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Migrant Entrepreneur Women in Konya: Processes and Expectations

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1 Introduction

Migration is one of the most popular topics of social sciences in recent years. Especially forced migrations due to wars have caused human mobility at a level that will change the demographics of countries.¹ When the migration to live in better conditions is added to this, it can have transformative effects on the ethnic, religious and political structure of countries. In recent years, migrations from Mexico, Syria, Afghanistan, Xinjiang Uyghur Region, Iraq and Ukraine to different geographies exemplify this situation.

With the mass migrations, many social, political and economic problems arise. Discrimination, hate crimes, acts of violence, legal situation, economic discrimination and living conditions are among the main

¹ For detailed studies on the subject (see Bloch & Dona, 2019; Fiddian- Qasmiyeh et al., 2016).

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problems. Trying to hold on to life in the place of migration with all these challenges signifies the migrant's struggle for existence. When we consider the elderly, women, children, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged migrant groups, this struggle becomes much more challenging.

The fact that migrants become entrepreneurs despite the social, economic and political problems experienced is of great value for the solution of problems on behalf of both migrants and residents. Because successful entrepreneurships can produce concrete contributions to the solution of the problems of migrant societies in the places of migration. Especially, the entrepreneurship experiences of women, who are among the disadvantaged groups of forced migration, are particularly important in this respect. Considering this importance, it seems difficult to state that the issue of migration and entrepreneurship has received enough attention in social sciences.² When we look at the studies conducted in Türkiye, entrepreneurship and immigration phenomenon have not been sufficiently explored in different contexts. Existing studies have generally adopted an economics-centred approach rather than a human-centred approach. In this sense, although the economics of migration has been extensively studied in the literature, migration and entrepreneurship studies are very few in terms of making a contribution to the solution of social, political and economic problems. In the case of Konya, no study has been conducted so far. This study aims to contribute to this gap in the literature. It focuses on understanding the processes and expectations of migrant entrepreneur women in Konya with a human-centred approach. For this purpose, the first part of the chapter is devoted to the development of a human-centred perspective in migration studies. In the following part, the migration experience as a woman and its relationship with entrepreneurship are examined. The field part of the study is limited to Konya. In-depth interviews were conducted with migrant women who have provided examples of entrepreneurship in Konya, and these interviews were analysed to understand the problems experienced by migrant women.

² For detailed studies on the subject: (see Bhachu & Westwood, 2004; Vershinina et al., 2021; Lyon et al., 2007; Villares-Varela & Sheringham 2020).

2 Actor-Centred Understanding of the Migration Phenomenon

Migration is defined as “the movement of people to a new country or area in order to find work or better living condition” (Oxford Dictionary). This is a general definition at the level of lexical meaning. In the literature, it is possible to encounter detailed definitions of migration from different disciplines.³ The common point of these definitions is that migration is human mobility. Most of them focus on the causes, consequences and problems of migration. In other words, they are based on the economic, political and demographic elements that migration either deprives or contributes to a region. According to most of these definitions, migration is evaluated by the numerical expression of the human mobility it generates. The number of people migrating, the amount of capital moved, the geographies travelled across, the economic cost or added value, gender and age ratios, and how such factors transform demographics are examples of these evaluations. When we examine the studies on migration, it will be understood at first glance that the majority of them are in this direction (Karaarslan, 2015, pp. 115–116).

Migration does not only refer to physical or numerical mobility because the main actor of the phenomenon of migration is human. More specifically, migrants. It is not only economic, social and demographic processes that migrants undertake and change. Of course, these are all critical factors. However, they do not allow us to understand the phenomenon of migration together with its main actor. It even prevents a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of migration due to its methodological limits. Therefore, the definition and explanation efforts of social sciences should be centred on the main actor. At this point, the most important theoretical basis of our study is Bruno Latour’s agent network theory because networks are formed by the actor who builds his/her own network and acts in the process rather than structural elements (Latour, 2021, p. 35). With migration, the migrant’s story, emotions, thoughts, desires, worldview and many other elements are displaced. It

³ For different definitions of migration: (see Adıgüzel, 2016).

encounters, fuses and constructs new elements. Migrants build new relationalities with each other's experiences. According to him, "the first feature of the social world is this constant tracing of boundaries by people over some other people" (Latour, 2005, p. 28). For this reason, migration means above all the end of one story and the beginning of new stories. Moreover, it is the mobility of the emotions, thoughts and behaviours that people have acquired throughout their lives, in other words, the mobility of their memory and identity. Therefore, migration is the displacement of worlds of meaning as much as numerical expressions. The main actor of all these processes is the migrant. For this reason, developing migrant-centred approaches and definitions to the phenomenon of migration should be indispensable for understanding this phenomenon (Karaarslan, 2015, p. 118).

