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Iğdır Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi

E-ISSN: 2147-6152

Yıl 15, Sayı 43, Ekim 2026

[Araştırma Makalesi] **Atıf/Citation**: Aslan, A. (2026). "Forced Migration, Women and Human Development within the Framework of the Capabilities Approach", *Iğdır Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*. (43): s. 623-638. **Gönderim Tarihi**: 20.05.2026 **Kabul ve Yayın Tarihi**: 15.09.2026-15.10.2026 **DOI**: 10.54600/igdirsosbilder.1955214

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Forced Migration, Women and Human Development within the Framework of the Capabilities Approach

Yapabilirlik Yaklaşımı Çerçevesinde Zorunlu Göç, Kadın ve İnsani Kalkınma

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the relationship between the concepts of "forced migration and gender equality" within the framework of Amartya Sen's "capability approach." The relevant literature has been subjected to a critical analysis. The analysis reveals that the "capability" approach combines poverty and fundamental human rights, and recognizes gender inequality as one of the most significant obstacles to development. Prioritizing security policies in managing international migration leads to the neglect of migrants' rights. Negative attitudes and reactions towards migrants cause the politicization of the migration phenomenon and the objectification of migrants. Immigrant women are marginalized in socio-economic life and do not have adequate access to services such as education and healthcare. The human development approach emphasizes the necessity of women's participating more equally and more fairly in socio-economic fields. In this context, it is suggested that eliminating deprivations and guaranteeing fundamental human rights are necessary for achieving social and economic development. Furthermore, the necessity for "the state and society" to play a supportive role in strengthening human capacity is emphasized.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Human development, forced migration, globalization, inequality, woman.

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada "zorunlu göç ve cinsiyet eşitliği" kavramları arasındaki ilişki Amartya Sen'in geliştirmiş olduğu "yapabilirlik yaklaşımı" çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir. İlgili literatür eleştirel bir perspektifle analize tabi tutulmuştur. Analiz sonucunda "yapabilirlik" yaklaşımında yoksulluk ile temel insan haklarının birlikte ele alındığı; cinsiyet eşitsizliğinin kalkınmanın önündeki en önemli engellerden biri olarak kabul edildiği tespit edilmiştir. Uluslararası göçün yönetilmesinde güvenlik politikalarının merkeze alınması, göçmenlere ilişkin hakların göz ardı edilmesine neden olmaktadır. Göçmenlere karşı oluşan olumsuz tutum ve tepkiler 'göç' olgusunun politikleştirilmesine ve göçmenlerin nesnelleştirilmesine neden olmaktadır. Göçmen kadınlar, sosyo-ekonomik yaşamda ikincilleştirilmekte; eğitim ve sağlık gibi hizmetlerden yeterince yararlanamamaktadır. İnsani kalkınma yaklaşımında kadınların sosyo-ekonomik alanlarda daha eşit ve adaletli bir şekilde yer alması gerekliliği vurgulanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda sosyal ve ekonomik kalkınmanın gerçekleşebilmesi için yoksunlukların giderilmesi ve temel insan haklarının güvence altına alınması önerilmektedir. Ayrıca, insan kapasitesinin güçlendirilmesinde "devlet ve toplumun" destekleyici bir role sahip olması gerekliliği vurgulanmaktadır.

Keywords: İnsani kalkınma, zorunlu göç, küreselleşme, eşitsizlik, kadın.

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Introduction

Today, the issue of migration and immigration has shifted from the local to the global level. Globalization has led to an increase in economic, social, and political issues. Globalization is characterized as a process that has both winners and losers and that deepens inequalities (Tomlinson, 2004: 135). Globalization is considered a phenomenon that leads to a shrinking of the world, a change in the perception of time and space, an expansion of communication, increased flows between continents and regions, and an intensification of social relations. With globalization, "social relations, activities, and interdependencies" increase; geographical boundaries and distances lose their importance (Steger, 2020: 28-31). Globalization is defined as "a series of planetary processes involving increasing fluidity and the growing multifaceted flows of people, objects, spaces, and information, and the structures they encounter and create." The globalization perspective includes fluidity. Fluidity is explained as "the increased ease of movement of people, goods, information, and spaces." Globalization has changed the nature and scope of migration movements; economic, social, political, and environmental developments have increased forced migration movements. One of the important problem areas of globalization, which is characterized as a multifaceted process, is international migration (Ritzer, 2020: 20). In the context of 'forced migration,' it is observed that globalization is a decisive factor in determining migration movements and shaping the policies of states and other actors (Betts, 2017: 219).

Throughout human history, international migration has been a decisive factor in shaping societies due to social, political, economic, and climatic reasons. International migration has different components, including "migration from one country of birth to another; migration back to one's country of origin after residing abroad; and migration from one foreign country to another." Structural transformations are occurring in the nature of international migration. International migration reshapes the economic, social, cultural, and legal conditions of individuals. In the international migration process, individuals' migration decisions may be based on voluntary choices, but they can also be shaped by compelling circumstances such as conflict, violence, political oppression, economic deprivation, or natural disasters. The outcomes of international migration are determined not only by the economic and social resources available to migrants, but also by their legal status in the host country, their access to the labor market, their access to social services, and their level of social acceptance. While the number of international migrants from developed countries is decreasing, there is a significant increase in the number of international migrants from developing countries. Migration from South to North is considered one of the consequences of global inequality (Ritzer, 2020: 316-425). Along with global developments, there has been a steady increase in international migration since the end of the Cold War. International migration is considered a decisive factor in the formulation of public policies by states. Due to global developments and the impact of international migration, states are responsible for providing services to non-citizens within their sovereign territories. The scope of state responsibilities and services is expanding due to the impact of international migration. Social welfare, social justice, and, in particular, ensuring the safety of all segments of society are considered the fundamental reasons for the state's existence. It has been determined that the state was born to provide individual security (Hobbes, 2023: 133).

