Attitudes of Foreign Primary School Students to Follow Traffic Rules: The Case of Ankara Province

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Abstract
Turkey is in a strategic position in terms of its geopolitical position and therefore it is the center of a continuous migration movement. While this mobility was mostly due to the fact that our country was a "transition country" in the past, it has become a "target country" in the last twenty years. Although the act of migration is defined as only human mobility, it includes the process of trying to live in a completely new culture and society for immigrants, trying to exist without losing their own identity by going beyond the usual patterns, and adapting to a new order as an individual and as a society. In this context, the phenomenon of social integration gains importance. It is crucial to look at the current traffic information, attitudes, and behaviors of the students in order to reveal solutions in terms of social policy in this direction. This is because foreign students need to develop the social skills necessary to adapt to our country and the rules of our country. The aim of this study is to examine the attitudes of foreign primary school students to comply with traffic rules and to propose solutions in terms of social policy. In the research conducted with the relational scanning model, the participants consist of 232 foreign national primary school students between the ages of 8-10 studying in Ankara. The data of the research were collected with the "Traffic Rules Attitude Scale" developed by Tahiroğlu (2012) and consisting of 21 items. SPSS 22 was used for data analysis. The data from the study led to the conclusion that most foreign students had low attitudes toward following traffic laws and that students generally had negative opinions toward traffic safety laws. It has been suggested to give traffic education in the context of social policies.
Key words: Foreign national primary school students, traffic attitudes, social policy.

Introduction

From past to present, people's basic needs have influenced their entire way of life and all choices have been shaped around these basic needs. When the satisfaction of the most basic needs such as eating, drinking, shelter and reproduction became insufficient, people started to pursue or search for what is "better". Once the extent of these searches exceeded the limits, negative events such as migrations and wars took place and people started to migrate individually or massively from their geographies (Şenol & Taştan, 2020).

Turkey is strategically located in terms of its geopolitical position and therefore it is the center of continuous migration mobility. While this mobility was mostly due to the fact that Turkey was a "*transit country*" in the past, it has become a "destination country" in the last few decades (Doğan, 2019). For this reason, migration to Turkey mostly takes place through direct routes and destinations.

Although the act of migration is defined only as human mobility, for migrants, it covers the process of trying to live in a completely new culture and society, trying to exist without

losing their own identity by going beyond the usual patterns, and adapting to a new order as an individual and as a society. In this context, the phenomenon of social integration gains importance. According to Coşkun (2004), it is the process of individuals and groups that make up the society forming an order in harmony and interconnectedness within an order, as well as the assimilation of the dominant cultural values in the society by the individuals in the society and thus the process of individuals gaining socio-cultural values belonging to the society and living in harmony with the society (Coşkun, 2004).

According to the 2021-2022 data of the Management, there are approximately 5,013,631 foreign nationals in our country. Of this population, 1,365,884 are of educational age (5-17 years old). The number of individuals of primary school age is 387,037 (Directorate of Migration Management of Internal Affairs, 2022). In addition, according to TUIK (2021) reports, it has been announced that the foreign population residing in Turkey is 1 million 792 thousand 36 by the end of 2021. According to TUIK, Iraq ranks first with 322 thousand in the country ranking. Afghanistan ranks second with 183 thousand and Iran third with 128 thousand. Turkmenistan, Syria, Germany, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, and Kazakhstan are the other top 10 countries, respectively. Course, tourism, scientific research, etc. For reasons, foreigners with a visa or residence permit for less than 3 months and Syrians in the country with temporary protection status are not included in the population. The number of foreign residents in Turkey increased by 458 thousand 626 over the previous year to reach 1 million 792 thousand 36, according to the data of the Address Based Population Registration System (ADNKS). Men make up 49.7% of its population, while women make up 50.3%.

