraordinary levels. A Syrian woman I have interviewed in an Assyrian cultural center narrated an incident she has encountered in a state hospital:

“I went to the hospital so I can measure my blood pressure, they didn’t measure it because my kimlik is in Bursa, just because of the location of the kimlik they refused to admit me in the hospital and I just wanted to measure my blood pressure... I was feeling dizzy that I fainted, one of the girls here took me to the hospital and they rejected me, I don’t even have the right to go to the hospital” – 35-year-old Syrian woman, Cultural Center, Yedikule

Those attitudes were already present, a woman I interviewed last year in ASAM narrated a similar experience of being rejected by state polyclinics in her neighborhood

“My son fell in the garden and injured his thigh, he needed stitches... the two polyclinics near where we live refused to admit my son to the clinic for treatment” – 30-year-old Syrian woman, ASAM

Depriving someone from healthcare is what Hannah Arendt refers to as the banality of evil. Discrimination is a mere act of thoughtlessness, it’s a sub-subordinate of violence. It is also paradoxical for healthcare staff to reject someone who needs medical care, it contradicts their oath. According to (Freedman, Kivilcim and Baklacioglu 2017), unregistered refugees are more prone to dire levels of precarity, thus they are more dehumanized and marginalized. Discrimination in state hospitals is as acute as the discrimination Syrian migrants’ face in public spaces

“When I went to the hospital for my son Ibrahim, the minute the doctor found out we were Syrians, she couldn’t even look at me, she looked disgusted.” – 45-year-old Syrian woman, ASAM

All the women I have interviewed have faced discrimination in Turkey in their daily lives. The women face discrimination in the streets, bazaars, and hospitals. Some of the women are discriminated against by their neighbors.

Verbal harassment intersects with discrimination according to the data I have collected. When I approached the question to the women in a cultural center in

Yedikule, the women informed me that the residents of the neighborhood of Yedikule harass them verbally, aggressively telling them to “go back to Syria”, all of the women showed devastation when they narrated their stories of being verbally attacked by the local population of Yedikule. According to the project coordinator of a cultural center in Yedikule, discrimination and violence that Syrian women beneficiaries face in Yedikule has two dynamics: (1) psychological abuse from the neighborhood’s local women, and (2) verbal harassment from the neighborhood’s local men. The center does not address violence against women and gender-based violence, however, the coordinator has informed me as far as she knows, 3 Syrian beneficiary women are being subjected to domestic violence at home by their husbands whilst simultaneously facing discrimination, psychological abuse and verbal harassment in the neighborhood by the local people

“It’s a small neighborhood by the way, it’s also an underprivileged one, all the refugee populated area, it’s not luxurious, most of them sharing the same occupation with the Syrians, relatively in better conditions but there is an on-going political tension I must say, the local people don’t want them here anymore, as you know in the last election, Fatih district made a huge surprise and voted for the secular party which is surprising for that district, when I saw its more common between children but when it was targeted to the women it was just the woman and sometimes, 1 or 2 were males, and they were just saying aggressive words and some curses and threats. The Syrian women just don’t know what to do in this situation, sometimes with this distance [face-to-face, few inches away] yelling to you, they are not usually targeting the personality but how they raise the kids, they are always saying you don’t know how to raise the kids, what kind of kid is this? You don’t look after when you give birth to them, the most common one is you don’t behave like you are a guest. It is always the same thing, it’s our neighborhood and until now we never encountered such thing until you came here, just make sure that your kids behave or you would be responsible for what happens and these are the males talk. for the female, they were not

that aggressive but they were more, you know, they know where it hurts, they were saying because of your kids, I made my children shift to another classroom because I don't want them to be with your kids and please make sure the kids behave because you don't know how to raise children, you don't know that we are culturally different and you think we have similarities but we don't. They were also implying that if you get back to Syria, if you don't deal with this behavior of your kids, when you go back to Syria and go back home, you will also struggle a lot and I'm saying this for you.” – Project coordinator, Cultural center, Yedikule

According to the interviews I have conducted with the women in Yedikule's cultural center, verbal harassment drastically increased when the Turkish government passed a deadline for Syrians to move to their city of registration and alleged deportations. When I asked a 24-year old woman in the center about the discrimination they face in the neighborhood, she narrated:

“To be honest, there wasn't discrimination before, there was no discrimination, Turks were looking at us normally, now, I had 2-3 incidents, a woman approached me and said ‘go back to Syria. You are Syrian, why are you here? Leave this country, git, go back to Syria’ this didn't happen before” – 24-year-old Syrian woman, Yedikule

When I asked the 24-year-old woman why discrimination has increased in the neighborhood, she confided:

“The number of Syrians increased, could be a reason, I don't know, recent regulations, deportation...” - 24-year-old Syrian woman, Yedikule