International forced migration transforms both the receiving and sending societies socially, politically, and economically. Forced migration serves to disrupt and hinder the development process. The consequences of forced migration do not manifest in the same way across all sections of society. This process of change and transformation leads to the deepening of inequalities based on "ethnicity, religion, class, and gender" (Basso, 2014: 134). International migration is undergoing constant formal transformation, and controlling social mobility in the global world is becoming increasingly difficult (Ritzer and Stepnisky, 2018: 464). Globally, "one person every 2 seconds" is displaced due to compelling reasons (Jankovic-Rankovic, Oka, Meyer & Gettler, 2020). Migrants who are forced to migrate due to reasons such as war, political and economic crises generally occupy the lowest class in the societies they join (Gallino; 2012: 59). Forced displacement leads to deprivation in fundamental areas of life for individuals, such as education,

health, employment, housing, security, social relations and political participation. Individuals who are 'forced to migrate' for compelling reasons are portrayed as a 'destructive' group by the settled society; they are marginalized and excluded. This 'marginalization' sometimes leads to states implementing institutionally violent policies. Violent policies applied to migrants can lead to the reproduction of social inequalities (Butler, 2021: 134).

Within the framework of Amartya Sen's capability approach, the relationship between the concepts of 'migration, development and women' has been examined from an analytical perspective. In this study, Amartya Sen's capability approach is examined in the context of the process of forced migration and the position of women. There are numerous published books, articles and reports on the 'capability approach'. Whilst the literature contains studies addressing the relationship between forced migration, gender and development from various perspectives, it is evident that there are few studies which comprehensively assess the experience of forced migration through the lens of the narrowing of migrant women's capabilities and from a human development perspective. The originality of this study lies in its inclusion of the 'women's dimension' in the relationship between migration and development, which distinguishes it from the relevant literature. Another aspect that makes this study unique is that, unlike existing literature, it examines the relationship between 'migration, development and women' within the framework of the capability approach. In this study, an attempt has been made to explain the 'process of forced migration and the position of women' by drawing on primary sources relating to the 'capabilities approach'. The aim of this study is to assess the socio-economic problems faced by women during the process of forced migration within the framework of the capabilities approach. Accordingly, the study constitutes a theoretical assessment based on a literature review.

The 'capability approach' offers a critical perspective on development studies. Sen's "capability approach" offers a critical perspective on development-related studies. In his work titled "Development as Freedom," Sen defines development as the provision of real freedoms and the elimination of deprivations. "Political freedoms, economic opportunities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security measures" are accepted as indicators of development. Ensuring gender equality and strengthening the social position of women are requirements of human development. The sense of inequality felt by disadvantaged groups in society can also harm social harmony. Sen, focuses on "deprivation and inequality" in his work. According to Sen, in order to increase individuals' capacities, barriers to access to basic resources such as "education, health, housing, or nutrition" must be removed (Sen, 2004). In his work titled "Inequality Reexamined" (1995), Sen evaluates different approaches to the concept of "inequality." In this work, Sen seeks to answer the question "inequality of what?" regarding "inequality." According to Sen, capability refers to the real options a person has to fulfill their most preferred subjective functions. Inequalities such as class and gender restrict people's freedom.

Martha C. Nussbaum is one of the key figures who made significant contributions to the development of the "capability approach." In her work titled "Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach" (2011), Nussbaum focuses on the question of what people can actually do. In this work, Nussbaum offers a critical reading of traditional development approaches. Nussbaum emphasizes that a "livable" world must be created not only for humans but for all living beings. According to Nussbaum, the capabilities approach addresses social injustice and inequality. The capabilities approach emphasizes that governments must act responsibly to eliminate discrimination and improve quality of life (Nussbaum, 2011: 35).

Gender-based inequalities increase during forced migration. Women, in particular, are more exposed to the risks and costs of the migration process due to existing gender inequalities. It has been observed that migrant women experience greater vulnerability in areas such as employment, wages, education, health, social security, violence, human trafficking, and legal status during forced migration. This study is significant because it critically evaluates the situation of women who have migrated due to compulsory reasons within the context of a human development approach. The study is based on a comparative evaluation of the literature on "migration, women, and development." The limited number of studies on the situation of migrant women within the

framework of a human development approach makes this study unique. The problems experienced by migrant women, especially in the context of forced migration, are of great importance from the perspective of gender equality and the human development approach. The literature shows that all disadvantaged groups in society, including women, experience more problems during forced migration (Alam, M.Z. and Mamun A.A., 2022; Baker et al., 2021; Bloch, 2008; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979; Hillmann and Toğral Koca, 2021; İçduygu and Diker, 2017). People displaced by forced migration are unable to find employment that matches their skills and qualifications. The existence of factors hindering migrants' participation in the workforce negatively impacts migrant women in particular. Problems accessing employment after forced migration can limit individuals' economic independence and their ability to meet their basic needs. The concentration of women in low-wage, informal, and precarious jobs creates significant problems not only in terms of economic vulnerability but also in terms of access to social security and labor rights. Therefore, the employment problem should be considered not merely as a matter of insufficient income, but as a multifaceted issue that limits individuals' economic capabilities. Securing human rights is crucial for building a more just world. The enforceability of international agreements and conventions that guarantee human rights and prevent discrimination is important for governments. Discrimination based on gender and race must be eliminated globally.