It has also been stated that there are 376 "stateless people" in Turkey. 109 people from Madagascar, 116 people from Vietnam and 125 people from Peru, who are at the bottom of the list, reside in Turkey. Other countries were recorded as 1,398. In order to ensure the social acceptance and harmonization of these large numbers of students, our country primarily tries to find solutions to the problems of foreign students such as language, employment, accommodation, education, health and security. In this context, social and cultural projects and policies are carried out, and considering their facilitating effects on social cohesion, it is an important issue to raise awareness of foreign children on traffic safety.
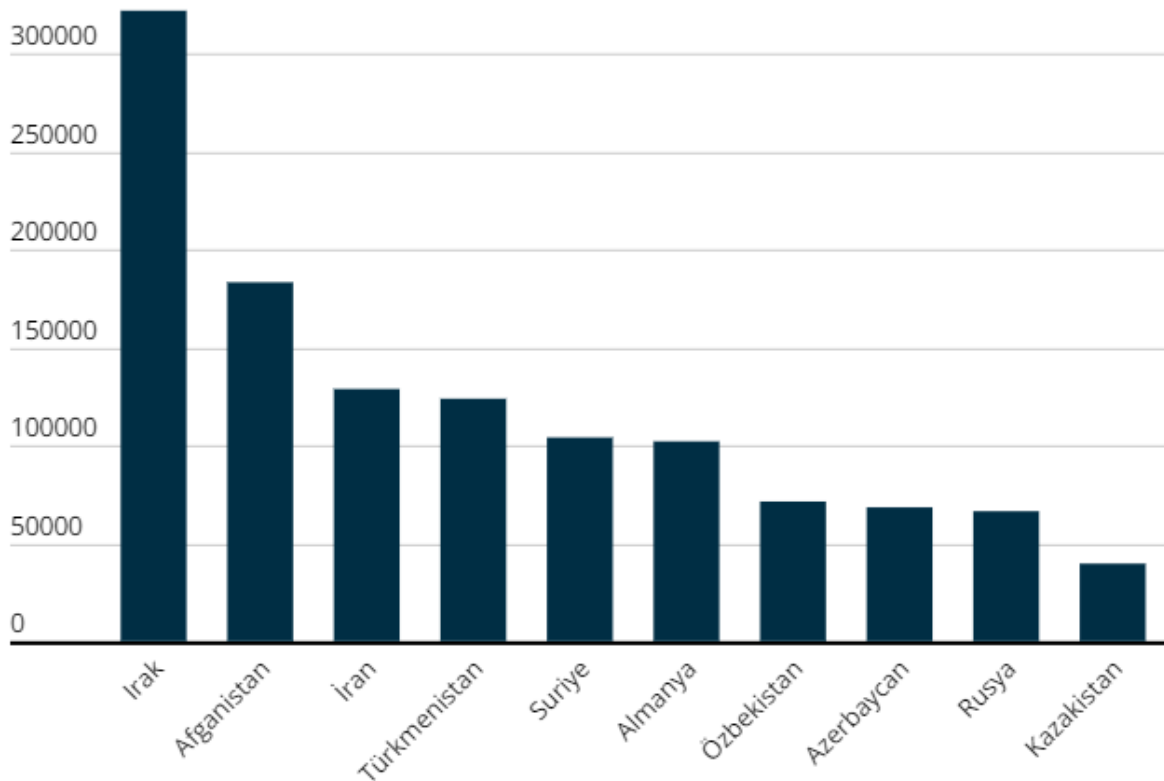
Figure 1. Number of foreign population residing in Turkey in the top ten countries

Walking and cycling are healthy, safe and environmentally friendly transportation methods compared to automobile use. Studies show that foreign nationals are more likely or obliged to walk and cycle in traffic (Blumenberg, 2009; Smart, 2010). In Turkey, 47.6% of the people killed in traffic accidents on the road network in 2021 were drivers, 30.3% were passengers and 22.1% were pedestrians (TUIK, 2021). In this context, considering that pedestrians and bicycle users are more vulnerable than vehicle drivers in traffic accidents; exposure to possible accidents becomes more important for these individuals.

