



CHILD POVERTY IN TÜRKİYE

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine the historical development of poverty and child poverty. Define poverty, and explain why child poverty should be handled separately. Then, considering the fact that children are dependent on their families, child poverty will be discovered in light of information regarding family poverty such as household income, employment status of parents, educational level of parents, single parenthood, household size and structure, housing deprivations and ownership status of housing, regional economic differences and presence of child labor.

Keywords: Poverty, Child poverty, Measurement of child poverty

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE'DE ÇOCUK YOKSULLUĞU

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Bu çalışma, ilk olarak yoksulluğu ve çocuk yoksulluğunu tarihsel süreç içerisinde inceleyerek, yoksulluğu tanımlamayı ve çocuk yoksulluğunun neden ayrı olarak ele alınması gerektiğini açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Daha sonra çocukların aileye bağımlı olduğu gerçeği göz önünde bulundurularak, hane halkı geliri, ebeveynlerin çalışma durumu, ebeveynlerin eğitim düzeyi, tek ebeveynlik, hane büyüklüğü ve yapısı, konutun mülkiyet durumu ve konut içi yoksunluklar, bölgesel ekonomik farklılıklar gibi bilgiler ışığında çocuk yoksulluğu incelenecektir. Dünyada ve ülkemizde çocuk yoksulluğuna ait veriler kullanılarak çocuk yoksulluğu incelenecek ve ardından çözüm önerileri sunulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yoksulluk, Çocuk yoksulluğu, Çocuk yoksulluğunun ölçümü

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

CCF	: Christian Children's Fund
CHIP	: Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Center
EUROSTAT	: European Statistical Office
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
ILO	: International Labour Organization
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
IPEC	: International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
OECD	: Organisation For Economic Cooperation and Development
TURKSTAT	: Turkish Statistical Institute
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
WB	: World Bank

INTRODUCTION

Although varies in degree, child poverty is a global problem. Children in poverty are deprived of their rights, such as shelter, nutrition, health, and education, and lose their potential to be qualified individuals. Taking into account the reality that poverty is passed down from generation to generation, child poverty becomes a crucial topic to be handled for the sake of the future of societies.

Therefore, projects should be carried out and strategies developed to reduce child poverty. However, to this end, first the problem should be defined. This study aims to comprehend child poverty by examining it throughout the historical context and to reveal the problems by examining the issue comparatively with numerical data in the world and in Türkiye. For this aim, in the first part of the study, poverty will be defined, different types of poverty will be emphasized, the differences between them will be examined and poverty will be discussed in the historical process. In the second part of the study, children and children's rights will be focused on and then a definition of child poverty will be made. Then, child poverty will be discussed in the historical period. After examining the measurement methods of child poverty, information will be sought about the academic literature on child poverty. Subsequently, the determinants of child poverty will be discussed and the effects of child poverty will be examined in detail under the headings of health, education and unregistered status. In the third part of the study, the dimensions of child poverty in the world and in Türkiye will be revealed through numerical data. In the fourth and final part of the study, solution suggestions to reduce/eliminate child poverty will be focused on.

CHAPTER I

POVERTY

1.1 DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY

Poverty, in its most basic definition, is an individual's deprivation of means to satisfy his/her fundamental human rights. Poverty is one of the central issues that all developed and underdeveloped countries encounter. Since it is a multifaceted issue, poverty does not have a commonly agreed definition, and it can be interpreted differently depending on time and place. As per se mercantilists define poverty as the lack of yield growth in agriculture. According to the classicals, economic fluctuations are natural given the economic fluctuations in the economy. According to Marxists, poverty occurs when labor cannot get its reward, and to Keynesians, poverty originates from insufficient demand.

Although the concept of poverty was first introduced by Booth in the 1880s, the initial literature definition of poverty was first put forth by Rowntree. Rowntree states that poverty occurs when individuals do not have adequate income to satisfy their fundamental physical needs such as food, shelter, and clothing to maintain their lives. (Öztornacı and Demirdöğen 2015:7-15)

A more recent version of the concept affiliates poverty with deprivation of income and other resources (food, material, opportunities, standards, and services) to obtain the necessary living conditions. (Townsend 2006:5-6)

According to the World Bank's definition, however, poverty actually refers to the cases actually refers to when an individual is deprived of consumption resources that can meet his/her fundamental needs outside food, i.e. access to fundamental public services such as health and education. In this regard, poverty should not only be seen as having insufficient income but be addressed in the broader sense of being deprived of fundamental needs necessary for an individual to humanely maintain his/her life. (World Bank Development Report 2000/2001)

Following this approach Amartya Sen (1992) put forth the concept of "capability" when defining poverty in its broadest sense today. According to Sen, this concept is an individual's capability to avoid situations like hunger, unhealthiness, illiteracy, and poor shelter conditions, which every human would want to avoid. According to Sen's approach poverty means the deprivation of capability, thus using only monetary indices will fall short of measuring poverty; instead, an extensive evaluation should be done by considering material and physical vulnerability, isolation, weakness, inadequate participation, and environmental deterioration.

Given its multifaceted nature, the issue of overcoming the poverty problem continues to be one of the most crucial problems of today's world.

1.2 TYPES OF POVERTY

Poverty types include many concepts and definitions that change according to time and the view of societies on the poor. It is necessary to discuss the differences and relationships between these; however, problems occur in doing so.

1.2.1 Absolute Poverty

Absolute poverty is measured on the number of calories consumed per capita, and is calculated according to the necessary minimum wage and expense standards to maintain an individual's life. This minimum limit, on the other hand, varies according to geographical region. According to the data from the World Bank, those who have as much as one or less than 1.5 dollars daily are deemed as poor. This poverty type is mostly seen in underdeveloped or developing countries.

1.2.2 Relative Poverty

This type of poverty is concerned with the income distribution. According to Adam Smith, individuals who can meet their mandatory needs but cannot reach the average prosperity standards of a society are deemed to be in relative poverty.

1.2.3 Objective Poverty

This poverty type is determined by normative values. Variables are determined by experts beforehand and falling behind in these variables is defined as objective poverty. These variables are concrete criteria such as the amount of calories consumed, income, consumption expenditures, square meters of the house inhabited.

1.2.4 Subjective Poverty

In this poverty type the subjective view of individuals matter. Large-scale surveys are conducted to measure the poverty threshold. Participants of the survey are asked what they think the income level should be to get out of poverty. This method is called Leiden Approach. Survey respondents are asked questions about how much income they get, whether their level of living standards are very bad, bad, insufficient, good or very good. Poverty threshold is then determined according to survey results, and those below this line are deemed as poor.

1.2.5 Chronic Poverty

This type of poverty occurs when individuals remain under the determined poverty threshold for extended periods. The generally accepted approach attributes chronic poverty to those who have been poverty for five years or more. In many societies five years is perceived as a long period of time in an individual's lifespan where the individual lose the abilities necessary for him/her to get out of poverty. Therefore, people who have been poor for five years or more are more likely to remain poor for the rest of their lives. As the period of poverty extends, hopes of individuals to get of poverty gradually decrease.

1.2.6 Temporary Poverty

This poverty type is attributed to seasonal fluctuations in the income level of individuals that may result from inflation, natural disasters, and temporary unemployment.

1.2.7 Human Poverty

In the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report (1997), human poverty is defined as the deprivation of opportunities to have a living standard to that enables a long, healthy, and productive life. Following these lines a Human Poverty Index was developed to measure human poverty. Thanks to this index, disadvantages, such as a short lifespan and deprivation of educational services are identified, and the extent of poverty and the rate of people who remain outside human development are measured.

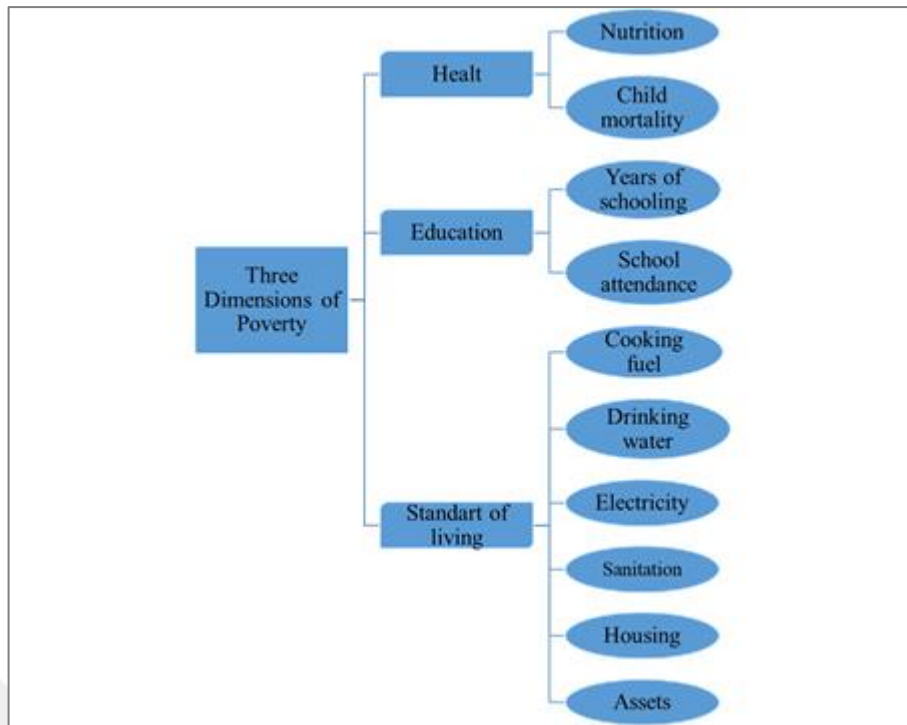


Figure 1: Indicators of multidimensional poverty

Source: UNDP, Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022.

In the global MPI, people are counted as multidimensionally poor if they are deprived in one-third or more of 10 indicators which are seen Table 1, where each indicator is equally weighted within its dimension, so the health and education indicators are weighted 1/6 each and the standard of living indicators are weighted 1/18 each. The intensity of multidimensionally poor people is measured by the average number of weighted deprivations they experience. The MPI is the product of the incidence of poverty (proportion of poor people) and the intensity of poverty (average deprivation score⁵ of poor people) and is therefore sensitive to changes in both components. The MPI ranges from 0 to 1, and higher values imply higher poverty.

1.2.8 Urban Poverty

This type of poverty sheds light on the extent the residents of a city can utilize the rights and opportunities their city has to offer. According to Incedal (2013), insufficient income, insufficient and unstable resource ownership, insufficient housing, insufficient public infrastructure services, deprivation of social security, inadequate protection of the poor individuals in the judicial system, and the lack of influence and power of the poor individuals on decision-making processes are the factors that affect urban poverty. (Incedal 2013: 26). This new urban poverty has

introduced new terms such as marginality, the underclass, and social exclusion to the poverty literature (Buğra, Keyder 2003: 20). Marginality is defined as the inability to be included in the social system. The term underclass refers to the working class living confined to certain regions due to their social status as an overall lower class, and social exclusion. Social exclusion refers to the process of pushing people out of society due to poverty, deprivation of basic education and skills, or discrimination, and preventing them from participating in social life as much as they wish. This situation, on the one hand, causes this segment to experience difficulties in accessing labor markets, income-generating activities, and education and training opportunities, and on the other hand, creates obstacles in establishing social networks and activities. The power they have is very limited and their participation in decision-making processes is limited. Therefore, this group generally feels powerless and incapable of keeping control over decisions that will affect their daily lives.

1.2.9 Rural Poverty

Areas, far from central settlements, with a low population and whose source of income is generally agriculture, described as rural areas. In this regions, there are deprivations such as low population density, water, electricity, roads, transportation, difficult geographical conditions, health, education, malnutrition, lack of job opportunities, lack of social participation and agricultural activities being based on subsistence economy. The necessity of selling agricultural products for lower prices and consuming more expensive products whose production is based on industry is challenging for rural areas whose economy is based on agriculture and leads to their impoverishment. Reasons such as cheap human labor, people not having enough land, or the division of land have increased rural poverty and paved the way for increased urban migration.

1.2.10 Women Poverty

Women poverty issue has been included in the literature since 1970s. According to statistics 70 percent of 1.2 billion people who have to maintain their lives under 1 USD are women and their children who depend on them (Özbudun 2014: 274). A poor woman is deprived of many opportunities, such as finding a job, obtaining education, and fundamental services, and cannot get a sufficient share from resource distribution due to gender inequality. Education and employment-related problems,

which can be accepted as the most influential causes of women in poverty, must be resolved.

1.3 HISTORY OF POVERTY

Although poverty has been a problem encountered in every society throughout human history, the concept of poverty in the sense that we discuss today dates back to the 16th century. Poverty experienced thereafter differed from previous periods in terms of living conditions and the perception of poverty (Buğra 2015: 24). With the commercialization of agriculture in the 16th century, agricultural structures started to disintegrate. The increase in agricultural profit strengthened the rents collected from the land, enhanced land values, and led to changes in ownership. Those who had to work in fields because they did not have enough land for production were forced to migrate to urban areas. This migration wave increased the demand for transportation, commerce, and manufacturing sectors and thus irregular employment. Commercial network that were enhanced with geographical discoveries led to a globalized economy. Poverty phenomenon expanded to cause a new set of serious economical and social structure issues. The poor of the Middle Ages in Europe, who maintained their lives with donations and charities, did not cause any disturbances and were seen as an integral part of the social order. In the 16th century, however, beggars were not welcome anymore. The poor was seen as labor force and were forced to work.

Poverty took on a whole new look in the 17th century. Support provided to the poor individuals was taken under state supervision. States took poor individuals under their protection, and this caused a debate in the newly emerging economic and social setting. Supporting poor people for a better social and individual welfare policy was challenged by the financial burden of the aid.

In the 18th century, the idea that poverty is not only a problem associated with unemployment but rather those who are already employed one day might become poor became a widespread acceptance. Speenhamland Law, implemented in England in 1795, was designed provide wage supplements from the public resources, which were determined according to the subsistence minimum based on the primary food prices, when wages fell under this amount. This way, it was thought that not only a certain level of employment could be maintained, but also the impoverishment of employees could be prevented. However, under the conditions of the Industrial Revolution, this

law, which did not comply with the logic of the market system in 1834, was abolished, and the new Poor Law was implemented cancelling the aid provided for the poor.