There is a rich literature on social injustice and inequality in the context of women's social status. In her work titled "How Has the Status of Women Changed? From Feudalism to Capitalism" (2020), Sheila Margaret Pelizzon emphasizes that gender discrimination is a justification for assigning different statuses to women and men, such as race and ethnicity. According to Pelizzon, the transition from feudalism to capitalism led to a further deterioration in women's social status. In this context, economic developments throughout history must be examined in order to better understand women's status. Pelizzon states that "social gender" was constructed for the functioning of the capitalist production process. The historically continuing patriarchal social order has also worked against women in the capitalist production process. The invention of gender has increased men's oppression of women. The gendered approach has led to women being subjugated in the capitalist world system (Pelizzon, 2020: 31, 356).

Valerie Bryson's work titled "Feminist Political Theory" (2003) comprehensively examines different feminist approaches. Bryson takes a critical approach to the social position of women. The work questions the domination established by the patriarchal social structure over women. Achieving "meaningful" equality between the sexes is linked to explaining the underlying elements of "the rules of the game." Bryson emphasizes that it is wrong to force a "single size" on all individuals in society (Bryson, 2003: 250).

One of the fundamental concepts discussed in relation to the position of women is "forced migration" and its consequences. When reviewing the literature on forced migration, it is observed that migration studies are approached from the perspective of "male migrants," with women being regarded as passive actors. During the forced migration process, migrant women face multidimensional problems such as "gender-based discrimination, precarious working conditions, cultural adaptation difficulties, and legal status uncertainties" (Morokvasic, 1984). Alexander Betts, who has conducted numerous studies on migration and migrants, offers a perspective based on both theoretical and practical applications in his work entitled "Forced Migration and Global Policy". In this study, Betts examines the problems of "refugees, asylum seekers, and individuals displaced due to compelling reasons" from a human rights perspective. Betts addresses the problems faced by migrants with a critical approach. The study explores migrant rights and the responsibilities of states. A critique of refugee policies implemented in the international system forms the main backbone of this study (Betts, 2017: 20-27).

1. Problems Experienced During Forced Migration

The removal of the minimum conditions necessary for people to live in their region or migration undertaken against their will is defined as *"forced migration."* According to William Petersen (1958: 261) forced migration is a type of migration deliberately carried out by the state or an equivalent public authority, resulting in the victimization of migrants. Forced migration refers to

situations where individuals are forced to leave their homes due to life-threatening security issues, conflicts, violence, political oppression, or severe socioeconomic conditions.Since the beginning of history, people have been forced to migrate from their places of residence to other places for political, cultural, economic, and other reasons. Forced migration can generally arise due to violent political and social events and major economic crises (International Organization for Migration, 2019; İpek, 2006: 17; Sert, 2012: 30). Different dimensions of globalization have a strong impact on the forced migration process. Many causes of displacement are linked to globalization. The relationship between globalization and forced migration can be conceptualized within a multidimensional framework encompassing the structural and underlying drivers shaping the emergence of forced migration, the patterns of mobility experienced by individuals and communities, and the policy and governance mechanisms developed by states in response to forced displacement. From this perspective, globalization should be understood not merely as a process that transforms the dynamics of forced migration, but also as a broader structural context that reshapes the underlying causes, forms, and state responses associated with such movements (Betts, 2017: 229–241). Today, 'violent incidents, terrorist acts, human rights violations, wars, conflicts, significant economic problems, and environmental changes' occurring in different parts of the world are the factors that trigger forced migration. Political reasons generally underlie the factors that trigger forced migration.

Forced migration has brought about various social, economic, and political problems. The working conditions of migrants have deteriorated compared to those of workers in the local community of the country to which they have migrated. International forced migration has been accompanied by an increase in unemployment and poverty rates. International migration is becoming increasingly prevalent as it becomes intertwined with the global economy. The mobility and complexity of human communities are predicted to increase further in the coming years (Giddens, 2008: 544).

As a result of forced migration, people who migrate as migrants, asylum seekers, or refugees face various risks both for themselves and for the settled people of the region they migrate to. As a result of forced migration, migrants experience problems in meeting their basic needs, such as "security," "accommodation, education, and health services." Forced migration is among the threats to human security. The concept of human security encompasses all individuals in a society, including both citizens and migrants. Human security extends beyond the traditional state- and border-centered understanding of security. It encompasses economic, political, environmental, and social risks that threaten individuals' lives and fundamental rights. The United Nations Human Development Report (1994) addresses human security in relation to infectious diseases, inequalities in economic opportunities, forced displacement, environmental threats, risks to cultural values, and political repression. Security, therefore, is not limited to the protection of borders and territorial integrity. It also includes individuals' security of life, health, housing, education, and livelihoods. In the context of forced migration, security concerns can directly affect individuals' physical integrity. They can also restrict access to fundamental rights and public services. These conditions may undermine individuals' ability to maintain safe and dignified living conditions. Forced migration should therefore be understood not merely as a process of displacement, but also as a multidimensional process that affects individuals' security, rights, and capacity to shape their lives according to their own choices (United Nations Human Development Report, 1994).

