# A School-based adjustment program based on ecological approach for immigrant students in primary schools living in Turkey[1]

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**Abstract**. In this study, it is aimed to present a framework for a school-based adjustment program for immigrant students living in Turkey and at primary school level. Adjustment to school is one of the priority needs of immigrant students. School adjustment is a structure that involves many dimensions and is influenced by many factors. Therefore, in the draft program proposed in the study, Ecological System Approach was taken as the basis for effectively addressing the multidimensional structure of school adaptation. As the draft program is based on the ecological system approach, the program aims to provide students, teachers, parents and community (local government, civil society, etc.). In this program, activities related to ecological system approach are planned for organism, microsystem, mesosystem and exosystem steps. It is aimed to increase the adjustment of immigrant students to the school with the program presented in the framework and thus to increase their social harmony and to be healthy and productive individuals in the future by meeting their developmental needs. It is also considered that the program proposal meets a significant need for teachers, parents, and school administrators, especially for immigrant students.

**Keywords:** Immigrant students, school adjustment, school-based adjustment program, ecological approach

## INTRODUCTION

The subject of migration, which is a sociological phenomenon, has the potential to produce research in the field of education as well as in many other fields. Immigrants are people who migrate from their country to another country for various reasons. Within the scope of this study, the concept of immigrant is used in the meaning of "leaving their home country and living in another country (someone, family or community)" (TDK, 2017). Concepts such as defector, refugee and foreign national are also expressed in this study with the term immigrants. Many different concepts are used in the literature that refer to immigrants. Turkey, according to the International Migration Law, does not accept people from outside Europe as refugees. Therefore, the occurrence of some confusion in determining the legal status has been reflected in the academic studies carried out on this subject and many different concepts have been used. Among the concepts related to the legal status of immigrants; The concepts of refugee, immigrant, asylum seeker, temporary protection and foreign national draw attention as frequently preferred concepts because they have close meanings. Temporary Protection Directive, which entered into force in 2014, provides temporarily protected status for foreigners sought refuge in Turkey with immediate and temporary protection requirements. This definition differs from immigrant status by being temporary and not having geographical boundaries. The Migration Terms Dictionary (2009) by the International Organization for Migration defines temporary protection as; "An exceptional procedure for immediate and temporary protection in case of a massive influx from third-country persons who cannot return to their country of origin, especially for the benefit of these persons and those requiring

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protection if there is a risk that the immigration system cannot operate without any negative impact on the effective functioning" (Çiçeksöğüt, 2017). In this study, the concept of immigrant student is preferred for all students under temporary protection.

In the last decade Turkey has been exposed to massive migration involving different ethnic and cultural diversity. As of 2017, it is home to about four million foreign immigrants and 3.5 million Syrians under temporary protection. The ranking according to the nationality of the migrants residing in Turkey is as follows: Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan (Turkish Red Crescent and Refugee Services Directorate, 2017).

Children constitute the largest group in the immigrant population. Children, who are called passive immigrants (Giani, 2006), are the group most affected by immigration. For this reason, children are the target group that should be especially emphasized while examining the subject of immigrants.

There are many risks and rights violations faced by child migrants. These violations are seen especially in situations that threaten the right to live and as discrimination, sexual abuse, shelter, nutrition, health and development. Besides, social adjustment of immigrants is one of the main problems. In a recent study conducted in Turkey on immigrants, education is emphasized as the most important issue of adjustment for immigrants (Coşkun and Emin, 2016). While the problem of immigrants' access to education remains valid, there are other problems before those who somehow have access to education. School adjustment is one of these problems. Studies on school adjustment of immigrant students contributes to the greater utilization of the educational processes of immigrant students who attend school.