Although facing discrimination is rather collectively inflicted upon Syrians in general, interpreting discrimination is subjective. During the fieldwork, I came across different mechanisms whilst approaching the subject of discrimination, self-blame was a common pattern that emerged in the field. I have observed an emergence of self-blame that shapes the Syrian women experience in Istanbul. Self-

blame did not emerge due to increasing tension and discrimination due to Turkey's nativist approach in the recent local elections and the recent policies of relocating to the province of registration, it has been there prior to the regulations. I have observed it during a prior field-work in Istanbul about Syrian's livelihood. In the previous fieldwork. I asked a woman I have interviewed in ASAM about her relationship with people from Turkey, she stated:

“My God protect them, I don't want any harm but some people don't accept me, we get very upset, we talk about it for a bit and then we just say may God forgive them. It's their right, it's their country” – 45-year-old Syrian Woman, ASAM

However due to this year's local elections and recent regulations, self-blame still emerged as a pattern of coping mechanism, the reasoning absorbed the anti-Syrian sentiments and morphed accordingly. A widowed Syrian woman I have interviewed narrated to me why she thinks discrimination against Syrians have been increasing

“Maybe because we stayed longer [overstayed], they think Syrians are... they say before Syrians came here, it wasn't that expensive here, there was no inflation, when Syrians came, things got more expensive, but it also got more expensive to the Syrian, some people think Syrians live on the expense of the Turkish government. Once a woman came and told me: "they say that Syrians receive a salary from Erdogan, they even say widowed Syrian women get free housing", I told her: not at all! Some Syrians make Turkish people hate them, some people rent houses and don't pay rent, they ruin things and they ruin it for all Syrians” – 35-year-old Syrian Woman, Cultural Center, Yedikule

It is clear to observe the self-blame dichotomy of the Syrian woman, anti-Syrian sentiment forms her opinion to justify nativism and discrimination against Syrians and their positionality in Turkey that is fabricated by rumors shapes her opinion of all Syrians in Turkey and as a refugee Syrian woman in which it tends to accelerate the attempt of accepting one's precarious livelihood solely based on imagined

identity mirrored by the local narrative and discourse, firstly, as a Syrian, then as a refugee and lastly, as a woman.

Even though I cannot relate to the experience of Syrian women, however, being a woman upholds a burden of accepting pain and suffering, as if we cannot live without pain and that life functions this way. As women, we are expected to fight our way through life, do we know how to live without fighting through the patriarchy, cultural norms, societal attitudes and harassments? Being a migrant, refugee, queer makes every day harassments not only possible but the norm, a normalized way of living that can be, symbolically comprehended as, a new life, life in diaspora. Syrian women in Turkey are subjected to daily verbal harassments from the local population.

“There is [discrimination], of course, there is discrimination. Turkey tolerated Syrians, it has been 9 years, it has been too long, there are also people that ruined things, not all Syrians are good, some people came and ruined this country, they won’t be okay with it, I’m not against them but I wish to go back to my country” – 35-year-old Syrian woman, Yediukule

It is apparent to observe that the Syrian migrants carry around the burden sentiment where they feel they have overstayed their welcome in a society that is no longer tolerating them. This mechanism led Syrians to Other themselves which is a mere projection of the anti-Syrian sentiment in Turkey that has been fostering nativism and xenophobia where prior to the overwhelming anti-Syrian attitudes, Syrians were ‘tolerated’, however, the shift of the brotherhood and guest discourse to the burden-hood discourse has impacted the psyche of Syrian migrants in Turkey in which they feel they are no longer tolerated, it has caused, according to my observations, Syrians to adapt, what I like to introduce as ‘reverse-scapegoating’ and self-blame as a coping mechanism. All of the Syrian refugees I have

interviewed portrayed reverse-scapegoating during the in-depth interviews, it was both saddening and intriguing to observe this phenomenon that is not assigned to a particular gender, nevertheless it is collectively adopted by Syrians. In a previous field-work research, I have interviewed Syrian men in Sultanbeyli about their livelihood in Turkey. All of the interviewees used phrases to justify discrimination such as: “it’s their country, they have the right to do whatever they want”, “we left our country” which illustrates the local Turkish discourse of viewing Syrians as traitors that abandoned their country in time of war. On the other hand, the women stressed the same sentiment, that it is their fault and should endure what their current situation is inflicting upon them. Women’s acceptance of discrimination and bigotry is merely a coping mechanism.