In the international migration process, "discriminatory practices faced by migrants; dangerous or deadly situations arising from border security; economic problems in the countries of destination; and migrant resettlement policies that lead to a socially isolated life." They are considered threats to human security. Global developments, including widespread wars, conflicts, and terrorist incidents, are causing forced migrations worldwide. State policies regarding migrations caused by these compelling reasons are predominantly shaped by "security" considerations. Practices are being implemented within the framework of "security-first policies" on migration and immigration. Following the terrorist bombings in the United States on September 11, 2001, the issue of "global terrorism" has led to the emergence of hateful rhetoric such as Islamophobia in

the public sphere worldwide. Influenced by global developments, security concerns have taken precedence over humanitarian concerns in the control or management of international migration movements. The centralization of security policies in the management of international migration leads to the neglect of "fundamental human rights, social and economic rights" of migrants.

From the perspective of the capitalist system, addressing migration primarily as a security issue also creates a contradiction in the functioning of neoliberal policies. In the neoliberal economic system, which supposedly encourages capital mobility, attempts to control human mobility lead to the concentration of cheap labor, and consequently poverty, in certain regions. Neoliberal economic policies allow capital to circulate freely worldwide, while placing obstacles in the way of people seeking work and wanting to participate in working life. The enforcement of strict immigration laws prevents people from traveling freely and participating in working life. Thus, it is evident that neoliberalism's understanding of freedom is ineffective in practice (Rivero, 2003: 67).

A significant dimension encountered in the migration process is related to development. When examining the relationship between migration and development, a key issue that stands out is the social position of women. In evaluating women's social position, opportunities such as "participation in decision-making processes, education, employment, health, and participation in economic and social life" are considered. The addition of new economic, social, and legal barriers to existing gender inequalities during forced migration can further narrow women's capabilities. Gender inequality is considered a significant mechanism that exacerbates the effects of forced migration on women and limits their opportunities for human development. Amartya Sen, who developed a perspective on the women's dimension within the context of the relationship between migration and development, emphasizes that if the "population explosion" continues, the likelihood of problems such as global food shortages, environmental pollution, and overpopulation in cities will increase.According to Sen, "women's spheres of freedom" must be expanded to solve the "population explosion" problem (Sen, 2004: 293, 311). Sen describes the simultaneous production of poverty and deprivation among a large proportion of the world's population, despite high growth rates and wealth increases in the capitalist production process, as "neglect and denial."

"Despite unprecedented increases in total wealth, the modern world denies the fundamental freedoms of a large number of people. Deprivation of fundamental freedoms is often directly linked to economic poverty, which deprive people of their freedom in exchange for alleviating hunger, accessing adequate food, finding cures for treatable diseases, providing adequate clothing and shelter, and benefiting from clean water or healthy conditions. The violation of freedom stems directly from the denial of political rights and human rights by authoritarian regimes and from the restrictions on the freedom to participate in social, political, and economic life" (Sen, 2004: 18).

Due to economic, social, and political problems, as well as security concerns, a certain segment of society perceives migrants as a threat in the context of anti-migrant sentiment. Individuals easily adapt to those they consider close to them in the context of social relations, while perceiving individuals or groups they consider distant from them as a threat. Uncertainty is one of the main reasons for othering, anti-immigrant sentiment, and xenophobia. Some segments of society attempt to other immigrant groups by holding them responsible for all problems in society. Negative attitudes, prejudices, and stereotypes toward immigrants exist worldwide. There are certain stereotypes and prejudices in public opinion regarding immigrants, such as "they are more prone to crime, they resist social integration, they do not succeed in education, they do not use the opportunities offered to them efficiently, they are wasteful in the use of public resources, they exhibit aggressive behavior, and they are sick" (Turkish Grand National Assembly Migration and Integration Report, 2018: 266).

Anti-immigrant attitudes can restrict immigrants' participation in social life and access to opportunities, thereby reinforcing processes of othering, discrimination, and social exclusion; these processes, in turn, may contribute to a narrowing of individuals' capabilities. Despite being legally recognized as a crime in many countries, *discriminatory* and *hateful speech* is becoming

increasingly widespread today. Unequal treatment of a person or group is defined as *discrimination*. Discrimination is a situation in which a person is treated differently because of characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, socio- economic status, or disability. The manifestation of discrimination is when an individual's prejudices against those who are different turn into behavior. Discrimination and hate speech can sometimes cause tension, discomfort, and disputes between the local population and immigrants. Negative social attitudes and reactions towards immigrants lead to the politicization of the issue of immigration. Negative attitudes towards immigrants among the local population lead to the issue of immigration being addressed through the lens of "political concerns" (Özer, 2015: 60). Discrimination is considered "one of the most difficult sources of inequality to eliminate." Attitudes and behaviors involving discrimination based on differences such as "gender and ethnicity" are widespread throughout the world. In this context, it is important to prepare and implement effective laws that prohibit discrimination and act as a deterrent (Stiglitz, 2018: 361). The problem of "social exclusion" has become a significant issue in studies on "poverty and deprivation."