## New Policies in the Context of Migration, Education and Adjustment

The geopolitical position and instability in the region has made Turkey the target of immigration waves. In today's conditions, Turkey is one of the countries that host the most international migrants around the world. According to the UNICEF report, Turkey was hosting the most Syrian refugees with 2.5 million people in 2015. This number exceeded three million in 2017. A significant part of the immigrant population consists of individuals of educational age. According to the reports of Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of Immigration Administration in April 2019, the number of Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey is 3 million 621 thousand 330 people whose biometric data is recorded. In addition, there are 139 thousand 150 people in the temporary shelter centers within the territory of Turkey (Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of Immigration Administration, 2019). About half of the immigrants in Turkey are children. While there are more than one million immigrant children at school age, the number of those enrolled in the school in the 2018-2019 academic year is around 650 thousand. Thus, approximately 40% of school-age immigrant children does not have access to education.

It is thought that the main problem ofimmigrant education is based on economic reasons. Economic insufficiency often leads families to give up education, so they avoid sending their children to school. Children out of school have the potential to produce social problems. However, another important issue is that children who somehow have access to education and enrolled in school are not able to benefit from school processes sufficiently. In the related studies, it is emphasized that some of the registered immigrant students do not attend school and those who continue are experiencing significant problems in their school processes.

Studies that point to the education problem refer to school adjustment, sometimes indirectly and sometimes directly. In a study conducted by Atasu (2012) the immigrant children's needs in Turkey are ranked as; psycho-social support, legal support, safe shelter, nutrition, access to health services, language support, and access to education. In a study conducted by Yurttutan (2017), it is stated that teachers had difficulties in communicating with immigrant students, problems with classroom management, and the academic success is low. However, education provides an important opportunity for immigrant children to have a healthy development and to get rid of the trauma caused by migration. However, governments and related institutions often deal with immigrant children as a matter of human rights and migration management.

**Pursuits and Stages of Immigrant Education in Turkey**

Migration movements affect countries' education and education policies. Education policies developed by countries for immigrants differ from each other. The economic and sociological situation of the country, and especially the structure of the immigrant population, is decisive in these policies. However, the economic dimension always comes to the forefront within educational policies. Because, the skills that immigrant individuals acquire through education are important in terms of providing an input for economic activities as well as reducing risks and facilitating adjustment to the new country (Stark & Bloom, 1985, as cited in Ereş, 2015).

Turkey, in contrast with immigrant education experience of the world, after a turbulent process, has chosen to determine its own policy. It is not wrong to talk about two main periods about this issue roughly as before and after 2011.Legislative regulations and public interest are taken as basis in making this distinction. This distinction manifests itself in educational policies (Şimşek and Kula, 2018).

### I. Period

Until 2011, operations with immigrant students were arranged within the frame of "Regulation on Immigrant Students Studying in Turkey" put into force by Cabinet Decision in 1985 that consisted of a total of 13 items (MEB, 2011). This regulation, which was very limited and did not contain detailed provisions, mainly included the liabilities of institutions and organizations and immigrant students. This regulation was repealed in 2011.

The Immigrant Students Circular, which was issued by the Ministry of National Education (MONE) in 2010 and consisted of 4 articles, stipulated that immigrant children can only enroll in a school with a residence permit. During this period, all immigrant families could not get a residence permit yet and there were also problems in enrollment of children with residence permit (Atasü Topcuoğlu, 2012). This situation was actually due to the lack of a child policy. In Turkey, a vision study for improving child policies came into question for the first time in 2010 and completed in 2011 with the title of "1. Turkey Children's Rights Strategy". However, although the issues such as child rights, child innocence, child respect, and child health were generally addressed in this document, the concept of immigrant children was not included (Şirin and Gülan, 2011). 2011 became a turning point in immigrant education.

### II. Period

This period can be described as the period of transforming the actual situation (defacto) into a legal situation (dejure) and improving the current practices. Considering the quality of the studies and the public interest, this period can be divided into three sub-periods:

***Uncertainty Period:*** After nearly a month since the uprising in Syria began in March 2011, the first wave of migration beyond the borders of Syria took refuge in Turkey and it created confusion on both sides as a typical feature of a crisis. However, during this period, the authorities and the public opinion in Turkey expected that the events in Syria would not take too long and that the Syrians would return to their country in a short time. In this process, which lasted for about two years and was described as a kind of confusion and uncertainty, nothing much was done about the education of immigrant children. In this period, in addition to some non-systematic psychological support initiatives for immigrant children, initiatives were started to provide Syrian students who stayed in camps in the border region with an education by Syrian teachers in accordance with the curriculum in their country in 2012 (Emin, 2016). However, in 2013, size of the fight in Syria increased the number of immigrants coming to Turkey, thus, the authorities were forced to reconsider the educational policy for immigrant children.