Approaching the phenomenon of migration from the world of the migrant is possible by focusing on his/her feelings, thoughts and behaviours. These three elements are actually the basic components of migrant memory. The migrant experiences new encounters with this memory and interprets these encounters. In fact, these interpretations also express new additions to his/her memory. With these new additions, the migrant develops new ways of feeling, thinking and behaviours and develops expectations for the future. The functioning of this migrant-centred approach can be clarified with two levels of meaning. These levels of meaning express processes and expectations in terms of a semantic approach. Processes are what the migrant experiences during migration and what he/she retains in his/her memory. In this sense, processes refer to how the relationship between environmental conditions and the migrant is interpreted by the migrant. Expectations are the way of perceiving the future based on processes. In order to understand the meaning world of the migrant, expectations are as meaningful as processes because expectations essentially contain the data of how the migrant makes sense of his/her own migration process. For example, the desire to migrate to other places or to stay in the place of migration is an indicator of satisfaction with the current situation. At this point, processes and expectations are closely interconnected. Processes point to expectations and expectations point to processes. The endeavour to understand these two elements in the migrant's world essentially means understanding the

main actor of migration. In this way, it becomes possible to develop an actor-centred approach.

3 Becoming an Entrepreneur as a Migrant Woman

Every migrant tends to cling to the place of migration. Attachment refers to the ways of maintaining existence in the place of migration. Producing social, cultural and economic survival strategies is the only way to sustain life in the place of migration. The ability of migrants to continue their existence in the place of migration is largely related to the economic situation (Koyuncu, 2020, p. 103). For this reason, every migrant tends to secure their economic situation as a priority because basic needs such as shelter, nutrition and health depend on economic status. Economic independence of migrants is mostly possible in unskilled jobs. However, for migrants who can observe the opportunities and possibilities in the place of migration well, entrepreneurship is also a way to gain economic security.

It is very difficult for migrants to become entrepreneurs if they did not migrate for entrepreneurial reasons. However, for an immigrant who comes to the place of migration with many innovations, entrepreneurship carries with it very important opportunities. Especially, when the socio-cultural environment in the place of origin corresponds to the opportunities of the place of migration, migrant entrepreneurship gains an important position. Of course, this position is accompanied by all the difficulties because being an immigrant also means being a foreigner in the socio-cultural environment. The foreigner is attractive because he/she accommodates a number of innovations. But on the other hand, he/she is uneasy because he/she is not local. In Georg Simmel's words, he/she is neither completely inside nor completely outside the local society. He/she is on the margin (2016). Despite this makeshift position, immigrant entrepreneurship can mean the solution of many problems in the medium and long terms. Problems associated with migration, such as social

cohesion, economic security, and cultural and economic value production, are addressed in the medium and long terms through entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is characterised by taking on certain opportunities and risks. Opportunities and risks are inherent in entrepreneurship. But these opportunities and risks increase exponentially when the entrepreneur is an immigrant. The specific position of being a foreigner is the most important reason for the increase. But not limited to this. The economic situation of the place of migration, sectoral diversity, sectoral preference of migrants, socio-cultural environment in the place of migration, ethnic and religious harmony, level of integration and many other factors are among the determinants of these opportunities and risks. In this sense, migrant entrepreneurship is accompanied by many equilibrium factors, and these equilibrium factors are highly effective in achieving the success of entrepreneurship.

One of the most significant equilibrium factors not addressed above is gender. There are very important differences between female and male migrant entrepreneurship. In fact, being a woman or a man is an important variable in the nature of today's entrepreneurship because almost every stage of economic processes is dominated by men. Men are the main actors in the economic sphere. Especially in Türkiye, the representation power of men in entrepreneurship is very high.⁴ In such an environment, at first glance, being a woman brings along a disadvantageous position. However, when we consider the relationship between entrepreneurship and innovation, being engaged in new economic activities as a woman has the spirit of entrepreneurship. In the sense of doing what has not been done before, being a woman can represent a very advantageous position. These advantages increase when we consider the state support⁵ programmes for women entrepreneurship in recent years. In other words, just like the nature of entrepreneurship, it would be appropriate to consider opportunity and risk factors together in the nature of women entrepreneurship. This situation reveals a similar picture for migrant

⁴ For detailed studies on the subject: (see Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, p. 513; Tağ & Hidroğlu, 2020; Gökçil, 2019).

⁵ Government support programmes for women: (see Durukan, 2021, p. 28).

women. Of course, it is quite difficult to show an example of entrepreneurship as an immigrant woman. However, overcoming every difficulty leads to the emergence of much stronger examples of entrepreneurship.