Social exclusion is considered as a separation of individuals from the social structure in which they live socially, culturally, and politically. Social exclusion eliminates the 'political, cultural, and economic' dimensions of social participation (Tümtaş, 2020: 69-70). Sen, states that socially excluded segments of society are categorized under headings such as "livelihood, secure employment, income, property, credit, land, housing, minimum consumption levels, education, cultural capital, welfare state, citizenship, democratic participation; public goods, nation, family, humanity, dignity." "Mentally and physically disabled people, people prone to suicide, criminals, single parents, the elderly, abused children, substance abusers, marginalized and unsociable people" are described as groups exposed to social exclusion in society (Sen, 2000: 1). The economic hardships, legal uncertainties and social prejudices faced by migrants can lead to the emergence or deepening of processes of social exclusion. In studies on social exclusion, the issue of 'migrant women' is generally discussed in the context of the problem of how they can integrate into other segments of society (Dedeoğlu and Gökmen, 2011: 19). The intersection of migration status and gender-based inequalities can lead to multiple disadvantages. There is a reciprocal relationship between social exclusion and xenophobia. There is no universally accepted definition of xenophobia at the international level. Xenophobia is defined as "attitudes, prejudices, and behaviors that reject, exclude, and denigrate the other" (IOM, 2019: 234). Xenophobia involves negative perceptions, hatred, and practices against people of different origins.

One of the major problems experienced by migrant communities around the world is related to "human trafficking." The majority of victims of human trafficking are "women and girls" (IOM, 2015). "Children and women who have lost their families; single or divorced women with children; unemployed and poor women and men; women and children who are victims of domestic violence; and those working in the informal sector" are among the groups at risk of encountering human trafficking (Adıgüzel; 2022: 122).

A significant number of people forced to migrate due to compelling reasons experience psychological problems such as anxiety, sadness, hopelessness, sleep difficulties, fatigue, irritability, anger, and physical pain. Scientific studies have shown that migrants experience more psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide compared to the host population. People who have been forced to migrate experience more psychological problems and have higher stress levels. Forcibly displaced people are at high risk in terms of mental health (Jankovic-Rankovic, Oka, Meyer & Gettler, 2020; Siriwardhana & Stewart, 2013; WHO, 2025). Access to health and education services is crucial in protecting the mental health of people forced to migrate and in facilitating their social integration. Restricting access to education and healthcare services should be considered not only a factor that worsens current living conditions, but also a mechanism that limits women's future capabilities.

2. Challenges Faced by Women During Forced Migration and the Capability Approach

When migration movements around the world are examined based on gender, it is seen that women face more economic and social problems in the regions they migrate to compared to men.

There are significant challenges, particularly regarding the labor force participation of migrant women. According to the UNHCR's 2020 Global Trends Report, 47.9 per cent of the migrant population in 2019 were women. The report highlights that, in all regions except Africa and Asia, the proportion of female migrants was higher than that of male migrants. In 2019, whilst the proportion of migrant women in North Africa and West Asia was only 35.5 per cent, it stood at around 51 per cent in North America and Europe (United Nations, 2019). The fact that women now account for approximately half of international migration indicates that they have become a significant quantitative factor in migration flows. This quantitative increase also highlights the need to assess the economic, social and labour market consequences of migration from a gender perspective. From a gender perspective, the experience of migration has negative economic, social and psychological consequences for women. Gender-based inequalities are evident in terms of female migrants' participation in the labour market, their access to employment opportunities, wage levels and working conditions (Qin et al., 2016).

Migrant women often find themselves forced to live under difficult socio-economic conditions in the regions they go to for various reasons. The intersection of gender and immigration status can lead to a diversification and deepening of the forms of discrimination and inequality experienced by women. Immigrant women face various obstacles to equal and effective participation in socio-economic life; their access to basic services and opportunities, especially education and health, may be limited. Nevertheless, despite the vulnerabilities brought about by the migration process, immigrant women also stand out as important actors in social change, contributing to the transformation of economic, social, and cultural life in the societies where they settle. Migrant women, along with the difficult conditions they face, emerge as one of the fundamental drivers of social change in the regions they go to. Despite the positive effects they create in both their countries of origin and destination, migrant women are the most vulnerable and defenseless segment of society in terms of socio-economic conditions. Migrant women face greater victimization due to their position within patriarchal social structures.

Today, the increase in income inequality that has occurred alongside the capitalist production process affects women the most. As inequalities deepen in the process of capitalist development, socio-economic differences between genders are increasing. Sen, argues that the fact that women are far worse off than men in both rich and poor countries, in the context of social inequalities, is a consequence of the capitalist economic system. Inequalities between men and women are clearly observable in fundamental areas such as "life and death, health and sickness, and education" (Sen, 1989: 53). In today's capitalist production process, formal institutions are weakening while informal sectors are growing and becoming more widespread. The informal sector has a greater impact on economic life, especially in poor countries (Calhoun, 2019: 182). Most women are forced to work in the informal sector for low wages. Statistical data on women's participation in the informal sector workforce is insufficient and incomplete. This situation leads to the devaluation of women's labor in the workforce. The fact that women who are forced to work under harsh conditions to contribute to the family income do not receive compensation for their labor is considered a fundamental problem from the perspective of gender equality and human development (United Nations Development Programme, 1990: 32).