***Pursuit Period:*** Since 2013, the civil war in Syria had been spreading across the country and the number of Syrian immigrants in Turkey shown a rapid increase. According to the findings of Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (DEMP), the number of those fleeing the civil war in Syria and taking refuge in Turkey rose to 600.000 prior to October 2013. This situation

forced the authorities and educators to question policies and practices for immigrant education and to take new measures (MONE, 2013). During this period, on the one hand, the idea of proper training of immigrant children for the curriculum in Syria in order to keep them up with their training process was supported, on the other hand, the initiative for these children to receive appropriate training on the prevailing curriculum in Turkey was initiated. A more systematic approach to migration and migration management was adopted in 2013.In this context, it was observed that activities such as the establishment of Provincial Immigration Administrations, publishing circulars, organizing workshops increased.

***Planned Adjustment Period:*** The gradual escalation of the war and the increasing number of immigrants brought the search for permanent measures in the government. As of January 2015, according to official figures there were 1 million 625 thousand Syrian immigrants in Turkey. The real figure was estimated to be around 2 million. However, as the volume of migration increases, the psychology and reactions of people who migrate and accept migration have increased. The subject of Syrians in Turkey turned into a cohesion and security issue with social, political and economic dimensions. An immigrant policy based solely on meeting the basic needs of Syrians became unsustainable. Because, the state of immigrants living in difficult conditions provided suitable conditions for all kinds of crime and violence. Young people who were not educated, had low income, and experienced an identity crisis, had the potential to create a source of crime. The effects of immigrants were felt the most in the social dimension. Problems arising from different languages, cultures and lifestyles were experienced between immigrants and local people, and problems such as woman and child abuse and unplanned urbanization arose. It was seen as one of the most serious social effects that the Syrians change the demographic structure in the cities where they lived intensely. This situation sometimes led to the emergence of ethnic and sectarian polarizations or to increase existing tensions. The biggest risk appeared in the political and security aspects.

This period, in which realistic measures for immigrants were considered, can be described as a search for integration or a planned adjustment process. The basic points that determine the third stage were the gradual consolidation of opinions that war in Syria would not end in a short time and the publication of opinion polls on the fact that the idea of staying in Turkey had been adopted by a large number of immigrants. It was observed that the Ministry of National Education had carried out many studies on the integration of immigrant students into our education system, had conducted seminars for teachers and had addressed this issue systematically. During this period, the Ministry of National Education made several attempts for the adjustment of the immigrant children to school. In this context, the subject of the education of immigrants in Turkey took place in the Strategic Plan 2015-2019 report prepared in 2015, and it was stated that studies for adjustment to education system for immigrants would be carried out (MEB, 2016a).

The Coordination Meeting for the Education of Foreign Students was organized by MEB in April 2017. It was observed that during three consecutive terms, significant steps had been taken in the education of immigrant children, both in terms of legislation and implementation.

**Need for A School-Based Adjustment Program**

Events that occur outside the ordinary flow of life, such as migration, also lead to sudden changes in individual life and complicate the individual's life. Unusual events and situations experienced in this process negatively affect the adjustment of individuals to the social environment, and constitute an important source of stress for them. Individuals experience a dilemma of establishing a balance between the demands and resources of the environment and their own capabilities and abilities (Danış, 2006). Eliminating this tension experienced by immigrants and ensuring their integration into the society is only possible with a planned adjustment process.