With the influence of industrialization in the United Kingdom, especially in the first half of the 19th century, poverty could not be prevented and became even more widespread (Şenses 2014: 32).

As poverty became more evident, philosophers of the time found the topic worthy of their attention. At the end of the 19th century, social scientists tried to settle poverty on scientific grounds. In the 1830s and 1840s, poverty, which became even more popular in academic fields in England and France with the Industrial Revolution, became one of the top fields of study of new disciplines of social sciences such as sociology and statistics (Zukas 2006: 482). The discussion of poverty as a social problem dates back to the studies conducted by Charles Booth in London in 1899. The findings of these studies were published by another eminent researcher Rowntree in 1902.

At the end of the 19th century, it was realized that neither charity nor the market could solve the issue of poverty. The concept of social welfare state started to emerge at this time and was first institutionalized in England in 1942 with the Beveridge Report, which terminated the poverty laws that lasted for four centuries and proposed a new reform agenda for poverty alleviation. (Güngör and Özüğurlu 1997: 1).

In the following years of the Great Depression, with the adoption of the Keynesian model, states intervened to the market system to foster economic productivity and wages and employment opportunities across the population, and thus mitigate the severe effects of the depression (Şenkal 2011: 148-149). Poverty decreased between 1945 and 1973. Regulations in the health sector and family aid implemented in the post-war period for social welfare purposes. Both the sense of solidarity and responsibilities of the states have helped increase the welfare of disadvantaged groups.

Due to the first petrol crisis break-out in 1973, Keynesian policies were abandoned, and social and public spendings were reduced. Export-based policies were adopted. A fierce competition atmosphere caused developing countries to encounter economic crises, and the poor individuals were the most affected group during these crises.

During the 1980-2000 period that neo-liberal policies dominated. With this crisis, many developing countries went into extreme debt. The need to finance these

debts made such countries dependent on organizations like the IMF and WB that impose neo-liberal policies. Policies that foresee reductions in public, health, and educational spending were adopted in the developing countries in line with the understanding of minimal state. Eventually, the integrating role of the state in social development was dropped, and liberal financial markets were established with foreign currency, interest, tax policies,(Şenkal 2011: 149-150). The most affected group of these crises and new policies in this period was the poor again.

Since 2000s, even though poverty was seriously addressed by international institutions and was aimed to be reduced, poverty remains still a critical issue due to reasons such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crises, wars, migrations and inequalities in the distribution of income.

The COVID-19 virus, which broke out in the city of Wuhan in China in 2019 and spread all over the World, was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020. Many people lost their lives due to the virus, and at the same time, many psychological, economic, political, and social problems came about. Poverty is the leading problem among these. The pandemic especially affected those living near the poverty threshold and caused a higher impoverishment among them. Women, children, senior citizens, the disabled, and immigrants felt the effects of the pandemic even more drastically.

Remote working, which became more prominent with the pandemic, caused establishments to lay off their employees, exacerbating unemployment. During this time, women were laid off more compared to men, and the economic inequality between men and women increased; resulting in a severe women impoverishment. Although economic aid packages were enacted by governments to eliminate the unemployment problem, accessing adequate social life standards became even harder. The economic hardships that families faced led to negligence in providing the necessary child care. Research conducted by UNICEF (2020) revealed that the COVID-19 pandemic caused many potential disadvantages for children and increased mistreatment and violence against children (Vezina, Brend, and Beeman 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic also led to some changes in the provision of education. Education was carried out remotely due to lockdowns. However, this system, which aimed for an uninterrupted education, had a greater impact on the inequalities for the disadvantaged communities. The necessary support could not be provided for the children who live in poor families and cannot afford internet

connection and computer to attend remote learning; therefore, depriving these children of their right to education and encouraging work. These children who were forced to give up their education and also did not have the required qualifications for the labor force had to work in unhealthy working conditions without insurance. This created the perfect environment for a cycle of poverty.

In conclusion, the educational issues during the pandemic, the uncertainty of going back to school, negligence of children due to parents' working and living conditions, the growing gap between the learning and developmental differences among students, handicaps of using technological platforms, and inability of the low-income groups to access opportunities provided by the educational systems are only some of the education-related problems encountered during the pandemic (Gençoğlu and Çiftçi 2020). According to the analysis published by UNICEF and Save the Children (2020), with the COVID-19 pandemic, 150 million children in countries with low and medium income dropped below the poverty threshold, and with an increase of 15 percent, in total 1.2 billion children now live in multidimensional poverty (Hosta 2020).

Moreover, urbanization, the aging world and deteriorating climate change also boost the severity and frequency of natural disasters such as floods, drought, storms, fire, and earthquakes around the world. Natural disasters bring about more destructive outcomes due to reasons such as economic and political inequalities, inadequacy in accessing resources, and insufficient public preparation, especially in developing countries and poor regions of such countries. Comparatively, lower numbers of casualties due to natural disasters in industrialized countries depend on the higher income per capita, a well-established institutionalization, and educational and health services. The higher numbers of casualties in poor regions might originate from low-income households and communities living in low-quality and risky houses with higher risk of danger, limited access to infrastructure services, and no access to insurance and social protection mechanisms. According to the United Nations (UN), in the last 50 years, more than 11 thousand natural disasters occurred due to climate and water-related reasons; 2 million people lost their lives, and 3.6 trillion dollars of economic loss was reported. Children are estimated to be the most affected by such disasters. For successful disaster management, social inequalities must be reduced, training must be provided to ensure a security culture, and decisive policies must be implemented that prioritize children.

Last but not least, increasing migration triggered by wars, conflicts, and climate crises plummeted the number of asylum-seeker and refugee children both in the world and in our country, which is one of the most affected regions by such events; therefore, the access of such children to fundamental human rights are neglected, and they are forced to live a life of discrimination.



CHAPTER II

CHILD POVERTY

2.1 DEFINITION OF THE CHILD AND RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN

Child can be defined as a state of humanity between an infant and a teenage. The period starting from infancy and up to the age of 18 is also accepted as childhood. However, beyond its biological meaning, referring to the ages between birth and adulthood, childhood is also a sociological, historical, and psychological concept.

The concepts of children and childhood have been perceived differently throughout the various periods of history and in diverse geographic regions. During the Ancient Ages, while it is observed that the emotional needs of the children were ignored and the fathers had absolute authority over their children, in the Medieval period it is seen that the children were perceived as mini-adults. With the Enlightenment Age occurring in Europe, the perception of children began to change and children started to be valued. In the same period, the concepts of children and childhood were approached and examined in terms of education by important scholars in Turkish-Islamic societies. Along with the advancements that were obtained during the 19th and 20th centuries, with the results of industrialization and world wars on children, the perspective on children began to change and this change became visible in the legal domain as well. After the WW1 to meet the urgent needs of children, the International Save the Children Union was established. The union later became known as the International Union for Child Welfare and with the efforts of the organization, the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the first international and comprehensive document was enacted by the League of Nations General Assembly on September 26, 1924. In 1959, the United Nations General Assembly approved the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which included the children's rights to education, health and protection. The year 1979 was declared as the International Year of the Child worldwide. On November 20, 1989, the United Nations enacted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since that date, the main law legalization text that regulates children's rights in international law has been regarded as the Convention

on the Rights of the Child. The declaration, adopted by 193 countries in total, was approved in 1994 in Turkey and was enacted as law in 1995. The treaty, consisting of 54 articles in total, includes four different sections each one of them summarizing a different law. These rights were divided into four parts: the right to survival, the right to development, the right to protection, and the right to participation. (UNICEF 2007:17):

Right to Survival: It refers to the basic needs that are necessary for children to survive such as nutrition, shelter, adequate living standards, and access to healthcare services.

Right to Development: It indicates the needs necessary for children to achieve their potential, including activities such as education, resting, and cultural activities.

Right to Protection: These rights emphasize that children must be protected from any kind of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Special safeguards for child refugees include issues like the protection and rehab of neglected and abused children.

Right to Participation: It highlights children taking an active role in the society they belong to by having a voice in issues affecting their lives and expressing their own opinions.

In fact, children's rights are a part of human rights. It is mentioned under another, section to indicate the special interest in terms of the care, upbringing, and protection of children.

2.2. HISTORY OF CHILD POVERTY

Since the beginning of the 20th century, many scientific approaches were developed to define, measure, and understand poverty. However, children are not at the center of such studies or hardly put at the center of the discussion. The detailed study of child poverty started with the sociological research by Charles Booth. The research which was done on the people of London between 1902 and 1903 studied the subjects of child poverty and child employment. This study suggested that children face critical nutritional issues, and they must be resolved by providing nutritional resources to children through their families, charities, and public institutions, which is their natural right. No consensus was established on whether a public intervention is needed or whether it is the parent's responsibility to meet the nutritional needs of children.

Following Booth's study, the work of Seebohm Rowntree revealed in 1899 that 4215 out of 7230 (58%) people in the city of York who were a victim of absolute poverty were children (Buğra 2015: 143).

In the 20th century, the roles of families and the public were at the center of studies to establish children's welfare. The Education Law, also known as the Food Law, enacted in the United Kingdom in 1906, was implemented to provide food for children in poverty. Rowntree, in his study conducted in the city of York in 1936, evaluated the kids separately from their families and created a distinctive category for children. In his study, he stated that there is intense poverty among children and called out the government for the provision of family allowances as minimum income aid. Rowntree, in his study, concluded that child poverty is evident in cases when factors such as unemployment, low wages, size of the family, and the head of the family being a woman are present. His study constituted the basis for the Family Allowance Law in 1945. With this law, the foundations of the social insurance system were laid. Family aids were started to be provided under social aids and were financed by taxes.

Abel Smith and Townsend, in the analysis of their findings from the family spending survey they conducted in the United Kingdom in 1965, found that a large number of children and families live in poverty (Smith and Townsend 1965) The family allowances provided in the period from 1948 to 1967 were inadequate, and could not save low-income families and their children from poverty. With further new policies for fighting against poverty, living standards started to improve toward the end of the 1970s. With the increasing welfare, improvements in the health and development of children were observed as well, and children were protected from poverty.

Previously, when child poverty was mentioned, children of poor families were thought of; however, since the 1980s, this started to change. The more severe impact of poverty on children compared to adults and the fact that children need protection required specific addressing of the child poverty in its own.

Nevertheless, when attempting to define child poverty, difficulties are encountered in describing a universal, objective definition that encompasses the factors affecting the children's lives and contributes to reducing child poverty. In the State of the World's Children report published by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in 2005, child poverty is defined as follows: "Children living in poverty experience deprivation of the material, spiritual and

emotional resources needed to survive, develop and thrive."(UNICEF, 2005: 18) In this case, children cannot utilize their rights, fully realize their potential, and cannot join society as complete and equal members. (Yiğit et al. 2018: 91) In this definition, the connection between child poverty and human rights along the multidimensional structure of child poverty is emphasized.

For "The Christian Children's Fund" (CCF):" Poor children are deprived of essential materials conditions and services; they are excluded on the basis of their age, gender, class, etc.; and they are vulnerable to the increasing array of threats in their environments." CCF sees child poverty as a dynamic and multidimensional phenomenon. It has both tangible and intangible components.

The Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Center (CHIP) offers the following definition for child poverty: "Childhood poverty means children and young people growing up without access to economic, social, cultural, physical, environmental and political resources that are vital for their wellbeing and for them to fulfill their potential.

UNDP does not provide an exact definition for child poverty. It identifies a conceptual framework based on the economic and social rights included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In addition, some studies are conducted without a special definition of child poverty. For instance, the EU approaches children from poverty and social exclusion sides. While poverty is evaluated from the relative poverty threshold, in the social exclusion the social limitations on children are examined. Therefore, it is possible to infer that the relationship between children and poverty has a two-dimensional structure consisting of monetary and social variables. On the other hand, WB focused only on the monetary dimension over the absolute poverty threshold and the OECD over the relative poverty threshold. However, OECD developed the equivalence scale based on the assumption that resource distribution within the household is unequal. Accordingly, in the distribution of income within the household, members under the age of 14 were weighted at different coefficients, taking into account the disadvantages of children, and thus the poverty of children was tried to be measured.

In general, when the definitions are evaluated, the weight of multidimensional approaches to child poverty is recognized. Since the unique situation of the child compared to adults inevitably affects poverty, multidimensional approaches occupy a large place in academic literature. However, there is no universal unique definition of

child poverty. Child poverty has varied from study to study, depending on the approach to addressing poverty, the variables focused on, and the causes of poverty.

As per the multidimensions of child poverty children living in poverty means the violation of human rights. Poverty takes children's rights, such as living, thriving, and growing away from them, and makes them vulnerable to adverse situations such as abuse, exploitation, and discrimination.

Children in poverty get sick more often due to higher exposure to the air, water, and environmental pollution in their region of residence and due to the lack of hygiene and insufficient nutrition; however, the quality of healthcare they obtain is very low. Due to the low levels of education quality, they rank lower in academic fields compared to other kids, and their rate of dropping out of school increases. On the other hand, they have a higher rate of getting caught, arrested or imprisoned due to a crime. When all of these conditions are evaluated together, it is observed that poverty leads to physical, mental, and social development disorders, and what is worse is that these children display a similar pattern of living in their adult lives as well because, these children living in poverty are stripped of their opportunity to realize themselves.

Poverty is thought to be a phenomena that is passed down from generation to generation. The cycle of poverty causes the emergence of deprivations related to and feeding of each other and increases the obstacles to overcoming poverty (Şenses 2014: 95). Breaking this cycle can only be possible by fighting against poverty from childhood.