Globally, women are at a disadvantage compared to men in the areas such as "health, education, and employment." Women are vulnerable in the fight against problems such as "malnutrition, unhealthy living, physical violence, and sexual abuse." These problems cause greater emotional distress for women (Nussbaum, 2000: 1). According to Mirjana Morokvasic (1984: 886) "*The exclusion of migrant women from the production process, their complete vulnerability within the market system, their use as cheap labor in labor-intensive sectors, their forced employment in insecure jobs, their inability to benefit equally or sufficiently from the opportunities offered,* and *the gender-based functioning of the labor market*" are fundamental social problems arising from gender inequality. There are qualitative differences between the jobs performed by resident women and migrant women in the labor market. Migrant women face more inequality in working life than local women. Migrant women are forced to work under more difficult conditions and for lower wages. Factors such as 'under-employment, informal work, low pay, precarious

employment, unpaid care work and the devaluation of labour ‘which stem from gender, based inequalities in the labour market’ lead to a loss of agency for women.

Gender discrimination in working life is more evident in socio-economically underdeveloped countries due to high unemployment rates. Women are not paid for some of the work they do at different stages of their life cycle. Some of the work they do, such as 'growing subsistence crops for the household and childcare', is not considered an economic activity. There is an exploitation of women's labor within the household and in different areas of economic life, and women are generally assigned secondary roles. In the capitalist world economy, ‘households’ are considered one of the fundamental institutional structures. In the capitalist world economy, the continuous and endless accumulation of capital is the raison d'être of the system’s functioning (Wallerstein, 2018: 131). Furthermore, historically, prioritizing continuous capital accumulation for the survival of the capitalist system is considered irrational. The continuous accumulation of capital for the sake of accumulating more capital is not sustainable for the capitalist system (Wallerstein, 2019: 21). In migration movements, women's status is constructed in a way that is dependent on men. As a result of this dependent status, women's social, legal, and economic development is hindered. Along with discriminatory policies, migrant women are forced to work in low-paid, temporary, insecure, and inhumane conditions. In the context of international migration and the capitalist production process, female migrants constitute the most exploited and vulnerable segment of society (Morokvasic, 1984: 888). Women are labeled as “the other” in the capitalist system (Gibson-Graham, 2010: 65).

A significant majority of women worldwide face barriers to exercising their fundamental human rights. It is difficult to say that there is any country in today's world where gender equality is fully implemented. Achieving gender equality is recognized as a common challenge for all countries. Women are largely the victims of gender inequality. Men are also sometimes affected by the negative consequences of gender inequality due to sexist stereotypes. To put it more clearly, ‘gender inequality’ harms both women and men in terms of its consequences. Therefore, both women and men need to be liberated together. In this context, the relationship between the concepts of “migration, development, and gender equality” can be evaluated within the framework of Amartya Sen's “capability approach” and “human development” approach. Amartya Sen bases the intellectual foundations of the "capability approach" on Aristotle, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx (Sen, 1989: 43). The capabilities approach prioritizes the protection of fundamental human rights. The success of the development process is measured by what people can or cannot do. Examples of success in a development process include “being able to live a long and healthy life, being protected from preventable diseases, being well-nourished, being able to communicate, and being able to participate in literary and scientific activities.” Instead of the dominance of “circumstances” over individuals, priority is given to the dominance of individuals over “circumstances.” In this context, the capabilities approach highlights the importance of people's ability to change their circumstances. Economic and social development is considered to be the process of improving people's abilities and rights (Sen, 1989: 45; 1983: 754-755). Today, stereotypes related to gender are being questioned with a critical approach in the relevant literature. Gender has been used as a justification for assigning different statuses to men and women in the capitalist production process. Stereotypes based on gender have led to the secondary status and further exploitation of women in the public and private spheres. Discriminatory practices based on gender in the capitalist production process have led to conflict between women and men. This conflict has contributed to the development of a structure that serves the interests of the capitalist class and weakens women's social position. Parallel to the development of the capitalist world economy, the assumption that all men are socially superior to women has gained acceptance. As a result of this approach*, "gender has categorized men as little bosses, little masters"* (Margaret, 2020: 32-357).

The full participation of women in social and economic relations is considered essential for human development. In a development report published by the United Nations in 1990, human development was defined as a process of “expanding choices” based on the fundamental criteria of “living a long and healthy life, being educated, and having access to the resources necessary

for a standard of living compatible with human dignity." Furthermore, "political freedom, the guarantee of human rights, and consideration for the personal dignity of individuals" were included in the definition. According to the "human development" approach, people's individual and collective potential should be developed, and a suitable environment should be provided in line with their areas of interest and needs. When a balance is achieved between the formation and use of people's abilities, their potential will emerge. The freedom of choice is considered a fundamental condition for human development (United Nations Development Programme, 1990: 1). In this context, the applicability of policies based on gender equality in all institutions and organizations has gained importance in the context of the human development approach. It is important to address forced migration and development efforts together. The social status of women during forced migration is explained in relation to gender-based approaches. There are various ethical problems in the relationship between forced migration and development. "Communities exposed to forced migration worldwide are deprived of control over the fundamental dimensions of their existence" (Indra, 2008: 18).