Meeting the school adjustment needs of immigrant children is also necessary in terms of preventing some important individual and social risks that may arise in the future. The first

years of school life are vital not only for immigrant children, but also for the adjustment of all children. Because adjustment in the first years affects later years. It is known that students who do not adjust to school tend to drop out of school at a high rate, and that they have more difficulty in advanced education levels academically and socially (Şimşek & Şahin, 2013; Duncan, et al., 2007; Jiang & Cillessen, 2005). In this context, it can be said that school adjustment has the potential to affect the lives of immigrant children now and in the future. Therefore, meeting the school adjustment needs of immigrant students in primary school is an economical approach. On the other hand, school adjustment is a multidimensional process by nature and therefore all factors affecting the school adjustment process should be handled together.

Considering school adjustment as a sub-dimension of adjustment concept, it is appropriate to explain the concept of adjustment first. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), adjustment can be understood only with certain effects and concepts that can be defined in connection with cultural and social issues. School adjustment is defined as the child's interest in the school environment, participation in activities, comfort in the environment and success in school (Ladd, 1996). As seen, school adjustment refers to a comprehensive process with social, cultural, behavioral, academic, and especially individual dimensions. The multi-dimensional strucure of the ecological approach to the behavior of the individual in the psycho-social context is the reason for this approach to be taken as basis in the design of the school adjustment program for immigrant students.

Hence, this study aims to propose a School Adjustment Program based on the ecological approach for immigrant students living in Turkey. The proposed program is for immigrant students at primary school level. The program also includes activities for students, parents, teachers and society. A new program for immigrant students focusing on school adjustment meets a current and important need in education in Turkey, but also contributes to the social integration of immigrants in general. A detailed information about the adjustment program is given below.

## The Design Process of the School-Based Adjustment Program

In this study, which aims to design the School Adjustment Program for immigrant students, based on the ecological system approach, main framework, theoretical basis, principles, target group and sample activity types are defined. As it is known, in the program development process, before any program is started to be developed, a design must be made for the proposed program (Demirel, 2007).

## Main Framework of the School-Based Adjustment Program

Children need the adjustment process more than others because of their developmental characteristics in psychological and social context. The adjustment program is a multi-dimensional opportunity of interaction with the participation of the school, family and friends, and especially the child itself. However, the adjustment program can take place as a complex process. For this reason, it is vital that the parties adopt their own roles in the adjustment process and act accordingly. Factors affecting the adjustment of individuals are listed as; family structure, circle of friends, school environment, hedonic adjustment (adjustment of people to their own situation), and mass media (İkiz, 2017).

Both the multiplicity of the parties and the complexity of the process show that the school adjustment process can only be achieved through planned activities. Therefore, one of the important issues to be managed in this process is the psychological readiness of the parties that take part in the school adjustment process. On the other hand, in this process, the efforts of the family and the school to understand the child's anxieties and to find solutions to these anxieties serves as a facilitating function for the child's adjustment. For this reason, school adjustment process is expected to have a supportive structure for the child (MEB-UNICEF, 2015). The student-centered structure of School-Based Adjustment Program (SBAP) facilitates the adjustment process.

Essentially, school adjustment is one of the important indicators of the overall adjustment process of immigrants. Because school is the most suitable environment for the determination, prevention and intervention of children's adjustment and behavioral problems (Savi-Çakar, 2017). For this reason, an adjustment program to be prepared for immigrant students is expected to be school-based. Overall, adjustment policies are multi-dimensional and cover primarily areas such as working life, housing, health, municipal services and social acceptance. Education is one of the important components of the adjustment process. Adjustment policy, which also includes the education process, is an indicator of holistic conception of adjustment.

In this study, the proposed adjustment program for immigrant students is designed multi-dimensionally in a sociocultural context, based on the basic assumptions of the Ecological System Approach. Because social and psychological adjustment are the first things that come to mind in adjustment programs. It is possible to explain the socio-psychological dimension of adjustment with the theory of identity. According to this theory, individuals in the adjustment process develop various identities depending on their relationship with their social environment. The individual's nationality, political tendency, and even the sports clubs are effective in gaining social identity.