Possible incompatibilities or differences in the safety culture between foreign nationals and Turkish nationals result in a different situation between the two groups, both pedestrians and cyclists and drivers. This condition increases the accident risk of foreign nationals. According to Lawson and Edwards (1991), Asian children living in Birmingham, England are twice as likely to be injured in traffic accidents than other children (Lawson & Edwards, 1991). Steinbach et al. (2010) investigated road injuries in London and found that foreign national children had higher injury rates as pedestrians than British citizen children. According to Chen et al. (2012), the rate of traffic accidents among foreign national children is higher than other children (Chen, Lin, & Loo, 2012).

Foreigners who are "foreign" to a nation and its laws, particularly young children who are defenseless and in need of supervision, may suffer harm as a result of traffic accidents. The attitudes and perceived social norms of the country of origin concerning risky traffic activities, such as pedestrians and cyclists, as well as their driving practices and expectations, are brought with foreign people when they move to a new country. The term "traffic safety culture" generally refers to the shared attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and values that relate to road safety (Fairley, 2009). Traffic education is necessary to ensure traffic safety culture. Traffic education is defined as raising awareness of people involved in traffic about traffic and traffic accidents, gaining knowledge and skills, and gaining the behaviors necessary to prevent traffic problems (Hatipoğlu, et al. 2012 as cited in Aybek & Aslan, 2016).

In order to develop a traffic culture and add new dimensions to this culture, the childhood period, which is the stage of preparation for life, should be handled separately from adults (Sarı & Ekici, 2022). Children can develop fundamental competences and social abilities including problem-solving, adjusting to society values, and following community laws thanks to basic education, which is the most crucial stage of childhood (Çubukçu & Gültekin, 2006). According to Hatipoğlu et al. (2012), the knowledge and skills to be gained in traffic education to be given during the basic education period, when learning and interaction are easier, can be more effective and lifelong. In addition, the traffic knowledge and skills to be gained by children through traffic education can reduce the probability and risk of their and eventually the whole society's involvement in traffic accidents and make children more responsible and educated in their future lives (Hatipoğlu, et al., 2012).

In Turkey, traffic education is carried out through the fourth grade traffic safety course curriculum. Aybek and Aslan (2016) claim that children are more likely to be exposed to traffic accidents in Turkey than in other nations, and that this is mostly due to children's inadequate knowledge and abilities about the road environment. Due to this, it is crucial to teach pupils about traffic and equip them with information beginning in the primary grades (Aybek & Aslan, 2016). In terms of foreign national students, especially when they are new to our country, traffic signs with a different language system and traffic behaviors belonging to a different culture can be a very complex situation for students. Traffic accidents can cause many material and moral losses, resulting in injury, trauma or death. In order to prevent these disasters and for foreign national students to gain the necessary social skills to adapt to our country and the rules of our country, it is important to examine the existing traffic knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of the students and to reveal solutions in terms of social policy in this direction.

Method
The study model, population, sample, measuring equipment utilized for data collecting, and data analysis are all covered in this section.

Research Design
Relational screening approach was employed in the study to identify the presence and strength of the relationships between the variables (Büyüköztürk, et al., 2018). According to their gender, grade level, whether they had previously received traffic education or not, and whether they desired to, traffic education-related views of international primary school pupils were evaluated in this study.

Participants
In the study, 232 foreign national primary school students studying in Keçiören district of Ankara province participated. One of the deliberate selection techniques, the criterion sampling approach, was used to select study participants from among pupils of various countries, ages 8 to 10, who met the predetermined criteria.

Data Collection Tools
While collecting the data of the study, firstly, a literature review was conducted. The "*Traffic Rules Attitude Scale*" developed by Tahiroğlu (2012) was examined so as to understand the knowledge about traffic safety regulations, and after reaching a consensus that it was a collection tool suitable for the purpose of the study, two field experts examined whether the scale items were at a level that foreign national primary school students could understand, and a consensus was reached on the comprehensibility of the items. The 5-point Likert-type scale was evaluated as "*Strongly Agree*" (5), "*Agree*" (4), "*Undecided*" (3), "*Disagree*" (2) and "*Not at all*" (1). After obtaining the necessary approvals, the scale was applied to foreign national primary school students.