In the 'capability' approach, poverty is viewed as a lack of basic capabilities rather than simply a lack of income. The capability approach involves addressing poverty and deprivation through a rights-based approach. The capability approach is defined as the ability to avoid adverse circumstances that people would wish to avoid. By focusing on the actual choices and freedoms available to individuals, the capability approach provides an explanatory theoretical framework. The resolution of the problems faced by women should not be limited solely to economic support mechanisms; rather, policies should be developed that will enhance women's long-term capabilities. Simply trying to reduce income poverty is not enough to combat poverty. Poverty and deprivation are assessed in terms of the lives people actually lead and the freedoms they actually possess. Expanding or strengthening people's capacities responds to these fundamental concerns. For social and economic development to occur, deprivation must be eliminated and fundamental rights must be protected. Developing capacity enriches people's lives and contributes to reducing deprivation in terms of both frequency and intensity. The capacity deprivation approach addresses poverty and fundamental human rights together. For development to be truly realized, real freedoms must be fully expanded. Sen's approach to human development emphasizes areas of freedom such as "political freedoms, economic opportunities, social opportunities, transparency, and security." According to Sen (2004: 14, 133), "development means the elimination of types of deprivation of liberty that leave people with no choices and provideing limited opportunities for carrying out normal activities." In Sen's approach, the "perspective of liberty" is at the center of development. Freedom means "the complete absence of external constraints on action." "*A free person is someone who is not prevented from doing what s/he wants to do with her/his power and intelligence"* (Hobbes, 2023: 163).

In the 'capability' approach, the existence of gender inequality is recognised as one of the key factors hindering human development. Development is defined as the utilization of the opportunities provided by freedom by individuals. Expanding people's freedom and eliminating deprivation are considered the fundamental "goal and means" of the development process. Achieving genuine development appears to be possible through the expansion of freedom. Sen's approach emphasizes that "the state and society" must play a supportive role in strengthening and protecting people's capabilities (Sen, 2004: 77).

The "capability approach" has been influential in the creation and development of the UN Human Development Reports. In the UN Human Development Reports, the problem of poverty is addressed as a problem of developing basic capacities and freedoms. When viewed within the framework of the capability approach, the low level of participation of immigrants living in developed countries in political, social, and economic life shows that poverty and deprivation continue to increase. In this context, a reciprocal relationship is established between forced migration and poverty. At the same time, as inequalities increase during the forced migration process, poverty increases (Nussbaum, 2000: 3).

Research has demonstrated that immigrant women may experience discriminatory practices to a greater extent than men due to their gender. However, the discrimination experienced by

immigrant women is not limited to gender alone; rather, it may intersect with other social and identity-related characteristics, such as ethnic origin and religious identity, resulting in multiple forms of discrimination (Bader et al., 2018; Coşkun, 2018; Knappert et al., 2018; Weichselbaumer, 2020; Yangın Kiremit & Akfırat, 2023; Yasmeen et al., 2025). In this context, patriarchal social structures, gender roles, economic dependence, the unequal distribution of unpaid care work, and discriminatory practices in the labour market emerge as important determinants of processes that restrict immigrant women's participation in social life, access to resources and opportunities, and the capabilities available to them. Accordingly, examining the inequalities experienced by immigrant women through the intersecting dimensions of gender, immigrant status, ethnic origin, and religious identity is crucial for understanding the multiple vulnerabilities and capability deprivations they may encounter. In this context, it should be noted that "absolute equality does not always lead to a just society." Ha-Joon Chang's example regarding equal opportunity and social justice summarizes the issue strikingly: *"When some people have to run 100 meters with sandbags tied to their legs, not allowing anyone to start ahead does not make the race fair. Opportunity equality is absolutely necessary for a truly fair and effective society, but it is not sufficient.*" Ensuring "opportunity equality" in terms of access to resources and services for different segments of society is an important issue in development-related studies. Globally, there is widespread public opposition to practices that discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or socioeconomic class (Chang, 2010: 267-278). Despite increased public awareness of discrimination and some fundamental gains, gender-based inequalities persist. On the one hand, it is assumed that wage inequality in the labor market will disappear by 2059. On the other hand, it is estimated that pressure on women's wages will continue until 2152 and that wage inequalities will persist (Chomsky and Waterstone, 2023: 322-323).

The Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 4, 1986, states that in order to develop the right to development, equal opportunities must be provided for all people in the use of basic resources and that this is a necessity. The UN Declaration on the Right to Development includes the objectives of "promoting the well-being of all people without discrimination based on race, sex, language, or religion; ensuring the equitable distribution of resources; achieving comprehensive development; eliminating discrimination; respecting fundamental human rights and freedoms; and ensuring international peace and security." The UN Declaration on the Right to Development also emphasizes that states must show universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination based on race, color, gender, language, religion, political opinion, or social origin, and that they have an obligation to comply.

Threats such as colonialism, neo-colonialism, ethnic discrimination, occupation, aggression, and war at the national and international levels prevent the establishment of conditions conducive to the development of a large part of humanity. Since the Industrial Revolution, forced migration processes have occurred worldwide due to reasons such as "depletion of resources, climate change, epidemics, and wars." With modern industrial capitalism, "colonial activities, wars, and technological developments" have increased the amount, importance, volume, and impact of migration (Castles and Miller, 2008:7). Ensuring international peace and security are important elements for the realization of the right to development. The UN Declaration on the Right to Development establishes a close relationship between disarmament and development. The resources obtained through disarmament measures can be used to achieve economic and social development. The Declaration emphasizes that a "human-centered" development process should be encouraged and that "human beings" should be seen as the primary beneficiaries of development. In this context, it is stated that states have primary responsibility for creating conditions conducive to the development of individuals and that the right to development is an inalienable human right. It is emphasized that measures must be taken at the national and international levels to adopt, exercise, and develop fundamental human rights.