A 26-year-old Syrian woman with a dual citizenship have entered Turkey after escaping the war in Aleppo with her Syrian passport¹² instead of her Bulgarian passport and was subjected to structural violence, however, when she realized her livelihood was unbearable with the Syrian passport, she did the border run and re-entered Turkey with her Bulgarian passport and she hasn’t faced any structural violence and labor exploitation ever since. Although she is married to a Syrian man that holds a Syrian passport, her husband faces discrimination and racism due to his nationality. The casual racism she faces as a married couple is due to her husband’s nationality that affected their livelihood in Istanbul. They faced discrimination when they were apartment haunting

“So, when we decided to live together, we started looking for a place, when they ask where are you from? And we say Syria, they say we don’t rent for foreigners, then I’d call from my number, calling the same people, where are you from? I’m Bulgarian but my husband is Syrian "okay, ah, yes", I moved 2 months ago and we had faced some people like that, but now luckily we have good jobs and etc. so we have some kind of privilege, we

¹² The woman have informed me that she has been advised to enter Turkey with the Syrian passport due to easier regulations, however, she faced a tremendous amount of structural violence and labor exploitation

can pay, when they know we work at a university with a work permit they feel better but people that don't work in universities with work permits is very difficult for them" – 26-year-old Syrian woman, Kagithane

According to the Syrian woman, the only problem she faces now is solely her husband's nationality and re-entering Turkey with the Bulgarian passport has tremendously enhanced her livelihood in Istanbul, prior to the border run, she narrated her story of being denied basic services, such as opening a bank account and signing a contract of a rental lease of an apartment

"The first time they said we don't open bank accounts for foreigners and the second time they did [with a Bulgarian passport]. For some apartments or even rooms, they'd ask where are you from? and when I say from Syria, they'd say we don't give to foreigners but then with a Bulgarian passport I didn't have any problems, I had other problems with my workplace, I started working with English Time and they knew I had dual citizenship and in the contract they were supposed to provide me with a residence permit and work permit but they booked my appointment in Tekirdag, I was fresh here, I didn't know" – 26-year old Syrian woman, Kagithane

According to the vice-president of MAZLUMDER, Syrian migrants face discrimination in the daily lives in Turkey. Ranging from struggles in the bureaucracy to school administration, the vice president addressed the small daily live struggles that Syrian face in Turkey that disrupts their lives, such as, a Syrian business man facing difficulties by the local municipality, a Syrian student facing difficulties in school by the school's president, landlords by either discriminating against Syrians and/or lack of rental accommodations due to landlords discrimination, all the aforementioned life struggles have been reported and appealed to MAZLUMDER for legal aid

and support. On the other hand, those that are ought to be minor struggles morph into a vortex of precarity infused with injustice, in which cases, could lead to direct violence. Accordingly, the vice president of MAZLUMDER stressed about the government's insufficient social policies and implementations and lack of protection that has been subjected Syrians with forced deportation by police officers

“I remember one case, a family was walking on the street, the police stopped them and checked the ID and one of them didn't have his card with him at that moment. Actually, he had a card but he had it at home. They caught him and sent him home [Syria].” – Vice president, MAZLUMDER

One of MAZLUMDER's lawyer informed the vice president about an incident where the police acted unjustly

“A family was walking on the street, the police stopped them to check their IDs. Everybody had their IDs... those bad days were few months ago... the police took the IDs of young men ripped them and said, ‘from now on you don't have IDs. Come with us.’” – Vice president, MAZLUMDER

According to the data I have gathered, it is evidently apparent that discrimination intersects with ‘forced deportation’. Although both genders face discrimination, nonetheless gender plays a role in shaping discrimination. Discrimination against Syrian women takes a different form than against Syrian men. For instance, Syrian women in Yedikule are being verbally attacked with their “inadequate” parenting skills, which is gendered. A Kurdish Syrian woman was discriminated against due to her identity and social status, a Kurdish single mother from her own community, many structural factors contribute to discrimination as a whole, however, experience of discrimination is gendered.

4.1.1.7. Displacement of Place: Living in a Closed-community and Hopelessness

All the participants have expressed social isolation. According to my observations, social isolation is precarious in its nature and have added another dimension of precarity within the livelihood of Syrian migrants'. Due to social isolation and living within a closed community, Syrians have been subjected to intersecting forms of violence. Syrian women, girls, and LGBTI+ have been subjected to intersecting forms of violence that results in living within a closed-community. Syrian women are subjected to gendered control and immobility, social isolation. Living in a rather closed-community restricts women's agency in exploring their rights as migrants in Turkey. It also restricts women in seeking help and protection. Although some women have found a safe space where they can gather and talk in a cultural center and/or in local NGOs, some of the women still struggle in attending those safe spaces due to their husbands controlling behavior, this gendered control and inequality affirms the patriarchal constructed belief that a woman's place is her home. The coordinator of the cultural center in Yedikule informed me that some of their Syrian women beneficiary's husbands are not comfortable with their wives spending time in a cultural center, they are also threatened by having their wives exposed to other foreigners that volunteer in the center regularly. Living in a controlling environment whilst socially isolated is exposing the women to more potential gendered violence. While interpreting the data, it appears that racism intersects with discrimination and verbal harassment intersects with discrimination.