Data Analysis

The data of the study, which aims to apply the "*Traffic Rules Attitude Scale*" to foreign national primary school students. In order to guarantee the validity and dependability of the constructed scale, the Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency coefficient was applied. The scale's 0.84 Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was discovered. As a result, the scale can be deemed to be sufficiently reliable. The collected data were tallied and evaluated in accordance with the research's issues.

Findings

Descriptive Findings about the Participants

The study's findings revealed that 68% of the pupils knew little about traffic safety regulations and had a bad attitude toward them.

Table 1 displays the results of the study's demographic variables:

Table 1. *Distribution According to Demographic Variables*

Variables	Groups	n	%
Gender	Male	97	42%
	Female	135	58%
Age	8 years old	86	37%
	9 years old	78	34%
	10 years old	68	29%
Previous Traffic Training Status	Yes.	18	8%
	No.	214	92%
Does he/she want to receive traffic education?	He/she wants to receive training	220	95%
	He/she does not want to receive education	12	5%

When Table 1 is reviewed, it can be observed that 92% of the students who had not received traffic education and 95% of the students who desired to acquire traffic education were girls, 37% of whom were 8 years old, and 58% of whom had obtained the scale. In the study conducted by Pekğöz Çeviker (2014), it was found that there was a substantial correlation between primary school students' attitudes regarding road safety courses and whether or not they had received traffic instruction. It was seen that primary school students who received traffic education had a more positive perspective towards the traffic education course than primary school students who did not receive traffic education. In the table above, it is seen that foreign national students have not received traffic education before and the majority of them want to receive this education.

Table 2. *Distribution of foreign students by school*

	School Name	Afghanistan	Iraq	Syria	Other	Total	%
The Study's Participating Schools and Students in the Keçiören District	Mecidiye Primary School	15	10	30	2	57	25%
	23 Nisan Primary School	10	8	30	2	50	22%
	Melek Özen Primary School	5	7	22	6	40	17%
	Çizmeci Primary School	12	9	20	4	45	19%
	Kocatepe Primary School	15	10	30	2	40	17%

| | 42 | 34 | 102 | 14 | 232 | 100% |

When Table 2 is reviewed, it can be noticed that 102 Syrian pupils and 57 students from Mecidiye Primary School participate in the most.

Explanatory Findings Related to Traffic Rules Attitude Scale

The descriptive statistics of the Traffic Rules Attitude Scale are shown in Table 2:

Table 3 : *Traffic Rules Attitude Scale Statistics*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	S. D.	Skewness Statistic	Skewness S. E.	Kurtosis Statistic	Kurtosis S. E.
Traffic Rules Attitude Scale	232	1,00	5,00	2,19	,51	-,169	,160	-1,155	,318

According to Tabachnick and Fidell, a parametric test can be accepted and handled appropriately when the skewness and kurtosis result is between +1.5 and -1.5. The "Traffic Rules Attitude Scale" is appropriate in this direction, within the parameters of the data acquired from Table 3, in accordance with the normalcy assumption, and parametric analyses should be carried out. The low score (X=2.19, S.S:.51) indicates that individuals' attitudes towards traffic rules are at a low level.

Information on the low items in the research scale is shown in Table 3:

Table 3. *Items with Low Level Traffic Attitudes*

Items	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.	Skewness Statistic	Skewness S. E.	Kurtosis Statistic	Kurtosis S. E.
If the road is empty, I cross without waiting for the green light.	1,0	5,0	2,414	1,5473	,670	,434	-1,102	,845
On my way home from school, I joke and play with my friends on the sidewalk.	1,0	4,0	1,621	,9788	1,400	,434	1,395	,845
When a vehicle (bus, public transportation, etc.) is in motion, I sometimes stand without holding on to anything.	1,0	5,0	2,448	1,6385	,726	,434	-1,165	,845
I do not use pedestrian crossings when crossing the street	1,0	5,0	2,517	1,7853	,597	,434	-1,335	,845
I also use bicycles, skateboards, etc. in areas open to vehicular traffic.	1,0	5,0	1,862	1,1870	1,523	,434	1,336	,845
I also use the bicycle when the brake or horn does not work.	1,0	5,0	2,517	1,5725	,469	,434	-1,372	,845
Wearing a seat belt is boring	1,0	5,0	1,552	1,0551	1,009	,434	1,427	,845