In migrant women's entrepreneurship, the risk of being an entrepreneur is increased first by being a migrant and then by being a woman. This implies that the entrepreneurial process can be much more challenging. Surviving as a migrant, woman and entrepreneur becomes an important issue. But the main issue in entrepreneurship is to discover areas of opportunity in the midst of all the challenges. This endeavour of discovery is above all a struggle for social and economic survival in the place of migration. This study has the desire to testify to these struggles of migrant women through the eyes of a social scientist. Here, the entrepreneurship examples of migrant women entrepreneurs are tried to be understood. Based on the conceptual framework we have drawn above, the basic approach of this attempt to understand can be summarised in the following points. These points can also be considered as the basic assumptions of the study:

- Taking an actor-centred approach to migration and focusing on the migrant's memory and life-world rather than numerical values as much as possible.
- Migrant memory can be understood in terms of processes and expectations because processes provide a road map of feelings, thoughts and behaviours.
- It is necessary to evaluate entrepreneurship, migrant entrepreneurship and migrant women entrepreneurship on the axis of opportunities and risks. Opportunities and risks prevent categorically negating a situation. For this reason, it is open to explore the context of each entrepreneurship.

In accordance with these assumptions, the qualitative research design focusing on understanding was chosen as the method of the field study, and the study is limited to the Konya sample.

4 Method: Field Research

In the study, interview technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was employed. The interview question form was planned as semi-structured. The reason for choosing the semi-structured interview technique is that it allows the issues to be elaborated on during the interview and new questions to be asked in case of need. In the study, the phenomenological design was used to focus on the experiences of migrant women entrepreneurs through their entrepreneurial processes and expectations. In this way, it was possible to obtain in-depth and detailed data on what was experienced. A total of 12 migrant women entrepreneurs were interviewed. Of these, nine were Syrian, two were Uyghur and one was Palestinian. The interviews were discontinued after the findings obtained from the interviews reached the level of fulfilment. An appointment was requested from the participants for the interview, and they were interviewed in the places chosen by them. Participants who made an appointment during working hours were interviewed at their workplace, while participants who made an appointment outside working hours were interviewed at the participant's home. The interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes. During the interview, voice recordings were taken with the permission of the participants, and then the voice recordings of the interviews were transcribed and documented. Before the data collection phase, a pilot interview was conducted in the field to test the level of understanding of the interview questions and the specific characteristics of the field. The interviews were conducted face to face with the participants, and the personal information of the participants was protected.

The main problem of the research is "What are the factors shaping the entrepreneurship processes of immigrants coming to Konya, and what are their expectations regarding entrepreneurship processes?" The interviews were conducted by two sociologists with field experience. While one of these people conducted the interview, the other person made observations. In addition, an interpreter was brought to the interviews with the participants who did not have a good command of Turkish. The fact that most of the participants do not speak Turkish is one of the major drawbacks of the study. When incomprehensible situations occurred

during the interview with people who knew the language, they were solved with people who spoke both languages in that place. The demographic information of the participants and information about their country of origin are given in Table 8.1.

When the demographic characteristics of the participants were analysed, it was found that the average age of the participants was 37. Considering the level of education, it is seen that the level of education of entrepreneur migrant women is high. It is seen in the table that the level of education is an important factor in entrepreneurship. Considering the marital status, the majority of the participants are married. In addition to this, according to the data obtained from the divorced participant, the reason for the divorce of the participant is that she has no children, and for this reason, she does not accept her husband to marry another woman at the same time. In the table, income status is not given purposefully. Many participants stated that they did not want to respond to this

Table 8.1 Demographic information

Participants	Age	Education	Marital status	Number of children	Entrepreneurship sector
P1	42	Undergraduate	Married	5	Book cafe
P2	39	Undergraduate	Single	–	Design
P3	38	Undergraduate	Married	2	Honey producer's production
P4	43	Associate degree	Married	6	Restaurant
P5	26	Master's degree	Single	–	Translator
P6	46	High school	Spouse passed away	4	Clothing store
P7	37	High school	Married	3	Textile
P8	29	Undergraduate	Married	3	Textile
P9	33	Master's degree	Divorced	–	Counsellor
P10	37	High school	Married	3	Hairdresser
P11	35	Undergraduate	Married	3	Restaurant
P12	40	Associate degree	Married	3	Textile

question. Some of them answered hesitantly. Therefore, it was considered more appropriate not to include income status in the demographic data.