2.3 MEASUREMENT OF CHILD POVERTY

The first distinction between the various approaches is whether they are uni-dimensional or multidimensional. Multi-dimensional approaches, such as the basic needs, capability and human rights approaches, use a broader set of poverty indicators to identify and measure poverty. Multi-dimensional approaches create a list of rights, needs, or capabilities that is used to evaluate whether an individual is poor or not. The main objective of multi-dimensional approaches is to ensure that the basic needs and rights of the poor are met – such as access to public services, infrastructure, shelter, food, and so on. The multidimensional nature of poverty includes quantifiable variables such as income, consumption, and access to basic services. But it also includes capabilities variables that may not be easily measurable like the capability to participate in society without facing discrimination. As it was referred to in the

previous section, international organizations agree that poverty is a multidimensional concept, but there seems to be no consensus on how to measure it. Considering the multidimensional nature of poverty measure, countries create a special multidimensional child poverty measure that focuses only on the specific circumstances of children. Firstly, dimensions relevant to estimating multidimensional child poverty, criteria and limits must be established to examine deprivation in each dimension. Nutrition, health, shelter and living conditions, education, care and skills, money and property, and social environment indicators are the dimensions used in multidimensional poverty research. Because of these complexities, most development agencies rely on the monetary approach to measure poverty. The monetary approach is a unidimensional approach. It uses income level to identify and measure poverty. Money, either represented by an individual's income or consumption levels, serves as the universal parameter in assessing poverty. As a consequence, income level is the only indicator used by the monetary approach to measure poverty.

The monetary approach has two methodologies. Absolute poverty and relative poverty. Absolute Poverty measures the number of people living below a certain income threshold. Relative Poverty measures the extent to which a household cannot reach a certain standard of living common to a country in particular. It is an indicator that measures whether an individual or household's income is low relative to his/her society; and does not imply that the basic needs are unmet.

From this point, relying solely on the monetary approach to measure poverty will result in inefficient outcomes. Because with the monetary approach, the multidimensional nature of poverty is ignored, the different characteristics of households are ignored, and the poverty threshold that determines the poor based solely on income is used. In this method, a bundle of goods and services is valued, which is determined by an acceptable minimum requirement so that individuals are not defined as poor. If households do not have sufficient resources to cover this bundle, the household is considered poor. Widely used absolute poverty level approaches include the Food-Calorie Approach, which includes the cost of daily necessary food amount; The Basic Needs Approach, which is found by adding the cost of basic staples into the minimum need of food and income aid provided by governments. Non-income indicators - such as health, education, and citizenship rights are not taken into account by the monetary approach when identifying or measuring poverty. The most common monetary approach adopts the \$1-a-day international poverty line. When the relative

poverty line is compared to the absolute poverty line, the former is more preferable since it allows poverty definition in relation to a reference group. More specifically, the arithmetical average of consumption or distribution of income or a portion of the median is used as a partial poverty threshold. In general, 40%, 50%, and 60% of average/median income/consumption are taken, respectively.

In this approach, thus, the level of welfare in households is based on two indicators; consumption and income. Some approaches state that as the consumption of household members increases, economic welfare will increase in correlation as well. However, while consumption is a sign of economic welfare, some household might not choose to consume all of its current income but rather save it for later spending and make spendings that exceed their income for that period. For instance, households who own their dwelling can get on with lower income levels due to their lower levels of cost of housing.

Another indicator of economic welfare is income. On some occasions where data is obtained from surveys, income may not be a good tool to measure poverty. If a large portion of the population works as own account worker or in informal jobs, data about the income may not be reliable. Additionally, in many countries, calculating income before the cost of housing is deducted shows that saving, borrowing, and future expectations are not included in income calculations.

When child poverty is exclusively considered, state-funded services such as education, health, and preschool care can create a big difference in the spendable income of household members. There might be a differentiation according to the importance attached to the children by the household members.

Briefly, we may not be able to correctly identify the extent of the household member's welfare just judging by their income. We must consider other diverse indicators that will include the welfare levels of a household. However, if the aim is to conduct comparative analyses on poverty, we can make use of income data, since the distribution of income, which shows how national income is shared, can be used to determine the direction of policies to be implemented.

There is a set of measure summary methods to analyze income data. One of them is average income. Average income is calculated by dividing the total sum of all incomes into observation number. The advantage of using average is its convenience for calculation and interpretation. Its disadvantage on the other hand is its vulnerability

against extreme values. Despite its weakness as a measure of central tendency, this method is frequently used to obtain data on the composition of household income.

Another measure of central tendency is median. When the observations are put in order from the lowest to highest, the middle observation represents the median. Since the median is less affected by the extreme values and sample fluctuations, it is a more stable scale than the average. If the median income is lower than average income, this shows an unequal distribution of income. The greater the difference between the median income and the average income, the more distorted the income distribution within a society.

Since the total sum of household income is a better guide than an individual's income in terms of living standards, calculations are conducted at the level of household income. In addition to this, equalization should be carried out considering the size of the household, and the income should be adapted according to the number of adults and children in a household. This way, we can compare the living standards of the household.

We can talk about two fundamental approaches in measuring household income (Canberra Group Handbook 2011):

- Macro approach with accounting-based standards rooted in national accounts.
- Micro approach rooted in microeconomics and especially in the investigation of poverty.

After determining the welfare indicator, poverty line, and income definition to be used, a measuring set must be selected to develop the poverty profile.

Widely used poverty measuring methods try to explain.

2.3.1 Head Count Index (Poverty Ratio)

It is one of the most widely used indices to measure poverty. National or international poverty threshold is taken as reference for measurement. The accepted poverty line is used as a threshold and the ratio of those below this threshold to the total population is calculated.

This index is highly criticized. The reason is that this measuring method does not provide any information on the intensity of poverty but rather focuses more on the income distribution among the poor. This index can only distinguish those in poverty from those who are not. This index is insensitive to the changes occurring below the poverty threshold. In poverty studies, surveys are generally conducted through

household members and it is assumed that each member of the family benefits from the same level of welfare. However, children of a household can be poorer than the other members of the same household because in real life, consumption is not always equally distributed among household members. Therefore, when the index is measured according to members, it will surely give much more realistic results. However, the most important advantage of this index is its easy calculation and understanding.

Head Count Index shows the ratio of the population below the poverty threshold to the general population in percentages.

$$\text{HCI} = P/N \quad (2.1)$$

P: Number of the poor below the poverty threshold

N: Shows the total population.

This measurement can be used to monitor the changes occurring in the rates of individuals and household members living below the poverty threshold. The data obtained from this index can help us see whether or not policies in the fight against poverty fulfill their function.

2.3.2 Poverty Gap Index

Poverty gap index is a measuring tool used to evaluate individuals below the poverty threshold. It determines the distance between poor individuals and the poverty threshold, calculates the transfer size to reach that threshold, and enables us to evaluate the amount of support needed to draw the income of poor people near the poverty threshold. According to this index, the poverty gap of those above the poverty threshold is considered to be zero.

Since it enables the measurement of poverty depth, it is much more reliable compared to the headcount method. However, according to Sen, this method cannot show the effect of income transfer sufficiently. Additionally, the poverty gap index cannot provide sufficient information about the income distribution of poor individuals.

The poverty gap index is defined as the ratio of the distance between the income or consumption of poor individuals from the poverty threshold to the poverty threshold to understand the extent of poverty and to reduce the sensitivity of the poverty ratio to the poverty threshold (Şenses 2003: 66)

An increase in the income of an individual who lives below the poverty threshold causes a fall in the Poverty Gap Index. However, since the income average of the remaining poor group will decrease, the income gap will increase as well.

2.3.3 Squared Poverty Gap

This index, which enables the individuals with high differences between income and poverty threshold to be seen, shows the relative mean of the square of the poverty gap to the poverty threshold. Put differently, the index shows the total sum of weighted poverty gap. The difference between the squared poverty gap and poverty gap is that the former takes income inequalities among poor people into consideration as well. In this measuring method, the poverty status of households evaluated according to their consumption spending can be easily identified. The index was developed to be sensitive to the redistribution among the poor. This method contributes to the poverty measurement using such techniques.

2.3.4 Sen Index

This index was developed by Economist Amartya Sen in 1976. It emerged as a response to the criticism against the poverty gap and headcount ratio index, which are accepted to be insensitive to changes in income. In Sen index, the number of the poor is tried to be combined considering the depth of the poverty and the distribution of poverty within the group. Sen takes notice of the income distribution and poverty gap ratio and can measure the intensity of poverty. This way it is distinguished from other indices. According to Sen, the elimination of poverty can only be achieved by eliminating the inequality in income distribution.

According to this index, the decrease in the household income increases the index. Sen index is the weighted version of poverty gap. Therefore, according to Gini coefficient, if the poor reaches ultimate income inequality, the index will be equaled to head count ratio and in case of complete equality, it will be equaled to poverty gap index.

Sen index is based on two statements; the axiom of monotonicity and the axiom of transfer. According to axiom of monotonicity, if the income of a poor individual decreases, the general poverty threshold increases. Axiom of transfer on the other hand, states that poverty increases if there is a transfer of income from a poor person to a rich person.

$$I \text{ Income gap} = \frac{z - Mg}{z} \quad (2.2)$$

Z: Poverty threshold

Mg: Average income of the poor

In case of a complete inequality among the poor, Sen Index is equal to Head Count Index.

When a complete equality is established among the poor, Sen Index equals to Poverty Gap Index.

2.3.5 Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) Index

This index can be used to obtain poverty gap index, head count ratio and squared poverty gap index. Since this one is one of the most detailed ones among poverty measuring methods, it can be considered one of the significant studies in the field. Its advantages include its easy application, easy adaptability to innovations, creating an understandable measuring class, and enabling sub-categorization of poverty. In addition to its ability to separate the poor into different socioeconomic groups, the index can categorize the poor according to regions as well. The total number of the poor can be obtained by weighting and adding population shares. In other words, this index makes it possible to reach the number of poor, the depth of poverty, and relative poverty intensity.

Another contribution of the FGT index is that it adopts the approach that the increase in the income of the poor will benefit more compared to the increase in other groups. This way, it includes a coefficient that increases in response to increasing poverty parallel to the degree of response to poverty.

The FGT index is formulated as below:

$$FGT_{\alpha} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^H \left(\frac{z - y_i}{z} \right)^{\alpha} \quad (2.3)$$

Pa: Poverty measure

α : Number of poor family members

N: Total number of family members

H: Total number of the poor with an income lower than z'

z: Poverty line

y_i : y_i those with an income of lower than poverty line

i . Income of household

When index equal to 0 it shows the poverty rate of the population (or child population) below the poverty threshold, that is, the head count ratio. In other words, it shows the rate of the population below the poverty line to the total population. In addition to its good use in general poverty comparisons, this measure is also insensitive to the differences in the depths of poverty. (Foster, Greer and Thorbecke 2010: 8)

When index equal to 1 poverty gap index is obtained. Poverty gap is the necessary income for the poor to go above the poverty threshold. In other words, it gives us information by measuring the distance between those who are below the poverty threshold and the poverty threshold.

When index equal to 2 the squared poverty gap index is obtained. This index helps us measure the income inequality among the poor. It gives more attention to the poor people who are below the poverty threshold. According to this index, the contribution of one dollar earned by the most poor will be much more significant than the one dollar earned by someone who is only a little bit poor.

2.3.6 Measuring Human Poverty

The Human Development Index (HDI) and Human Poverty Index (HPI), developed by UNDP (United Nations Development Program) to measure human poverty, are widely used.

These are the indicators that include nonmonetary standards, such as educational and health-related standards, along with the indicators that can be evaluated materially.

2.3.6.1 Human Development Index

This index, developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and has been in use since 1990, not only focuses on the national income figures but also on human values and development. Criteria for human development are classified as life standards, health and access to information. The health element of the index is calculated based on the life expectancy of a country. The educational element is calculated according to the ratio of the illiterate population in a country to the total population; school enrollment ratio and distribution of the total population are taken as basis in terms of education. The income compound of the human development index is measured in terms of national income. These three compounds are calculated in a way that will stand somewhere between 0 and 1, and the total human development

index score is generated . Thanks to this index, it is possible to compare countries and develop policies against problems identified with indicators. The human development index can also be used in the classification of the development level of countries. According to this classification, countries scoring higher than 0.800 on the human development index are categorized as "very high human development," those between 0.700-0.799 are "high human development," those between 0.550 - 0.699 are as "medium human development," and those scoring below 0.549 are classified as "low human development." According to Human Development Index, poverty does not only hold a structural vulnerability. Besides, political and economic discrimination is a significant negative indicator of mass poverty (Gürses 2009: 341).

2.3.6.2 Human Poverty Index

This index attempts to obtain findings that identify the extent of poverty.

Ratios of those with a life expectancy of less than 40 years, illiterate adults, those who cannot access healthcare services and clean water, and children who are skinnier than their peers at the age of five are used to measure. (Aytaç and Habipler 2011: 25.)

2.3.6.3 Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)

This is an index developed with the assumption that poverty does not only mean satisfying basic needs or improving life standards, but it also occurs in aspects such as deprivations of employment, health, and educational services. Instead of human poverty index, the UNDP has been using this index since 2010.

The Human Development Report published in 2010 noted that measuring only income poverty will give faulty and missing results. Following this publication, the United Nations Development Agency developed a multidimensional poverty index for developing countries. This index took the place that human poverty index held. The measuring method developed by Alkire and Santos was adopted by the United Nations Development Agency on an institutional level (Alkire and Santos 2010: 7). The multidimensional poverty index, designed to reach the Millennium Development Goals, aims to measure poverty on a national level (Alkire and Santos 2010: 7). Amartya Sen's Capability Approach lays the foundation of multidimensional poverty index. The multidimensional poverty index is similar to factors such as health, education, and living conditions included in the human development index. This index,

consisting of three dimensions and ten indicators, covers not only value poverties but also income poverty. A result above 30% in all factors is an indicator of "multidimensional poverty" (Alkire and Santos 2010: 7). The multidimensional poverty index (MPI) covers ten fundamental indicators under the categories of health, education, and living standards, which are deprivations experienced by individuals. These indicators equally weighted. This index finds the MPI score by multiplying the ratio of those exposed to multidimensional poverty to the total population by the mean depth of deprivation.

2.3.7 Leiden Index

This index was first proposed by Goedhart, Halberstadt, Kapteyn, and Van Praag in 1977, and it enables subjective evaluation of poverty. This index attempts to create a poverty threshold that puts forth the individual preferences of household members because it is assumed that individuals or household members can make better decisions about themselves. Leiden index is based on the fact that individuals and societies have different needs. Leiden's evaluation of poverty not only addresses the income level of individuals but also considers all other elements that affect people's welfare. Individuals are asked questions to determine poverty threshold and identify in which occasions they define themselves as poor. Thus, a poverty line can be determined for each individual.