On the other hand, social isolation is evidently a major issue that affects Syrian women's livelihood. The project coordinator of a cultural center in Yedikule have observed most of their Syrian women beneficiaries are reluctant to learn Turkish and there is a lack of willingness to have their children learn Turkish, instead they prefer their children to learn English as it is a universal language that the women believe will be more beneficial than learning Turkish, one of the reasons is that the women, perhaps, don't see a future in Turkey and/or they are waiting for a third country resettlement. The project coordinator observed the women's struggle in

navigating their life in Turkey with basic Turkish and how this has an impact on their livelihood, whether in trying to communicate with their children's school administration or in receiving medical examination in a state hospital, language barrier tends to make the women feel more socially isolated, the project coordinator stressed:

“The more they become isolated from society, the less they care about integration. You know, they are used to live like this. They find a way to live like this, to live with minimum interaction with the people.” – Project Coordinator, Cultural Center, Yedikule

How could women integrate into a society that does not recognize them as refugees? A society that portrays them as a burden, a community that is no longer tolerated in their own temporality. These questions come to my mind when I think about Syrian women social integration in Turkey. I have observed in a previous fieldwork that Syrians that are ethnically Turkmen are easily integrated into the Turkish society, it is not solely due to the language, however, that plays a crucial role in integration. The Syrian Turkmen I have interviewed showed a greater level of belonging and willingness to integrate into Turkishness. Ethnicity plays an important role in a country where the role of ethnicity is monopolized. Most of the women I have interviewed pinpointed that living in a Muslim-majority society is a reason why they would want to stay and living close to “home” [Syria] is another contributing factor. Social isolation is derived from different factors, feeling unwanted might lead to feeling isolated, living in a closed-community is another attributing factor that might affect the entire community, however, social isolation due to gendered control is gender-based violence imposed by the patriarchy that impedes the refugee women's mobility and has a tremendous impact on the women's general well-being.

The women that have been interviewed expressed hopelessness based on their own livelihood and precarity, thus, subjective. A 28-year-old Single ethnically Kurdish Syrian mother narrated her hopelessness by having financial problems, taking care

of a sibling that is fighting cancer, a custody and alimony case in court, the 28-year-old woman faces discrimination from the local people and from her Syrian neighbors. Social isolation and hopelessness is a recurring theme that coincides with lack of financial support, the woman informed me that her financial aid was coming into a halt and she is no longer eligible for it. A 38-year-old Syrian woman recounted her decision to take the journey to Turkey from Aleppo

“My husband lives here, he has a second wife, she is very young. Also two of my children are here, they’ve been here... Well, prior to my arrival, they have been living here for 2 years already. I actually didn’t want to live here but I had to leave and take my children with me due to the situation in Syria”
– 38-year-old Syrian woman, ASAM

When I asked her about her living conditions in Istanbul, she narrated:

“I live with my children’s father and his wife. I didn’t have a choice, I’m obligated to stay with them. [...] I’m obligated to live there... the situation is very difficult, you know, with the rent, expenses and all...” – 38-year-old Syrian woman, ASAM

Throughout the interview the woman showed a significant level of hopelessness due to her current living situation. She informed me that she would want to live alone with her children, however that is unlikely to happen. The woman informed me that she never held a job and she is illiterate, she finds her situation hopeless and beyond fixable, she constantly used the phrase “I’m obligated to stay with them”. When I asked her if she knows her rights in Turkey, she informed me that she doesn’t know her rights, she doesn’t have the liberty to search and navigate her rights. I asked the women if she thinks there is a lack of awareness about refugee women’s rights in Istanbul

“No there isn’t [...] but the way we were brought up is quite different. I was raised in a very conservative area, we didn’t socialize much, we were a bit isolated” – 38-year-old Syrian woman, ASAM

Social isolation, whether it is from gendered control that is part of their everyday life in Syria imposed by the patriarchy or due to nativism and anti-Syrian sentiment creates more hopelessness and exposes the woman to more gendered control and immobility that may lead to direct violence. Widowed and divorced women portrayed more hopelessness vis-à-vis married Syrian women due to their financial situation.