One of the most important factors affecting the entrepreneurship processes of migrant women is their previous experiences. The city they came from, their period of living in Konya, their previous cities and the occupation of their husbands are presented in Table 8.2.

The majority of the participants are the ones who came to Türkiye after the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Due to Türkiye's open-door policy, nearly four million Syrians continue their lives in our country under temporary protection status. Therefore, Syrians have the largest population among the migrants in Türkiye. The interviewees included Uyghur Turks fleeing from Chinese persecution and a Palestinian participant who turned his international student status into entrepreneurship. The average duration of their stay in Türkiye is 6.5 years. When we look at the occupation of the spouses of the entrepreneurs, it is seen that non-skilled jobs are in the majority. In addition, in the interviews, it was found that men in entrepreneurship help their wives in buying and

Table 8.2 Country and city information

Participants	Country and previous city of residence	How many years in Türkiye?	Profession of spouse	Cities they have been to in Türkiye
P1	Syria/Latakia	10	Car repair	Hatay, Ankara, Mersin, Urfa, Adana, İstanbul
P2	Syria/Aleppo	5	–	İstanbul, Bursa
P3	Syria/Hama	4	Grocery store	Hatay
P4	China/Urumqi	7	Trade (export)	Konya, Karaman, Gaziantep, Ankara
P5	Palestine/Gaza	4	–	İstanbul
P6	Syria/Aleppo	10	Car repair	Kilis, Adana
P7	Syria/Damas	7	Sewerage	Konya
P8	Syria/Aleppo	8	Painter	Şanlıurfa
P9	Syria/Aleppo	5	–	Gaziantep, İstanbul
P10	Syria/Aleppo	7	Construction	Konya
P11	China	5	Trade (export)	İstanbul, Konya
P12	Syria/Damas	6	Textile	Hatay, İstanbul

selling or marketing, which we can call external jobs. In addition, most of the women have stated that they have taken the entrepreneurship in order to support their husbands financially. When cities and connections are considered in the entrepreneurship process, cities are important in establishing a business, buying and selling goods and services.

The following questions were asked to analyse the current situation of migrant women entrepreneurs and to understand how they got to where they are today.

- How did you decide to become an entrepreneur/get into this business (previous job, vocational training, education, person)? How many years have you been in this business?
- Did you work in any job like this in Türkiye before starting your own business?
- Did your life before migration contribute to setting up this business?
- How did you raise your funds to start a business? Did you receive any support?
- Who were your most important supporters when starting a business? Did you receive financial support? Who encouraged you?
- Who are your customers?
- Are you satisfied with your current job? What are the advantages and disadvantages of doing this job as a woman in Türkiye?
- What are the problems in your business life? What difficulties have you experienced?
- Do you plan to continue this business in Türkiye? Under what circumstances would you consider going back and leaving this place?
- What has changed in your life after opening a business?
- How do you see your future in Türkiye?
- Would you recommend other migrant women to start a business?
- Do you have solidarity co-operation with other enterprises doing the same business?

The first eight of these questions are aimed at understanding the processes of migrant women's entrepreneurship, and the remaining five are aimed at understanding expectations. All participants responded to all of these questions.

5 Research Findings: Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Processes in Konya

Konya is one of the oldest settlements in Anatolia. It is an ancient city that has been home to Hittite, Phrygian, Cimmerian, Lydian, Persian, Roman, Umayyad, Abbasid, Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman Empires. It is defined as “Konya Seljuk Capital” in the UNESCO World Heritage Temporary List since 2000. In addition, the Spice Road, Silk Road and Caravans (historically traders or pilgrims) contributed to the economic development of Konya and the interaction of the city. Konya, which has a very deep-rooted history, is in the Central Anatolia Region. Konya is the largest province in Türkiye in terms of area. According to 2021 data, it has a population of 2,277,017. While the number of foreigners in Konya with a residence permit is 11,977, the number of Syrians under temporary protection is 123,800 (GİGM, 2022). As such, it is a city preferred by immigrants.

In economic terms, Konya is known as the granary. The main agricultural products are wheat, sugar beet, sunflower, onion and poppy. In addition, it has an important place with its developing industry in various sectors and the employment it provides. According to the “Konya Economy Report 2020” published by Konya Chamber of Commerce in 2021, there are 10 organised industrial zones, 17 small industrial sites, 15 small industrial sites in the provincial centre, 11 small industrial sites in the districts of Konya Province and 32 private industrial sites in Konya (KTO, 2021). Konya, which has a conservative line in terms of political tendency, has a conservative tendency in cultural and religious terms (Akın et al., 2013, p. 147). All these dimensions that constitute Konya play an important role in the adaptation process of migrants who migrate. Therefore, the factors that make it meaningful to live in the city are the reasons that attract migrants to live in that city.