2.4 ACADEMIC LITERATURE REVIEW

When studies on child poverty in Turkey are examined, it is observed that the studies before 2010 mostly focused on child development deficiencies, health conditions and education levels, while studies after 2010 focus on household income, the employment status of the head of the household, child labor, social aid, social welfare and social exclusion are emphasized. In studies that deal with poverty in a multidimensional way, it is seen that the child is discussed within the perception of poverty as a general concept. The studies that deal with child poverty in a one-dimensional way, it is seen that the effects of poverty on the child's future are discussed. Especially in studies conducted before 2020, studies that directly focus on children are not common. Additionally, to the extensive academic literature addressing poverty on a global scale, it can be seen that studies evaluating child poverty are limited. When studies on child poverty are examined, the focus is on issues such as the

human and social capital of the family, education, health and employment status, the structure of the household such as being a nuclear family or extended family or the gender of the head of the household, employment of children in the household and property ownership as determinants of child poverty. Studies show that poverty is transmitted from generation to generation and causes social problems that affect social welfare. Dayıođlu (2007) calculated both the consumption and income poverty by using 2003 Household Budget Survey. In addition, she estimated the indicators of child poverty by utilizing conventional probit estimation method. Study underlined the differences between income and consumption based measurements. According to results, there were changes in determinants of child poverty according to each measurement and between urban and rural areas. This study revealed that child poverty calculated with annual household income is 26.66% in city and 28.47% in countryside. And the related values calculated with monthly household spending is 22.43% and 23.83% respectively.

According to Kiren Grler (2011), rapid population growth, high migration rates and unplanned urbanization, urban employment problems and unequal income distribution problems that affect developing countries also bring about child poverty. The study of Yılmaz et al. (2011) shows that between 2002 and 2008, one in every three children in Turkey and one in every two children in rural areas were poor. In single-parent families, a large proportion of women have low education levels, have not been involved in working life before, or work in low-income jobs that do not require qualifications. The lack of family insurance within the scope of the social security system leaves women working in unregistered, irregular and low-income jobs in poverty along with their children.

Eryurt and Koç in their research published in 2013 studied the multidimensionality of child poverty. Eryurt and Koç (2013) who used Trkiye Population and Health Survey data set of 2008, and evaluated child poverty in four aspects; health and nutritional conditions, education and working conditions and family and residence conditions of child. A total of twenty-five indicators are used in each of these aspects with varying numbers. The study which uses Principal Components Analysis method, revealed that child poverty in Trkiye is 22.4% and according to the regional analysis results, this ratio was found to be highest in the eastern part of the country.

Kahraman and Sallan-Gül (2015) conducted a study on the multifaceted view of poverty experienced by immigrant children and their families living in Gaziantep. In the study, 20 children and 20 parents between the ages of 11-17 were interviewed in detail and the data obtained was interpreted with quantitative and qualitative research techniques. In the interviewed households, relatives generally live together, traditional family types are preserved, the average number of people living in the household is around 6.7, which is above the average of Turkey's households, the parental education level is at primary school level, male parents generally work in the households, and children work in temporary places such as restaurants and bakeries. The results are that they work in jobs and contribute to the family budget, but the total household income is below the minimum wage, thus that children cannot invite their friends to their homes, cannot participate in school activities, are malnourished and cannot consume foods such as fruits and vegetables every day.

Acar and Anil (2015) used SILC-2011 and pooled cross-sectional SILC data from 2006 to 2010 containing a special module on the intergenerational transmission of disadvantages in order to reveal the intergenerational links of poverty and the effects of childhood poverty on children's future outcomes, which are closely related to the dynamics of poverty in Turkey, and for a robustness check. Findings show that experiencing poverty during childhood increases the likelihood of being income poor in adulthood; In other words, it shows that poverty in Turkey is transmitted from one generation to the next. Descriptive findings indicate that 34 percent of the sample experienced childhood poverty. Dayıoğlu and Demir Şeker (2016) estimated 2006-2009 child poverty transformation using Income and Living Conditions Survey panel data set. The study focused on 0-6 age group. According to the findings, 51.4% of children in their early childhoods experienced poverty at least once in a 4 year period, which was considerably higher than the cross-sectional head count ratio, 32.2%. Study showed that 30% of poor kids and 15.4% of all kids remained poor throughout these four years. The results also implied that almost half of children aged 0 to 6 were in severe material deprivation. Moreover, the results suggested that the probabilities of persistent child poverty declined with the educational level of household head. Employment status of household head is effective in reducing the risk of persistent child poverty and material deprivation.

Kırca et al. (2016), the effect of unemployment and economic growth on infant mortality in Turkey between 1960 and 2013 was investigated. The long-term

relationship between infant deaths unemployment rate and per capita income and its size was examined by time series method. After the analysis, it was concluded that there is a relationship between the variables and that while an increase in the unemployment rate increases infant mortality rates in the long term, an increase in national income per capita reduces infant deaths.

Bayırbağ et al. (2018) examine the nature, causes and consequences of child poverty and youth unemployment in Turkey. It places particular emphasis on how the post-1980 neoliberal transformation transformed the nature of child poverty and youth unemployment in Turkey, further exacerbating socioeconomic inequalities while concentrating these problems in large urban centres.

Gürdal (2019) researched child poverty in Turkey using data from 2007 and 2017. According to the results, it was concluded that the children of older household heads are less likely to be poor, the higher the education level of the household head reduces the probability of children being poor in both years, and unemployed household heads increase the risk of poverty for children in both years. The logistic regression method was used in the analyses.

Gül and Ergun (2020) examine how the phenomenon of children is handled in the field of public policy in Turkey and the legal and institutional developments developed in the fight against child poverty in the historical process. They advocated the necessity of taking special needs and measures for children's rights to education, health and development.

Tekdemir and Yılmaz (2020) in their study titled Comparison of child poverty and determinants of child poverty in Turkey with EU countries, with Eurostat data for the years 2006-2015, household income level, education levels of parents, domestic facilities and property ownership status of the house, as determinants of child poverty, in their study titled "Child poverty in Turkey and comparison of the determinants of child poverty with EU countries". It investigated the size and structure and the effects of women's employment on child poverty using panel regression analysis. Within the scope of the study, it was emphasized that the fight against child poverty should start with breaking the cycle of poverty and investing in human capital.

Limanlı (2020), used Türkiye Population and Health Survey data set to display the extent, course and indicators of child poverty for 1993-2013 period. This study consisted of a long period and utilized Alkire Foster Method. The aim was to estimate the child poverty indicators using a mixed model. The study revealed that the factors

affecting the possibility of a child falling into multidimensional poverty are parent's educational status, the status of the household in distribution of wealth and ethnic identity.

Berkman (2022) examines the necessity of direct intervention in poverty by proposing the minimum income guarantee model as a social policy tool for the child poor.

2.5 DETERMINANTS OF CHILD POVERTY

When the studies carried out by Eurostat are examined, it seems possible to summarize the main determinants of child poverty as household income, education level of parents, employment status of the parents, marital status of the head of the family, ownership status of the house and household amenities and regional economic differences.

Income level is one of the main factors determining child poverty. The total income of the members of the household is calculated by including their pensions and state aid. In this line of thought, one of the most important factors in determining child poverty at the household level is the employment status of the parents. Parental unemployment increases child poverty. The quality of employment is also as important as the employment of the parents. Child poverty increases in families where parents work in temporary or low-income jobs. Children living in low-income households have limited access to many services, especially health and education, and this affects the children's future. Increases in mothers' employment are also closely related to reducing child poverty as women's participation in the workforce enhances the social, economic and cultural development of countries and also reduces domestic poverty. (Kılıç & Öztürk 2014: 107-130). A positive empirical correlation was seen between the share of women in household income and the consumption level of children in studies conducted in wealthy and poor countries (Bradbury and Markus 1999: 9). Therefore, to increase household income, supporting women's labor market participation and employment is crucial. Employment policies that include educational and other programs such as providing nursery services for working parents are thought to contribute significantly for poverty alleviation.

Although unemployment manifests itself mostly economically on parents, it also brings with it many problems through its psychological effects. The unemployed

parent may see himself as someone who is of no use to anyone. He/she may become involved in crime, substance use may start or increase (Şentuna 2019).

Low education levels directly affect child poverty (UNICEF 2005). There is a well-established negative relationship between parents' education level and child poverty. The education level of the parents, together with their income and occupation, are the fundamental factors that determine the socioeconomic status of the household. Moreover, parents who earn more by working in jobs that require more qualifications, can be more supportive on their children's academic endeavors. Because parents with a high education level can help their children with their homework, monitor their children's school attendance, direct them to professions in which they can be successful in the future in line with their children's abilities, and pay closer attention to their other physical and emotional problems.

There is a direct relationship between household size and child poverty. As the number of household members increases, poverty increases. A critical consideration when it comes to the impact of household size is the number of children in the household. It seems that families with many children have more economic difficulties than families with one or two children. In families with many children, more financial resources are required to meet the basic needs of family members such as health, education, nutrition. This may make dividing family income and resources more difficult. Moreover, when we look at households with a large number of children, it is observed that the education level of the adults living in such household is typically lower. In other words, poor families, whose education level is mostly the lowest, cannot make appropriate family planning and raise generations in which poverty will continue for generations (Lipton & Ravallion 1993: 30-32).

Regarding the relationship between the marital status of the household head and child poverty, it has been revealed that child poverty in two parent households is lower than children living in single parent households with never-married or divorced parents, and that child poverty is especially high in single-parent households consisting of single mothers (Bradbury and Jäntti 1999: 26-27).

There is also a significant relationship between home ownership status and child poverty, although it is not the same in every country. More specifically, poor families have to allocate a large part of their income to housing expenses and considering energy expenses, they have to minimize their expenditures in health, education and cultural areas, as they can only allocate a budget for basic food items.

Household amenities are another factor affecting child poverty. The standards of the housing that children live in and the environment in which they grow up affect children's growth and development in various different ways. In addition to the lifestyle adopted and the culture in which they grow up, it is also effective in terms of health, cognitive and social development. Due to the deprivations in housing, hundreds of thousands of children lack a bed where they can sleep comfortably, the necessary hygiene and privacy as there are not enough rooms, and the sun-filled space that is important for both their health and academic success. They lack a living space (Harker 2006: 8).

Child poverty may also occur due to lack of resources caused by geographical location, which is one of the long-known factors that cause poverty, such as war/violence and underdevelopment (Gordon et al. 2005: 12-14).

There are also many other factors that affect child poverty, which can be seen as a complex network of deprivations, other than the determinants listed above. For example, the development level of the countries, the prevailing political conjuncture, migration, ethnicity, social structure and relations, wars, epidemics, environmental factors caused by excessive rainfall or drought. Therefore, although addressing the issue based on only a few factors includes some deficiencies in solving the problem, taking the above-mentioned factors into account in poverty alleviation practices and carry out policies accordingly, in parallel with the studies carried out by Eurostat. (Yilmaz, et al. 2011)

2.6 EFFECTS OF CHILD POVERTY

Growing up in poverty negatively affects child development both mentally and physically, and this effect becomes more severe as the income level decreases and the time spent in poverty increases (European Commission 2006). The effects of poverty on children are concentrated in the fields of health and education, and also include the problem of working children.

2.6.1 Health Effects

Malnutrition is one of the most common realities that impact children living in poverty. Undernutrition is defined in the UNICEF Status of the World's Children Report (2005) as a condition in which body balance is disrupted due to insufficient intake of nutrients necessary for human life. According to the definition made by

WHO, malnutrition includes undernutrition (wasting, stunting, underweight), inadequate vitamins or minerals, overweight, obesity, and resulting diet-related noncommunicable diseases.

Undernutrition makes children in particular much more vulnerable to disease and death. Nearly half of deaths among children under 5 years of age are linked to undernutrition.

Wasting indicates recent and severe weight loss because a person has not had enough food to eat or they have had an infectious disease such as diarrhoea, which has caused them to lose weight. A young child who is moderately or severely wasted has an increased risk of death.

Stunting indicates low height for age. It is usually associated with poor maternal health and nutrition, frequent illness, inappropriate infant and young child feeding in early life. Stunting holds children back from reaching their physical and cognitive potential.

Children with low weight-for-age are known as underweight. A child who is underweight may be stunted, wasted or both.

Vitamins and minerals enable the body to produce enzymes, hormones and other substances that are essential for proper growth and development. Inadequate intake of vitamins like iodine, vitamin A, and iron represents a major threat to the health and development of children.

Overweight and obesity occurs when a person is too heavy for his or her height. Excessive fat accumulation and diet-related diseases including cardiovascular diseases, certain cancers, and diabetes can also severely impair health. Among children and adolescents aged 5-19 years, 390 million were overweight, including 160 million who were living with obesity. Another 190 million were living with thinness. In 2022, an estimated 149 million children under the age of 5 years were suffering from stunting, while 37 million were living with overweight or obesity.

One of the saddest consequences of child poverty is infant and child deaths. Deaths that occur before the age of one are called infant deaths. Infant deaths are generally caused by mishaps during birth, hereditary factors or inadequate and irregular nutrition of the mother during pregnancy, respiratory diseases, epidemics, and diseases that can be prevented by vaccination.

When child deaths are mentioned in the literature, it refers to the deaths of children under the age of 14. The main causes of child deaths in underdeveloped and

developing countries are food shortage, difficulty in accessing clean water resources, infectious diseases and lack of hygiene. According to World Health Organization data, in 2020 an estimated 5 million children under the age of 5 years died. Sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia, account for more than 80 percent of the 5 million under-5 deaths in 2020

Globally, infectious diseases, including pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria, along with pre-term birth complications, birth asphyxia and trauma and congenital anomalies remain the leading causes of death for children under 5 years. Access to basic lifesaving interventions such as skilled delivery at birth, postnatal care, breastfeeding and adequate nutrition, vaccinations and treatment for common childhood diseases can save many young lives.

Malnourished children, particularly those with severe acute malnutrition, have a higher risk of death from common childhood illnesses such as diarrhea, pneumonia and malaria. Nutrition-related factors contribute to about 45% of deaths in children under 5 years of age.

On the other hand, maternal mortality rates at birth remain high in underdeveloped countries. Every day in 2020, almost 800 women died from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. All women need access to high quality care in pregnancy, and during and after childbirth. Maternal health and newborn health are closely linked. It is particularly important that all births are attended by skilled health professionals, as timely management and treatment can make the difference between life and death for the women as well as for the newborn.