4.1.1.8. Role of NGOs: Criticism

According to my observations in approaching NGOs, I have observed a gendered approach with helping women within NGOs. Women are perceived as vulnerable, fragile, thus needs protection. Local NGOs offer and provide protection that comes in different forms, ranging from psychosocial support, legal aid and by providing a shelter and/or referring the refugees to state shelters, to name a few. On the contrary, there are NGOs where male refugees are eligible for their services as beneficiaries are provided with vocational trainings and schemed program where they provide an employment opportunities' upon finishing the program, whereas, for women, there is a focused-demand to provide Syrian women with classes, e.g. Turkish classes, basic computer skills, some knitting and cooking workshops. The knitting and cooking workshops have helped some women who participate in social entrepreneur projects that aim to generate an income for the refugee women, however, the income is not sufficient to pay for rent and/or to buy a one-week grocery. It is tremendously problematic how NGOs are also fostering gendered inequality while proposing they are empowering women. They are empowering women to stay where they are in society, where men are encouraged to seek employable opportunities. It is quite paradoxical to observe the aforementioned antithesis during my fieldwork. According to the literature review, (Hilhorst, Porter, & Gordon, 2018) asserts the aforementioned gender-essentialist view where women are primarily viewed as victims in the course of conflict and forced migration. On the contrary, (Hilhorst et al., 2018) criticized the approach by addressing the

victimhood that is imposed on women, especially toward women-led household, where women are obligated to work in order to provide for their families, albeit there are many Syrian women-led households in Turkey¹³, the differentiating dynamic in the Syrian case in Turkey is that Syrian women-led households tend to have their sons work in order to provide, many of them had to drop out of school and/or not enroll in a school in Turkey upon arrival to work and provide for the family, the mother in this dynamic imposes structural violence upon her children by depriving them the right of education, although the women I have interviewed portrayed a strong sense of guilt, however, they are helpless due to their situation. On the other hand, the aforementioned gender-essential view does not cease to exist in the discourse of Syrian women-led households in Turkey, local NGOs reaffirms this victimhood stance by reinforcing it and enabling it through their approaches on how they view migrant women, in this case, Syrian women refugees as vulnerable and fragile. Local NGO's primarily focuses on workshops where Syrian women attend to socialize, pick up a skill and/or enhance a skill, such as cooking workshops, knitting workshops, Turkish classes, etc. Some of these projects are social entrepreneur projects where the women knit knitwear, the women that have been part of knitting social projects view their employment role as a space that enhances their mental being, however, it doesn't provide for their livelihood, it doesn't pay the rent. International organizations according to (Hilhorst et al., 2018) affirms women refugee victimization by embedding the view into their language and policies, thus, reinforcing created gender-essential view, accordingly, international organizations still "resonates with the 'moral language' familiar to international donors, and continues to dominate policy discussions and journalistic representations of the effects of war".

During my fieldwork I have encountered another paradoxical façade in a local social entrepreneur NGO, although the local NGO provide a space for women to produce knitted knitwear and accessories that are being sold on their website to

¹³ Some of the women I have interviewed are either divorced or widowed. A woman lost her husband that was killed by ISIS in Raqqa, Syria.

generate an income for the Syrian women and to assist their livelihood in Istanbul, however upon visiting the organization, I observed the women are working in a factory-like setting in a small room producing accessories and in the other room women were screen printing tote bags for WWF, the women are underpaid for their labor work and there was a boss/employer hierarchy in the local NGO, for instance, I observed one of the previous coordinators ordering one of the Syrian woman to bring her coffee, reducing her role as a servant. This exploitative nature is embedded, alas, even in humanitarian work.

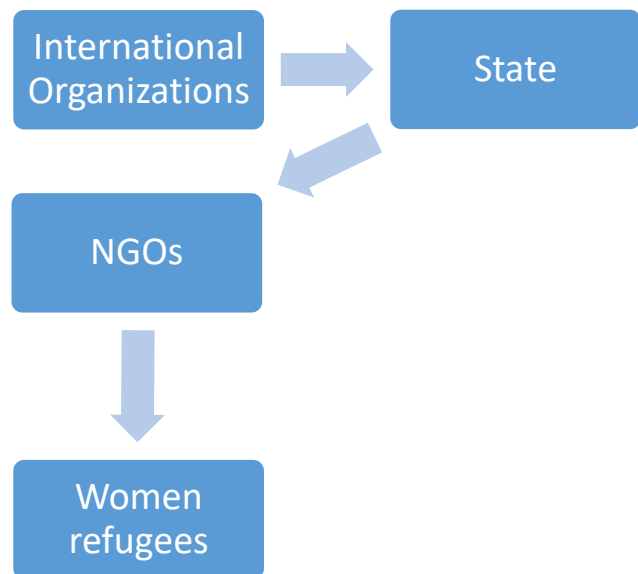


Figure 2 the illustration shows how violence influences other bodies that results in a collective infliction of enabling VAW