When we consider the reasons for the interviewees to be in Konya and to prefer Konya for entrepreneurship, we see that Konya’s religious and political identity is an influential factor. In this sense, most of our interviewees see Konya as a favourable city to live in both in terms of economy and in terms of culture.

We came to Konya for the first time. We were working with the agencies of a few companies from here before. We were working in food sector in Konya, Karaman, Gaziantep, Ankara. We travelled back and forth a lot and we liked Konya. There are many Uyghurs in Istanbul and our children are in their adolescence. Konya is a city where adolescence can pass more conveniently. Then we moved here directly, thinking that Konya is a good place to live. (P4, Restaurant, 43)

Living in Konya did not pose a problem in terms of culture. The culture of Konya and our culture are similar. This is the reason why we chose Konya. We used to live in Mersin, but the culture there is different, but Konya has an Islamic culture. (P1, Book Cafe, 42)

One of the main reasons behind the entrepreneurship of the interviewees in Konya is that the acquaintance with those who migrated to Konya before them has an important role. This actually reflects what the network theory suggests to us.

First, we were in Reyhanlı; the district of Hatay, then we came to Konya. My husband was initially in Istanbul and we came to Konya because they did not give him a valid ID card. We came here because my husband's brothers and sisters are here. (P3, Honey Producer, 38)

I came to Konya. I checked Istanbul and Bursa to find a job, but life there is both overcrowded and difficult, so I chose Konya. My family is also here. (P2, Design, 39)

The fact that all of the interviewees find Konya to be a favourable city to live in also means that a safe environment for entrepreneurship is available in Konya for migrants. In this sense, it can be stated that there are different reasons for migrant women to engage in entrepreneurship in Konya. All interviewees have emphasised the struggle to hold on after migration. In fact, the main reason for entrepreneurship is a state of compulsion. More accurately, it is an endeavour to live in better conditions. In this sense, the struggle for survival emerges as a central theme in migrant women entrepreneurs. The struggle to survive for many different reasons emerges in the interviews. The most prominent theme among these is the economy.

We escaped from the Chinese persecution. All our money, property, and jobs were left behind. You cannot sell them and leave the country. Therefore, we left everything. We started a new life here. My husband buys and sells milk

and I cook and sell food to students at home to support him. We have different food culture; Turkish cuisine is different to us. So, I cook for the international students here. (P11, Restaurant, 35)

After my husband died, I had to work and look after the children. I had no profession, so it was easy for me to work on women stuff. Here I sell products such as clothes, make-up and perfume. I have been running this shop for 4 years. (P6, Clothing Store, 46)

5.1 Entrepreneurship Processes and Supports

One of the most important aspects of understanding entrepreneurship processes is to explore support factors. In this sense, the interviewees were asked about the factors that migrant entrepreneur women think that are supportive for them. The most important motivation that supports migrant women's entrepreneurship processes is institutional support. This is a significant finding of the field study. The support provided by different institutions, both educational and economic, is the main determinant motivation of migrant women's entrepreneurship processes.

Firstly, we had a clothing shop next to our house. We were selling clothes, men's, women's and children's clothes. We ran it for two years, then we closed it down. After that, we applied for entrepreneurship programme. We were accepted by ILO and received support. They gave us courses. 60 people took entrepreneurship courses and 8 of them were to be selected. This selection was made according to the project. I am an Arabic teacher and I presented a book cafe project for support because it is my field. Books are very important to me; I love them very much. I applied for the entrepreneurship course and I was accepted. I took courses on entrepreneurship for 10 months every day between 9.00–17.00. At the end of 10 months, there were 50 people. They selected 20 people among these 50 people. Everyone started working on a different project idea. 8 projects were selected from 20 people. I was one of them. (P1, Book Cafe, 42)

We received support from ILO (International Labour Organisation). There was a course on entrepreneurship and after this course everyone presented an entrepreneurship project. Since we were already in the honey business in Syria, our project was on honey production and we received support.

During the Covid process, our business started to deteriorate. Then we applied to UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and received a grant. (P3, Honey Producer, 38)

We came to Türkiye. First, we settled in Hatay, then we went to Istanbul, where my husband and I found a job in a textile factory and started working. The hours were long and the pay was low. We worked there for 3 years. Then we heard something about entrepreneurship. Then I applied and we created a workshop on textiles. We decided to do this because the working conditions were bad. (P12, Textile, 40)

Based on the above views of the participants, institutional support is a very important factor that positively affects the entrepreneurship processes of migrant women. This institutional support does not only mean financial support. It is extremely important in terms of understanding the socio-cultural environment of the place of migration, developing language skills, vocational training, and getting socialised in different places. In migration processes, the spouse factor is as significant as institutional support. All married women have engaged in entrepreneurship with the support of their husbands. On the other hand, the entrepreneurship processes of those who do not have husbands involve the reverse motivation. Those without husbands find the way to survive as women through entrepreneurship.