Poverty has not only physical but also psychological effects on children's development. Socio-emotional and behavioral problems such as depression, inability to socialize, difficulties in peer relations, behavioral disorders, and a higher probability of failure in school are more common in children living in poverty than in wealthy children.

Financial uncertainty and stress caused by poverty can lead to increased anxiety levels. Therefore, chronic stress and anxiety may cause psychological health problems in the individual. Poverty can cause introversion and lack of self-confidence in children, as well as the emergence of aggression. Having limited resources can negatively affect children's intrinsic motivation and create hopelessness in achieving future expectations and personal goals.

At the same time, poor children are more disproportionately exposed to adverse physical and social environmental conditions than middle- and high-income children. Every child has the right to clean drinking water and safe sanitation. Poor children are deprived of these rights and live in more dirty and unhealthy environments. The air that poor children breathe and the water they drink is not clean, and the houses they live in are crowded, physically bad and noisy. Additionally, households are at greater security risk. In addition to direct causes such as low income, an inadequate social environment also has indirect effects on children's physical and mental development. The neighborhoods they live in are often places with dense populations with low standards. This environment they live in also makes it difficult for them to access health services. The neighborhoods they live in are more dangerous and where municipal services are almost non-existent.

2.6.2 Child Poverty and Informal Economy

In most basic definition informal economy is illegal economy. According to the common definition given in the literature, the informal economy is the total of the unregistered economic activities that would normally be reflected in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) if recorded.

Two approaches, descriptive approach and behavioral approach, are used to define an unregistered economy. Descriptive approach only considers unrecorded economic activities with the aim of providing a measurement. The behavioral approach, on the other hand, takes into account the behavioral characteristics in economic activities to create a theoretical base.

The foundation of the concept of informal employment was coined "Informal Sector" in the Kenya Report published under the World Employment Program by the International Working Organization in 1972. The report emphasized that the concept of open unemployment, which cannot be explained by the formal sector, is met by the informal sector, which is far from formalization and regularity (Komşu 2005: 140).

Reasons that lead to the emergence of informal employment can vary depending on the country. For example, while in developed countries, higher cost of labor is the reason for informal employment, in developing countries, economic hardships and the inability to provide adequate job opportunities can be seen as a reason for informal employment. Increases in population, high unemployment rates, domestic and international migration, are some of the leading social factors that lead

to informal employment. Inflation, poverty, the structure of the company and powers of competition, the structure of the labor market, and changes arising accordingly are economic factors that cause informal unemployment. The current taxing system can also be regarded as a contributory factor. Since unrecorded activities are discreet and unsupervised, their actual size cannot be identified, and such activities can lead to the victimization of employees due to reasons such as occupational accidents and psychological violence.

Although unregistered employment can harm both employees and employers, some people prefer informality due to reasons such as the lack of supervision, payment in cash, and having no legal bounding. Increase in poverty boosts the informal economy as well. While the informal economy contributes to decreasing poverty by providing employment, inadequate opportunities also lead to the informal economy. Due to low wages and poor working conditions in the informal economy, people who chose this path due to poverty carry a risk of becoming even poorer.

Generally, unskilled labor, foreign illegal workers, children, and women who cannot find a job in the formal sector work in the informal sector. The leading reason for the employment of women and children in the unregistered sector is poverty. Especially since child labor enables poor families to survive economically, children are used to work in environments that can adversely affect their psychological and physical well-being. Although children are less likely to be employed in developed countries, this issue prevails in many countries and dates back very early in history. The Industrial Revolution aggravated the problem of child labor as it became a more common practice to force children to work beyond their capabilities. ILO defines child labor as the work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.

Children joining the work-life before completing their full education become deprived of the knowledge that they will require in both their work and personal lives; thus lose their chance to work in jobs that will provide them with higher income and better living standards. This leads to the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Moreover, when we look at the bigger picture, this situation adversely affects the development of countries, and human capital is wasted (Sunal 2011: 120). At the same time, since depriving children of their right for education can push them to criminal and informal economy.

Studies about child labor show that poverty is the leading cause of child labor. Adversities in economic structure increase unemployment. When the adults of a household are unemployed or do not have a regular income, all family members might be obliged to work, including the children. Knowing that a large portion of this income goes to purchasing basic foods, we can easily understand how vital child labor is for poor families.

Studies have proven that while the kids of parents working in unregistered jobs tend to participate more in work life, whereas the children whose parents work in relatively better conditions do not (Sarı 2006: 126–137). Additionally, findings show that kids whose fathers have worked as a child are more likely to work as a child worker too. Along this framework, a child in poverty sometimes might be under the influence of several generations, and this can create a poverty spiral like a vicious cycle.

The appealing factors underlying the demand for child labor stem from children's inability to address their problems encountered in the workplace due to several reasons, not having social insurance, not looking for their rights through unions, etc., and last but not least their inability to have many of the rights and opportunities that adults have (Kılıç 2009: 63). Working with low payment and without social security is not the only reason behind the demand for child labor. Child labor is needed in sectors which requires speed and working with little pieces.

On the other hand, the education life of children working in the labor market is hindered because they are outside for long hours, their school success decreases, and they are more likely to drop out of school too. Additionally, these children encounter nutritional and health problems, and their physical and intellectual development suffers as well.

The concept of children working on the streets, which is a type of child labor, is used for children working on the streets for a certain period during the day to contribute to family income or cover their expenses and return home early or late at night (Karatay et al. 2003: 261). This issue requires more specific attention because these children not only work illegally but also are neglected, abused, exploited, and eventually discriminated from society in time.

Another important driver of child informality stems from house chores. House chores are not defined as unregistered economic activity in many countries, and this makes it hard to discuss child labor completely. House chores that are very common

and often seen as acceptable can be carried out in a family's house, a third party's, or an employer's house. While house chores in a child's own house can be works that will enable a child to moderately help with chores that will not intervene with the education and play time of the child, which increases the sense of responsibility and self-confidence in a child, some of these chores might adversely affect a child's life, health and education. Children working outside the house for other's houses are subject to long working hours, and girls cannot find the opportunity to attend school and are alienated from their friends, families, and social circle. Children who perform domestic services are involved in works such as cleaning, ironing, cooking, gardening, taking care of other children and elders in houses of third parties or employers. Since it is hard to determine the exact number of children working at domestic jobs, the figures are not reflected in the national statistics, and children's housework cannot be supervised. Almost without exception, children doing house chores are exposed to several types of abuse. They are economically exploited when they are made to work for long hours for low or no wages. Additionally, they are abused in terms of their health generally because they do not have any social or legal protection and, for example, have to work with toxic materials. Under international law, children are deprived of many of their rights, especially education that enhances their potential and skills, as well as the right to play and health (ILO 2006). Carrying heavy loads, use of toxic chemicals, long and intensive working days, use of dangerous substances such as knives, lack of or inadequate food and shelter, physical and verbal violence, humiliating treatment, including sexual abuse, are among the risks children face in domestic service. When the child who works as a domestic worker stays at the same house, the risk of such abuse increases. These dangers seem to occur as a result of rejecting fundamental rights such as resting, leisure time, right to play and entertainment, access to education and health services, and healthy communication with his/her peers and parents. Preventing children from utilizing their fundamental rights can leave irretrievable physical, psychological, and moral effects on their health and development.

Under ILO Conventions Numbered 132 and 182, it is stated in the ILO Convention No. 189 that works performed by children should not hinder their attendance to vocational and further education, and they should not be deprived of obligatory education, which is under the responsibility of the Member States. Recommendation No. 201 of ILO Convention No. 189 states that Member States

should prohibit and eliminate domestic work likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children and such child labor to strengthen the protection of children. Member States are called to provide children with enough time to spend with leisure time activities, resting, building family relations, and education; prohibiting them from working late hours, and restricting psychologically and physically compelling works, and to establish mechanisms or reinforce already existing ones to monitor children doing house chores and their living conditions. The International Labor Organization (ILO) which determined that child labor is a subject to be discussed on an international level, initiated the "International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor and Forced Labor (IPEC)" in 1991 and aimed to terminate child labor and protect children. In light of the agreements made between ILO and the Turkish Statistical Institution on child labor, which is also a crucial subject in our country, for the first time in 1994, a child labor survey was applied to diversify and improve statistical data on child labor. Studies conducted in other countries and Türkiye give similar results regarding the main dynamics of child labor. Factors such as poverty, illiteracy, and migration are accepted as the leading causes of child employment. The fact that each of these reasons can be a reason and a result of the other creates a vicious cycle. This cycle is known as the "Vicious Cycle of Underdevelopment," and this relation makes this underdevelopment continuous (Tunçcan 1999: 244).

In conclusion, child labor largely originates from poverty, and its only long-term solution is to eliminate poverty and establish social development.

2.6.3 Child Poverty and Education

The fact that poor families have limited financial resources restricts and makes it difficult for children to access education. Poor families may have difficulty in covering expenses such as stationery materials and textbooks necessary to send their children to school, and difficulty in accessing public transportation or transportation costs may restrict children from going to school. Poor children live in houses and neighborhoods with inadequate infrastructure, cannot access information resources such as computers and the internet, cannot access a working environment that provides the necessary conditions for studying, watch more television, try to receive education in classrooms with many children, in inadequately qualified schools and in more dangerous living spaces. Children's cognitive development and academic achievement

are negatively affected. At the same time, children living in low-income households face difficulties in maintaining friendships and social activities due to financial inadequacies. Because of the pressure they experience in schools, which are a social living space, they cannot concentrate on their lessons, become absent or drop out of school. Education can be described as one of the most important tools in the fight against poverty because educational status is one of the most significant indicators of the income an individual earns. Education helps people get more well-qualified and increases their productivity. This way, they can work in better conditions and get the chance to earn an income to save them from poverty. It is seen in the studies conducted that, there is an inverse proportion between poverty and education. So, getting a better education means a better income.

Education is also known for its contribution to a more equal distribution of income in addition to improving personal income. Thanks to education, poor individuals can change their social class and integrate into society by boosting their skills and talents. Developed countries attempt to provide education equally accessible to everyone because equality in opportunity improves income distribution. It enables individuals to show their potential and find jobs with better working conditions; therefore, contributes to their effort to get out of poverty. Since applications to establish equality in education do not create complete equality due to socioeconomic conditions outside of school and personal characteristics that affect an individual, some think that equality in education is impossible (Tan 1987: 249-258). However, because there is a positive correlation between educational level and increase in productivity, although no ultimate equality can be established in terms of equality in education, welfare is boosted through increased productivity. And we cannot discuss a possible economic development without increased productivity. Whether a country can leave poverty behind has a lot to do with its level of development in the fields of science and technology. To gain new knowledge, adapt this knowledge to technology, and carry out the production process by harmonizing these processes with technology is only possible through education. In the 1980s, it was understood that in Endogenous Growth Models, economic growth cannot only be explained via physical capital, and human capital is also one of the significant entries for long-term sustainable growth. And it was highlighted that education is at the base of human capital. In conducted studies, the following variables were at the center of education: Knowledge, experience, workforce capability, use of technology, intellectual level, schooling rate,

and preschool education. Productivity can be established thanks to the achievements acquired from all these variables, and thus, economic growth enables income equality. Since it is crucial to establish equality in education in terms of social and productivity aspects, factors that cause inequalities must be analyzed in detail, and necessary solutions must be created.

Inequality in education might arise from economical, geographical, social, political and individual reasons. Geographically different settlements can lead to various educational opportunities. For instance, students in the countryside do not have as much chance as their peers in the cities to continue their education after primary education. A mobile teaching system is used to eliminate the inequality between them and the other students who live in cities or are closer to schools. When social causes are examined, we can see those factors such as gender, religion, ethnic background, and population also play a part in educational inequality. In terms of political reasons, we see that policies adopted by governments can leave those who have counter-views outside the educational arena. Intellect, level of cognition, and physical differences can also create differences in accessing education. Similarly, it is almost impossible for the children working on the streets and child workers to access education. Due to the externality of schools and the principle of equality, it is required for the states to be included in the process and provide everyone at least with fundamental education on equal terms. Children who do not participate in political decision-making processes have to stick with the educational policies deemed suitable by states on their behalf.

Early childhood period is one of the most significant phases in child development. Early childhood, which enables children to uncover their potential, cognitive and social skills play a significant role in their education as well. Children who receive such education can be great role models for their siblings, and they are more likely to become responsible citizens and better parents in their adult life. Providing equality in opportunity in pre-school education is exceptionally essential to build the foundations for primary and secondary education and due to its effects in preventing discrimination by eliminating inequalities during education and after, in professional life. In many of the OECD countries, free and all-inclusive preschool education and pre-childhood education programs integrated into the former are utilized due to their high added value, and great progressions are made in this field thanks to these applications. Even though families have realized the necessity and significance of preschool education, poverty-stricken families cannot provide their kids with such

services. Social spending for preschool education should be handled as an element of economic and humanitarian development and increased.

Currently, psychological, sociological, and economic studies indicate that adverse economic conditions in childhood determine the personal productivity capacity through psychological, emotional, and behavioral development and education opportunities. According to this, lack of human capital and inequality emerging from the socio-economic conditions of a family deepen in the market where state intervention is missing and makes poverty a reality for generations to come (Esping Andersen 2011: 42). In fact, it was found in research conducted in the USA that children of poor families will also become poor, with a probability of 42% when they become adults themselves (Esping-Andersen 2011: 156). Studies also show that the quality of informal education emerging between parents and children during communication processes also affects children's linguistic skills, cognitive development, and success in school. Families with low educational status cannot make time for activities that will contribute to the development of their kids and communicate less with their children. Although some research concluded that the socio-cultural properties of a family, which is accepted as a cultural capital, are much more significant in academic success than family income, the direct correlation between the level of income and cultural capital is the reality of our daily lives (Polat 2009: 53-57). Supporting this finding, another study conducted in Türkiye showed that educators explain academic failure with social inequalities, and the most influential factor in determining academic success is highlighted to be the level of culture and income of a family (Polat 2009: 56). For instance, parents with higher education levels can help with their kid's homework, lead their children into the most suitable profession by identifying their skills, and can deal with their emotional problems more closely. Conscious parents raise children who are more constructive in human relations, follow rules, and can think rationally. In addition, as the level of education increases, families attach more importance to children's health. This way, children can grow both physically and psychologically healthier.