Another concept that we encounter during the adaptation process is acculturation. Acculturation is a facilitating factor that has positive effects in the adjustment process. Because adjustment, which is a search for integration, can be realized through the mutual interaction of the parties. The facilitating factor in this process is the principle of equality. Because eliminating obstacles in benefiting from public services such as health, education, housing, and having a job has a facilitating effect.

The school-based adjustment program designed within the scope of this study envisions adjustment in three important areas. These are the academic adjustment that includes the student's school success; social adjustment that includes the relationships it establishes with individuals in the school and environment, and behavioral adjustment that include behaviors that follow the rules in the school and society (Demirtaş-Zorbaz, 2016).

## Theoretical Basis of School-Based Adjustment Program: Ecological System Approach

The theoretical basis for a school-based adjustment program is a critical issue. Considering the target group that the research is directed to and the environmental factors that affect the behavior of the individual, the ecological system approach is considered to be favorable in the process of developing the adjustment program. In fact, ecological system approach is taken as a basis in studies on school adjustment (Demirtaş-Zorbaz, 2016; MEB-UNICEF, 2016).

School adjustment harbors psychological and social processes. Therefore, it is predicted that it would be beneficial to consider the school adjustment program with the ecological system approach, which is a psycho-social theory. The adjustment process takes place both by the individual's own characteristics and the characteristics of the social environment in which he lives and their mutual interaction. The ecological system approach is based on the assumption that the individual can adapt to environmental changes more easily with the interaction between the individual and his environment. The ecological system approach argues that there are changes in the functions and structures of the family, social institutions and other environmental systems in which the individual is involved, which leaves individuals in a difficult situation to adjust to the environment.

The ecological system approach focuses on the problems of individuals, families and small groups related to transition periods and the needs that arise in transition from one age stage to another (Ashman & Zastrow, 1990). According to the ecological system approach, thanks to the adjustment to be established between the individual and his environment, many problems in the individual, family and social areas can be prevented and functional deficiencies between the systems can be eliminated (Turan, 1999; as cited in Danış, 2006).The system approach put forward by Bronfenbrenner (1979) is based on the thesis that interrelated socio-cultural layers affect the individual. Accordingly, the layers begin from the close environment

(micro system) of the individual, such as family and friend, to which the individual is directly related, and extends to legal regulations (macro system) that do not have a direct relationship with the individual but have the power to affect the individual. The relationships between these systems can change during the human development process (Hehherington and Parke 1986).

## School Adjustment According to the Ecological System Approach

The sociocultural layers proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) start from family, close friends, and extends to a layer that is farthest from the individual that includes systems such as legal arrangements that are not directly related to the individual. The relations between these systems can change during the development process (Hehherington and Parke 1986).These steps are described below (Akman, 2002; Hehherington and Parke 1986; Henry and Stephenson, 1993; Schiamberg, 2004). Each step contains important indicators of school adjustment in relation to each other.

**Organism**, which is the first step of the ecological system approach, expresses the individual and its characteristics. The individual features such as age, gender, language use skills, psychological resilience, problem solving skills, social skills etc of the immigrant students can make things easier or harder during the school adjustment process. Therefore, SBAP is planned to include activities primarily for students. The second step, **Microsistem**, contains the interactions and activities of the individual in the immediate vicinity. Family, peer groups, teachers, school and neighbors etc. take place in this step for most children. Considering the importance of this step in the development process, it is deemed appropriate that SBAP includes activities for all parties in the microsystem. The third step of the ecological system approach is **Mesosystem**. This step refers to the interaction of the units in the microsystem with each other. For example, school-family or family-peer relationships. Considering the effects of factors such as family involvement and school-family cooperation in the school adjustment process, it is expected that there are activities aimed at increasing the positive effects of these factors on the adjustment process in SBAP. The **Exosystem** is the fourth step of the approach, which consists of units that encircle the mesosystem and have indirect effects on the individual's development, such as mass media and legal regulations. The effects of the systems in this step are indirect. Examples of these are general school policies, country policies, and mass media. The school adjustment of immigrant children is directly related to this step in the context of social impact. The content of SBAP is planned to include activities involving mass media, local media and school policies. **Macrosystem** step consists of the units of the cultural structure that are lived in such as ideologies, attitudes, cultural values, racial relations, and religion. This layer differs in different cultures and countries due to ideology and beliefs. Considering the different countries of immigrant students in Turkey, the fact that children are trying to adjust to a new culture as well as to school is taken into account. Therefore, cultural differences is taken into consideration during the preparation of SBAP and it is designed in accordance with a multicultural structure. The last step in the ecological system approach is **Chronosystem**. Covering all previous layers, this outer layer is created by socio-cultural conditions. Therefore, it expresses the time period people live in. For example, it is a known fact that migration increases during wars and economic crises.