Many women suffer from sexual violence on migration routes and struggle to survive in dangerous, neglected, and unhealthy conditions in refugee camps. The barriers to empowerment experienced by migrant women, such as "sexual violence, human trafficking, adverse living

conditions in refugee camps, unwanted pregnancies, reproductive health problems, and restricted access to healthcare," should be considered as a whole. When men migrate and women are left behind as heads of households, women's access to resources may be limited. The migration process itself is the most important determinant of migrant health. Conditions existing before migration, during the migration process, upon arrival in the destination country, and upon return to the home country affect migrant health. Age, gender, and socioeconomic status are common factors determining migrant health at every stage of the migration process. Disadvantaged groups displaced due to poverty, conflict, natural disasters, etc., face greater risks in all basic areas, including health. It has been observed that migrant women who experience social exclusion in socio-economic areas are in a vulnerable and fragile situation. The inequalities faced by migrant women in accessing basic services such as health, education, employment, social security, and housing have psychological consequences (International Organization for Migration, 2013: 29-30).

In 2008, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) drew attention to the situation of migrant women workers, with particular emphasis on sexual and reproductive health. Article 26 of the recommendations for migrant women workers states that importance should be given to the period of pregnancy in terms of discrimination, noting that "migrant women workers are subject to practices that result in significant health risks, such as being subjected to mandatory pregnancy tests, being deported if the test is positive, being forced to terminate the pregnancy, or being unable to access safe reproductive health and voluntary abortion services, failure to receive adequate or any maternity leave when the mother's health is at risk, and inability to access obstetric services" (The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2008).

Conclusions and Recommendations

In migration policies and practices effective worldwide, the "phenomenon of migration" is assessed within the framework of state security rather than the safety of migrants. Security-oriented policies and practices that prioritize the interests of states can lead to the spread of negative reactions towards migrants.

With the increasing proportion of female immigrants within the immigrant population, the issue of "gender equality" has gained more importance. Despite the growing importance of gender equality, it is evident that women's migration experiences and the problems they face are not sufficiently addressed in migration studies. Women's life experiences are generally evaluated in relation to men. In the context of the relationship between "development and migration," women are subjected to discriminatory practices due to factors caused by gender stereotypes. Gender equality is a concept that encompasses the equality in access to fundamental rights and representation. The egalitarian statements expressed in laws do not find their counterpart in real life. Social development will be possible if priority is given to practices based on social justice and equality in migration policies.

Achieving gender equality is one of the fundamental goals of "human development." To achieve "human development" and eradicate poverty at a global level, egalitarian approaches must be developed. In this context, "civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights" must be guaranteed. If correct and appropriate policies are implemented, migrants will be seen as potential local development actors in the realization of social and economic development, and this will have positive results for socio-economic development. In this context, governments should bear primary responsibility for realizing the "right to development" at the global level. Relevant institutions or organizations should play a more active role in ensuring social justice and equality; in this framework, cooperation should be developed. Policies based on "sustainable and humane development, income distribution justice, universal human rights, and gender equality" should be implemented. Concrete policies and practices should be implemented to ensure social justice and equality. The root causes of inequality and poverty should be investigated; measures should be taken based on the results of the investigation; socio-economic policies that will eliminate social injustice and inequality should be developed.

This study evaluates the problems faced by women during forced migration within the framework of a "capacity approach." The main assessment of the study is that forced migration is not only a deterioration in income and living conditions for women, but also a multi-dimensional process that limits their real options in the areas of education, health, employment, security, and social participation. It is possible to consider forced migration as a process that narrows the capabilities of individuals. The problem of social exclusion arising from forced migration should be addressed as a human rights issue. Migration and development policies should be reorganized and developed based on human rights. The problems of migrants should be assessed from a perspective that focuses on “human rights,” free from any political, ethnic, or religious discrimination. The governments of developed countries should regulate legal provisions relating to migrants in a consistent, objective manner, in accordance with universal legal principles. Governments should allocate more resources to social and economic policies. In order for women to participate equally and effectively in society alongside men and for gender equality to be achieved, legislators and implementers must have an egalitarian perspective. Forced migration restricts women's real options in education, health, employment, security, and social participation, thereby narrowing their capabilities and deepening gender inequality and hindering the realization of human development. The reasons why women's capabilities are particularly limited during forced migration processes should be emphasized. Migration policies should be strengthened from a human development perspective. Policy tools aimed at increasing women's capabilities should be developed. In this context, it is necessary to ensure migrant women's access to secure employment, education, and health services, their participation in social security mechanisms, and the strengthening of legal protection mechanisms against discrimination and violence.

There is a strong correlation between increasing migration flows due to global developments and socio-economic problems. At the global level, approaches that place “people” at the center should be supported in order to achieve social development, ensure justice, and eliminate inequalities. Amartya Sen's “capability” approach is important in assessing the fundamental socio- economic problems faced by migrants in social and economic terms. More humane, feasible, and realistic solutions must be found for the problems faced by migrants who are subjected to violence, experience livelihood difficulties, find themselves in desperate situations, struggle to survive, and seek rights-based solutions. Consequently, supporting women experiencing forced displacement from a human development perspective requires not only addressing existing deprivations and inequalities but also expanding the substantive freedoms and capabilities that enable them to shape their lives in accordance with their own values, preferences, and choices.

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Financial disclosures

The author declared that this study did not receive any financial support.

Acknowledgements

The author have nothing to acknowledge of any persons, grants, funds, institutions.