In addition to parent's level of education, women's education level is highly significant in preventing child poverty as well. The higher educational level of women is one of the most important factors that separates a developed society from others. In countries where women stand out in their roles as mothers and wives, women's educational levels are much lower. As the educational level of women increases,

poverty decreases because as women receive education, the age of marriage and motherhood increases, they become more aware of family planning, and employment opportunities increase, so women can easily find a place in business life. As women's educational level increases, socio-cultural improvement occurs as well. However, in many countries, women's access to education is still a big problem.



CHAPTER III

STATISTICS ON CHILD POVERTY

3.1 CHILD POVERTY IN THE WORLD

World Bank Group and UNICEF, presents estimated trends in child poverty from 2013 to 2022, based on three international poverty lines: \$2.15 (extreme poverty), \$3.65 (lower middle income), and \$6.85 (upper middle income). There are roughly 333 million children in the world who are living in extreme monetary poverty, surviving on less than \$2.15 per day. 829 million children living below \$3.65 and 1.43 billion children living below \$6.85. The estimates show a reduction in the extreme child poverty rate from 20.7 percent to 15.9 percent between 2013 and 2022.

Much of extreme child poverty is clustering in economically fragile regions: more than 70% live in sub-Saharan Africa. Madagascar, Burundi, South Sudan, and Malawi each have national extreme child poverty rates above 75%. But economic development does not necessarily protect children from poverty. Nigeria is a middle-income country and sub-Saharan Africa's largest economy but nearly 38% of children (40 million) live in extreme poverty. India is a lowermiddle-income country and one of the fastest growing economies of the world, but India has only reduced its extreme child poverty rate from 11.7% (53.3 million) in 2017 to 11.5% (52.2 million) in 2022.

South Asia has a rate of 9.7 percent of children living in extreme poverty in 2022 (62 million), and accounts for 18.6 percent of the world's extremely poor children. Extreme child poverty has decreased in almost all regions of the world between 2013 and 2022. The Middle East and North Africa region is the only region with an estimated increase in the percentage of children living in extreme poverty, with an estimated increase from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 10 percent in 2022. The share of children in extreme poverty has remained constant in Latin America around 3 percent.

2023 estimates suggest that 566 million children under 18 years across 110 developing countries are multidimensionally poor. They experience deprivations in at least a third of the ten indicators spanning health, education, and standard of living.

Across the world, regardless of the definition of poverty used, children and young people are disproportionately affected by poverty.

Children make up a third of the world population but account for over half of the extremely poor. Even among the richest nations, poverty rates are higher in children (0–17 years) and young people (18–25 years) than in adults. Across 110 countries with multidimensional poverty data, 27.7% of children are poor, compared with 13.4% of adults.

When looking at OECD and EU countries despite overall decreases in poverty by nearly 8 per cent across 40 OECD and EU countries between 2014 and 2021, there were still over 69 million children living in households earning less than 60 per cent of the average national income by the end of 2021.

After presenting the child poverty in the world with figures, let's examine the effects of child poverty. According to the report published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF on 10 June 2021, the number of children working in child labour has increased by 8.4 million to 160 million worldwide. The report points out that there has been a significant increase in the number of child workers aged 5 to 11, who currently account for more than half of the number of child workers in the world. The number of children aged 5 to 17 working in hazardous jobs, defined as work that may harm the health, safety or morals of children, has increased by 6.5 million to 79 million since 2016. A total of 160 million children – 63 million girls and 97 million boys – are in child labour globally, accounting for almost one in ten of all children worldwide. Nearly half of all those in child labour – 79 million children in absolute terms – are in hazardous work that directly endangers their health, safety, and moral development.

Africa ranks highest both in the percentage of children in child labour – one-fifth – and the absolute number of children in child labour 92 million. Asia and the Pacific ranks second highest in both these measures 5.6 per cent of all children, 49 million in absolute terms, are in child labour in this region. The remaining child labour population is divided among the Americas (8.3 million), Europe and Central Asia (8.3 million), and the Arab States (2.4 million).

The agricultural sector accounts for by far the largest share of child labour. The sector accounts for 70 per cent of all those in child labour and for 112 million children in absolute terms. Children in child labour in the services and industry sectors number 31.4 million and 16.5 million, respectively.

When we look at the data in the field of health, we come across the following results. According to UNICEF poor children often living in fragile settings, who face multiple deprivations and risks, including food insecurity and lack of access to good-quality health care, safe water, and sanitation. Pneumonia and diarrhea together account for 23 per cent of all child deaths globally among children under the age of five. Global vaccination coverage has seen some recovery in 2022. However, there are still 20.5 million children missing out on lifesaving vaccines globally, 2.1 million more than in 2019.

3.2 CHILD POVERTY IN TÜRKİYE

3.2.1 Child Poverty and the Determinants of Child Poverty

In this section, first of all, some factors that cause child poverty in Türkiye and OECD countries will be examined comparatively then the consequences of child poverty in Türkiye will be tried to be revealed.

3.2.1.1 Child Population

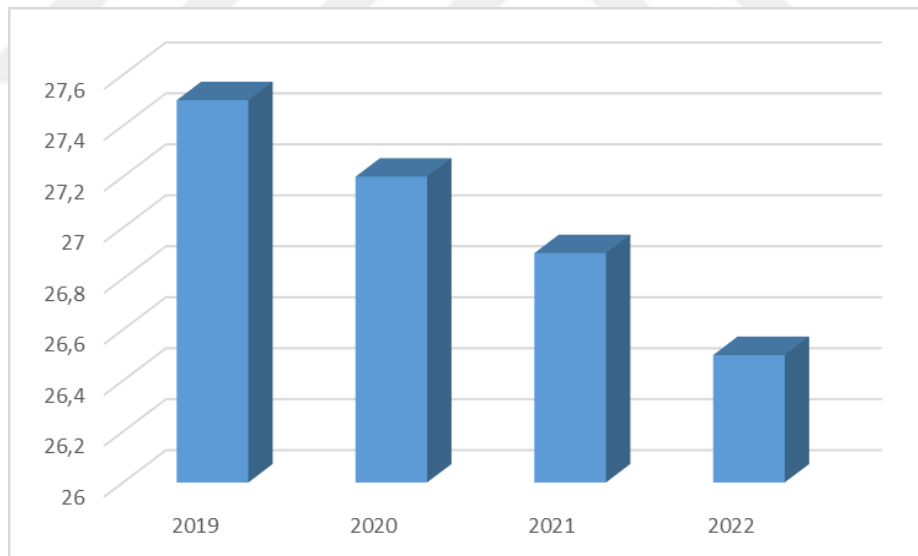


Figure 2: Child population (%)

Source: Prepared by the reporter from <https://data.tuik.gov.tr> (Date of Access 29.03.2024).

Chart 1 for shows the child population rate between 2019 and 2022. This rate, which was 27.5% in 2019, has been decreasing over the years and realized as 26.5% in 2022.

As of the end of the 2022, the population of Türkiye was 85 million 279 thousand 553 people. 22 million 578 thousand 378 of them were children. In other

words children make up 26.5 percent of the total population. According to 2022 data 25.1 percent of the child population in the 0-4 age group, 29.4 percent in the 5-9 age group and 17 percent in the 15-17 age group. When the child population was examined on a gender basis, it was seen that 51.3% of the population was boys and 48.7% was girls.

It was observed that Türkiye's child population rate was higher than EU member states, with 26.5%.

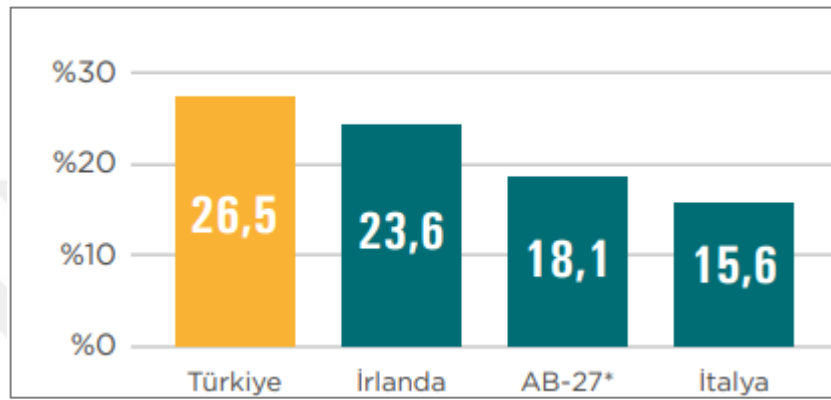


Figure 3: Child population in the world (%)
Source: TÜİK.

When the child population rates of 27 European Union (EU) member countries are examined, the EU average of the child population rate in 2022 was 18.1%. It was observed that the country with the highest child population rate among EU member countries was Ireland with 23.6%, and the country with the lowest was Italy with 15.6%.

3.2.1.2 Poor Child Rate in Türkiye

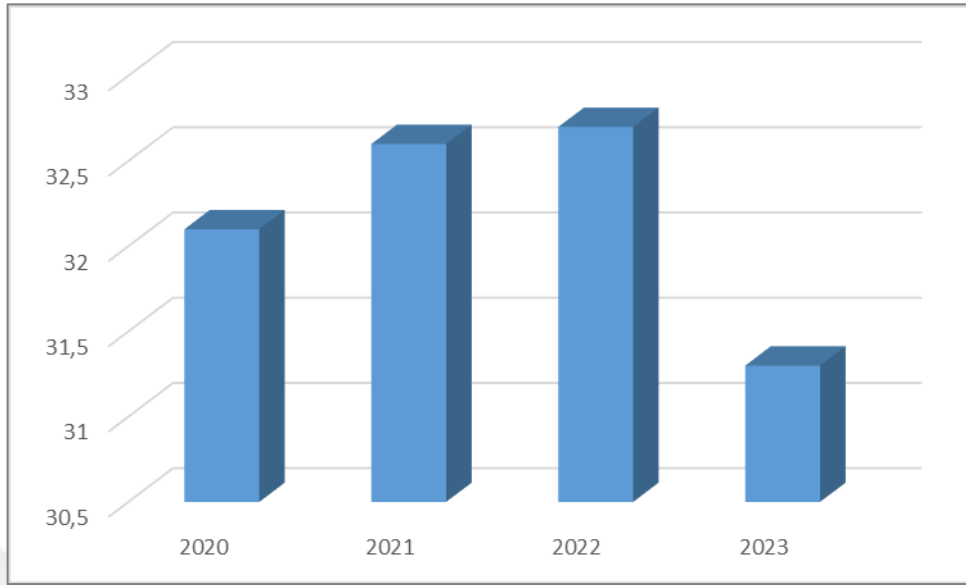


Figure 4: Poor child rate in Türkiye (%)

Source: Prepared by the reporter from <https://data.tuik.gov.tr> (Date of access 29.03.2024).

The poverty rate is the ratio of the number of people (in a given age group) whose income falls below the poverty line; taken as half the median household income of the total population. Chart 3 shows the rate of poor children in our country between 2019 and 2023. Child poverty, which was measured as 32% in 2020 and 32.5% in 2021, also increased in 2022 and was measured as 32.7 percent. It is seen that this rate is 31,3 percent in 2023. When we look at it in terms of making a comparison with OECD countries, the following results are found.

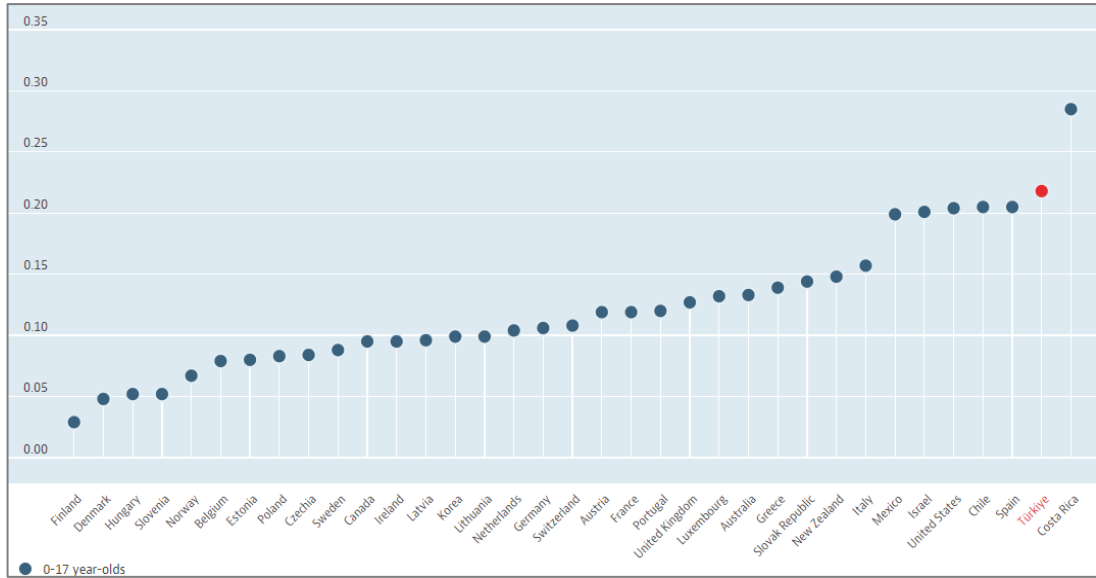


Figure 5: Poverty rate in OECD countries

Source: Prepared by the reporter from <https://data.oecd.org> (Date of Access:05.04.2024).

Chart shows the poverty rates in the 0-17 age group between 2019-2022 in OECD countries. According to 2019 or most recent data, the country with the highest child poverty among OECD Countries is Costa Rica. Türkiye ranks second. Among the OECD countries, Costa Rica had the highest share of children living in poverty, reaching 28.5 percent in 2022. Türkiye followed with a share of 22 percent of children living in poverty, while 20.5 percent of children in Spain, Chile, and the United States did the same. On the other hand, only three percent of children in Finland were living in poverty.