Governmental organizations on the contrary, reproduces violence against women (VAW). Through the collaboration and partnership of EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) and World Food Program (WFP), the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) program is, accordingly, EU's biggest humanitarian fund that is partnered and implemented by Turkey's Red Crescent (ESSN 2019). The monthly

aid rounds up to 120 Turkish Liras per person, however, not all refugees are entitled, to be eligible, there is a set of a criteria: (1) single female, (2) single parents with no other adults in the family and at least one child under 18, (3) Elderly people above 60 with no other adults (between 18 and 59) in the family, (4) families with 4 children or more, (5) families with one or more disabled people, they must have a disability of 40% or more, evidenced by a disability health board report from an authorized state hospital, (6) families that have a high number of 'dependents' (i.e. children, elderly, and disabled). This is determined as families that have at least 1.5 dependents for every able-bodied adult (between 18 and 59) (Kizilay n.d.). The aforementioned financial aid scheme has enabled, produced, reinforced violence against Syrian women refugees in Turkey. Various women have been subjected to forced pregnancies, threats of polygamous marriage or a divorce in order for the family to be eligible for Kizilay's financial aid. Placing a policy where having four children or more is eligible toward a population of migrants where cultural and religious norms are not illegalized such as polygamous marriage, where marital rape is not considered rape, where the agency of the woman is inferior accelerates a tremendous amount of potential violence toward the women. Lack of consideration of obvious factors is evidently being neglected by NGOs, policy-makers, regional organizations, and international organizations, it is highly problematic to draft out such policies without taking the risks of the potential danger that can inflict women at any given moment, it illustrates such policies are not taken seriously. On the contrary the UNHCR has assured that women and sexual minorities needs will be taken seriously and therefore will be on the agenda, those needs have not been addressed nor fulfilled (Freedman, 2016). Gender-based violence is often identified as direct violence, an act that is visible, seen, and touched. Governmental institutions and international organizations producing and enabling violence against women can be seen as non-GBV, although the policies are not put into effect to target and harm women directly, however, neglecting its effects and consequences it has on women is violent, thus, can be considered as gender-based violence. State and international organizations negligence of women's well-being is thus banal, thoughtless, and violent. On the contrary, the

Turkish government adopted a brotherhood discourse at the amidst of the Syrian War and implemented an open door policy, the social environment was more tolerable toward Syrians, they were seen as guests, when the Turkish government shifted its discourse from the Brotherhood discourse to the burden discourse, it has enabled discrimination against Syrians that acted along with the increase of nativism in Turkish political climate, social tension has been on the rise and discrimination against Syrians reached unprecedented levels.

CONCLUSION

Forced migration and displacement has enabled Syrian women and LGBTI+ to face violence, due to their status in Turkey and elsewhere, lack of protection dictates their livelihood. Precariousness ranging from unemployment, dependency, unregistered residency, temporary protection, unregistered marriages, limited mobility, labor exploitation, and “voluntarily” deportation governs Syrian migrants’ livelihood. NGO staff I have interviewed from Hayata Destek, KADAV, Qnyusho, Mavi Kalem, Hevi LGBT, Aman Shelter affirm that domestic violence is reported by Syrian women and Syrian LGBTI+. Verbal abuse and harassment by the local population have been noted to be increasing towards Syrian migrants amidst the last local elections and the deportations that headlined the news last August. It was easier for the women I have interviewed to identify discrimination/racism and anti-Syrian sentiments than to distinguish gender-based violence

Syrian women are prone to be subjected to various forms of violence both from the public and private sphere. Since Syrian migrants tend to live in a closed community in Istanbul, social tension has been drastically increasing after Turkey’s local elections due to Turkey’s nativist approach in mobilizing the masses. Due to nativism that arises from the local population and the government’s approach that shifted from the Brotherhood discourse to Burden-hood, verbal harassment has significantly increased. Living in limbo and in most cases in isolation, Syrian women have faced street harassment from the local population, street harassment varies geographically. For instance, in Yedikule, street harassment from the women in the neighborhood is both verbal and psychological, while the men are more aggressively verbal. Anti-Syrian sentiments have filled up the streets where Syrians are most populated. According to the data, Syrian women with low educational levels are more socially isolated due to lack of mobility, gendered control, and in many cases domestic violence. Despite the hardships Syrian women encounter, eligibility criteria by aid regulations have enabled violence against women. Paradoxically majority of the NGOs’ approach toward empowering refugee women

is gendered. The livelihood of Syrian migrants and in particular, the layered multifaceted forms of violence women and girls are prone to do not lie in a uniform experience but rather is elastic with the interplay of structural factors that contribute to enabling violence such as border regimes, legal framework, humanitarian aid regulations, schools, state hospital, neighborhoods, and even the streets. As a result of the overlapping factors, it is rather difficult to distinguish the sub-type of violence they are being subjected to and/or if it considered violent due to violence being around them like gas and the possibility of igniting the gas requires minimum friction of a spark administered by the aforementioned structural factors.