I have only my husband, my children are small and we have no relatives here. My family is in Syria. My husband supported me and I opened the haberdashery to support my husband in a way. We were 7 of us, the whole family, and I wanted to work so that the children would not be needy. I started working with my husband so that they would not drop out of school and have to work. Most of the Syrians who have come to Türkiye so far do not send their children to school but make them work. My husband and I both worked because we wanted our children receive education. We tried to grab every opportunity so that our children could go to school. (P1, Book Cafe, 42)

My husband was my biggest supporter. Since I could not do the merchanting and visiting brands that I could not do myself, my husband did it for me. In other words, first we were making honey, packaging it, shipping it, sometimes it was sent to Istanbul and Gaziantep. We worked here together with my husband. (P3, Honey Producer, 38)

My husband has always been my biggest supporter. He told me to work, go out, learn languages. We both supported each other and we faced the difficulties together. (P8, Textile, 29)

Language, education and socialisation skills have an important role in migrant women's entrepreneurship as much as the spouse factor. This is clearly reflected in the customer profile of the enterprises. The customers of the interviewees generally consist of their fellow countrymen. In other words, it can be stated that one of the most important supports for the entrepreneurship process is the entrepreneur women's own community. Here we can state that ethnic, religious and cultural similarity directly affects the customer profile. In addition, as the entrepreneurship experience increases, it is observed that there are customers from different groups. In this sense, while P3 has a more limited customer profile, she states that the customer profile has changed over time. P4, on the other hand, states that he appeals to people of different nationalities and Turks since he does not have his own countrymen in the city.

Mostly Syrians but there are a few Turks too. Since we don't have many Turkish acquaintances, we can't sell much to them. That is why most of our customers are Syrian. (P3, Honey Producer, 38)

Mostly Syrians. Some of them are my former customers and acquaintances. I also have Syrian customers from Türkiye. There are those I do business online. I do things such as logos, business cards, packaging design, signboards, brochures, posters, social media advertisements, and every group demands my products now. (P2, Design, 39)

There are not many Uyghurs here, they are usually in Istanbul. Malaysian, Indonesian Far Easterners come here. Turks also come here, they used to come less in the past, but more and more Turks are coming here. (P4, Restaurant, 43)

While talking about her customer audience, P10, unlike other participants, expresses the satisfaction of working only with women and states that the customer environment is actually an environment of trust. This shows that the customer group is of extra significance in the problems experienced by women migrants.

I don't know what else I could do. It is difficult to be a Syrian woman in Türkiye. People can be mean to you or say nasty things to you. They may say that you give birth too much or that you have fled your country. They mess with your child. Especially hairdresser customers like to chat and think that

they can ask you about anything. When they think that, they think they can interfere with your life. This was upsetting for me at the beginning, but now I'm used to it. The advantage is being in the company of women. You feel safe and comfortable. (P10, Hairdresser, 37)

5.2 Entrepreneurship Processes and Main Problem Areas

The most important reason why the customers are not locals is stated as the language problem. Many participants consider the lack of sufficiently developed language skills as the most important obstacle in front of their entrepreneurship.

It is difficult to speak Turkish, in general, since the people we do business with are Syrians, we do not speak Turkish and our language does not improve. This time, when we have Turkish customers, we cannot communicate well in Turkish. (P2, Design, 39)

I had a lot of language problems and I still do, but I learnt the language while working. I asked what I couldn't understand and I listened well. The person I worked with taught me how I should speak and I went to a language course. (P10, Hairdresser, 37)

Some participants drew attention to the difficulties of being a migrant and a woman. In this sense, it is stated that being both a migrant and a woman is open to abuse. Especially P12's views on this issue express the difficulties experienced by migrant women entrepreneurship in an illustrative way.

It is difficult to work as a Syrian migrant woman. Not everyone, but some people I worked with approached me in a bad way. The rumours spread among men about relationships and marriages with Syrian women have bad effects. Men assume that we can live with them because we are in a difficult situation. Women think that we will take their husbands. There may have been such incidents, but not everyone is like that. I am not like this; my social circle is not like this. Being a woman is hard. The advantage is that it is good to work, I know that not everyone perceives me like this, there are also good people in the factory. There are also such good people who help us and see us as sisters and brothers. The advantage is that women in Türkiye can work,

start a business and there is support for them. In Syria, I cannot work because it is shameful.