3.2.1.3 Annual Average Equivalent Household Disposable Individual Income

It is a type of income measured based on the differences between incomes per individual, taking into account the number of individuals in the household. Incomes collected at the household level need to be converted into incomes per individual. In order to make accurate comparisons between households, differences in adult-child compositions of households are taken into account in this calculation. For this, the coefficients called the equivalence scale are used to calculate how many adults (equivalent individuals) each household size is equivalent to. By dividing the total disposable income of the household by the equivalent household size, the income per equivalent individual for that household, in other words the disposable income of the equivalent household individual, is calculated. According to the equivalent household disposable individual income calculated by TÜİK using the OECD equivalence scale

using the coefficient of "1" for the reference person, "0.5" for individuals aged 14 and over and "0.3" for individuals under the age of 14, the highest income. The share of the 20 percent group with the highest income in total income increased by 1.8 points compared to the previous year in 2023, reaching 49.8 percent. The share of the 20 percent group with the lowest income decreased by 0.1 point to 5.9 percent.

The annual average equivalent household disposable income in Turkey increased by 72.3% compared to the previous year, rising from 48,642 TRY to 83,808 TRY.

The highest income in annual average equivalent household disposable income was for single-person households with 100,076 TRY, an increase of 37,522 TRY compared to last year. While the annual average equivalent household disposable income of households consisting of more than one person without a nuclear family was 99,916 TRY, this value was 85,758 TRY for households consisting of a single nuclear family. The household type with the lowest annual average equivalent disposable household income was households consisting of at least one nuclear family and other individuals, with 66,001 TRY.

The highest share in total income was taken by salary and wage income, with 48.5%, which increased by 2.3 points compared to the previous year. The second place was the entrepreneur's income with 22.1%, which increased by 1.1 points compared to the previous year, while the third place was the social transfer income with 17.6%, which decreased by 2.6 points compared to the previous year. The share of agricultural income in the entrepreneur's income was 20.5%. The share of retirement and widow-orphan pensions in social transfers was 88.4%.

Annual average main job income was calculated as 157,851 TRY for higher education graduates, 114,374 TRY for high school and equivalent school graduates, 89,012 TRY for those with less than high school education, 63,425 TRY for those who did not graduate from a school, and 45,637 TRY for illiterate individuals, respectively. Compared to last year, the highest increase in annual average main job income was for individuals with less than high school education, with 89.7%, and the lowest increase was for illiterate individuals with 79.6%.

Since field work could not be carried out in the Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye (TR63) region in 2023 due to the earthquake that occurred in February 2023, the income distribution according to the Statistical Regional Units Classification (NUTS) was announced covering 25 regions.

According to the research results, the annual average equivalent household disposable income, which was 83,808 TRY throughout Turkey in 2023, was highest in the Istanbul (TR10) region with 114,634 TRY on the basis of NUTS 2nd Level regions.

This region was followed by the Ankara (TR51) region with 108,036 TRY and the Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli (TR21) region with 101,372 TRY. The lowest annual average equivalent household disposable income occurred in the Van, Muş, Bitlis, Hakkari (TRB2) region with 39,173 TRY. Accordingly, the average annual equivalent household disposable income in Istanbul is approximately three times that of Van, Muş, Bitlis and Hakkari, which are TRB2 regions. Across the OECD, the average household net adjusted disposable income per capita is USD 30.490 a year. In Turkey, the average household net adjusted disposable income per capita is lower than the OECD average. In Luxembourg, the average household net-adjusted disposable income per capita is USD 44.773 a year, more than the OECD average of USD 30.490 a year. In South Africa, the average household net adjusted disposable income per capita is 9.338, much lower than the OECD average of USD 30.490.

Over the most recent years, households have enjoyed higher income on average and financial wealth has increased in many OECD countries. Despite the general increase in living standards, some groups have been left behind and inequality has also increased over the same period. On average in OECD countries, the average net-adjusted disposable income of the top 20% of the population is an estimated USD 59.336 a year, whereas the bottom 20% live on an estimated USD 9.060 a year. Some OECD countries such as Costa Rica, Mexico and the United States, have a much more unequal income distribution than others.

3.2.1.4 Housing OverCrowding Rate

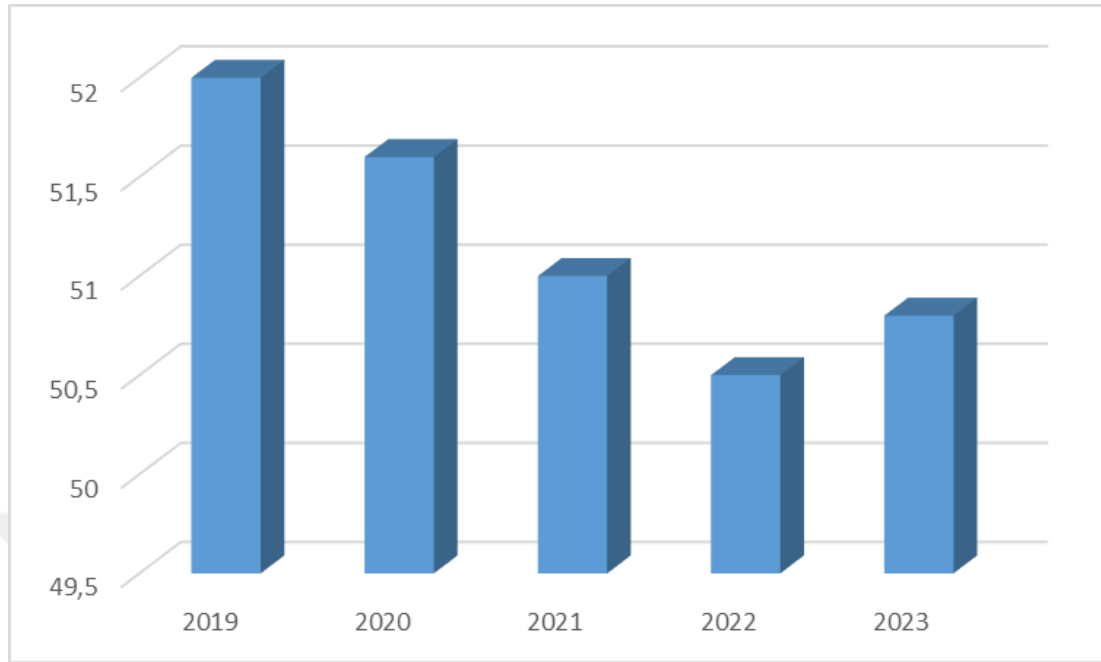


Figure 6: Housing overcrowding rate in Türkiye (%)

Source: Prepared by the reporter from <https://data.tuik.gov.tr> (Date of access 02.02.2024).

This indicator is an alternative measure of dwelling space that takes into account household composition.

Chart shows the crowding rate between 2019 and 2023. This chart shows crowding rate follows a decreasing course from 2019 to 2022. While this rate was 51.8 percent in 2019, it followed a decreasing trend until 2023 and reached 51.6 percent in 2020, 50.6 percent in 2021 and 50.3 percent in 2022. By 2023, it approached 51 percent again.

According to 2022 data, the total number of household is 26.075.365 and 44.3 percent of them have at least one child in the 0-17 age group.

In 2022 the rate of households with rooms for children in our country is 34 percent. The proportion of children who share their room to sleep with one household member is 29.4 percent. It is seen that when age increases the proportion of children who have their own room increases. While the 0-1 age group rate is 23.4 percent, 15-17 age group this rate increases 45.3 percent.

According to TURKSTAT data, the proportion of children who have their own room increases as the mother's education level and the family's income level increase.

When we look at OECD data a household is considered as living in overcrowded conditions if less than one room is available in each household: for each couple in the household; for each single person aged 18 or more; for each pair of people of the same gender between 12 and 17; for each single person between 12 and 17 not included in the previous category; and for each pair of children under age 12.

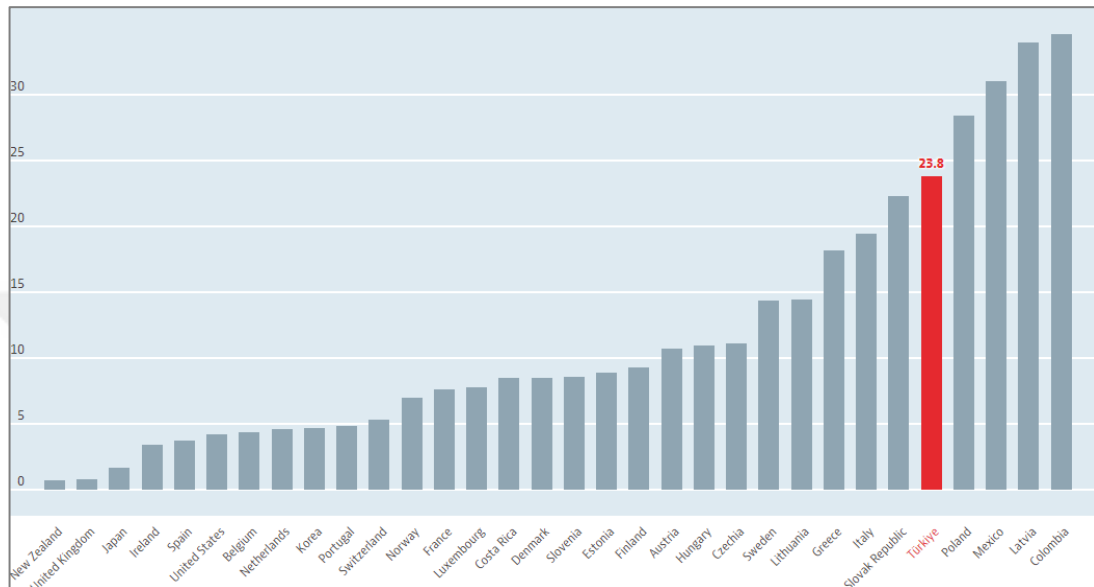


Figure 7: Housing overcrowding

Source: Prepared by the reporter from <https://data.oecd.org> (Date of Access:29.03.2024).

When the table is examined, it is seen that this rate is close to zero in New Zealand and the United Kingdom, while Turkey comes after the Slovak Republic with a rate of 23.8. It is seen that Colombia is the country with the highest crowding rate, with a rate of 30.8 percent.

3.2.1.5 Intergenerational Transmission of Disadvantages

When the results obtained from the study titled "Intergenerational Transfer of Disadvantages", conducted by TÜİK to compare the situation of individuals in the 25-59 age group with the situation of their parents when they were around 14 years old, the following conclusions were reached.

When the current education level of individuals whose mothers were higher education graduates when they were around 14 years old was examined, it was seen that 2.7% were below high school, 13.7% were high school or equivalent, and 83.5% were higher education graduates. Again, when they were around the age of 14, it was

determined that 4.4% of the individuals whose fathers were higher education graduates were below high school, 16.0% were high school graduates or equivalent, and 79.5% were higher education graduates.

When the current education status of those whose mothers completed less than high school education when the individual was around 14 years old was examined, it was seen that 56.3% were below high school, 21.9% were high school or equivalent graduates, and 21.9% were higher education graduates. When the individuals were around the age of 14, it was estimated that 60.0% of those whose fathers had completed less than high school education were below high school, 21.5% were high school graduates or equivalent, and 18.4% were higher education graduates.

While 16.5% of those who stated their family's financial situation as "very bad" when they were around 14 years old are now in the highest 20 percent income group, 25.5% are in the lowest group. While 40.6% of those who stated their family's financial situation as "very good" when they were around 14 years old are now in the highest income group, 7.6% are in the lowest income group.

It was estimated that 57.7% of the interviewed individuals, whose families were "homeowners" when they were 14 years of age or around, were "homeowners" in their current residence, and 26.3% were "tenants". Again, of those whose ownership status was "tenant" when the individual was around the age of 14, 40.0% were the owners of the house they currently live in, while 47.7% were renting.

3.2.2 Effects of Child Poverty

3.2.2.1 Education

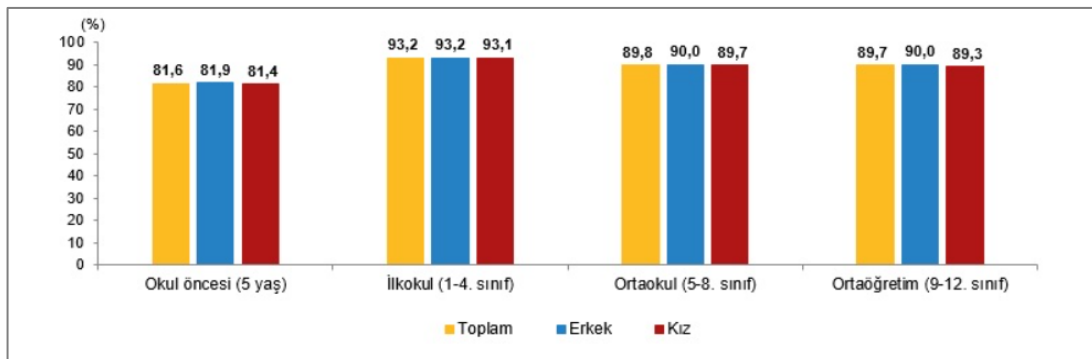


Figure 8: Enrollment rate

Source: Prepared by the Minister of National Education <https://istatistik.meb.gov.tr> (Date of access 6.02.2024).

This table shows schooling rates by education levels and gender in the 2021/'22 academic year. According to the formal education statistics of the Ministry of National Education, the five-year-old net schooling rate at the pre-school education level is 81.6% in the 2021/'22 academic year. When the five-year-old net schooling rate is examined by gender, this rate is 81.9% for boys and 81.4% for girls.

The net schooling rate at the primary school level is seen 93.2% in the 2021/'22 academic year, the net schooling rate at the secondary school level is 89.8%, and the net schooling rate at the secondary school level is 89.7%.

According to the results of the National Education Statistics Database, when school completion rates were examined by education level and gender, an increase was observed over the years. While the primary school completion rate was 98.3% in the 2016/'17 education and training period, this rate became 98.4% in the 2021/'22 education and training period. While the secondary school completion rate was 88.9% in the 2016/'17 education and training period, this rate was 96.4% in the 2021/'22 education and training period. The secondary education completion rate increased from 62.9% to 77.9%.

According to 2022 data, the rate of children whose parents helped them with their homework at least once a month was 54.8%. It was observed that as children get older, the rate of parents helping children with their homework decreases, while the rate in the 6-9 age group is 82.8%, in the 15-17 age group it is 23.1%.