## Principles of School-Based Adjustment Program

The principles that can be considered as a criterion in the design, implementation and evaluation processes of the program, designed to facilitate the adjustment of immigrant students at primary school level are determined as follows:

*Comprehensiveness:* SBAP should be in a structure that includes all parties as well as immigrant students.

*Persistence:* SBAP should be persistent in terms of supporting holistic development in accordance with the developmental characteristics of the students and should be implemented all year long.

***Cooperation:*** SBAP, by its nature, should support the participation and collaborative work of teachers, administrators, families and all concerned parties as well as students.

***Student Centered:*** SBAP should be student-centered.

***Economy:*** SBAP should be economical in terms of time, cost and availability.

***Dynamism:*** SBAP should be developed in the light of evaluations to be made during and after the application.

***Cultural Sensitivity:*** SBAP should be sensitive to know social environment, family and culture in which the child grows.

***Practicality:*** SBAP should be prepared in a planned, comprehensive and understandable way.

***Need Basis:*** SBAP should include activities that facilitate adjustment.

***Flexibility:*** SBAP should be flexible enough to allow different applications considering the individual needs of students.

## Target Group of School-Based Adaptation Program

According to the data of MONE, immigrant children participating in formal education are concentrated at the primary school level (Atasü Topçuoğlu, 2012).The reasons such as primary school being the first step of basic education and that this period is critical for the development of the child's personality (Baysal, 2005) and that the life experiences of the child in this period affects his entire education life and other developmental periods (Tan, 1992) requires the adjustment program to be designed primarily for the primary school level. In this program designed for the adjustment of immigrant students at primary school level, it is considered important to have activities for the society (local government, non-governmental organizations, etc.) in addition to students, teachers and parents.

## Draft Program

The draft program has been prepared for immigrant students in the primary school stage in Turkey. The main purpose in the draft is to provide information on the possible contents of SBAP. As stated earlier, school adjustment includes three dimensions: academic, social and behavioral adjustment. In this context, activities related to these dimensions are proposed in the draft program. In the Draft Program, these dimensions of school adjustment are first explained and then the program draft is presented.Academic adjustment, which is seen as one of the components of school adjustment, is expressed as the student progressing academically at the desired level (Iyer, 2006).Because when the child is unable to adjust to the school, he may not want to go to school, lose interest in the activities in the school and fail academically.Therefore, academic success is an important indicator of academic adjustment. In this context, academic adjustment is discussed as the first dimension.

**Table 1.** *School-Based Adjustment Program (SBAP) draft for ımmigrant students at primary school level - academic adjustment*

| Target | Student | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Academic Success | | |
| **Level** | **Layer** | **Method** | **Outcome** |
| Information | Organism | Peer Counseling | Knows what to learn and which lessons to take at school. Recognizes the physical environments where the lessons will be held. Knows what materials are used in lessons. |