In addition to the problem areas mentioned above, all participants consider the pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis as the most important problem of their businesses. The economic crisis that follows the prolonged closures continue to be experienced even after the pandemic period. As was the case with all entrepreneurs, it has negatively affected the entrepreneurial processes in migrant women entrepreneurship.

5.3 Satisfaction and Expectations

Despite all the problem areas, when migrant women entrepreneurs were asked whether they were satisfied with being an entrepreneur in Konya as a woman and a migrant, almost all of the interviewees stated that they were satisfied. Although there are certain problems, the satisfaction of being able to create value and survive in the prevailing conditions is reflected in the statements of all interviewees.

Yes, I am satisfied. You always express yourself well (laughs). It is very difficult at work. For example, not everything is that easy for us here. Even though it is difficult, we work on our own feet without being dependent on anyone. It is difficult to employ people. It is difficult to stand and cook from morning till night. It is really difficult to cook because it is not a meal that is prepared and served in advance. (P4, Restaurant, 43)

Thank God, I'm very pleased. Every work has its difficulties. It is always hard to work, there is no comfort, but my job is a little more comfortable here than other jobs. Some Turks say, "Why you Syrians are poor?" I find this statement disturbing. I am very upset, I am not poor, I work, I earn. They say, "We help Syrians." This is a problem. It is not like that, I earn myself. (P6, Clothing Store, 46)

The main reason behind the satisfaction of the participants is the acquisition of dignity and self-confidence. Whether successful or not, entrepreneurship experience causes migrant women to express themselves more comfortably. In this sense, when the participants were asked what changed in their lives with entrepreneurship, it was stated that there was

a radical change, and this change was welcomed positively despite many difficulties. Here, it is necessary to reiterate the increase in their respect and self-confidence.

It is different when you do not work, it is different when you work, it is very different when you have a workplace. I started working and everyone's approach towards me changed. When I became a business owner, I also became the owner of respect. Everyone treats me like I am important. I realised much better that I share a common life with my husband. I felt that I belong here in Türkiye. I can call it my workplace. (P12, Textile, 40)

Work has become my best friend. Before, I was always at home. When I started working, I got used to living in Türkiye. We were going through hard times financially and when I started working, we were relieved. The old R ... and the current R ... are quite different now. In the past there was no need, I was at home, I was afraid, now I am brave. I am working in an unfamiliar country and I don't even speak the language. (P7, Textile, 37)

Freer, safer, H... is a new H..., stronger, I used to be very embarrassed, I wanted to do it but I was afraid, but now it is better, I am stronger. I've already been through war; I've already had fears. Sitting at home, I lost hope, I didn't do anything, I just sat, I had no hope for the future. Now all my circumstances have changed. Before, I was out of the war, I was married and I was sitting at home. I changed everything. I work, I study, everyone's respect has changed and my self-respect has changed. (P9, Counsellor, 33)

My self-esteem has increased, the respect of my social environment has increased. Their respect has increased both because it is in Arabic and because it is a book and because I sell the Qur'an in the Book Cafe. Mrs S... for example. I feel that I am useful, I contribute to Türkiye in the social field. (P1, Book Cafe, 42)

As it is understood from these findings, entrepreneurial experiences are highly important for migrant women to feel and express their own existence in all situations. These results, which we can show as an example of the actor-centred migration approach we expressed in the theoretical part, show that entrepreneurship in the migration process has produced positive changes in the life of the actor (migrant woman). It is extremely important that even people whose entrepreneurial processes are characterised by a series of problems have this approach.

Entrepreneurs' satisfaction levels also shape their expectations. In this respect, there are almost no participants who do not want to continue the entrepreneurship process. It remains uncertain how economic processes and different problems will affect the entrepreneurship process. However, it is quite significant that the entrepreneurship experience itself is desired to be continued. Participants want to continue their entrepreneurship experience by returning to their hometowns or in Türkiye. Some Syrian participants are divided into two camps. In addition to those who want to return when the war ends and when there is a convenient environment, there are also participants who state that they will not return in any case. In fact, these participants do not believe that there will be appropriate conditions in their home countries.

I want to live in Türkiye, I don't want to return. There is no country to be found when I return. Everything has changed and now we can't go back even if we wish to return. I want to stay and expand my textile workshop here. (P12, Textile, 40)

I really want to continue the book café, but not now because of Assad and the regime we cannot go back. Assad will destroy us the moment we return. It will be only possible if there is a better Syria. Then I will continue as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship is a wider field. (P1, Book Cafe, 42)

Contrary to these participants, there are also participants who think that they will return when the regime in Syria changes.