On the other hand, going through a war and/or witnessing a war has impacted Syrian migrant mental health, a woman I have interviewed informed me that the possibility of violent acts became more common than before, she also believed that they did not develop that, sadism has always been there but it got triggered by trauma caused by the war and forced migration. Women have been subjected to forced/early marriages, were sold as brides, were coerced into a marriage due to the family's financial situations, thus women and girls are perceived as a financial burden on the family. Syrian migrants live in limbo and in a closed community, this kind of environment fosters violence against women and girls. Language barrier and residency status, such as unregistered Syrian women and girls are unprotected which leads to an abyss of uncertainty that accelerates the possibility of violence. The scope of sexual and gender-based violence remains widely underreported, thus, unknown, mainly due to stigmatization and the risk of reporting an incident that might lead to further attacks.

In this research I have analyzed gender-based violence and violence against women as a structural system of oppression that targets Syrian migrants in Turkey as how it is affecting Syrian women livelihood and how it intersects with other structural forms of violence and discrimination.

There is a further need for investigating violence against 'refugeeness' and positionality, as well as, an urgent need for further research on gender-based

violence against Syrian migrants living in urban cities in Turkey that could be discerned through deploying a multi-level analysis. Violence as a system of oppression needs to be analyzed through different paradigms and by connecting the other forms of violence besides the GBV and VAW that is defined by international organizations. Other forms of violence have been uniformed which led to the negligence of those that have suffered from other forms of violence but was not recognized.

My original contribution to knowledge stems from my ability to underline patterns of violence and violent acts that I have observed during the fieldwork conducted by different agents. To this extent, I have distinguished other forms of violence that affect Syrian migrant livelihood as well as structural violence inflicted by mothers upon their sons due to financial instability. My research is unique in addressing and comprehending typologies and sub-typologies of violence Syrian migrants face which have become a normalized routine of their livelihood in Turkey. Further research could be easily carried on in order to further investigate other forms of emerging intersecting violence¹⁴.

In summary, this research has chapters that provide the context to the research findings gathered from ethnographic research. First, the chapter on violence, gender and migration starts with a brief history of conceptualization of violence, conventional definitions of violence against women and gender-based violence from an intersectionality paradigm that underlines the role of gender, race, sexuality, and ethnicity. The second chapter on perseverance of violence against Syrian migrants provides the literature of violence and gender-based violence against Syrian migrants in host countries, particularly, in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. The aim of this chapter is to describe the context and circumstances of

¹⁴ I have come across digital violence that I couldn't investigate further due to the sensitivity of the topic. However, Syrian girls have been coerced and groomed online via apps by sex predators to perform certain sexual acts either with someone else or on herself. The girls were coerced into recording themselves and/or sending nude 'selfies' and later were either blackmailed or threatened to expose them to their families which have exposed the girls to vulnerability where the sex predators abuses and exploits in their favor.

Syrian migrants' livelihood and to reveal the varying differences, dynamics, and patterns of violence for further enquiry. The third chapter is on methodology, I aimed to describe how I conducted the research and the challenges I have encountered.

The fourth chapter on Turkey as a refuge: banality and continuum of violence I aimed to underline my research findings and contribution. I have utilized qualitative analysis with the help of qualitative and mixed-methods analysis software that enabled me to navigate through the data I have gathered. The chapter reveals intersecting forms of violence and the role of aid regulations in fostering VAW.

This research aimed to comprehend the dynamics of violence against Syrian women in Turkey by discerning patterns of violence. For this particular reason, this research focused on the analysis of violence and its forms within the livelihood of Syrian migrants. I have gained insight into the logic and mentality of both Syrian women and NGO staff.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Age	City of Origin	Marital status	Number of children	Educational Status	City of Residence
24	Aleppo	Married	3	Middle school	Yedikule
41	Aleppo	Married	5	Elementary	Yedikule
38	Aleppo	Married	5	Illiterate	Okmeydani
28	Aleppo	Divorced	1	Diploma	Esenyurt
45	Aleppo	Married	3	Elementary	Kurtulus
30	Aleppo	Divorced	4	Middle school	Fatih
35	Raqa	Widowed	5	Illiterate	Yedikule
23	Lattakia	Single	0	University	Mersin
47	Homs	Divorced	1	University	Harbiye
38	Aleppo	Married	3	Diploma	Zeytinbumu
26	Aleppo	Married	0	University	Kagithane

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NGO STAFF

1. How do you define gender-based violence?
2. Have you witnessed any violence against Syrians?
3. Are there any social policies in Turkey towards violence against women?
4. If an organization, are there any Syrian women that approached the organization for help?
5. If an organization, were there any cases reported by Syrian women?
6. If an organization, what is the most cases reported by Syrian women?
Could be Sexual and gender based violence, intimate partner violence, psychological violence, abuse, emotional and financial abuse, unregistered marriages, child marriages, rape and unwanted pregnancies
7. If an organization, how does the organization help in supporting victims/survivors of violence?
8. What services does the organization provide for victims/survivors?
9. If a psychologist, what kind of therapy do you offer for victims/survivors?
10. How to prevent SGBV?
11. Have you witnessed violence against women (VGW) in the workplace?
12. If a psychologist, what coping mechanism you would advise?
13. If NGO, what coping mechanism are encouraged in this organization?
14. How are the victims/survivors perceived as by the local population?
15. What is contributing to violence against women in Turkey?
16. What is contributing to violence against Syrians in Turkey?