I don't like to wear a helmet when cycling.	1,0	5,0	2,069	1,6020	1,055	,434	-,590	,845

When Table 3 is examined, the mean of the item *"On my way home from school, I joke and play with my friends on the sidewalk"* (X=1.62, S.S:.98) was very low. Similarly, the mean of the item "*I use bicycles, skateboards, etc. in areas open to vehicular traffic*" (X=1.86, SD: 1.18) was very low. On the other hand, the mean of the item "*Wearing a seat belt is boring.*" (X=1.55, SD:1.05) was very low. In addition, the mean of the item "*I do not like to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle.*" (X=2.07, S.S:1.60) was at a low level. "*If the road is empty, I cross the road without waiting for the green light*." The mean of the item (X=2.41, SD:1.54) was also at a low level. On the other hand, the mean (X=2.44, S.S:1.63) of the item "*When the vehicle (public transportation vehicles such as buses etc.) is in motion, I sometimes stand without holding on to something."* was at a low level. The mean of the item "*I also use the bicycle when the brake or horn does not work."* (X=2.51, S.S:1.57) was at a low level. Finally, the mean of the item "*I do not use pedestrian crossings when crossing the street."* The mean of the item (X=2.52, SD:1.63) was at a low level.

Conclusion

According to the outcomes of the study's findings, 68% of the students had a low degree of familiarity with road safety regulations, and 92% had never been given any instruction in this area.

According to Aybek and Aslan (2016), the rate of exposure of children in Turkey to traffic accidents is much higher than in other countries. While people who are accustomed to their home country's laws and customs are more likely to be exposed to traffic accidents, it may be more common for foreign national students who are "foreign" to our country and its traffic rules to experience traffic accidents. Children lack the maturity to understand what to do and what not to do while crossing highways, in contrast to adults. Without adult supervision and proper knowledge of traffic safety rules, children may put themselves at risk. It can be difficult to ensure children's safety at all times, especially when parents may face safety issues due to not being with them all the time. Therefore, providing road safety lessons for foreign national students can be useful when they walk to school, take the bus or go out to play.

The study's findings suggest that practical instruction in traffic regulations should be given to students who are foreign nationals in order to improve their knowledge of and attitudes toward traffic rules. Similarly, Hatipoğlu et al. (2012) point out that traffic education should be provided practically on roads open to traffic and traffic education should be provided in primary schools as in many European countries within the scope of the implementation of traffic education (Hatipoğlu et al., 2012). Similarly, Bailey (1995) and Zeedyk et al., 2001) emphasize that young children should be given practical and performance-oriented education in order to make what they learn permanent.

As can be seen, effective education is one of the most important solutions to minimize traffic accidents. With the assistance of connected organizations like schools, municipalities, provincial traffic branch directorates, etc., traffic education is attempted to be offered to children starting at a young age. It can be stated that in order to provide traffic education to foreign national students and to increase the traffic knowledge and skills of the students and to gain positive attitudes and behaviors, necessary arrangements should be made by determining the nationalities, traffic knowledge and language skills of foreign national students in the traffic safety course curriculum. While making arrangements; the dimensions of the program (purpose, content, learning-teaching process and assessment-evaluation), language levels, needs and expectations of the students should also be taken into consideration. Utilizing

informative content such as videos, animations and digital games in the learning-teaching process in terms of both students' language levels and their interests can increase students' knowledge of traffic rules and help them acquire positive attitudes towards traffic rules.

In order to provide people with a safe traffic environment, to correct their wrong actions, to provide them with the right habits and behaviors, and to ensure safe transportation, social policies that make good use of the culture, environment and social life of foreign national students in our country should be established (Aybek & Aslan, 2016).

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