While the percentage of children aged between 6 and 17 who stated that they discuss their educational performance with their parents at least one a month is 89,7 %, the percentage of children who stated they talk about movies, books or TV shows is 69,9%, and the percentage of children who expressed they go to the library or book store is 28,5 %.

According to the results of the Information Technology Usage Research in Children conducted by TÜİK; The internet usage rate for children in the 6-15 age group was 50.8% in 2013 and 82.7% in 2021. When internet use was examined by gender, it was seen that this rate for boys increased from 53.7% in 2013 to 83.9% in 2021, and for girls it increased from 47.8% in 2013 to 81.5% in 2021. Considering the data for 2022, 40.1% of the children who did not go to the theater and/or cinema in the last 12 months cannot participate in such activities due to financial inadequacies, while 24.3% of these children cannot participate in these activities because there is no cinema/theater nearby.

3.2.2.2 Child Employment

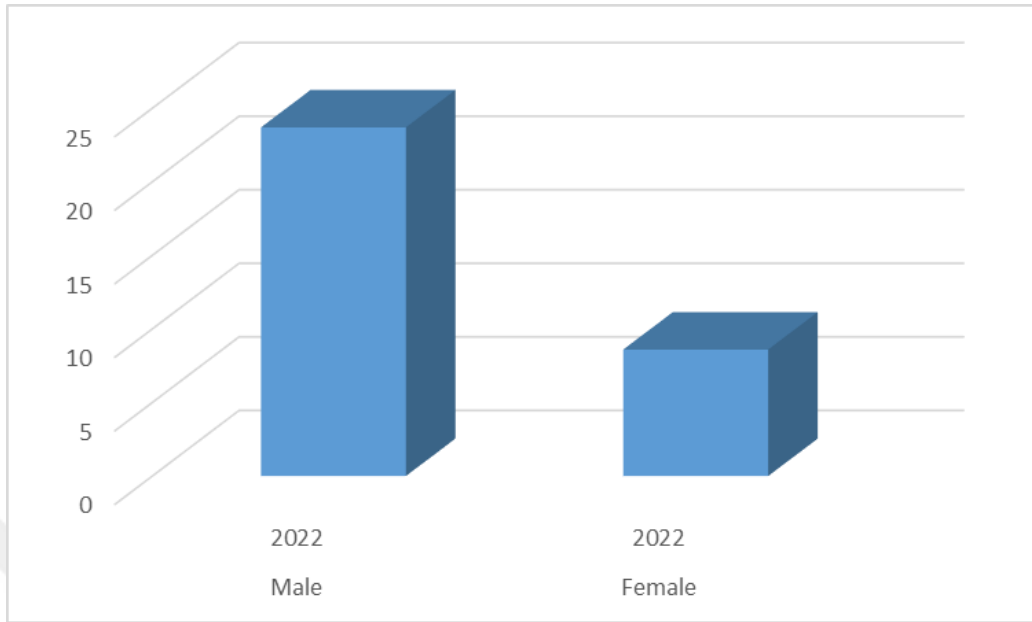


Figure 9: Employment rate (%)

Source: Prepared by the reporter from <https://data.tuik.gov.tr> (Date of Access 2.02.2024).

According to 2022 data, the labor force participation rate of children in the 15-17 age group is 16.4%. When the labor force participation rate was examined by gender, it was seen that this rate was 23.7% for boys and 8.6% for girls.

Also, according to 2022 data, the number of children living in households where the household manager is unemployed was measured as 1210. The ratio of these children to the total child population is calculated as 9.3%.

3.2.2.3 Health

When the types of diseases seen in children in the last 6 months were examined, upper respiratory tract infections were the most common in the 0-6 age group with 31.3% in 2022. This was followed by diarrhea with 29.4% and lower respiratory tract infection with 6.9%, respectively. In 2022, upper respiratory tract infection ranked first in the 7-14 age group with 27.1%. It was followed by diarrhea with 19.8% and oral and dental health problems with 11.2%.

According to death and cause of death statistics, most child deaths in the 1-17 age group in 2021 were due to external injuries and poisoning. The number of deaths of children in the 1-17 age group who died due to this reason was 1,313 in 2021. 893 children died due to nervous system and sensory organ diseases, 669 children died due

to benign and malignant tumors, and 429 children died due to circulatory system diseases.

According to death and cause of death statistics, while the infant mortality rate was 13.9 per thousand in 2009, it decreased to 9.2 per thousand in 2021. When the infant mortality rate was examined by gender, it was seen that between 2009 and 2021, the infant mortality rate decreased from 14.6 per thousand to 9.8 per thousand for male babies, and from 13.1 per thousand to 8.6 per thousand for female babies.

The under-five mortality rate, which expresses the probability of dying within five years after birth, decreased from 17.7 per thousand in 2009 to 11.2 per thousand in 2021. When the under-five mortality rate is examined by gender; Between 2009 and 2021, it was observed that the under-five mortality rate decreased from 18.5 per thousand to 11.9 per thousand for boys, and from 16.8 per thousand to 10.5 per thousand for girls.

Table 1: Foods /drinks stated to be consumed every day (0-17 age) (%)

	Fruit	Vegetable	Meat, chicken, fish	Legumes such as beans, chickpeas, lentils	from animal milk, such as cheese and yogurt	Sweets (candy or chocolate)	Snacks like chips and crackers	Coke or other soft drinks that contain sugar	Food such as bread or pasta that contain grains
Total	50,5	33,0	12,7	10,9	57,8	32,6	21,4	15,1	62,4
Sex									
Male	50,7	32,5	14,1	11,3	57,9	32,9	22,7	16,6	62,9
Female	50,3	33,7	11,2	10,5	57,6	32,4	20,0	13,4	61,8
Age group									
6-23 months	54,9	38,3	11,8	10,0	57,6	9,5	7,0	3,3	45,0
2-4	56,1	33,2	12,8	9,7	59,6	31,7	18,9	11,4	62,8
5-9	53,7	32,4	13,0	10,8	57,0	34,4	21,8	14,5	64,3
10-14	47,4	32,6	12,5	11,3	56,5	34,8	23,4	17,1	63,6
15-17	43,3	32,7	12,8	12,0	59,5	36,2	25,2	20,8	63,8
Mother's/Caregiver's education									
No school completed	30,6	26,5	9,5	11,6	48,0	21,8	16,5	12,9	58,7
Primary school	46,9	30,4	9,3	10,3	56,5	33,4	23,9	18,8	64,9
Primary education/lower secondary school or vocational lower secondary school	51,8	31,4	11,3	9,5	57,7	33,7	24,0	17,1	62,0
High school or vocational high school	60,1	36,3	14,9	10,6	63,2	38,8	23,0	14,1	63,3
Higher education school, university, master/doctorate	70,3	44,6	22,6	13,4	67,0	36,6	18,1	9,6	61,5

Source: Prepared by the reporter from TÜİK (Date of Access:10.04.2024).

According to 2022 data, the rate of children aged 6 months and above whose mothers stated that they consume foods such as cheese and yoghurt every day is 57.8%, the rate of children who are stated to consume grain-containing foods such as bread or pasta every day is 62.4%, and the rate of children who are stated to consume fruits such as fruit every day is 57.8%. The proportion of children stated to consume vegetables every day is 50.5%, the proportion of children stated to consume meat, chicken or fish every day is 12.7%, and the proportion of children stated to consume

legumes such as beans, chickpeas and lentils every day is 10.9%. At the same time, it can be seen from the table that as the education level of mothers increases, their income also increases, and accordingly children's food and beverage consumption also increases.



CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL GOALS TO REDUCE CHILD POVERTY

To prevent child poverty, first, what child poverty is and what causes it must be studied, that is, the subject matter must be conceptually addressed and evaluated in detail. Then, the issue can be discussed in figures. When the issue is addressed, certain goals should be introduced, and policies to reach these goals should be adopted with decisiveness and consistency.

It is difficult to give a general definition of child poverty because this definition should be universal, highlighting vital points that affect children's lives, that is, reflecting how children perceive poverty, and last but not least these definitions should contribute to solution-oriented applications.

After the definitions are completed, we might encounter certain challenges in quantitative evaluation because, in Türkiye, general poverty data is used to access other data related to child poverty. Essentially, in studies conducted to measure child poverty, children's needs are not taken into consideration but a general evaluation is made of household. Children are indirectly represented as supplemented into the adult data within the limitations of statistical categories, or through their influence on family economy and adult life. Since data on children is almost nonexistent, studies with qualitative methods are conducted more in our country.

Being aware of these limitations, realist goals should be set and consistent policies should be implemented via multidisciplinary studies. Which policies could be applied to reduce child poverty?

Examining the practices around the world, we see that first, family income is increased via jobs with high salaries and through direct cash transfers. Activities to increase employment are essential in terms of enhancing the opportunities parents with regular income can provide for their children. Therefore, we cannot deny the

significance of decreasing unemployment rates in fight against poverty. Our findings verify this assumption as well.

The application of conditional cash transfer in many countries is effective in developing human resources. The actual aim here is to reduce the effects of poverty in the long term by providing short-term support for poor families. Conditions generally include school enrollment, seeing a doctor at health centers, attending seminars for preventive health measures, and receiving health checks during pregnancy (Heinrich 2007: 200). The program is carried out with a scoring system that aims to reach poor beneficiaries, and payments are made every other month, provided that the conditions are met (Heinrich 2007: 121). Conditional Cash Transfer is thought to be more useful since it results in behavioral changes in the fight against poverty compared to other methods of social aid, and contributes to permanent solutions for poverty. When the adverse effects of poverty on education and health are evaluated, the significance of constructive contributions in this regard to reduce the effects of poverty can be seen more clearly. Providing regular health checkups for children free of charge can reduce the negative effects of poverty on children.

As mentioned previously in this study, education is one of the most important tools to eliminate poverty. Breaking the vicious cycle of poverty is only possible through raising well-educated individuals. Therefore, monetary and in-kind support must be provided to poor families to maintain the continuity of their children's education. As other studies also show, as the level of education increases, poverty decreases. Thanks to education, individuals can acquire knowledge and skills, and through this acquisition both employment and income increase by individuals becoming qualified employees. All kids of school age must benefit from educational opportunities equally, the necessary infrastructure works should be conducted by following the changing conjuncture in the world and the quality of education should be enhanced. Measures that will relieve families should be developed to especially enable and encourage girls to attend school. Families should receive monetary aid, and the idea of seeing children as workforce and making them work should be prevented. Pre-school education which holds a special significance in enabling opportunity equality in the development period and reducing the negative effects of poverty on children should be valued more, it must be generalized and its quality should be

enhanced. To this end, preschool education, and early childhood education programs, which are integrated into the former, should be provided. Equal opportunities must be provided for children in poor areas through cultural, psychological, and cognitive stimulants when they start school with their peers. Women's education should be prioritized and women's employment must be encouraged by opening vocational courses. Especially, in families where mothers are single parents, child poverty and women's poverty are intertwined because women hold the first-degree responsibility of children. In this context, women's employment is grave in reducing child poverty. Necessary legal regulations should be implemented to provide women with opportunities to prevent their exclusion from professional life through applications such as flexible working hours to help them balance work and house life. Development strategies focusing on poor women's needs should be adopted, and microloan applications that enable women to own businesses should be encouraged.

Social services for poor families should be generalized, and policies to improve child protection services should be established. Social aid services should be provided as citizen rights, and the necessary efforts should be made to reduce the effects of poverty on children by increasing support programs for children. Services to encourage children to acquire confidence and self-respect and improve their relationships with family and friends should be created. Necessary efforts should be made to help individuals in disadvantaged regions reach such services.

Local governments, central governments, and international organizations should work in coordination to fight against child poverty. Since regional and cultural differences lead to a diverse array of needs in our country, local governments have a great duty as local governments are closer to those in need. A system that feeds off of local resources and puts children in the center should be formed to fight against child poverty, and an institutional observation mechanism that evaluates the efficiency of support provided should be established. Public institutions should be encouraged to provide their services in line with the principles of transparency and equality. Public institutions should cooperate with NGOs in providing their services, and the poor must have a say about the services provided.

Other political goals might include covering childcare expenditures of families and helping them reside in affordable houses. In addition, high-quality care services

with affordable prices should be provided to children because parents working for long hours may not be able to spare time for their children, and unattended kids can experience emotional and intellectual development issues.

In addition to providing care for children, programs to help them reach sufficient nutrition must be established to help children maintain a healthy and happy life by solving their nutritional problems. These programs can include free breakfasts and lunches at schools. Orphaned and disabled children might receive their support in the form of cooked meals.

According to a report published by UNICEF Innocenti Research Center in 2005, as the budget allocated by states for supporting families and children increases, poverty in children decreases.



CONCLUSION

The problem of poverty is as old as human history. Just like it occurs differently in various geographies, the reasons and its effects differ too.

Similarly, child poverty may develop due to various factors. Therefore, first the reasons and the process of child poverty should be discussed, this way the political tools and projects to be formed are more effective. The concepts of social justice, equality and competence are essential in fight against child poverty. First things first, distribution should be equal and children should be protected from falling into the pit of poverty; if this cannot be established, mechanisms to protect and support children should be formed. In this sense, the share of social protection reserved from the state's budget can be seen as an indicator of the importance attached to social protection.

Children are more vulnerable to poverty than adults are. They cannot even satisfy their fundamental needs. Especially, for those who do not access social protection, the situation gets worse for poor families. When exposed to poverty, children are more likely to experience problems they will feel the effects of throughout their lives. Due to malnutrition, children may experience physical, social, and emotional problems. Obstacles in accessing education lead to failure at school for children and make them fall behind of their peers. On the other hand, hardships in accessing healthcare cause children to miss opportunities for healthy growth and development. And in addition to all of these disadvantages, poor children become vulnerable to early marriage and violence.

We can solve poverty only by looking through the eyes of children in poverty and examining and critically analyzing all systems children are a part of. Instead of measures that focus on social supports to save the day in the fight against child poverty, a more holistic point of view must be adopted for a long-term solution, and child poverty should be handled as a political priority and preventive and curative solutions should be introduced. One of the most significant indicators of child poverty, and even general poverty, is education level. Becoming a production society is only possible through education. Individuals must be educated, employment opportunities must be

created by reviving labor market, and production activities should be supported. The findings of this study show that boosting education, production, and employment opportunities will impact the reduction of child poverty.



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