If the war ends and everything gets better, I will return. My homeland, my home, my family, everything is there. If I have a good job here, maybe I will think about it, but if the conditions are equal, I will return to where my family is. People want to get social; I don't want to be alone. (P9, Counsellor, 33)

I think hairdressing is a good profession for me. I'll continue. I don't know if I'll go back. If the regime changes, I will think about it. My loved ones and family are there. If we can be together as before, I will return and do hairdressing there. If not, I want to continue here. (P10, Hairdresser, 37)

Finally, when the participants were asked what they would think about other migrant women becoming entrepreneurs, all of them recommended entrepreneurship and thought that migrant women would feel better about themselves in this way.

You need courage, you need to take risks. Everyone can stand on their own feet. There is no advantage in doing a big business, start small. The important

thing is to do it well and to do it from the heart. We were very small, we did not expect many customers before, we grew up on our own. (P4, Restaurant, 43)

Yes, they should work because it develops better a language. Two, this way Turks can realise what they like and what they don't like. How will they treat each other? I order to stay in this country these are necessary to learn the language and the Turks. I always advise my friends to work in whatever job they find. Working is very good for a person. (P5, Interpreter, 26)

I advise migrant women to open a business. Whoever can find a job for themselves can work under favourable conditions and in a favourable environment. The point here is to be a woman and to work under favourable conditions. Otherwise, it is easy to do business. But when the workplace is one's own, the woman herself creates the environment and conditions. Therefore, migrant women should open up a business. (P11, Restaurant, 35).

When we evaluate the experiences of migrant women entrepreneurs in the context of satisfaction and expectations, we clearly see that entrepreneurship processes have a rehabilitative aspect and contribute to the solution of problems, especially economic and social problems.

6 Conclusion

This study aims to understand migrant women's entrepreneurial experiences in terms of processes and expectations. In doing so, it evaluates the phenomenon of migration from an actor-centred perspective. As a result of the fieldwork, several tangible results have been obtained. The first is that entrepreneurship supports migrant women to survive in the place of migration. Entrepreneurship experiences play a key role in solving the social, economic and cultural problems of migrants who are the real actors of the migration phenomenon. More importantly, entrepreneurship plays an important role in enabling disadvantaged groups, both migrants and women, to express themselves, to respect themselves and to feel valued, thus facilitating their adaptation to the place of migration. As a result, all of the interviewees recommend other migrant women to undertake entrepreneurship experiences. In addition, they are satisfied with being an entrepreneur in the city of Konya due to its socio-cultural environment.

As one of the most important findings of the study, institutional and family support has a very significant role in entrepreneurship. In particular, institutional support guides entrepreneurs in economic and educational fields. For this reason, it is very important to increase the number of institutional supports for disadvantaged migrant groups. This will ensure both the integration processes of migrants and the ability of migrants to express themselves in social, cultural and economic terms. In this way, an essential contribution will be made to the solution of migration-based problems. In a similar way, family support constitutes one of the most important motivations for migrant entrepreneur women. At this point, it can be ensured that training modules on entrepreneurship can be created in national education and continuing education fields. In this way, migrants can be encouraged to become entrepreneurs.

The study concluded that language is the most important obstacle for migrant women entrepreneurs. This problem also affects the customer profile. In a way, entrepreneurs feel obliged to appeal to their own community. It is possible to take institutional measures to overcome this barrier. Migrants can be encouraged to have entrepreneurial experiences in different regions and in places where people of different nationalities live. In this sense, alternative sectors should be introduced for migrant entrepreneur women so that they can appeal to different customer groups. As a matter of fact, migrant entrepreneurship is extremely important for migrants both to create their own economy and to contribute to the national economy. In this study, the language problem, which appears as a disadvantage in this study, will be a move to encourage the export network if it is managed in the right way.

This study was conducted on migrant women with entrepreneurial experience in Konya. In this context, the obtained findings should be considered as limited to Konya. Similar studies to be conducted in different cities and regions may reveal different findings on migrant women entrepreneurship. These different findings are very significant in understanding migrant women entrepreneurship. For this reason, the number of regional studies on immigrant women entrepreneurship in particular and immigrant entrepreneurship in general should be increased and encouraged. In the meantime, studies on different groups should be

encouraged. The entrepreneurship experiences of migrants from different categories such as people with disabilities, elderly, widowed, youth should be tried to be analysed through academic studies. These studies will enable us to comprehend regular or irregular migration, which is one of the most important social problems of today and probably of the coming years. The expansion of the academic literature with studies from different perspectives will be a source of developing the right policy when it is required.

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