**Table 1.**
*Continued*

| Attitude | Organism | Drama | Enjoys going to school. Knows that going to school is important. Is willing to go to school. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Skill | Organism | Drama/Games | Attends classes. Takes responsibility for the school. |
| **Target** | Teacher | | |
| **Theme** | Acceptance/Support | | |
| **Level** | **Layer** | **Method** | **Outcome** |
| Information | Microsystem | Group Counseling | Knows which curriculum to apply to immigrant students. |
| Attitude | Microsystem | PBE | Accepts to have immigrant students in class. |
| Skill | Microsystem | Brochure/Interview | Lectures with immigrant students. |
| **Target** | Parent/Guardian | | |
| **Theme** | Cooperation | | |
| **Level** | **Layer** | **Method** | **Outcome** |
| Information | Microsystem | Brochure/Interview | Knows the new curriculum the child is involved in. |
| Attitude | Microsystem | Meetings | Is willing to send the child to school. |
| Skill | Microsystem | Group Counseling | Communicates with the child's teachers. |

Social adjustment, which is another dimension of school adjustment, consists of components like teacher-student relationship, peer acceptance, and liking the school (Mathur, 1999). Children who cannot achieve social adjustment can experience problems in their relationships with teachers and peers, and some behavioral problems can be observed in their relationship with teachers and peers. It is assumed that the children who have such problems have low social adjustment levels. When it comes to the adjustment of immigrant students, a remarkable concept is acculturation. Acculturation means that the individual develops a sense of belonging in the process of getting used to different cultural groups or cultures, in the cultural transition, by dealing with the stress he experiences and developing new skills (Ward, 2001). It is thought that immigrant students' sense of belonging in their school adjustment increases their social adjustment. In addition, acceptance by others in social adjustment is also very important for these students. It is thought that the influence of peers and teachers is great in social adjustment.

**Table 2.** *School-Based Adjustment Program (SBAP) draft for ımmigrant students at primary school level - social adjustment*

| **Target** | Student | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Sense of Belonging | | |
| **Level** | **Layer** | **Method** | **Outcome** |
| Information | Organism | Presentation | Recognizes Turkish culture. |
| Attitude | Organism | Group Counseling | As an immigrant student, becomes happy in the classroom. |
| Skill | Organism | Drama | Establishes friendships. |
| **Target** | Teacher | | |
| **Theme** | Social Support | | |

**Table 2.**
*Continued*

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Information | Microsystem | Presentation | Knows the relationship between social support and school adjustment. |
| Attitude | Microsystem | Drama | Shows interest to immigrant students. |

| **Target** | Parent/Guardian | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Participation | | |

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attitude | Mesosystem | Meeting | Is willing to participate in activities organized by the school. |

| **Target** | Local Government | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Support | | |

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Information | Exosistem | Workshop | The importance of the participation of the local government in the process for the adjustment of the students is understood. |

**Table 3.** *School-Based Adjustment Program (SBAP) Draft for Immigrant Students at Primary School Level - Behavioral Adjustment*

| **Target** | Student | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Connecting to School/Belonging | | |

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Information | Organism | Presentation | Knows the discipline rules of the school. |
| Attitude | Organism | Drama | Internalizes school rules. |
| Skill | Organism | Group Counseling | Solves problems in healthy ways. |

| **Target** | Teacher | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Support/Control | | |

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attitude | Microsystem | Drama | Is willing to support immigrant students in solving their problems. |

| **Target** | Parent/Guardian | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Acceptance/Cooperation | | |

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attitude | Mesosystem | Presentation | Believes in the importance of collaborating with teachers and school in solving children's problems. |

| **Target** | Non-Governmental Organizations | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme** | Social Support | | |

| Level | Layer | Method | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|
| Information | Exosystem | Conference | Realizes what non-governmental organizations can do for students' behavioral adjustment. |

The third dimension of school adjustment is behavioral adjustment (Demirtaş-Zorbaz, 2016). Behavioral adjustment means that the student behaves according to the rules in school life, does not exhibit problem behaviors, and does not exhibit behavioral problems such as internalization or externalization. In other words, students that are aggressive in school, that do

not obey the rules of the school, lie, etc. are expected to have low school adjustment. When considered in terms of immigrant students, this kind of behavioral problems have the risk of weakening their acceptance by their social environment besides harming themselves.

This draft program is just an example of SBAP that will be developed. The themes included here will be increased and therefore all other items such as the number of activities and outputs will be developed accordingly.

## DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

The difficulties and uncertainties as a result of migration pose some difficulties for immigrant children to benefit from the educational processes. The main problem affecting students, teachers, school administrations and even parents in this process is the need for adjustment. Studies on immigrants in Turkey reveals that there is a need for educational programs that support the multicultural structure in schools and enable intercultural interaction and facilitate school adjustment of students (Atasü Topçuoğlu, 2012, 2014; Çakırer Özservet, 2015; Özer, Komşuoğlu and Ateşok, 2016; Sakız, 2016; Şimşek and Kula, 2018; Topsakal, Merey and Keçe, 2013).

Berry et al. (2015) points out that schools and other educational environments are important in the acculturation of immigrant children. Schools and educational environments provide a favorable opportunity for acculturation of immigrant children to represent the culture they have just encountered. In this context, it is stated that school adjustment is a primary task and is realized as a result of acculturation.

It is known that migration process affects children in many dimensions like economy, psychology, physical and social. In addition, the problem of adjusting to the new migrated environment and new culture is not a situation that the child is able to deal with. As a result of the literature review, it is understood that immigrant students have problems with school adjustment and the necessity of a comprehensive adjustment policy for immigrant students is pointed out in the literature (Şimşek & Kula, 2018). In the public events and official documents held in recent years, the adjustment process is frequently mentioned, and activities that provide solutions to the adjustment problems of immigrants are organized through various institutions. Prepared by the General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development at the end of 2017, a *Handbook for Teachers with Immigrants in Their Class*has been published. *Education for All in Times of Crisis I & II and Strengthening the Education Infrastructure* projects have been launched in September 2017.Within the scope of these projects, schools has been built for the training needs of immigrant students in various provinces of Turkey (TED Imam, 2019).In addition, in order to support Syrian students' access to qualified education and support their adjustment processes, a project titled *Education of Ministry of National Education Teachers with Immigrant Students in Classroom*has been carried out in cooperation with MONE and UNICEF. With these projects, it is aimed to facilitate the adjustment of immigrant students to the Turkish Education System (MEB, 2017). The Project for Supporting the Integration of Syrian Children into the Turkish Education System (PICTES) has been launched in 2016 to contribute to the access of Syrian citizens to education and to support the Ministry of National Education in their efforts to adjust Syrian students to the Turkish Education system (TEDMEM, 2019). In May 2018, "Administrative Staff Awareness Training" is also organized within the scope of PICTES by the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate for Lifelong Learning. It is seen that all these efforts are realized in order to facilitate the adjustment of immigrants in Turkey with a multi-dimensional perspective. Thus, while there are various initiatives and efforts towards the adjustment of immigrant students in Turkey, there is not a systematic and planned adjustment program. In the light of these facts, the aim of this study is to put forward a school-based adjustment program for immigrant students at primary school level.

The adjustment program designed in this direction is based on the ecological system approach. The dimensions of the designed program are: academic adjustment, social adjustment and behavioral adjustment. Target groups in these dimensions are students (individuals), teachers, parents and society. Themes are created for each dimension and target group in the

designed program. Then, activities are created for these themes and it is stated which level/layer they are oriented in the ecological system approach. In addition, expected outcomes are defined as a result of the activities.

In conclusion, this study on immigrant children is believed to play a leading role in meeting an important need of education in Turkey. In this way, the study is expected to make an important contribution to the field of education. It is thought that an important reflection of this contribution is to be observed in social life.

It is thought that the fact that multi-dimensional issue of school adjustment is explained in the context of the ecological system approach and the fact that theoretical basis of the program is based on this approach supports the personal development of students, as well as the development of the relations between family, teacher and society.

The draft program introduced in this study is expected to be finalized depending on the implementation, evaluation and implementation results on the field. Publishing the adjustment program and the activities included, which is given its final form in this process as a booklet will be beneficial for school administrations and teachers. Based on the results of this program in the field, adjustment programs for immigrant students at other educational levels can also be developed. The support of MONE for the development and sustainability of such program development studies is considered important. In addition, adjustment programs can be organized for adult immigrants by local authorities.

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