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS FOR SYRIAN WOMEN

1. Can you please tell me a little about yourself? What is your name?
Where are you from? Your educational status? How old are you? Marital status? (if married, do you have children? How many?)
2. When did you come to Turkey?
3. Where do you live?
4. With whom do you live?

- **Livelihood in Turkey:**

1. Do you feel safe living in Istanbul?
2. Did you feel safe living in Syria?
3. Do you feel safe when you walk home alone?
4. Do you feel safe in institutions? For example, in the immigration office?
State hospitals?
5. Have you visited local NGO's? If yes, did you feel safe being there (or, what kind of help did they provide)?
6. What do you think about your neighborhood?
7. Do you think your neighborhood is a safe neighborhood for women and girls?
8. Do you feel safe commuting in Istanbul?

- **If married:**

1. Did you get married in Syria or in Turkey or somewhere else? (if in Turkey, is it a registered marriage?)
2. You are married to which nationality?
3. How did you meet your husband?
4. How old is your spouse?

- If queer:
 1. When did you come out?
 2. What do you think of the queer culture in Istanbul?
 3. Do you have any queer friends?
 4. Do you visit queer organizations? For instance, Lambda?
 5. Do you attend any queer events and parties?
 6. Have you participated in the pride? And in any of the pride events and workshops?
 7. Is there any queer space you consider safe in Istanbul?
 8. Are you aware of any free psycho-social and legal support provided by LGBT organizations in Istanbul? (if yes, have you contacted any for help?)
 9. Are you aware of free HIV and Syphilis testing in Istanbul? (If yes, have you done any? Do you do the tests periodically?)
 10. Do you feel safe walking in the streets?
 11. Do you feel safe in Istanbul?
 12. Was there an incident you were rejected help and/or services because of your sexual orientation?
 13. What do you think of discrimination against sexual orientation? Have you witnessed any?
 14. Do you feel you are being discriminated because of your sexual orientation?
 15. What do you think about the job sector? Have you witnessed any discrimination in a workplace due to someone's sexual orientation?
 16. Do you think finding a job is more difficult because of your sexual orientation?

- Violence:
 1. Have you witnessed violence in the streets? Could be assaults (are men harassing you?)
 2. Have you witnessed sexual harassment in the streets?

3. Why do you think men harass women?
 4. What are your coping mechanism?
 5. What do you do when you feel low?
- Employment:
 1. Are you currently working? If not, did you hold a job before?
 2. Did you work in Syria?
 - Rights:
 1. Do you know your rights in Turkey?
 2. Did you know your rights in Syria?
 3. What do you think about healthcare rights in Turkey?
 - Discrimination:
 1. Did you face any discrimination in Turkey?
 2. If yes, where? Could be in the bazaar, in a state hospital, in social institutions, by the police, schools and universities, workplaces, in the neighborhood, in public transportation, in the apartment building
 3. Have you witnessed any sort of discrimination against Syrians by the Syrian community?
 4. Do you face any discrimination by Syrians? If yes, why do you think you are being discriminated against? (sect, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation)
 - Future:
 1. What do you think about your future?
 2. Are you planning to stay in Turkey or move back to Syria? Or perhaps plans of moving to a different country?
 3. If planning to stay in Turkey, are you going to apply for citizenship? OR Have you thought about applying for citizenship?

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**ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU/RESULT OF EVALUATION BY
THE ETHICS COMMITTEE**

(Bu bölüm İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurul tarafından
doldurulacaktır /This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in research
on Humans)


Başvuru Sahibi / Applicant: Roquya Al Zayani

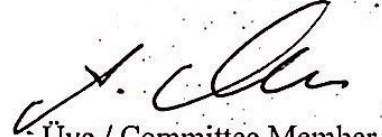
Proje Başlığı / Project Title: Intersectionality of Violence Against Women:
Discrimination and Gender-Based Violence Against Syrians in Turkey

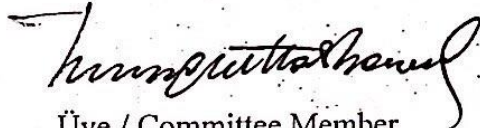
Proje No. / Project Number: 2019-20013-129

1.	Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision	XX
2.	Ret/ Application Rejected Reddin gerekçesi / Reason for Rejection	

Değerlendirme Tarihi / Date of Evaluation: 25 Temmuz 2019


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